

Modern Woodmen group donates to Little Hall



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SILVERHILL, Alabama -- Modern Woodmen presented a check during Monday's Silverhill Town Council work session to the Save the Little Hall Committee as part of the group's efforts to save the more than 90-year-old structure.

Charles Koen and Sharon Kostelecky with Modern Woodmen presented a \$5,000 check to the Committee at Monday's meeting, which included a \$2,500 match to funds raised by the Committee during the Silverhill Car Show in May.

A second work day has been scheduled for Saturday, July 21 at the Little Hall with work once again scheduled to begin around 8 a.m., said Frankie Kucera, chairman of the Save the Little Hall Committee.

In April, just over a year after it was damaged when a tornado ripped through the area, the Little Bohemian Hall was moved and set on its new foundation, approximately 200 feet from where the more than 90-year-old structure sat for the better part of three decades.

The journey to save Little Hall began in March of 2011, when the building sustained extensive damage during a tornado. Two months later the Silverhill Town Council voted to proceed with plans to demolish the structure and build a new Community Center, which will be located in the southwest corner of the park.

Following the vote, several concerned residents came forward asking to save the structure, and another three months of discussions later, in August of last year, plans proceeded to save the Little Hall and move it to a new location.

Another six months of discussions followed, trying to decide what to do with the structure, where it could be moved and how to move it. Then, on Feb. 13, a proposal was presented to the Council at a specially called meeting to move the structure closer to the corner of Third Avenue and Fourth Street near the town's water tower.

After receiving no objection from the Havel family, who donated the land for the park and approved the usage of the land when the structure was moved in the 1970s, and confirming with the town's insurance company that, as long as they give the building a new address, it can stay at the park, the Town Council voted at its regular meeting March 5 to move the structure to its new home at the corner of Third Avenue and Fourth Street, mere feet from where the structure has been for more than 30 years.

Three weeks later, after receiving approval from the town's Planning Commission and following the proper procedures to facilitate the move, employees with the Town of Silverhill and Fauver's Movers out of Semmes worked together to right, turn and move the structure from facing east toward Second Street to facing north toward Fourth Avenue.

This year's Car Show raised well over \$8,000, which will go toward repairs for the structure, Kucera said. Monday's matching donation from Modern Woodman was a result of funds raised in conjunction with the car show, including a bake sale and raffle which was donated for the fundraising effort.

Once completed, the building will serve as more than just a meeting place, Kucera said. It will also serve as a museum of sorts, showing the history of the town and specifically its Czech and other heritage which has so long been a part of the identity of the town.

For more information on how you can donate to the Save the Little Hall Committee, contact Kucera at 251-945-550