



Enid News
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CITY CHOSE PRIVATE ENTITY WITH LOTS OF EVENT-MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

When the Enid Event Center and Convention Hall opened, there was some controversy about contracting with venue manager Global Spectrum, now Spectra by Comcast Spectacor.

There were concerns about running an upscale facility that would be too pricy and exclusive. Some local restaurateurs were worried about catering restrictions. Others were worried about how long and how much taxpayer support would be needed.

Approaching its third year of operation, the facility is earning a reputation for an impressively wide variety of events. And, if you haven't noticed, the Enid Event Center is bringing top-notch entertainment to town.

There will be a major celebration next weekend. Grammy Award-winning artist Vince Gill will perform Saturday at Enid Event Center, with fellow Grammy winner Lee Ann Womack opening.

Celebrating three years, it's time to re-emphasize the significance of the city selecting a private entity with lots of promotion and event-management experience to run the facilities.

That's increased the quality of Enid's entertainment draws from the Beach Boys, Styx, Pat Benatar and "Weird Al" Yankovic to Willie Nelson, Jamey Johnson, Chris Stapleton and Kenny Rogers.

Keller Taylor, former general manager of Enid Event Center and Convention Hall, put the venue on the map. With Taylor's recent promotion to a position in Colorado, Spectra brought in Kevin Boryczki from Salina, Kan., to oversee booking, day-to-day operations and tap synergies in finance, marketing, sponsorship, food and beverage and promotions from other Spectra Venue Management facilities.

The most significant decision, however, happened almost four years ago when the Enid City Commission evaluated bids and selected a company to operate the renovated Convention Hall and soon-to-open Event Center. Rather than selecting just a building manager, the commission contracted with a company that had the financial incentive and desire to promote events.

That's been a huge advantage, because Spectra is the promoter for the vast majority of bigger-name entertainers and events that we have enjoyed. Spectra, which has existing contracts at venues throughout the country, has a lot of experience in event promotion. As a result, Enid has been able to attract some quality entertainers, often scheduling them between shows in other Midwest locations. Entertainers often prefer playing to a nearly-full 4,000-seat venue in Enid rather than several thousand people scattered around a much bigger arena in a metro setting.

The Enid Event Center, with its varied entertainment offerings, is delivering on the "quality of life" promises of three years ago. Happy anniversary.