



FACT SHEET

Warner Theatre Preservation Fund



About the Fund

The Warner Theatre Preservation Fund was established in 2015 by Morgantown native Lori Tanner, a CPA and investment-money manager living in Tucson, Arizona, to support the restoration and up-keep of the historic Warner Theater, located at 147 High Street in Morgantown.

The endowment would provide funds for this purpose as long as the theater is opened and operated as a non-profit facility for the benefit of the community. If the Warner is not opened or is for any reason not operated as a non-profit, then the endowment fund would be redirected to other historic preservation projects in Morgantown.

The fund is for preservation and restoration only and is separate from the purchase of the property.

Lori and a large group of supporters would like to turn the theater into an art house, dealing exclusively with foreign and independent films and documentaries that might not be seen anywhere else in the area. There could also be film festivals showing several movies of a particular genre or actor, she said.

“Morgantown is a college town,” which means it has an intellectual heartbeat, she said. “We can make the Warner an interactive odyssey of film, and concentrate on film education with research and lectures,” she said. “Most of the people who are making these independent films love traveling to universities to talk about their work because they’re always looking for one more screen. And you can supplement the income with live entertainment.”

The High Street landmark opened in June 1931 as part of the national chain fronted by the Warner Brothers studio in Hollywood. It was known for its art deco style and then-modern technology. The Warner screened mainstream Hollywood movies plus independent offerings from the Sundance Film Festival as well as an annual showing of “The Rocky Horror Picture Show,” a college town favorite.

Except for a three-year stretch, the theater was open continuously until September 2010, when financial problems closed its doors for the last time.

How Can I Donate?

Individuals, organizations and businesses are encouraged to contribute any amount of money to the Warner Theater Preservation Fund. Contributions are tax-deductible. All pledges, big or small, are accepted and gifts can be added to the fund at any time.

All donations to the theater fund and other endowments managed by YCF are invested to increase their value, with net income from these investments available for distribution annually to meet the requirements and donor objectives of the fund. While the net income is dispersed, the original endowments and any subsequent contributions remain intact and continue to grow from year to year.

To make a donation, or to get more information, contact Your Community Foundation, P.O. Box 409, Morgantown, WV 26507. Call us at (304) 296-3433 or visit our web site at www.ycfwv.org.