

# Delphi Preservation Society receives grant

The Delphi Preservation Society received a \$1,000 grant from the Carroll County Community Foundation for support of the Opera House feasibility study update, according to Lynn Corson, Society president.

"We are very appreciative of the Foundation's support of this effort," said Corson. The grant is a matching grant requiring an equal contribution from the Society or other sources.

The original study examining the feasibility of restoring the Assion-Ruffing Opera House, on the third floor of the City Hall Building in Delphi, east of

the courthouse (housing The White Iris and Curves on the first floor) was completed in 1997 and was based on the condition of the facility at that time, Corson said. In 1997 there was also a need for community meeting space. The Wabash & Erie Canal Interpretive and Conference Center was not even conceived.

"We planned the restoration of the Opera House and the second floor of the building with an 'add-on' structure to accommodate an elevator, meeting rooms, restrooms and other space, he added. Now, with meeting space available at the Canal, the Society can

focus on the Opera House and the supporting facilities necessary to create a venue for local and regional theatre productions, musical entertainment, and other cultural offerings." The grant will be used to more closely examine the feasibility of installing an elevator to provide access to the second and third floors; to assess the electrical lighting requirements for the performance space and second floor; to determine the need for a sprinkler or other fire suppression system; to estimate the heating and air conditioning requirements; and, generally bring the facility up to city and state building, fire and health code requirements.

Corson said that the first event in the hall was a ball, on June 27, 1865, for Civil War soldiers who were members of Company B, 86<sup>th</sup> Indiana Volunteers and the last performance, a minstrel show, was staged in February 1914. The fire inspector "condemned the building" in December 1914, and the space has been used for storage since.

The Preservation Society staged a performance at Carroll County Old Settlers last August. Over 200 people climbed the stairs to the third floor to sit in wooden chairs in 90-degree heat and 90-percent humidity to enjoy the Tonsil Klackers, a comedy barbershop quartet from Lafayette.

"That attendance really left an impression with us," Corson said. "We knew, then, that if we could develop a reasonable plan for restoring the Opera House, the Delphi and Carroll County communities would support it."

"The grant from the Carroll County Community Foundation to update the feasibility plan is the first step, and for that, we're very grateful of the Foundation's interest and support," he added.

## Steve Nichols named Sagamore of the Wabash



Steve Nichols of Delphi was awarded The Sagamore of the Wabash Monday night at the Carroll County "Ag" Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

President of Carroll County Pork Producers Association David Lambert, who nominated Nichols, said, "Steve has served Carroll County as Extension Agriculture educator for over 25 years, going above and beyond the call of duty to serve the people. He has demonstrated utmost dedication to his family, church, community, and his fellow man. We feel Steve is deserving of the highest honor that the governor can bestow, a Sagamore of the Wabash.

The word Sagamore came

from American Indian tribes and was used to describe a great man whom the chief would look to for advice. We in Carroll County have looked to this great man for advice for over 25 years."

Lambert also presented Nichols with a plaque commemorating his 25 years of service as extension educator.

"We don't know how he can work so tirelessly to do all the things that he does," Lambert said. "This is especially evident at the Carroll County 4-H fair. When you think of the word 'service,' you think of Steve Nichols. Service to other people, community, family, and God define Steve's life. We cannot thank him enough."



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