Daily Journal • Daily Messenger Thursday, May 28, 2009

Elegance returns to Walhalla auditorium

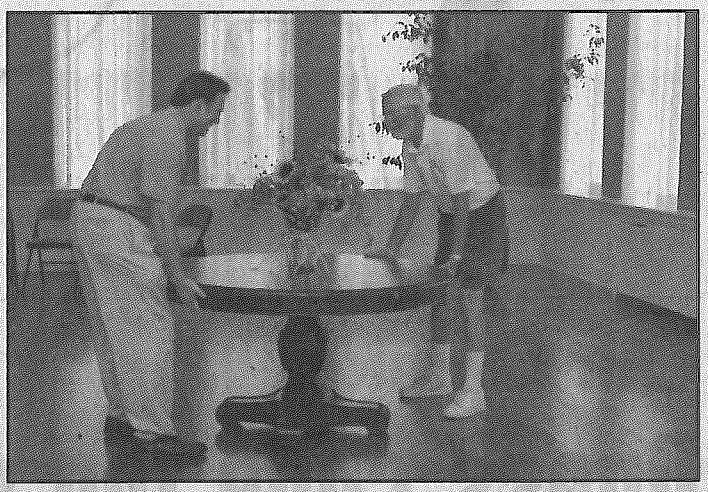
By JESSICA SIBLEY
jsibley@dailyjm.com

WALHALLA — You're not actually walking into a Victorian reception hall circa 1905, decked out with fancy trimmings and furniture. It just looks like you are.

Following a year of planning and implementing, the Walhalla Civic Auditorium (WCA) is ready to unveil its new reception area, a project that the Board of Directors has been eagerly awaiting the completion of.

Complete with flowing drapery, high ceilings, shiny hardwoods and intricate chandeliers, the reception hall has elegance written all over it.

"Before the auditorium even housed entertainment and while it was being renovated many years ago, two people made quite the difference," said Tom Brosnan, representative from WCA. "Alberta Bowers and Leon Cantrell, although I didn't know them, were key players in the organization. So, we knew we wanted to do something with the room and give a dedication. This was the perfect way."



Jessica Nelms/Staff

Walhalla Civic Auditorium board members Ken Sloan, left, and Tom Brosnan move furniture into the newly-renovated reception hall, on Wednesday.

While the room was used to sell refreshments during events, Brosnan agreed that it wasn't visually appealing.

"Things were rundown and dark in that room," he said. "It had potential to be something grand and now it truly is."

Costing nearly $45,000 to complete, the new reception hall is open to the public for various functions.

Available for $25 an hour at a four-hour minimum, weddings, birthday parties, class and family reunions will be entertained in a pristine room with gads of space, Brosnan said.

"It's really a bargain for a fantastic room," he added. "We will also open it to civic organizations and charities for meetings. At that point, we would waive the four-hour minimum."

WCA plans to have smaller functions in the new reception hall as well because the acoustics are top notch.

"The sound in that room is phenomenal," Brosnan said. "All around, it's going to be a great step for the auditorium. We're very happy to have it finished."