



Dennis Magruder - *Music and Fine Arts*

Dennis Magruder has rightfully earned the title of Wheeling's "Mr. Entertainment." As executive director of the Greater Wheeling Sports and Entertainment Authority, Magruder supervises venues that have brought to eager audiences an astounding array of singers, musicians, comedians, sports figures, and children's entertainers.

Magruder, executive director of the WesBanco Arena and Capitol Theatre in Wheeling, presides over an arena that seats 7,800 people and is home to the Wheeling Nailers of the East Coast Hockey League. The Capitol seats 2,460 people and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. During his watch, the city of Wheeling has played host to scores of well-known entertainers and is home to an eclectic array of high school, college, and professional sports, all at a venue that also serves as a meeting place for dozens of community-based activities, from high school and college commencements to weekly meetings of Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions and Civitans.

The executive director received a degree in Accounting/Business Administration from West Liberty State College. He then served in many financial capacities with the city of Wheeling, including utility rate analyst, budget director, and Urban Renewal treasurer. He then joined the Certified Public Accounting firm of Jack J. Ferlise Company, specializing in field audits and governmental accounting. In 1978, he was appointed business manager/comptroller of the Marshall County School District with more than 10,000 students. While with the school system, he was active with his professional association, the Association of School Business Officials. In 1984, he was the West Virginia State President of ASBO and served on the National Accounting Committee for School Finance from 1983-86.

In April 1986, Magruder assumed his position with the arena, and the rest is history for audiences throughout the tri-state area. Along with the ambitious list of activities he oversees at the arena, Magruder became involved immediately with an international organization that also helped to place Wheeling at the forefront of venues in the United States. He joined the International Association of Assembly Managers, now known as the International Association of Venue Managers. Magruder has been an avid, productive, and consistent volunteer throughout the IAVM's committee structure. He is a past chairman of the board of regents and served on numerous IAVM committees. He has served on the IAVM board of directors and its executive committee.

Significantly, Magruder was a member of the first graduating class (1988) of the Public Assembly Facility Management School at Oglebay Resort and Conference Center. Since that time, he has served as a faculty member and/or as regent of the school. The school was initiated in 1987 through a grant by the IAVM Foundation. In addition, Magruder has lectured at a one-week seminar, called the Ice Arena Institute of Management, at the Oglebay school.

Magruder's initial efforts nearly 20 years ago to entice a professional hockey team to locate in Wheeling resulted in the birth of the Wheeling Thunderbirds, now the Nailers. He understands the Wheeling area's deep involvement in high school sports, and his partnerships with the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference and other athletic groups have added immeasurably to WesBanco Arena's place in the world of sports.

His role recently expanded to encompass the Capitol Theatre, including the renovations to the theater as well as to the Capitol Ballroom. It is clear that his leadership is helping to pave the way for resurgence at the Capitol Theatre, a venue many people believe is the jewel in the renaissance planned for downtown Wheeling. Magruder also serves as the treasurer of the board of the Wheeling Convention and Visitors Bureau.

He has been married to his wife, Barb, since 1967, and they have three children and seven grandchildren. Coincidentally, as the Wheeling Hall of Fame is conducting its installation banquet at WesBanco Arena on April 16, 2011, Dennis Magruder is celebrating his 25th anniversary as its' executive director.