



# Henry County Chorale

**Mission Statement:** The Henry County Chorale is a non-profit adult community mixed chorus that is based out of Napoleon, Ohio since 2010. Our mission is to provide an outlet for those adults who wish to be a member of a choral ensemble. The chorale's additional mission is to entertain and provide scholarships to area graduating high school seniors who are pursuing a degree in musical arts. Repertoire includes lighter numbers such as show tunes, jazz, pop, patriotic and some sacred music. Concerts are presented throughout the year.

I wrote the above mission statement in December 2010, hoping that the initial grouping of individuals would number around twelve. To my joy, we have concluded our first year with almost forty individuals who have joined the chorale for not only the reasons as described in the mission statement, but also joining for the joy of singing and performance, experiencing the self-appreciation of artfully performed music as a result of intense rehearsal, discovering the comradeship of fellow singers, finding a niche shortly after moving to the area, providing a community service to the Henry County area, and simply enough, just having fun.

Why do we value music? In an article entitled *Vision 2020*, edited by C. K. Madsen(2000) and published by the Music Educators Nation Conference, Reimer makes the statement “that to be human is to make meaning and seek meaning. A life full of meaning, including musical meaning, is a life fulfilled in one of its primary needs”. We as human beings often ask ourselves “why were we placed here on earth?” The typical high school student asks that by wanting acceptance by peers, wanting to find his/her niche in the school setting, by wanting to belong to a group. “The best reason to study music is that it gives people a reliable, thorough, and efficient way of becoming expert at creating, communication, and deriving meaning musically in the world of humans (Madsen, 2000).

How do individuals participate in music? Jellison stated that “music teachers across this country every day provide pleasurable, enjoyable creative music experiences for their students. Yet, it appears that many children and adults do not choose to continue many of these music experiences outside of school (Madsen, 2000). Perhaps we need to plan more directly for the future musical lives of students. This can start with the renovation of John L. Johnson auditorium. The mission of the Napoleon Area City School District is to “lead, learn and live in the pursuit of excellence.” The ultimate objective of all standards, all music curriculums, and all

school personnel is to help all students gain the broad skills and knowledge that will enable them to function effectively as adults and to contribute to society in today's world and tomorrows. As the ultimate goal of music education...is to identify those skills and experiences that are important building blocks on which to structure adult music experiences" (Madsen, 2000).

President John F. Kennedy remarks at Amherst College, October 26, 1963, made clear the need for a nation to represent itself not only through its strength but also through its art and as he said, "full recognition of the place of the artist." Two years later, President Lyndon Johnson signed the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, creating The National Endowment for the Arts. Kennedy also stated in his speech, "I look forward to an America which will not be afraid of grace and beauty, which will protect the beauty of our natural environment, which will preserve the great old American houses and squares and parks of our national past, and which will build handsome and balanced cities for our future... I look forward to an America which will reward achievement in the arts as we reward achievement in business or statecraft. I look forward to an America which will steadily raise the standards of artistic accomplishment and which will steadily enlarge cultural opportunities for all of our citizens. And I look forward to an America which commands respect throughout the world not only for its strength but for its civilization as well. And I look forward to a world which will be safe not only for democracy and diversity but also for personal distinction."

As director and founder of the adult community choir, The Henry County Chorale, I fully endorse the renovation and restoration of John L. Johnson auditorium. As a music educator, I see the need for the district and community to not only provide for the numerous extra-curricular sporting activities, but more importantly to provide for the board adopted curriculum-based music education within the district with a performance arena that allows for the culmination of what is taught in the classroom. The first priority of the performance area should be for the arts, music, dance, drama, and not to diminish these disciplines to secondary users of the facility. A gymnasium does not support the classroom pedagogy. An acoustically renovated auditorium not only supports the classroom pedagogy, but also will aid the student in learning proper etiquette and decorum for an artistic performance. It will also be a reflection upon the Napoleon community in general as President Kennedy declared in his speech, to "enlarge cultural opportunities for all of our citizens". The Henry County Chorale would be proud to call the renovated and restored John L. Johnson auditorium, "home."

Sincerely,

Janet Lyne

Director and Founder

Henry County Chorale