

# Letters to the Editor

## City auditorium is being renovated, not destroyed

To the Editor:

Please attend the Peace Memorial Auditorium renovation information session at 7 p.m. this Thursday at City Hall.

The recent letter to the editor by the League of Women Voters is deceptive as it states that the auditorium is being replaced by city offices. It would be correct to state that the renovation will include offices for Parks and Recreation, but to insinuate that the entire structure will be used as office space and that the memorial will be destroyed is false.

In an effort to best utilize municipal buildings and funds, city staff was tasked with a project to consolidate staff at one location, improve the auditorium (gym/basketball courts) and accomplish the goal within a very limited budget.

The city studied the history of the auditorium and the original intended use of the space. The original uses included office space. Over a year was spent looking at feasibility, cost, etc. Much misinformation is being circulated about this project. Here are the facts:

1. The auditorium will be expanded to include two basketball courts to full size. It currently only has one.

1. The expanded basketball courts will result in removal of the stage.

3. The facility is not currently air-conditioned; the renovation will make it a better year-round facility.

4. The renovation will include mobile bleachers, and the auditorium will still be able to host events other than just basketball games.

5. The current fixed seating

area will become office space.

6. 15,442 citizens used the gym last year, only 205 used the stage.

7. The offices being added on the upper floor will replace the current substandard parks and recreation office. The consolidation of staff will provide better customer service and significantly reduce cost. In fact, the cost saving will finance much of the project.

8. Going ahead with the renovation plan does not do away with the Veterans Memorial. The building footprint will remain as well as the original gym space. The stage will be replaced by a second basketball court. The removal of the stage will prevent the production of theatrical-type events but will not preclude the use of the space for other activities. An auditorium is a place for public gatherings and contains public seating; a stage is not required.

The building is being renovated, not destroyed. The facility will be rededicated upon completion. The renovation plan will significantly improve the structure and expand upon its original purpose. The structure will continue to be a vibrant living memorial to honor World War II veterans.

City Commissioner Wynn Butler  
3600 Windsong Court

## Manhattan Municipal Band grateful for all the support

To the Editor:

To the supporters of the 93rd Manhattan Municipal Band — thank you.

Your dedication and support of the band are greatly appreciated by the entire band. We have thoroughly enjoyed playing for you, and we hope you were musically entertained by