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ONE DOLLAR

LIBERTY THEATER SHINES AT OPEN HOUSE

Free tours Saturday part of a yearlong anniversary celebration

By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

John Ginder marveled at the stunning, 1,200-pound, 8-foot tall iron-framed chandelier that is the centerpiece of the majestic Liberty Theater.

The videographer, who has lived in Astoria for about a year, had never been inside before a free open house Saturday afternoon to celebrate the historic theater's 90th anniversary and the 10th anniversary of the grand reopening.

"It's beautiful. I love old theaters like this," Ginder said, pointing up at the chandelier. Ryan, 13, and Will, 11, bolted up the staircase to a get better view from the balcony.

His partner, Judith Niland, a writer and director who works with the Astor Street Opry Company, is a longtime Astorian who remembers when the old vaudeville house and movie theater was not exactly a source of civic pride.

"It was really sad to see that," she said of the time when the theater was in disrepair. "So it was great that they did this."

The best part, she said, is that the theater renovation helped restore a city block. "I've watched the town come back up," she said. "And if we can just take care of that Flavel corner ..."

The open house was a chance to show off the Liberty to locals who may not have had an opportunity to catch a performance and to visitors stopping by the city for the day.

"Beautiful," said Patti Miles, an architect who lives in Portland. "We just happened to be walking by and it said 'tours.'"

"It's a gorgeous building," said Tom Richardson, a mailman from Portland who was with Miles.

The free tours Saturday included a peek inside the McTavish Room, where tables were set for an elegant dinner Saturday night, and the Paulson Pavilion, which had a puppet show.

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Bob Hamilton gestures in the main floor auditorium while leading a tour of the Liberty Theater during an open house event Saturday. The open house was part of a celebration for the theater's 90th Birthday. The chandelier in the auditorium is original. The framework had to be restored in place while the panels were restored in Portland.

Library redo in doubt

Astoria councilors give pause to growth into old Waldorf Hotel

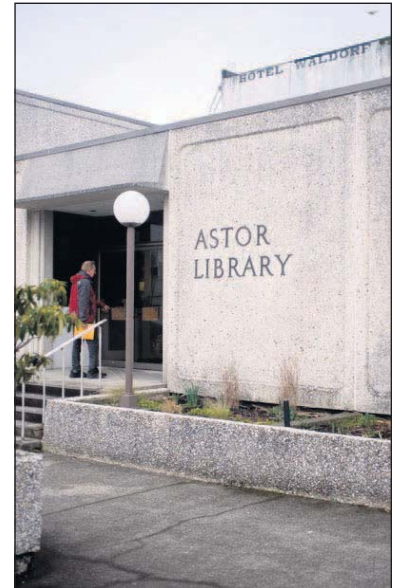
By DERRICK DePLEDGE
The Daily Astorian

The city's renovation plan for the Astoria Public Library is in doubt due to the uncertainty of two new city councilors and an organized campaign by preservationists to save the old Waldorf Hotel.

The City Council voted last January to accept a renovation plan that involved expanding the library into the long vacant Waldorf Hotel, also known as the Merwyn.

But two new city councilors — Cindy Price and Zetty Nemlowill — have said they want more information about the plan before making a decision. The Lower Columbia Preservation Society and others have also launched a drive to save the Waldorf as a historic example of 1920's architecture.

Implementation of the library renovation plan was among the City Council's goals for this year. At a council goal-setting session on



Daily Astorian file
The Astoria Library and its future is under discussion by the Astoria City Council.

A Port of Play, but for teens

Teen center opens after team effort

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Astoria's only city-sponsored teen center has come out of hiding at the Astoria Recreation Center (ARC).

It took a year of planning, a raffle fundraiser, donations by a large community coalition and a grant from the Ford Family Foundation.

The center, a single room at the new ARC, is filled with a giant flat-screen TV television, video games, foosball, air hockey, a reading corner, arts and crafts. It opened Friday night with a ribbon cutting, packed with members of the Ford Institute Leadership Program, who helped make it happen.

"It's such a diverse group who joined this," said Lily Teadtke, a senior at Astoria High School, about the leadership program.

The leadership program, sponsored by the rurally focused nonprofit Ford Family Foundation, included high-schoolers like Teadtke

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Engineer takes craft beyond the border

Brittany Park, an environmental engineer at Georgia-Pacific Wauna Mill, saved her vacation days last year for a two-week trip to Paufi, Ecuador, as part of an Engineers Without Borders program.

Park is a member of the Portland Chapter of Engineers Without Borders. She was one of five people on the travel team to make the volunteer trip in November.

The Ecuador trip was Park's first travel experience with Engineers Without Borders, a group she was interested in joining since studying chemical and environmental engineering at Oregon State University.

"I tried to join in my freshman year of college, but



I didn't have enough money," Park said. "I was looking for an opportunity to travel and it's all in my field."

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Submitted photo
Brittany Park, an environmental engineer with Georgia-Pacific Wauna Mill, (left) works with Paufi, Ecuador, residents in November as part of an Engineers Without Borders program.

