

South Coast

22, ext. 239

Feb. is Egyptian blitz month

■ Cash donations pour in for historic downtown theater

BY TIM NOVOTNY
The World

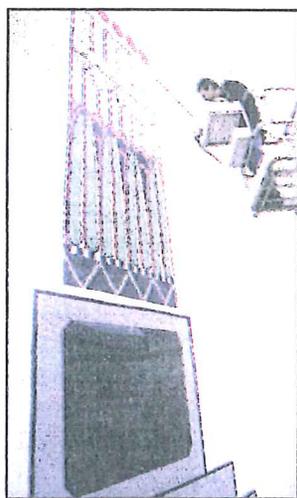
COOS BAY — Trying to bring Coos Bay's historic Egyptian Theatre back to life, supporters are targeting this month as critical to the patient's short-term prognosis.

Bob More, who heads the Egyptian Theatre Restoration Steering Committee, says the group has made great strides since the fundraising effort began in October. The public can see the evidence by checking out their fundraising obelisk that was updated last week.

Organizers speculate they may be able to bring the building back up to code for \$500,000. But they have bigger plans, so the overall campaign total is \$750,000. Of that, \$525,000 would come from grants, with the other \$225,000 targeted in cash donations.

"This is a really big time for us," More said. "This is the month we're really going to try and make a dent in that amount."

They are already more than halfway to their cash donation goal. They closed January with almost \$118,000 and probably are closer to \$120,000 currently.



By Alysha Beck, The World
Tracy Mueller, owner and operator of Art Signs in Coos Bay, adds signs to the Egyptian Theatre's obelisk that reveal the amount of money collected and the goal amount to help save the theater. As of December, \$132,000 had been collected, which is still short of the \$750,000 goal.

"February is going to be sort of our blitz month. It's the month we are approaching individuals and businesses for major contributions," More said.

To that end, they are working on a high-end fundraiser next month at Benetti's. More says Joe and Tricia Benetti are donating everything necessary for a \$500-a-plate dinner for 40 people.

Two other big fundraisers are in the planning

stages. One is for a special screening, sometime in late March, of an independent film that recently was honored at the New York Film Festival. On April 27, Coos Bay and North Bend are holding their annual free cleanup day, at which they accept donations. They have announced that all donations will go to the Egyptian.

Grant funding is also progressing. On Feb. 21, the Egyptian will receive a \$10,000 grant award from the Coquille Tribal Fund. Another \$615,000 in various grant applications are pending.

"We are up for a \$60,000 grant from the Collins Foundation," More said. He noted that the fund recently visited the coast to see the Egyptian.

"The fact that they came out in the field to see us would seem to indicate that we are a good candidate."

An \$150,000 application to the Ford Family Foundation has moved to the second stage of Ford's selection process.

All of this adds up to some exciting times for More and the steering committee.

"Our goal is to try and have things done by April, where we'd be in more of a position to actually get some construction going over the summer," he said. "We're in the thick of it at the moment."