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Weinberg Center nearing \$1 million campaign goal

City Beat | Erica L. Green

The Weinberg Center for the Arts is \$25,000 closer to reaching its \$1 million capital campaign goal, following what staff called an overwhelming response from the Frederick community.

"We have been making progress in the last two weeks," said Stephanie Miller, marketing and development manager for the Weinberg. "I think we all — the city, the staff and the board of directors — are all surprised by how well we've done."

The center announced last month that it was within \$100,000 of reaching the \$1 million mark, and Miller said this week that the campaign is now within \$75,000. The goal is to reach the \$1 million goal in the second quarter of this year. The campaign started in September 2008.

The theater has made a big push in the last few weeks selling bricks that can be personalized and will lie along the "Weinberg Walk of Fame," a commemorative walkway outside the main entrance of the theater that will recognize donors of various levels, Miller said.

The theater's largest donations have come from businesses, individuals and Frederick institutions.

The PNC Foundation contributed \$75,000 to help replace the theater's marquee to make it more historic looking, and the Ausherman Family Foundation is matching all funds received up to \$200,000. The theater's newest contributors, residents Tom Lynch and Karlys Kline each pledged and contributed \$10,000 to the center.

But Miller said donations of all amounts have gotten the Weinberg to this point. "Every little dollar has helped, and that will help push us through," she said.

The money will go toward the continuous restoration and renovation of the 83-year-old, 200-seat theater that sits in the center of downtown's West Patrick Street. Plans to renovate the building have been in the works for years. In 2009, the theater received new flooring and seating. The renovations were supported by city, state and county funds for capital improvements.

The capital campaign will support more renovations planned for this year, such as repairs to the original tile floor, and new carpet and paint in the theater's lobby.

Miller said she believes that the theatre may even exceed its \$1 million goal, thanks to a supportive community.

"What it shows us is that the community understands the importance of the Weinberg," she said.

http://www.gazette.net/stories/01072010/frednew145411_32552.php