

WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 2021

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Gayle Berry, Executive Director
Willcox Theater and Arts P.O. Box 217 Willcox AZ 85644
520 507-1080 willcoxtheater@gmail.com

WILLCOX THEATER AND ARTS, INC. AWARDED AARP COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Willcox, AZ (July 28, 2021) -- Willcox Theater and Arts, Inc. was awarded an AARP Community Challenge Grant to develop a Heritage Courtyard on its campus in the Railroad Avenue Historic District in downtown Willcox.

Heritage Courtyard will transform the downtown lot into a historically compatible "pocket park," a small greenspace accessible to the public. With a focus on heritage, it will feature ADA accessible walkways, seating, vegetation, shade features, and lighting. The Heritage Courtyard project also has major support from Arizona Complete Health and the Arizona Community Foundation of Cochise along with generous individual donations.

Gayle Berry, Executive Director of WTA, said, "The focus will be on celebrating local heritage, with heritage themed murals on flanking walls; displays with photos, maps and/or heritage facts; and three-dimensional features including artifacts and art pieces."

The Heritage Courtyard will also serve as an arts activity space hosting community events such as jam sessions or exhibits, and WTA programming, including puppet shows, talks, or musical performances. An old-time social media feature, also known as a community bulletin board, as well as printed QR codes will provide information on downtown and area attractions and businesses to help inform visitors of upcoming activities.

Since its founding in 2012, WTA has renovated three historic buildings in downtown Willcox: Willcox Historic Theater (the movie theater); Studio 128, now housing STEAM labs and programs including computer stations, 3D printers, a laser cutter/engraver, and a video/sound studio; and the Palace of Art and Theater which provides studio space for arts and music workshops, classes, and exhibits along with a performance theater hosting live music and stage performances, open-mic nights, history talks, and WTA's Creative Youth Productions.

"The Heritage Courtyard continues the work of WTA as it contributes to the revitalization of downtown Willcox with its arts, cultural, and heritage programming for the community," Berry said. Construction is slated to begin in the fall.

The AARP Community Challenge is a grant program to make tangible improvements to communities that jump-start long-term change. It is part of AARP's nationwide Livable Communities initiative, which supports the efforts of cities, towns, neighborhoods, and rural areas to become great places to live for people of all ages. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org/Livable.

For more information about Willcox Theater and Arts, please visit www.willcoxtheater.com.

###

134 N Railroad Ave P O Box 217 Willcox, Arizona 85644
520-766-3335 willcoxtheater@gmail.com
This institution is an equal opportunity provider