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By: Phillip Ramati

Music Hall of Fame to reopen on Sundays and Mondays

Starting Sunday, the Georgia Music Hall of Fame will reopen its doors to a seven-days-a-week schedule. Museum director Lisa Love said Monday that cost savings by closing the hall on Sundays and Mondays were minimal, and that increased traffic should make up the difference.

“The costs (of opening for a full week) are minimal, but the benefits are huge,” Love said. “Not only is it a revenue generator, but it also serves the public and promotes access. The cost in savings was minimal, and there was no significant savings (shutting down two days) because energy costs have risen.”

Officials began closing the museum on Sundays and Mondays in July 2009 after the state cut the hall’s budget. The Georgia Sports Hall of Fame also shut down on those two days, but officials there haven’t said whether it will reopen for a full weekly schedule.

The music hall of fame will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

Love said people wanting to visit the museum were frustrated when it was closed, especially on Sundays, when there are few things open in downtown Macon. The museum did open on a few Sundays and Mondays when tour groups made special arrangements.

“There were many times we had to turn away fans because the museum was closed,” she said. “I’m thrilled to be open again seven days a week. ... Especially with our group tours, it’s important to accommodate them. I just like being open every day.”

Franklin Brown of Macon stopped by the museum Monday when Love happened to be there. He and a family member wanted to buy some items from the museum’s gift shop but didn’t realize the museum is usually closed on Mondays.

“(People) need to visit one or two times or more,” Brown said. “I’ve only been once, but I’m coming back again.”

Brown said he’s heard rumors of officials in Atlanta trying to get the hall of fame moved there, and he is adamantly opposed to that.

“This place don’t need to go nowhere, especially Atlanta,” he said. “Atlanta gets everything already. We need to keep something here. We don’t need either (hall of fame) to go to Atlanta.”

The state has directed both museums to send out requests for proposals to municipalities and counties all across Georgia to get bids for the museums. The deadline for the proposals is Sept. 30.

Meanwhile, the music hall will be hosting an exhibit of paintings by Macon-reared artist Steve Penley from Sept. 10 to July 9, 2011. There will be a preview party with Penley in attendance at the museum Sept. 9 from 7-9 p.m. The cost is \$25 for the general public, \$10 for members at solo, duet and band levels, and free for members at friend, patron and benefactor levels. For more information, call the museum at (478) 751-3334.

To contact writer Phillip Ramati, call 744-4334.