experience the magic of butler again.

A NEW OLD TRADITION

the penn theater

THE PLACE FOR ARTS, EVENTS, & CULTURE IN BUTLER, PA

our story

Butler's historic Penn Theater is the last of its great 20th century moviehouses. Situated near the corner of North & Main, The Penn is an anchor for Butler's Historical & Cultural Districts. The Penn Theater opened on April 22, 1938, & has witnessed various highs & lows, re-openings & closings, & renovations, throughout its storied history. Styled with classic 1930s art deco appeal, geometric shapes, neon, brass, marble, & deep reds, ambers, whites, blacks, grays, & indigos, the facility features five distinct event spaces: the Lydia Mainstage, a now multipurpose & reconfigurable large venue, the Bantam Auditorium, a smaller box theater with fixed seating, & three club or conference rooms, each accommodating guests for events either in the Lydia or Bantam or reservations themselves.

our mission

- To reinvigorate the historic Penn Theater as the region's premiere hub for arts, entertainment, culture, & heritage through community-centered, high-quality, diverse events, promoting economic revitalization for downtown Butler, while enriching the quality of life for our citizens & lifting up the needs of those marginalized across our community.

our vision

- To envision a theater that is more than a building, but a gateway to downtown Butler, an anchor for its rich cultural & historic heritage, a source for outreach & support, & the region's heart for arts, events, & culture.
- To envision a multiuse, community-centered facility, where all feel welcomed, where all feel a sense of what Ray Oldenburg in 1989 called the 'third place,' or one's home away from home – neither home nor work, but that place where they feel a sense of belonging, & where they long to return.
- To envision collaborations with key public & private stakeholders to help the community experience the magic of Butler again.

our values

- The Penn Theater is Butler built, Butler proud, Butler resilient, & Butler strong.
- We value community, collaboration, charitable good works, holistic wellness, equity, stewardship of donor's time, talent, & treasure, transparency, innovative solutions, & high quality.

stay in touch!

OFFICE HOURS
MONDAY THRU FRIDAY
9A - 5P
OTHER TIMES BY APPT ONLY

CONTACT US
☎ 724-256-5634
✉ INFO@THEPENNTHEATER.ORG
🖥 WWW.THEPENNTHEATER.ORG
📘📷📱🔗 @THEPENNTHEATER

learn more or donate today!

The Penn Theater is a tax exempt, non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation, so your donations could be tax deductible!

frequently asked questions

when are you opening?
We hope to open for the holiday season this year (2023), while hosting various pre-opening events for the community to get to know the Penn again throughout October & November.

are you just going to show movies like before?
Nope! The NEW Penn Theater is going to be a completely multipurpose, reconfigurable event venue for the community, featuring music, comedy, speakers, interactive & novelty acts, performing arts, feature & indie films, open mic nights, talent shows, corporate events & conferences, private rentals (like weddings, trainings, meetings, etc.), and more!

So we will have movie nights, but so much more! Plus, all of our events will be community-driven events. It's on you, Butler, to come out & support The Penn. It's success is just as much in your hands as it is in ours. We're all in this together, thick or thin!

can i book the penn? how much will it cost?
Sure can! Check out the website: www.thepenntheater.org, or email Zach at zach@thepenntheater.org! We're still working out details on pricing, but Zach will be able to send you our official event pack & availability electronically!

are you hiring?
Right now, we are not. But we are accepting applications for various hourly positions, such as event staff, security, box office, hospitality & bartending, custodial & maintenance, etc. Contact Zach at zach@thepenntheater.org.

how will i know about events?
We will promote in a number of ways, but the best ways will be to follow us on social media, including Facebook & Instagram: @thepenntheater, & to stay current on our website, as we'll release info there first!

are you going to have food?
The Penn Theater itself will not serve food; we will partner with other Butler restaurants & caterers to bring you the best food & beverages around!

where can i buy tickets?
The Penn Theater will have a few options for ticketing, including our administration office for sales before the event, online sales via our website, & our theater box office for sales at the event. Cash, credit card, & apps accepted!

where can i park?
There's tons of convenient parking nearby in the city surface lot, city parking garage, & along adjacent streets.

will it be modernized at all?
The old girl is being restored to her former glory while also getting major upgrades, like the sound & lighting equipment, staging, projection, service areas, hospitality areas, concession & ticketing areas, & restroom facilities in the Lydia & the Bantam, plus the old balcony & projection room have been converted into corporate boxes! No - the art deco isn't going anywhere, & we're rehabilitating the Lydia's murals & the iconic P-E-N-N neon marquee!

how is this a non-profit?
The Penn Theater is operated by the Penn Theater Performance Company, a tax-exempt, non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation, which has a charitable, community-serving purpose for all of Butler! The physical building is owned by Wallace Group Productions, run by Bryan & Marina Frenchak, two philanthropists & community organizers. Bryan is Butler-born & Butler-proud!

learn more or donate today!
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how do i get involved?
There are a ton of ways to get involved! You can donate time, talent, & treasure: time by helping at fundraisers or events; talent by assisting with key tasks that require specific skills; & treasure through monetary donations!

brought to you by:

penn theater performance company
THE PLACE FOR ARTS, EVENTS, & CULTURE IN BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA

149 NORTH MAIN STREET, BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA 16001 ● INFO@THEPENNTHEATER.ORG ● 724-256-5684 ● WWW.THEPENNTHEATER.ORG