



WCTEL's gift advances MACK rehabilitation efforts

Nov. 3, 2022

McCormick, SC -- The McCormick Arts Council at the Keturah (MACK) rehabilitation initiative received a boost on Wednesday, Nov. 2, as representatives from West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative (WCTEL) presented a \$32,500 donation toward the project advancement.

"The MACK's contribution to this community cannot be measured," said WCTEL Board President Wes McAllister. "A vibrant community is one that invests in arts, culture, recreation, outdoor beautification, and its people. This initiative is an example of giving to a project that will give back to the community multiple times over."

"We wish to thank WCTEL for being a leader in supporting our efforts to advance arts and culture in McCormick," shared Janice Grizzard, Executive Director for the MACK. "We are deeply grateful to the entire WCTEL team for this opportunity. This donation will help the MACK invest in essential life safety systems, necessary for our organization to resume serving our communities."

"To see the historic Keturah hotel reimagined with updates that both preserve its history and ensure its service to the community for years to come is truly exciting," says Talmadge (Tag) Bussey, WCTEL board member. "This project invests in our people, our community and our history. WCTEL is pleased to play a small effort in this worthwhile initiative."

The MACK was established in 1984 and opened its doors at the historic site early the following year. The site was listed in the National Register on December 12, 1985.

"The investment in the historic site, our cultural organization, and the surrounding public park have all been identified as action steps for our community's investment," says MACK Director of Programs and Development Heather McNally. "As the cultural center and community stakeholder for McCormick County, the McCormick Arts Council and the historic Keturah Hotel are identified in major components of the McCormick County Economic Development plan. Collectively, we are participants within a larger preservation plan to include product development, public outreach, communication, quality of life, and downtown initiatives."

The project seeks to modernize the building in a historically sensitive way through the installation of new systems and utilities while increasing ADA accessibility for patrons. Current investment in the arts center also includes increased galleries, larger classrooms, a new reception room and highly flexible spaces.

Next steps will include investment in a commercial kitchen, a code required stairwell and elevator, improve maintenance and event areas and feature a youth center and young adult studio. McNally says these priorities will provide a safe, accessible and fully functioning arts center for generations to enjoy. All investments will allow the MACK to enhance its cultural purpose in the community.

Project scope:

- Enhance ADA accessibility to all areas of the building and site
- Update utility services and repair deficiencies to building for longevity
- Approach renovations in a historically sensitive way
- Create flexible and multi-use program spaces for a variety of arts-related endeavors

WCTEL's donation in particular will advance the essential fire safety systems for the building. The MACK is still actively raising funds for the initiative, and is currently seeking municipal support for this project. "We are prioritizing the critical needs of the building and are currently on track to deliver Phase I goals by mid 2023. Efforts have begun to advance our next needs. Phase II will ensure access to all stories, provide functional program space all while taking great care to cherish the historic character of the Keturah building. The community and surrounding area have been incredibly supportive and we welcome others to join our cause," McNally says.

To donate to the MACK, go to mccormickarts.org/donate or contact McNally at mccormickarts@gmail.com or (864) 602-0331.

About MACK

The McCormick Arts Council at the Keturah (MACK) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that operates from the Historic Keturah Hotel and serves the extended community of McCormick, South Carolina. The MACK was established on December 6, 1984, and opened its doors to provide quality programming to the public in 1985.

The purpose of the MACK is to advance the arts in our communities. The MACK exists to serve as the visionary leader for the arts in our communities, stimulate and promote the arts, increase access to the arts and produce arts programming for the benefit of community members. In addition, the MACK actively participates in local economic and tourism development including the stewardship of the historic Keturah Hotel. To find out more about the MACK, visit www.mccormickarts.org.

About WCTEL

West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (WCTEL) was formed in 1952. Since its beginning, WCTEL has not only met its primary goal of providing basic telephone service to the rural areas of Abbeville and McCormick counties and the Starr and Iva areas of Anderson County, but has also been able to provide the enhanced services others have come to expect in metropolitan areas of the United States. As new services were being developed, WCTEL renewed its commitment to giving customers access to the latest in advanced technologies, including overbuilding its network with fiber to stay ahead of the demand for more bandwidth and advanced communications. To find out more about WCTEL, visit www.wctel.com.