CENTENNIALANNIVERSARY

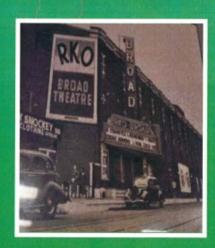
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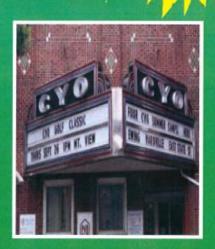
Construction Of This Building





920 South Broad Street





1920-2020

Centennial Anniversary of 920 S. Broad St.

Opening in 1920, Trenton's second largest movie house, the RKO Broad Theater, has always been a focal point for this section of the capital city. Originally providing a stage for vaudeville acts, the theatre would evolve to screening moving pictures.

In 1962, the Diocese of Trenton purchased the theater, an idea of Rev. Leonard Toomey, in hopes of converting it to a recreation hall.

Throughout the years, it would continue to feature memorable entertainment such as ECW and NWA wrestling matches with visits from Sgt. Slaughter as well as semi-pro basketball games.

Now at 100 years old, the building has never seen more activity than it does today by serving as a home to a Pre-School, After-School Program, and Summer Camp. With a focus on childcare, the building has never been more important to the community.

We have put together this virtual open house to allow you to get a better understanding of the history of this building that we love so much. Be sure to take the time to read the occasional articles that follow as they contain additional details of stories you may have heard.

And now, on with the show!



The South Broad Street Theatre

The New Amusement Palace for the People of the Old Borough Is Daily Taking Shape.

The South Broad Will Provide the Best of Entertainment at the Smallest Fee for the Largest Centre of People in the City.

Watch It Grow

The Biggest Theatre In Trenton

36% On Your Investment WHEN YOU PUT YOUR MONEY IN FIRST MORTGAGE BONDS OF THE SOUth Broad St. Theatre BOUTH BROAD RELOW BEATTY These Bonds Pay: Interest on \$100 Bond - - \$6 Free admission per year to the value of - \$30 (as long as you hold the bond) Total - - - - - - - \$36

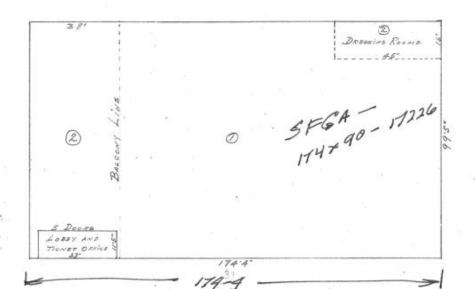
SIZE 175 x 100

STREET 920-922 3. Broad St.

OWNER Trenton Theatre Bldg. Co. **PAGE 167**

LOT 96 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

92



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52		21000	90500	111500
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THEATRE TO SEAT 2,100 PEOPLE PLANNED FOR SOUTH BROAD; ADDISON TRUST PROMOTERS

The SOUTH BROAD Theatre

Broad Street Balow Bootty

Will Be the Largest and Most Up-to-Date Amusewest House in Treaton When Completed Next Spring.

The Stage Alone Will Cost \$75,000, and With Its Equipment, Unrivaled in the State, Will Permit the Presentation of

BIG SPECTACULAR ACTS

The Best of Vaudaville and the Biggust Notion Picture Features in a Magnificance of Manner Unknown in Treaton. With the Accompanisment of Recitals by a Woodswini

\$25,000 Organ

NEW THEATRE WILL HAVE MANY EXITS

Proposed South Broad Street

" Playhouse Eliminates Dan-

ger from Panic





As Cool as an Autumn Breeze

AT RKO THEATRES



NOW

Dancing, Singing, Swinging



with
George Murphy
Binnie Barnes
Buddy Ebsen
Sophie Tucker
Judy Garland
Robert Benchley
Willie Howard
Charley Grapewin

AUG. 27-BOBBY BREEN 'MAKE A WISH'



NOW thru Mon.

FRED MACMURRAY
FRANCES FARMER
CHARLIE RUGGIES





Tues .- Joe E. Brown's rib wrencher 'Riding on Air'

TRENT

NOW-MON.

JACK OAKIE, CARY GRANT, EDWARD ARNOLD, FRANCES FARMER in 'THE TOAST of NEW YORK'

STATE

-Now-

in 2-gun, 2-fisted action picture "WINDJAMMER" & tense 'Valley of Wanted Men'-Frankie Darro

BROAD

TODAY

Jack Oakie, Ann Sothern in mirthquake thriller 'Super Sleuth' Eric Linden, Cecilia Parker 'Sweetheart of the Navy' Mat. 'Painted Stallion'

Sun., Mon.—Richard Cromwell, Slim Summerville, Andy Devine, Louise Fazenda, Barbara Read, John King in tense 'The Road Back'

8/1937

SOUTH BROAD

ST. THEATRE

5. Broad, Near Beatty Trenton's Finest Playhouse

- MATINEE TODAY --

Under Crimson Skies

with

EIMO LINCOLN Comedies, Pathe News

Starring Carmel Myers

The enty picture house with an orchestra PRICES 10c, 20c, 30c.

TRENTON THEATRES (With Seating Capacity)

	TRENTON THEATR	RES (With Seating Capacity)
Name of Theatre	No. of Seats	Street Address
American	345	667 Princeton Ave.
Bijou	901	1807 S. Clinton Ave.
Broad	2159	950 S. Broad St.
Capitol	1977	18 S. Broad St.
Center Street	744	422 Center Street
City Square	650	Anderson & Washington Sts.
Gaiety	1200	S. Olden Ave. & Walnut
Garden	376	150 N. Broad St.
Greenwood	744	Greenwood & Cuyler Aves.
Lincoln	2360	N. Warren & Hanover Sts.
Orpheum	768	127 E. State St.
Palace	1318	179 S. Broad St.
Princess	676	483 N. Clinton Ave.
Rialto	660	13 Pennington Ave.
Stacy	819	142 E. State St.
Strand	734	N. Hermitage & Edgewood
Thropp	1672	211 E. State St.
Trent	1033	17 N. Warren St.
Victory	700	736 S. Broad St.





RKO THEATRE

Trenton, New Jersey LINCOLN, CAPITOL, STATE, BROAD, PALACE and TRENT

Good clean amusement is a necessary requisite of every day American life...

ALWAYS HAS AND ALWAYS WILL BE!

















Lively time in front of Broad Theater in 1941 as Junior 4 students celebrated

Broad Closes Doors As Theater

Sale Or Lease Last Billing As Colorful History Ends

A spectacular wedding, 2,200 edal - operated trash baskets. ve horses, 300 WACs, boxing and junior high school marching No, this strange collection isn't

mething dreamed up by P. T. arnum. They're all a part of the story of the RKO Broad Thear on South Broad Street near

eatty. The occasion for recalling them the recent removal of all proctors, seats and scenery from

renton's second largest movie ouse. The days of the double feaare and free dishes are no more. The owners of the building, the

renten Theater Building Comany, have put it on the block, ith one condition - the new ownr or the person who leases it nust agree not to use it for thea-

rical purposes. For many, the final passing of le Broad as a movie theater is ke the passing of an old friend. Built in 1919 by William J. Ver-

on and W. Henry Elfreth, the neater was operated by them un-1 1924. In 1924, however, it was

laced in receivership following long legal battle in which Veron and Elfreth were charged

rith mismanagement. In the same year, a lease was ranted to George B. Ten Eyck y Richard Stockton III of Princeon, who was acting as receiver. 'he theater was renamed "Ten

Eyck's Broad."

The Broad changed hands again n 1928 when Frank V. Storrs of Yew York, majority stockholder f the Trenton Theater Building Company, bought the building rom Stockton. The building is

till owned by that company. Reflections By Conklin James Conklin, manager of the Broad from 1930 to 1944 and again from 1950 to 1951 before becoming manager of the Lincoln in 1955, recalled some of the high points in the theater's

nistory.

lot of people were out of work, you know, and for many of them the only thing they had to look forward to for a little entertainment was an occasional movie.

Bargain Price

"Back in the 30s," he said,

"we were always coming up

with some kind of gimmick. A

. "Well, during the depression the downtown theaters were getting 40 cents for a show. We charged a quarter and did a booming business."

Referring to the 2,200 pedaloperated trash baskets, Conklin explained that they followed the old giveaway standard—dishes.

"We made people come to three shows in orde to get crack at those cans," he said the city commissioners com-

still using some of the things And of those who saw them, we gave out at the Broad."

Another stunt that Conklin en Gloves fights? used to boost attendance was a "When we started the bouts,"

stunt. Everything turned out all said. right, though, with some 2,000 With the coming of World see the ceremony.

brought his whole troupe on the Broad and glamour was stage and at least one lucky added to the opening by the boy won himself a pony.

School Anniversary One of the biggest events in

the theater's history was the parade held to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the opening of Junior High School 4. Hundreds of people turned out to watch the high school band perform and listen to speeches by

"I bet many homes here are memorating the event.

who could ever forget the Gold-

wedding on the theater stage. Conklin said, "the audience was The idea almost backfired, almost all men. But when the however, when Conklin, in an women heard that it was just attempt to stir up interest in the like going out to see a show,

event, sent an unsigned letter the whole thing changed. After to the newspapers criticizing the first few fights half our the whole thing as a publicity audience were women, he

people jamming the theater to War II, the Army came to Broad and Beatty Street - the Horses got into the act to women's army that is. A redraw the kiddies. Carney Rose cruiting booth was set up at

> presence of 300 WACs. The war effort also got a big boost in 1943 when the theater offered a free two-hour motion picture show to youngsters who brought in wranned waste fats.

One boy, Conklin said, almost got into trouble when two cops heard him admit he "lifted" a pound of butter from home and dropped it in with the rest of the fats "for the cause." On May 17, 1960 the theater

was officially closed. The last two movies to be shown were "Heller in Pink Tights" and "This Rebel Breed."



RKO Broad Still Serves The Community

by Frank Richardson

On South Broad Street near Beatty, a large 61-year-old building currently houses a cultural and athletic center for the Catholic Youth Organization. The familiar yellow school buses appear frequently in front of the entrance on weekdays after 3 p.m. But if one looks on the north side of the building, the painted bricks, which have faded over the past two decades, read "RKO Broad Theater."

Broad Theater."
The spacious Broad Theater, seating over 2,000, largest in the city when constructed by William Vernon and W. Henry Elfreth in 1919, was an integral part of the Chambersburg shopping district for forty years. Purchased by R.K.O., which also operated the

Capitol, Lincoln, Palace, and State in

downton and later the Brunswick and

Hamilton in the neighborhoods, the theater was the scene for Golden Gloves boxing, a wedding, a parade, and other audience attracting events. Theater policy also called for promotional efforts such as prizes, dishes and pedal-operated trash basket giveaways.

In the theater's early years, the Broad featured vaudeville since it had an adequate size stage, orchestra pit, flies, and a high stage loft. The large seating capacity, approximately 1,400 in the orchestra and 600 in the balcony, also made it attractive to the vaudeville circuit.

The depression of the 1930s did not hurt movie business as most people needed the cheap form of entertainment that motion pictures provided.

Admission was only a quarter then compared to the forty cents admission in downtown theaters.

During the patriotic era of World War II, the Broad management aided the Army by permitting a recruiting booth to operate in the building. This was just part of what the operators of the theater did for the war effort. According to Harold Stout of Hamilton Township, children "...were urged to bring milkweed pods which were used in manufacturing parachutes. This way we would get in for nothing." In 1943, a free two-hour show was awarded to youngsters who brought in wrapped waste fats which would be transformed by private industry into soap and glycerine.

"The Broad used to show a popular serial, cartoons, shorts like Joe McDoakes' "Buy Behind the Eight Ball," Movietone News, and the feature film," Stout said smiling while reminiscing about his youth. "I saw many movies there starring Gene Autry, Tom Mix, and Roy Rogers." He added that he "...used to go to Sanders Ice Cream Parlor after the show."

Captain Roy Hasty, of Ladder Company No. 2 at Clinton and Beatty Street, remembers the Broad in a different way. "I used to inspect the Broad for fire violations," Hasty recalled before adding that "...I'd sometimes get free tickets and take the family to the movies."

When R.K.O. decided to shutter the old film house in 1960, its future remained uncertain since the owners wanted its prospective buyer to agree not to reopen the building as a theater. The Broad bowedout with "Heller in Pink Tights" and "This Rebel Breed" on May 17, 1960.

After the seats, scenery, curtains, and projectors were removed in September, 1961, the building was purchased by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Trenton for the Catholic Youth Organization at the insistence of Monsignor Michael J. McCorristin in 1963 for \$65,000. Monsignor Leonard Toomey, director of the CYO for 19 years, supervised the renovation of the theater into a recreation hall.

Monsignor McCorristin, presently the pastor at St. Anthony's Church, said that "the building inspector said it was worth at least \$500 thousand." Referring to the purchase price of \$65,000, he said, "That was a very special price they gave us." Most of the renovation work inside the building was done by volunteers.

The theater was ideal for the sack

The theater was ideal for the goals of the CYO according to Monsignor Toomey of Sacred Heart Parish. "The auditorium is just the right side for regulation high school basketball. The old vaudeville dressing rooms on both sides of the stage were converted into arts and crafts rooms, manual training centers, and locker rooms. The stage was set up for physical training, upstairs for girls and downstairs for boys."

The tiered balcony was leveled and converted into rooms for games, meetings, and recreation. "The lobby is still very much the same except for the small kitchen and snack bar," the monsignor said. "The foyer outside the theater was shortened to make room for offices although the original panel in the ticket booth and the coming attractions sign still exist today."

In reference to the old marquee

which adorns the building he said that "...it is still the original sign put up by the Hutchinson Sign Company." If one looks closely at the marquee, "RKO Broad" is visible under the black coats of paint.

Unlike the many other movie theaters in the city, the Broad, rededicated as the CYO in June, 1964, has found a niche and is still viable to the local parochial schools and the Chambersburg community.



A mason completes work on the entranceway of the new Catholic Youth Organization headquarters in what formerly was the old RKO Broad Theater on S. Broad St. The renovated structure will house three basketball courts, offices and meeting roms.









Now Playing At Old Broad Theater... 'CYO'

Movie House Becomes Youth Center

Times-Advertiser Staff Writer

"CYO" will open soon fo permanent run at the ed

RKO Broad Theater. "CYO" is not a new movie stage show. It is the Catholic Youth Organication of the Trenton Diocese which purchased the old heater on South Broad Street, near Beatty, a year and a half

In that passing time, the New Kitchen sprawling building has been In The Lobby converted inside into what

a full-time Summer program on Monday, June 15.

it has CYO in large letters affixed on either side

The entrance has been shortened and the space side to side are two smaller gained is now two small ofices. They will be used by the Rev. Leonard R. Toomey, diocesan CYO director; Alice Callery, secretary, and Robert Malloy, the new program director. William Weiss and Carl Thiel of the physical de-

partment may use the offices Behind the glass panels, Father Toomey proud-

ly guided a couple of visitors from the basement to the either side of it. very top of the building the other day. Most everywhere he went he remarked about what a relief it was that there were blank and darkened the- come a squash and handball

The lobby has been retained looks like a Frand new cen- but it now contains a big It will be officially dedicat-ed next Saturday afternoon was once a rapp leading to an exit. The two rest rooms also have been retained.

The biggest space, the old The old marquee of the auditorium, is now a vast the door that had once led in-theater is still there, but now gymnasium. It has a three- to the box office of the old way basketball court. The theater. The door doesn't main court is regulation high school size. Crossing it from courts, one for grammar mey's office.

They just left to what of Father Too-widows, and the other for the courts. "biddys" and gids.

Father Toomey explained One of these days, he said, that volunteer workers helped he'll have a "box office" sign remove the old theater seats. He said the old cushions were of no value and were destroyed, but he added that the metal was salvaged and sold for around \$2,000

The old backstage space is now an exercise room, and shower and locker rooms for men and boys, threetly above are similar rooms for women and girls, Similar, that is, except in one very noticable respect. The lower locker and shower rooms are in green tile, but the upper feminine section is done up all in pink.

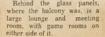
Arts And Crafts Sewing Rooms

Still higher, in what were old vaudeville dressing rooms, are now being constructed arts and crafts and sewing rooms for girls. Above these yet are still more old dressing rooms that have not yet been converted

'We'll wait aid seee what to do with then," said Father Toomey. He also men-tioned that Mrs. Harry E. Farley is in charge of arts and crafts, and Mrs. Charles Smith and Mrs. George Hearny head the stwing department.

What was the balcony is partially separated from the gym with large panes of fibre-glass.

Father Toomty was asked if the glass is tafe from fly-ing basketballs. He said it is unbreakable, but he added, "Of course. I'm not challang-ing any of the boys to try it."



There is some space that hasn't yet been used, but plans are already in mind. For instance, there is space are now windows in a num- up among the old dressing ber of places which once rooms that may one day becourt. And the small basement beneath the lobby may one day be used for a rifle

Having completed the tour. continually pointing out were windows had been cut into en. These are where there the walls of the once dark building, Father Toomey led his visitors back to the lob-

> There he pointed to the lit-tle door that had once led inlead to anywhere now. It just hangs outside the wall of what

They just left it there for the fun of it, he said.

made and hang it on the door that leads to nowhere and



This is the boys' and men's exercise room located in wht was the backstage area of the RKO Broad Theater. From left are Father Leonard Tooney, diocesan CYO director, Wilfiam Weiss of the physical department and Robert Maby, program director,



Robert Malloy, CYO program director, tries out one of the power saws in the CYO manual

training room.

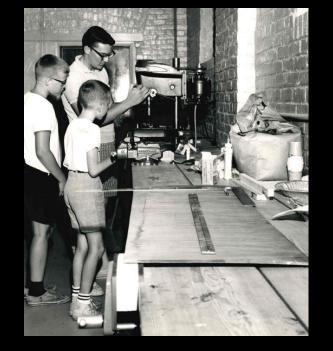
This big neeting room is located in what once was the balcony of the RKO Broad.



led in the area that once was the auditorium of the BU Broad. The balcony of the old This brand new CYO gym is theater was located behind the









HISTORY OF THE MERCER COUNTY CYO

In September 1952, the Catholic Youth Organization of the Diocese of Trenton was established in all eight Counties of the Diocese, under the supervision of Father Leonard R. Toomey, Diocesan CYO Director.

Like its counterparts, the Mercer County CYO functioned in 26 parishes offering a four-fold program of spiritual, athletic, cultural and social activities to boys and girls of both grammar school and high school age, as well as to young adults out of school and working. The latter group was known as CYAC's - Catholic Young Adult Club. With 3,000 youth in these three divisions participating weekly in the CYO program, the Mercer County CYO was one of the largest youth service agencies in the area.

On February 3, 1958, the Mercer County CYO opened its first official headquarters at 1 Centre Street, Trenton adjacent to Sacred Heart Church. The building was well known City-wide as the home of the former Men's Catholic Club and its gymnasium, game activity and meeting rooms became alive again.

The CYO Day Camp began on July 7, 1958, on a 20 acre tract site of the old Springdale Park, on Allentown Road in Yardville, next to St. Vincent DePaul Church; it featured an Olympic size swimming pool, sports, arts and crafts and acres of woods. The Day Camp was an immediate success, with a daily attendance of 300 grammar school age girls and boys in that first Summer of '58 and a daily attendance of 500 in the Summer of '59. The Day Camp still flourishes and now features an Evening Family Swim Club and a weekend picnic spot for private parties.

With an ever increasing number of young people participating, the facility at Centre Street became inadequate. On June 13, 1964, the late Bishop George W. Ahr blessed and opened the present CYO Center at 920 South Broad Street. After 32 years, it is still home to thousands of youth and adults who participate in the variety of programs and activities sponsored by the Mercer County CYO.

Today it's hard to imagine that the building was originally the RKO Broad Theater. After extensive renovations, the auditorium and stage were transformed into a gymnasium featuring a regulation size basketball court and bleachers. The balcony became game and meeting rooms, and the backstage changed into exercise and locker rooms. Second floor backstage dressing rooms reappeared as the arts and crafts area.

No account of the CYO of Mercer County would be complete without acknowledging the assistance and interest of the Diocese of Trenton and the dedication and work of the late Monsignor Michael P. McCorristin. Monsignor, with a group of volunteers, undertook the renovations at 1 Centre Street and 920 South Broad Street, as well as building the swimming pool and facilities at the Day Camp.

Likewise, the CYO will always be grateful to the legions of men and women, priests and religious who in the past as well as in the present, so generously volunteer their time and talents serving the youth of CYO in its 44 year history (the 35th anniversary acknowledges the official incorporation of the organization) here in Mercer County and throughout the Diocese of Trenton. Last but far from least is Miss Alice V. Calley, long time secretary in the CYO Office. For her it was not a job, but a labor of love.

Written by Monsignor Leonard R. Toomey - August 1996



















Championship WRESTLING

CYO Building So. Broad St., Trenton

Wed. May 1 8 pm

National Title Match Ron Garvin vs. Tully Blanchard with Baby Doll tag team maich Ole & Arne Anderson

Raging Bull Manny Fernandez Thunderbolt Patterson

Pistol Pez Whatley vs. Bob Roop Krusher Kruschev vs. Buzz Tyler Stony Burke vs. **Hollywood Johnny Tatum** Denny Brown vs. RPM-LP tickets \$9 & \$7

available at CYO. Pep's Steak House, and Antinora's Pizza

May 1,1985 - Trenton, New Jersey

E.C.W. Pro Wrestling

is back! Saturday May 3 8:00 PM

At the C.Y.O. Building on Broad Street

Tickets: \$25 Front & 2nd Row \$20 Ring Side \$15 General Admission

For More Info. Or Advanced Sales Call: NJ: 609-396-1019 PA: 215-579-2399 Trenton C.Y.O.: 609-396-8100 Doors Open At 6:30 PM

- main Event -LARRY ZBYSKO VS. PAT PATTERSON TAG-TRAM TITLE MATCH THE SAMOANS VS. RICK MEGRAW DOM DE NUCCI OTOR KAMATA & ELOLYMPICO · LARRY SHARPE" IS AMBELO GOMEZ DAVE O'HANNON W. MANUEL SOTO Magram Subject to



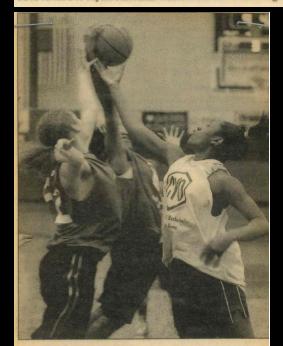
Hoops players hold court at CYO All Star games



Andrew Kusnirik, left, presents the CYO Boys All Star Game MVP Award to Myles Mitchell-White from Lawrence High.



Steinert High School senior Morgan Comfort, left, receives the Renee Keister Award from Renee Keister.



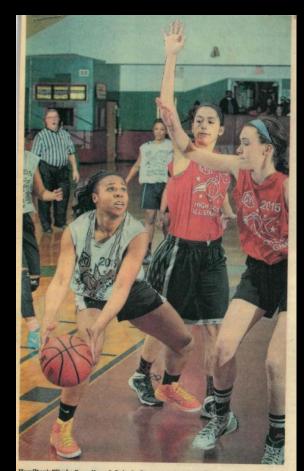
Lawrence's Amirah Brown, right, battles for a rebound against Peddie's Madison Skerrit, left, during Friday's CYC All Stars game.



Samantha Widmann from Notre Dame puts up a shot at the CYO of Mercer County's 17th Annual High School Basketball All-Star Game .

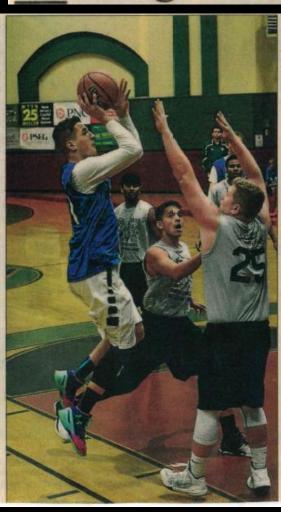


GREGG SLABOOA - TRENTOMAN PHOT Brianna Dorner from Steinert drives to the basket during the CYO of Marcer County 17th Annual High School Basketball All-Star Game on Saturday.



Hamilton's Elischa Dessalines, left, looks for room to put the ball up from under Hightstown's Jessica Marcus, right, and Allentown's Christa Labers during the CYO Girls All-Star Game at the Trenton CYO on Sunday. (TONY KURGZUS/TIMES OF TRENTON)

All-Stars rack up points during annual CYO showcase















CYO MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Although the CYO has evolved over time, it's mission has not changed, according to Tom Mladenetz, CYO executive director. Times of Trenton file photo

Decades of service: For 67 years, the organization has made a lasting impression







With the new bus are, back row from left, John Soss, CYO Broad Street center program director; Nancy Podeszwa, CYO grant proposal writer, and Tom Mladenetz, CYO executive director. Courtesy Ptoto

TRENTON

Donors keep wheels turning at CYO of Mercer









'THANKS, BOOMER!' .

Children at the CYO Mercer's Broad Street Center got a special visit from Trenton Thunder representatives, who gifted the center with a \$2,500 grant. In back row, from left, are Jeff Hurley, Thunder general manager; CYO executive director Tom Mladenetz, with mascot Boomer: Thunder community affairs director Vince Marcucci; CYO grant proposal writer Nancy Podeszwa; CYO tutoring coordinator Andrea Sirak and CYO tutor Lar Sirak. Courtesy photo

CYO of Mercer receives grant from Trenton Thunder



CYO tutoring program gets boost from TD Bank grant



Educational
Opportunities - Stacey
Romano (back row, at
right), TD Bank market
manager for Mercer
County, and Jacquelyn
R. Sheridan, TD Bank
Trenton store manager,
present a check to Mercer
CYO executive director
Thomas G. Mladenetz.
They are joined by children
from the CYO's summer
recreational/educational
day camp. Courtesy photo

The Moreor County CVO will continue it

Donation to help boost CYO programs

That concludes this trip through the past.

But we hope this is not the end of the story.

If you happen to have any additional pictures, articles, or any other historical content featuring the RKO Broad Theatre or the CYO, please send them along to jsoss@cyomercer.org.

Thank you for taking an interest in this small piece of history. Stay tuned to see what will be playing next at the CYO!