

**HEARTHSTONE HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM RECEIVES \$100,000 CONTRIBUTION FROM THE DAVID L. AND RITA E. NELSON FAMILY FUND**

Friends of Hearthstone, Inc., the privately funded, non-profit organization that owns and operates Hearthstone Historic House Museum in Appleton, Wisconsin, has received a donation of \$100,000 from the *David L. and Rita E. Nelson Family Fund* within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, Inc. The donation, which will be made over a three-year period, is being allocated for the exterior restoration of the Henry and Cremora Rogers residence, known as Hearthstone. The top-down restoration, initiated in May, will take place in three stages over the next three summers. The exacting restoration will meet all federal, state and local standards for a historic structure, and is being done by select artisans and contractors who specialize in historic work.

“We want to thank the Nelson Family and the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region for this generous donation,” says Hearthstone Development Director Tom Weiland. “This wonderfully generous contribution helps to ensure that Hearthstone will be standing strong well into the future. We appreciate the David L. and Rita E. Nelson Family Fund and everyone who realizes the significance of preserving important aspects of the history of the Fox Cities, and Hearthstone certainly belongs in that category.”

Hearthstone is one of the last buildings still standing in the United States from the very beginning of the electric age. It is listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The restoration of the exterior of the richly appointed Queen-Anne style (former) residence is the final phase implementing the recommendations of a *Historic Structures Report* completed in August 2010. “While Hearthstone has been exceptionally well maintained, it is apparent that without prompt completion of this vital final phase, both the exterior integrity of the structure and its priceless contents could be in jeopardy,” states Hearthstone Executive Director George Schroeder.

Hearthstone has also received a \$100,000 anonymous donation, as well as smaller individual donations, toward the project. The entire budget of the “Shine Even Brighter” restoration project is \$500,000., and includes the restoration of the chimneys and replacement of the roof, both of which have just been completed. Next year, the project will restore the millwork, soffits, and fascia, and will add a fresh coat of paint to the building's exterior. Finally in 2021, the masonry and all of the original windows will be restored. All major areas of the interior of Hearthstone have previously been restored to their original 1882 condition.

**About The David L. and Rita E. Nelson Family Fund**

An estate gift of more than \$100 million arranged by former media executive David L. Nelson and his wife, Rita, is generating millions of dollars in grants annually to benefit causes important to the couple and their family, primarily in the Fox Cities and Green Bay areas in northeast Wisconsin. The gift is among the largest in Wisconsin's history and large enough to have ranked among the top 20 gifts nationally reported by the Chronicle of Philanthropy in 2017. The Nelson gift established the *David L.*

*and Rita E. Nelson Family Fund* within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, a permanent, donor-advised endowment that will award grants to charitable organizations reflecting the charitable interests of David and Rita Nelson and their family. The bequest is by far the largest gift to the Community Foundation in its 32-year history. The Community Foundation supports an advisory committee comprised of people who know the Nelson family to award grants from the fund. More information can be found at <https://www.cffoxvalley.org/david-l-and-rita-e-nelson-family-fund/>

#### **About Hearthstone Historic House Museum**

Hearthstone Historic House Museum is nationally renowned historic site of international significance as the first residence anywhere in the world to be incandescently lit by a hydroelectric central power station using Edison technology. The house still contains the original Edison electroliers and other original light fixtures, original light switches, and some of the world's only examples of original Edison wiring in situ. Beyond its technological significance, Hearthstone is a truly exceptional example of Queen Anne style residential architecture, and is full of examples of Victorian interior design and visual arts. Hearthstone Historic House Museum is operated by Friends of Hearthstone, Inc., a 501 (c) 3 public charity. Additional information about Hearthstone is available at [www.hearthstonemuseum.org](http://www.hearthstonemuseum.org).

For more information, please contact:

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