



CULTURAL CENTER
OF HENRY COUNTY

Questions for the President

As the Cultural Center of Henry County continues to build momentum this spring, Board President Mark Giannetto shares his perspective on the organization's progress, the vision behind the project, and what the community can look forward to in 2026. This conversation will continue to evolve, with additional questions and responses added in the months ahead.

Question #1: *Is there anything you'd like to say to the community as we look ahead?*

Answer: Yes! I'd like to start by thanking our supporters, volunteers, board members, insight providers, and followers. Things always move forward thanks to all of you.

Question #2: *What's ahead for this year, 2026?*

Answer: This year we have a greater slate of goals, activities, and businesses to grow. We are already planning for our fourth annual Spring ArtsFest held on the front lawn of our campus on Saturday, June 6, 10 AM to 4 PM. This event continues to grow as a gathering point for our community, and we're committed to making this year's festival the best yet.

Question #3: *You've been trying to get this project going for so long. Why keep at it?*

Answer: Because this isn't about a single year - it's about the next generation. Across the state, communities that have reinvested in spaces like this are seeing stronger economies and improved quality of life. When you know something can make that kind of difference, you don't give up easily.

Question #4: *How can I best explain what this project would mean to residents now and in the future?*

Answer: When I talk about this project, I point to both the data and the vision. Independent research shows measurable benefits in regional tourism, economic activity, and quality of life. We've compiled those third-party statistics under Community Benefits on our website. But beyond the numbers, this is about long-term impact — creating something that strengthens our community for years to come.

Question #5: *How could an operation of this scale sustain itself financially?*

Answer: Projects like this are typically supported through a diversified funding model — including private donations, grants, and strategic partnerships. In addition, revenue-generating uses of the space — such as event rentals, including weddings and community gatherings, create an ongoing income stream that supports long-term sustainability. The goal is to not be dependent on one revenue source, but multiple.

Question #6: *What is happening with the legal issues regarding the building?*

Answer: I'd love to have a detailed update on the current legal barriers that we are currently navigating regarding the lawsuit initiated by the Napoleon Area Schools (NAS) against us that is also financially supported by the City of Napoleon. But the reality is we continue to do what's been asked of us as property owners and are hopeful to have a favorable legal outcome shortly that allows us full use of our building.

Question #7: *What kind of shape is the building in?*

Answer: Like any older building, it requires ongoing maintenance, and we have been proactive about addressing needs as they arise.

Question #8: *Why is the city focused on demolition?*

Answer: I can't speak to all of the City of Napoleon's motivations. What I can say is that we remain committed to preserving this building and transforming it into something that serves the wider community. We are hopeful that, in time, all parties can come together around a solution that prioritizes long-term community benefit.

Question #9: *What kinds of activities would happen if the building were to reopen?*

Answer: The vision is multi-use and community driven. Our 700-seat John L. Johnsen (JLJ) Auditorium would host live performances, films, and special events. Classrooms could be used for art instruction, workshops, and community education. The gymnasiums would support team sports and open recreation. In addition, event rentals, including weddings and larger gatherings — would provide space the community currently lacks, while also contributing to long-term financial sustainability.

Question #10: *How can I support this project?*

Answer: Great question. Support comes in many forms. Donations and volunteer efforts help build momentum, and sharing your perspective with community leaders ensures that residents' voices are heard. This is ultimately a community-driven, grass roots effort.