

New Nonprofit Formed to Preserve Historic 1875 One-Room Schoolhouse in Muncie, Indiana



The one room schoolhouse - built in 1875, is one of few remaining one room schoolhouses in the country. Photo provided.





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APRIL 22, 2026

By Colleen Cooper—

MUNCIE, IN — A dedicated group of community members has officially established One Room School House No. 3, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to preserving one of the last remaining brick one-room schoolhouses in the nation and considered a crown jewel of Muncie and Delaware County.

Originally built in 1875, the historic schoolhouse had fallen into complete disrepair before being restored in 1996 by the late Norman Miller and his wife, Hermie. For many years, the restored building served as a living classroom, welcoming local students for immersive field trips that brought history to life.

The Miller family has deep roots in the area, spanning more than 110 years. Norman Miller, a longtime veterinarian in Muncie, Indiana, held a deep personal connection to the schoolhouse, which was located just down the road from where he grew up. Both his father and grandfather attended the school, making its preservation a labor of love.

As Norman aged, he was unable to keep up with the increasing maintenance demands of the historic structure. Eventually, the building again faced deterioration, and the beloved field trip program was discontinued. Despite this, Norman's vision and dream was to see the schoolhouse restored once more and revived as both an educational site and a vibrant community hub.

That vision is now being carried forward by a new generation of stewards. Leading the effort is Board President, Colleen Cooper. She approached the Miller family to explore forming a nonprofit to ensure the long-term preservation of the schoolhouse and a vision of what it could become.

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Colleen, a Cowan High School graduate, developed a connection to the schoolhouse years ago as a fourth-grade student on a field trip, leaving a lasting impression. “I still remember walking into that schoolhouse as a young student and feeling like I had stepped back in time,” said Cooper. “It stayed with me all these years, and I want my children and the entire community to have that same experience. My husband, Garrett, and both of our families all grew up in this area and we are raising our family here. This nonprofit is about preserving history, creating memories and connecting the community in a very special way.”



A view of the interior of the schoolhouse. Photo provided.

With official non-profit status now secured, the organization is launching a fundraising campaign to support critical restoration work, including a new roof, reconstruction of the iconic cupola, structural repairs, and detailed brick and mortar tuckpointing to ensure the building stands for another 150 years.

“We need to raise $52,000 to complete the essential repairs, and we are hoping for early support so we can begin some of the restoration before winter,” Cooper added. “It’s inspiring to see how much this schoolhouse

means to people, and we're confident the community will rally to help us reach our goal." said Cooper.

Once restoration is complete, One Room School House No. 3, Inc. plans to reintroduce educational field trips for local schools while also expanding programming to include community events, programs and cultural gatherings celebrating the heritage of Muncie and Delaware County. Visits to the Schoolhouse are by appointment only.

Board of Directors:
Colleen Cooper, President
Peggy Hazlett, Secretary
Mary Coffman, Treasurer
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If you are interested in having someone speak to your organization or community event about One Room Schoolhouse No. 3 or for more information to make a gift to support the restoration efforts, please email **oneroomschoolhouseno3@gmail.com** or call board president, Colleen Cooper at 765-729-5177.



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