The unveiling of the $6 million renovation of Utah State University Eastern’s
Geary Events Center showcased an unbelievably beautiful
theatre, stage, dressing rooms and scene building addition
on Jan. 17.

“It takes my breath away . . . it’s the WOW factor when I
walk in,” said Corey Ewan, associate professor of theatre.

“I know it means more to me because as a student at
CEU [College of Eastern Utah], I was part of every Geary
Theatre production for two years in the early ‘80s. After
being away from it while earning my doctorate, I came
back as a faculty member and the theatre was essentially
the same. The roof still leaked, the seats were worn out
and the sound system was terrible,” Ewan said.

It’s now completely outfitted with LED lights, a cloud-
based-sound system, “silent” padded seats, scene shop,
dressing rooms, storage area, green room, restrooms, roof
and the list goes on and on. Essentially all that remains
of the 1959 Geary Theatre is the skeleton of the building.
Even the plumbing and electrical have been redone.

Aesthetically, The GEC is definitely one of the nicest on
any college campus, Ewan said.

An acoustical engineer designed the sound so that it
reflects the same volume anywhere in the 515-seat
theatre. By using a cloud system dropped from the ceiling, ¼-inch black felt lining the side walls and covered by wood
slats plus a suspended drape system will deaden any
reverberation of sound. The drapes can be raised and
lowered to match the acoustic sound desired.

The roof of the theater was seismically unstable before the
remodel. The entire roof was replaced and connected to
the building reflecting today’s building codes.

Chancellor Joe Peterson cringes at the cost of the remodel
because the first estimates were between $2.5 and $3
million. “It seems like every time the workers started
another section of the building, they would have to
complete a major upgrade of the original building. The
costs kept adding up, but the building we have now is state
of the art.”

He is most excited about the HVAC system in the building.
“The system has to be totally silent, no sound, no noise.
You should be able to hear a pin drop when the system is
running.”