

# Preservation fund awards grant for Orpheum Theater

## Money to be used to hire consultant

The Orpheum Performing Arts Centre Ltd. has been awarded a \$2,500 grant from the National Trust's Preservation Services Fund to hire a consultant to prepare an architectural plan for the Orpheum Theater.

The grant was possible through a special appropriation. Barbara Pahl, director of the Mountains/Plains Regional Office of the fund, said such funding often helps provide critical seed grants to nonprofit groups and local gov-

ernments and can be the deciding factor on whether historic buildings or sites are saved for future generations.

For several decades, the Orpheum was the pride of Wichita's theaters. When it opened Labor Day weekend in 1922, it was considered a city within a city. The seven-story building featured several shops and businesses, including doctors, lawyers and barbers.

There currently are businesses in the Orpheum building; however, the theater portion remains vacant, awaiting restoration.

— Beccy Tanner