

"Those were typical community center activities at that time," Pincus said. "The facilities of the building were at that time run independently (by the organizations meeting there)," Pincus said. Today, the City of Eugene collects the rent. Along with rock and roll during the '50s, the West Eugene

Secure a Westside Community Center for the Performing Arts was formed in that same year. It was made up of hall users, performers, neighbors and people concerned with historic preservation.

The committee learned that the owner of WOW Hall, E. William Mullholland, would

the fund-raiser," for its very survival in the future, he pointed out.

Gate fees aren't enough without monetary assistance from the community, he said. Pincus hopes to earn enough (\$500,000 by Jan. 1) to "stabilize the future of the organization."

"Due to the efforts of many dedicated volunteers," Pincus said, the patronage of WOW Hall by Eugeneans continues today.

Without community support there will be no WOW Hall, he added.

In the words of a member of the Checkered Players comedy act referring to the first WOWATHON, let all members of the community, "make one last stand to save this place."



Photo by Stephen Maher

Posters outside the box office door reveal the diversity of events held at WOW Hall. During the year those events include concerts, dances and theatrical performances.

'To me this place is more like an old church than a sock hop.'

— John Gibbons

Boxing Association took up residence in the hall, and a portable boxing ring went up.

Many of the activities which are now part of the Community Center for the Performing Arts saw their beginnings at WOW Hall, from the Eugene Dance Collective, later called the Wallflower Order, to the Checkered Players, a comedy theater group.

More recently the hall saw such attractions as nationally popular Blues artist Doc Watson, the I-Tals, a Reggae group, and Queen Ida, a Cajun singer from New Orleans, La., Pincus said.

Many other well-known bands from both Eugene and elsewhere have appeared there.

In 1975 it became apparent that WOW Hall couldn't stay open under the existing management situation.

In response to the many concerns of Eugene citizens, a group called the Committee to

sell it to the community at a price of \$75,000 with a \$10,000 down payment provided the down payment was delivered within 13 days.

The Checkered Players proposed a WOWATHON — five days of continuous entertainment — to raise money for the hall.

The "Peoples Food Annex," run by the workers at Mama's Home-Fried Truck Stop, turned in a \$1,000 donation putting the total over the required \$10,000, and history was made when the era of the Westside Community Center for the Performing Arts, the community's WOW Hall, began.

Pincus said he may have another WOWATHON this year.

"We don't get a large percentage of outside help," Pincus said. "A fund-raiser is scheduled for mid-September to early-December," he said.

The WOW Hall "depends on

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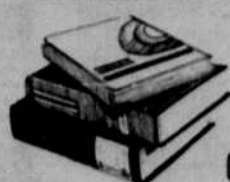
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