



ERICKA AND BILL CAIN

Sept. 17. By Dave Yochum. The new Cornelius Arts Center planned for downtown Cornelius has a significant naming benefactor: Ericka and William Cain, owners of Financial Independence Group.

The Cornelius residents will contribute \$5 million to the project which will be named the Cain Center for the Arts.

The \$25 million undertaking will be the cultural cornerstone of Cornelius—if not all of Lake Norman—as well as an economic development catalyst for downtown Cornelius.



GREG WESSLING ANNOUNCES \$5 MILLION GIFT

Cornelius-based Financial Independence Group helps market insurance products for brokers all around the country. The business is officed on West Catawba.

Financial Independence Group has been in business four decades and employs about 150 people. Ericka Cain is the company's executive administrator. Bill Cain is CEO.

The gift was announced at the Town Board meeting by Greg Wessling, chairman of the Cornelius Arts Center Board of Directors.

Bill Cain immediately addressed the Town Board by saying "thank you for the honor." There was a standing ovation when the gift was announced.

"We wanted to see Cornelius become not just a good town but a great town," Cain said.

Cain said he and Ericka asked themselves what kind of contribution could they make to help beautify Cornelius.

"When we heard about the [arts center](#) we immediately became interested," Cain said, explaining it will have "a lasting effect and a lot of influence on children and adults."

Mayor Woody Washam said the \$5 million gift was historic. "This is a transformative event. Cornelius will never be the same because of their wonderful generosity," Washam said.

The new center, [which will be built on town-owned property](#) just to the west of the Police Station, is expected to anchor the revitalization and economic redevelopment of downtown Cornelius. Washam said the center will provide quality education, entertainment and social experiences for all ages.

The center will work with the Cains to create a new organizational brand, with plans for unveiling in early November.

The Cains, who moved here from Asheville 20 years ago, have both honored for their community work. Bill Cain received the Businessperson of the Year Award in 2017, while Ericka Cain received a Top Women Lifetime Achievement Award from Business Today last year.

BACKGROUND

In 2013 Cornelius residents approved a \$4 million bond project for downtown redevelopment projects. The need for a community arts center was identified to complement the growing arts district in Old Town Cornelius. The Town has purchased 1.85 acres in downtown Cornelius adjacent to the police station to house the future arts center.

The not-for-profit arts organization will operate the facility as “a place for creativity, learning, entertainment and enjoyment.”

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Discussion

One Response to “Cains make historic donation to Cornelius Arts Center”

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This is outstanding for our Cornelius Community! Thank you Bill and Ericka Cain!

Posted by Gail Williams | [September 18, 2018, 9:10 am](#)

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