

Marquee Lighting Celebrates a Major Renovation Milestone

Norwalk Arts Center celebrated a major milestone with the lighting of the newly-renovated marquee on October 1. Food trucks, live music and excited conversations in the street set the mood as anticipation for the official lighting built.

A sudden rainstorm altered the schedule a bit, but spirits remained high as Dina Lukasko, newly-hired Executive Director of Norwalk Arts Center, introduced NAC board members, state and local officials, contractors, donors and volunteers who made the renovation of the marquee possible.

Representing Huron County were commissioners Terry Boose and Skip Wilde and Executive Director of Huron County Growth Partnership Sarah Ross. Lukasko thanked them for their support, adding, "There's much to do, and we look forward to collaborating with all of you to make a huge economic impact in Norwalk and Huron County." Ross said,

"Thirty percent of attendees that visit here will come from outside our community, and in addition to what they spend on their tickets, they will spend an average of \$25 here on our Main Street." She encouraged private donors to "step up and take this the rest of the way."



State lawmakers, Representative Dick Stein, and Senators Nathan Manning and Theresa Gavarone, were also in attendance. Lukasko thanked them for their efforts in helping secure the state's \$3 million contribution to the theatre renovation project. "We are completely humbled by this and will be extremely good stewards of this funding," she said.

Dick Brady from Brady Electric Inc., one of the contractors on the marquee project, gave credit to the NAC board for taking on such an overwhelming project, adding the marquee project is just the first step in a long, worthwhile journey towards the theatre reopening. Brady said, "What they do every day when they're open and when they're vibrant, like this one will be again someday, is they draw a community together. They end up being the fabric of your community."

Brady then presented a surprise to NAC. He told the crowd he had discovered a photo of the theatre, dated August 1, 1959, while replacing some of the glass in the marquee. He enlarged and framed the historic photo and presented it to the NAC board.

Rylie Mullen, NAC's production chair, announced the 2025 production season. The NAC Teen Theatre group will perform "Back to the 80s" June 6-8, with auditions to take place in March. The adult theatre group, NACTors, will present "Guys and Dolls" August 1-3. The NAC Junior Theatre Group will present "Finding Nemo Jr." in November.

Finally, Lukasko led the crowd in a countdown from 10. As the marquee was lit, the crowd gasped and cheered. The LED lights were a spectacle on their own, but in the rain, they took on even more of a sparkle.

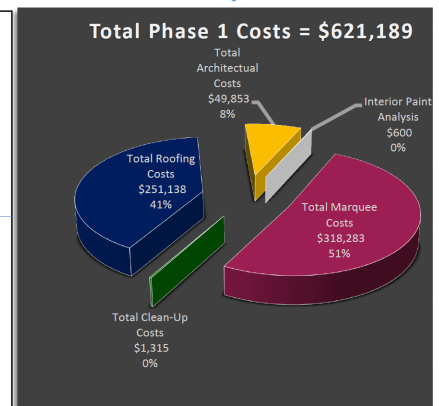
The celebration continued with live performances from members of each of NAC's theatre groups and members of NACTA (NAC Teen Association). The evening was a perfect foreshadowing of the community connections and entertainment that will come with the renovation and reopening of the historic Norwalk Theatre.

1st Phase of Renovation Complete!

- **New roof decks and membrane**
- **Refabricated marquee with LED components**

Fully Funded With

- **\$250,000 State Appropriation Grant**
- **\$114,500 Fundraisers**
- **Community Donors**



1 Mission : 2 Pathways

The mission of Norwalk Arts Center (NAC) is to celebrate and increase advocacy for the Arts in North Central Ohio by providing education, experiences and environments for artistic growth. There are two pathways NAC is following in order to successfully bring our mission to life in our community.

The first is the programming element, which encompasses our Arts Education and Production facets. These include our educational workshops for all ages and the wonderful productions put on by our children, teen and adult theatre groups. At this time, these happenings are held at 22 E. Main Street, Norwalk until the historic Norwalk Theatre at 57 E. Main Street can be re-opened. This pathway (programming) will eventually "live" at the theatre once completed, but for now we are bringing arts alive using the resources available at this time.

Our second pathway will be the restored, historic Norwalk Theatre! This beautiful venue, once restored, will be the host to not only the NAC programming element, but it will be the avenue to

many, many other forms of the arts and cultural events for this community. The mission of NAC will be enhanced and the impact of the restored theatre will become an anchor for this community, as well as surrounding communities. There will be a place for the arts, entertainment, movies, conferences, dance and so much more to experience! The impact on economic development, culture and diversity will be magnificent!

So, you see, even though we are one organization, we have two very specific paths we are developing to enrich our mission statement.



Great Changes Are Coming! Be a Part of the Change!

For the past five years, Dina Lukasko has served as the President and Fundraising Chairperson for the Norwalk Arts Center, while also serving the buyers and sellers of Erie & Huron County with their real estate needs. However, on October 1, 2024, her roles switched. With the amazing news NAC received over the summer of being allocated \$3,000,000 in state funding for the restoration of the historic Norwalk Theatre, the NAC Board of Directors unanimously decided it was time to hire a full time Executive Director. The decision to hire Dina was very logical in that she had already been doing the job as Executive Director, but as a volunteer. With the upcoming planning, research, and commitment needed to keep the restoration on track, this position is vital. We are excited to have this change in the organization, as it will bring quicker results to a very important project!

The project is of course the restoration of the 1941 Norwalk Theatre. The State of Ohio recognizes the importance of preserving historical buildings and the economic impact the theatre will create for the Huron County community. Now is the time for **YOU** to get involved and be part of the change to this restoration! The \$3,000,000 awarded by the State of Ohio is a phenomenal amount of money compared to the average appropriation amount given to other community projects. However, that will not bring us close to what is needed to completely restore the building for opening night. The Building Committee members are working diligently with the architects to deliver a beautiful, functional, and completely updated facility, all the while retaining the 1941 Art Deco style attributes. Your contribution to this year's 2024-2025 Annual Appeal will help immensely to offset the costs associated with the restoration. Please consider donating to this very important project. Be part of the change!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
DONATE TODAY.

If you have any questions about the restoration project or donating, please don't hesitate to call or email Dina at (419) 681-3091 or email Execdir@norwalkartscenter.org.

NAC Offers Live Theatre for All in 2025

Norwalk Arts Center is proud to present the 2025 Season!! We have a great lineup and we are very excited for this show stopping season!!

NAC Teen Theatre: *Back to the 80's*

Open to individuals aged 13-19

Auditions: March

Shows: June 6th-8th, 2025

From the era that brought the world the Rubik's Cube, Max Headroom and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles comes the "totally awesome" musical *Back to the 80's*. In the style of movies such as *Back to the Future*, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* and *The Karate Kid*, *Back to the 80's* is a nostalgic romp through the greatest hits of the decade. With copious amounts of blue eyeshadow, twenty cans of hairspray, as well as some of the most popular songs ever written, this is a show that you will NOT want to miss!



NAC Adult Theatre (NACtors): *Guys & Dolls*

Open to individuals aged 18+

Auditions: May

Shows: August 1st-3rd, 2025

Guys and Dolls is a musical set in New York City, centered around gamblers and their romantic entanglements. *Guys and Dolls* is an oddball romantic comedy. As the plot unfolds, love, friendship, and the clash of lifestyles leads to unexpected twists and heartfelt moments, all wrapped in catchy songs such as "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat" and "A Bushel and A Peck", *Guys and Dolls* will certainly be a crowd pleaser and a fun addition to this exciting lineup!

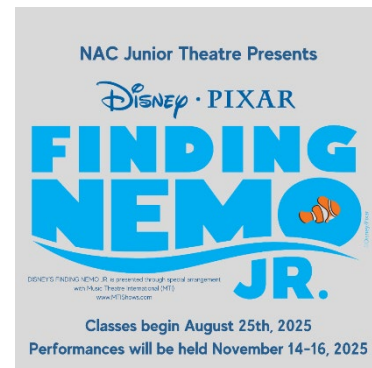
NAC Junior Theatre: *Finding Nemo JR.*

Open for individuals in 2nd-8th grade.

Classes Begin: August 25th, 2025.

Shows: November 14th-16th, 2025

Disney's *Finding Nemo JR.* is a musical adaptation of the beloved 2003 Pixar movie *Finding Nemo*. Featuring memorable songs such as "Just Keep Swimming," "Fish Are Friends Not Food," and "Go With the Flow," *Finding Nemo JR.* brings a vibrant underwater world to life on stage in a story full of family, friendship, and adventure.



Interested in sponsoring a 2025 show or 2025 season?

Please email info@norwalkartscenter.org for more information!

New Website Rollout

Norwalk Arts Center has grown exponentially since its inception in 2018. Part of that growth includes an upgrade in our digital footprint as an organization. We are happy to announce we have had our website overhauled. With the assistance of Effective Web, we hope our new website will be more user-friendly, showcase our many facets and provide more security for our patrons. In addition, we have moved to a private email platform.

Our new general email is info@norwalkartscenter.org. To reach specific team members, please refer to the board listing on the back of this mailer.



View our new site: NorwalkArtsCenter.org

Save the Dates:

AIM: Art pop-ups @ Sheri's Coffee House (5th-8th grade): 2nd Friday of each month during the school year, 3:15-4:00 pm

Light Up Norwalk: Nov 30th, 3-7pm free family make and take at 22 E Main St, Norwalk

NAC Junior Theatre: *Seussical JR* performances Nov 15-17 at 22 E Main St.

Arts Explorers: Friday, Dec 6, 6-9pm grades 1 through 4

Jaycees Christmas Spectacular: NACTA Teens Caroling Friday Dec 6, 7:30-9 pm at Huron County Fairgrounds

Visit our webpage for more information about all of our programs and to register! NorwalkArtsCenter.org

It is the mission of Norwalk Arts Center to celebrate and increase advocacy for the Arts in North Central Ohio by providing education, experiences and environment for artistic growth.

Thank you to our generous continuous



CONGRATULATIONS!

The dedicated volunteers of the NAC Arts Education Committee were awarded the Ohio Art Education Association 2024 Distinguished Service Award for the North Central Region. The committee is chaired by Tiina Ruffing, and members include Ashleigh Couch, Leslie Kline, Cassie Shella, Brooke Gfell, Mary Lisa Boose, Cassie Shella, Theresa Barcus and Vanessa Cook. They provide art education sessions for children, tweens, teens and adults in the Huron County Region.



Creating Art. Building Community.

Norwalk Arts Center

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Instagram



Return Service Requested

NORWALK ARTS CENTER

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