

Old seats, new purpose: Rotary Club aids Park Theater revamp

Submitted by Tom Guyette



Leander Hauri (foreground) and David Lipscomb (background) at work.

Photo Tom Guyette

The transformation of Lafayette's Park Theater has officially entered a new phase, with demolition activities set to commence this month. The existing seats did not fit the reimagined theater's floor configuration, so they had to go before demolition began.

Tracey Farrell of The Park Theater Trust said, "The dilemma we faced was how to keep our project on schedule while being sustainable." Enter stage right, a team from Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary led by Alex Arnold. Armed with hammer drills, headlights, knee pads, and gloves, they descended on the theater's dark and

chilly interior. In the space of two hours, they unbolted and removed 121 seats from the theater.

"This effort continues our partnership with the Park Theater Trust," said Rotary President Fred Stambaugh. He highlighted the collaborative spirit of their club, stating, "Our club members have joined with the Park Theater Trust in the past to deep-clean the building's exterior and make minor repairs. With patience, hard work, the right tools, and laughter, Rotarians again helped improve our community."

Of the original 344 seats, 100 were sold to a

Hollywood prop shop; 121 were claimed as keepsakes by local residents, and the remainder will be installed at Benicia's 100-year-old Majestic Theater, currently undergoing its own remodel. This exemplifies sustainability in action.

"The Park Theater's revival is only possible because of the many hands and hearts invested in it," Farrell noted. "From removing seats to raising funds, every effort counts. We encourage the community to visit parktheatertrust.org and be part of this incredible journey."