



Gary Buysse inside the current Big Store.

By Gayle VanVooren
Mascot Editor

Fundraising and grants have brought in about \$286,000 to the Friends of the Library as they continue to move toward renovation of the old Big Store Building in Minneota into a new library building.

About \$234,000 has already been used.

“We are definitely going to need some more funds,” added Gary Buysse, President of the Friends of the Library. “Probably in the neighborhood of \$300,000.”

“The reason it’s so expensive,” he explained, “is because the building is on the National Historical Register and we have to keep it original.”

So the project that began in 2005 is about half-way home.

Buysse feels that the four years of the renovation of The Big Store has been a “long process” but he also feels that the work being done now will give the community more of a visual as to the work being done.

Buysse is very happy with the support the Big Store renovation has gotten thus far. “The Minnesota Historical Society has given us great grants because they like that we are restoring an old building.” Other money has come through fundraising efforts — with more of those to take place in the future.

Is there an end in sight? Buysse hopes so. As he put it, “The sooner, the better” is when he’d like to see the Minneota Library housed in this new space.

Recently funds from the Lyon County Commissioners, some \$53,334, was “a big plus” as far as Buysse is concerned. “Getting that money sure helps.”