



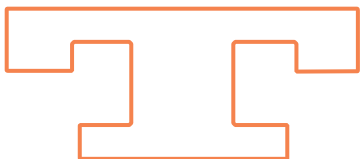
# Box Office 2.0

The Villages Entertainment patrons now will find it easier to purchase tickets online, reach box office staff and change seating at shows. New upgrades launched Monday include enhancements to the website, new equipment, a remote box office call center and other customer service improvements.



George Horsford | Daily Sun

**Marsha Stach, right, a customer entertainment representative with The Villages Entertainment Box Office in Brownwood, helps Charlie Riviello, of the Village of Hillsborough, purchase tickets for a show.**



By **KRISTEN FIORE** | Daily Sun Senior Writer

These days, all it takes to get tickets to a concert, musical or comedy show is a quick phone call, a moment on a smart device or a trip to the box office. Now, The Villages Entertainment is aiming to make the process even easier and more informative. New upgrades launched Monday include enhancements to the website, new equipment, a remote box office call center and other customer service improvements. “We found that the system we were using was becoming more and more problematic and was unable to keep up with all of the expansion we’ve done with entertainment and the opportunities we provide, so we decided to make the change to better serve our residents’ needs,” said

# BOX OFFICE

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Brian Russo, director of entertainment.

The entertainment team started with residents' most requested update: more access to the box office.

A new remote box office call center will expand box office operating hours by an additional 18 hours a week.

Physical box office locations are open 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Spanish Springs, Lake Sumter Landing, Brownwood and Savannah Center, but the remote box office will be open 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and available only by phone. There is a \$3 processing fee per order, regardless of how many tickets are purchased.

The call center can be reached at the same number as all other box office locations, 352-753-3229.

"We're especially excited about this because we are now able to offer three levels of convenience," Russo said. "We have the box office windows, which carry no additional fee; the call center, which is only \$3 per order regardless of the quantity of tickets or ticket price; and the web, which varies based on the price of each ticket."

The other big part of the upgrades includes enhancements to thevillagesentertainment.com, making purchasing



Cindy Skop | Daily Sun

**Box office sales clerk Ginny Fortney, of the Village of Tall Trees, prints tickets for a customer Monday at the box office in Lake Sumter Landing.**

tickets online a more interactive and efficient experience.

Patrons will be able to set up an online account where they can keep their contact information and interests up to date.

From their computer screens, they also will be able to see the view from their seats they purchase at Savannah Center and The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center, just by hovering over the seat diagram with their mouse.

If audience members get to the show and decide they'd like to switch seats, house managers will be equipped with tablets to make the process quicker and easier. The use of tablets in the house will start in a few weeks, according

to Russo.

"Purchasing tickets at the box office will also be a lot faster," Russo said. "Our upgrades significantly enhance our ability to sell tickets quickly, especially when someone is buying multiple performances at one time."

Additionally, the upgrades were designed to accommodate and assist individuals with special needs, according to Yasmeen Stogden, director of ticketing.

Patrons can update their record to reflect a short-term disability, like a surgery, or even make note of special dates, such as anniversaries and birthdays.

"Hospitality is one of the

core values that is very dear to us, and now we have the business means to break through previous limitations," Stogden said.

Russo and Stogden said they hope patrons have an improved experience when they buy tickets.

"We view the process as the first part in the journey of attending a live event that can create memories that will last for years to come, and we want that moment to be as special as possible," Russo said.

Stogden said the team always hopes to elevate customer relations.

"We hope our patrons are able to not only experience, but visibly notice a shift in their

ticketing and entertainment options," she said. "This adventure we are embarking on will help provide memories that will last for years."

And this is only the beginning.

"This project has taken almost a year to complete and virtually countless hours from dozens of individuals," Russo said. "I'm so proud of what we've been able to accomplish. This launch is only phase one. We have lots of plans for the future, so stay tuned!"

*Kristen Fiore is a senior writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5270, or kristen.fiore@thevillagesmedia.com.*

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