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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Madison Children's Museum to Celebrate Grand Opening August 14–15

MADISON, Wis. (July 29, 2010) – Madison Children's Museum will mark 30 years of serving the community by opening the doors of its new Capitol Square location for the first time on Saturday and Sunday, August 14–15, with a spectacular Grand Opening Celebration.

A festive lineup of special events for families will fill the weekend, which also will be an opportunity to celebrate the countless contributions and acts of support from community members, artists, crafters, and volunteers that have made the museum's completion possible and have given the facility a truly Wisconsin feel.

"We're so proud of the local people, products, and processes that have involved the entire community in creation of the new Madison Children's Museum," said Executive Director Ruth Shelly. "When families walk through the door on opening day, they'll be amazed at the transformation of an empty office building into an exciting center for creative play and learning."

Saturday's Schedule of Events

The Grand Opening Celebration will kick off at 9 a.m. Saturday, August 15, with a performance by the Boys & Girls Club Black Star Drumline outside the museum. At 9:15, a volunteer contingent of the UW Marching Band will lead a parade around the museum block, featuring stilt walkers, giant puppets, and opportunities galore for families to carry flags, decorate strollers, and play instruments. Following the parade, all children will be invited to grab a pair of scissors and, together, snip a giant ribbon wrapping the entire building. The doors officially open at 9:30 and will remain open until 5 both Saturday and Sunday.

The celebration will include activities spilling onto the sidewalks and around the block, and the museum's upper parking level will be closed so it can be used for programs. Saturday's festivities also include special workshops and demonstrations throughout the day in the museum's Art Studio, Rooftop Ramble, Tinkerers Workshop, and Community Concourse. Up on the Rooftop Ramble, visitors can water plants, harvest and taste vegetables, float boats in the pond, hold newly hatched chicks, map Madison landmarks, and meet the animal residents.

In addition to these family activities, MCM's outdoor "campus" will offer free programs, including a 10 a.m. performance by Ken Lonquist and the Kenland Band. Local family entertainer Lonquist has been a member of the MCM family from its earliest days. There will be hands-on activities with the Driftless Folk School in the 1838 log cabin, a permanent outdoor exhibit developed in collaboration with three local elementary school classrooms. Volunteers will

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lead drop-in crafts and storytelling programs based on typical family life in 1838 Madison.

9 a.m.: Kickoff Performance by the Boys & Girls Club Black Star Drumline outside the museum
9:15 a.m.: UW Marching Band-led family parade around the museum block
9:30–11 a.m.: Cycropia Aerial Dance in the Community Concourse & Rooftop Ramble
9:30–10 a.m.: Madison Unicyclists in the MCM parking lot
9:30 a.m.–4 p.m.: Letterpress Demonstration in the Art Studio
10:00 a.m.: Ken Lonquist and the Kenland Band performance
11–11:30 a.m.: Meet the Chickens on the Rooftop Ramble
11:30 a.m.: Atimevu Drum & Dance Company on the Rooftop Ramble
1 p.m.: Solar Oven Cooking Demonstration on the Rooftop Ramble
2–4 p.m.: Alternative Energy Demonstrations with Laura Williams from Madison Gas & Electric on the Rooftop Ramble

Sunday's Schedule of Events

While exploring the museum, visitors are welcome to enjoy Sunday's Overture Showcase. Resident companies from Overture Center for the Arts will perform throughout the day, including Kanopy Dance Company and Children's Theater of Madison. Enjoy collaborative Art Studio activities with the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, meet a guest musician from the Madison Symphony Orchestra, and enjoy the Public Art Tour. Art aficionados can join Brenda Baker, MCM's Director of Exhibits, at 3 p.m. for a tour highlighting public art in the new building.

10–11:30 a.m.: Art Workshop with Madison Museum of Contemporary Art in the Art Studio
11–11:30 a.m.: Meet the Chickens on the Rooftop Ramble
Noon: Meet the Musician violin demonstration with Suzanne Beia of the Madison Symphony Orchestra in the Wilderrest
1 p.m.: Kanopy Dance performance on the Rooftop Ramble
1 p.m.: Solar Oven Cooking Demonstration on the Rooftop Ramble
2 p.m.: Kids in the Rotunda at MCM, with songs and stories by Stuart Stotts in the Celebrations Room
3 p.m.: Public Art Tour begins in the Community Concourse

While outdoor activities and the museum's first-level Community Concourse are free, admission or a museum membership will be required to see the rest of the building. However, each ticket purchased on opening weekend comes with a token for a free return visit before the end of the year. For visitor information, please visit MadisonChildrensMuseum.org and click on the Visit menu.

The following businesses and individuals have generously supported the new museum by sponsoring its Grand Opening Celebration.

Supporting Sponsor: Upstairs Downstairs Catering

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The new museum was made possible through a gift of \$5 million from W. Jerome Frautschi that allowed for the building's purchase in 2005. MCM is nearing the completion of a \$10 million capital campaign that allowed for building renovation. The capital campaign kicked off with

major gifts by Pleasant T. Rowland and Jan & William DeAtley, and is expected to be completed with a \$750,000 Kresge Foundation challenge grant once the museum reaches \$9.25 million. As of today, the museum needs to raise less than \$200,000 for the Kresge challenge grant to top off the fundraising effort.

The museum will “go beyond green” in its new building, already having won the 2010 Promising Practice Award from MetLife Foundation and the Association of Children’s Museums for its *Only Local Initiative*. To refurbish the facility — which was originally built in 1929 to house a Montgomery Ward store — the museum employed a local contractor, architects, artisans, designers, exhibit fabricators, and cabinetmakers. Whenever possible, the museum is using recycled and reclaimed local materials, such as an artistically laid gym floor from a school in Oak Creek, Wis., and an entire exhibit, Possible-opolis, made with more than 90 percent reclaimed parts. The museum hopes to be the first in Wisconsin to obtain LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification.

From involving 13,000 local schoolchildren in program development and the making of public art — such as decorative tiles for all of the museum’s bathrooms and bottle cap mosaics for the Art Studio — to working with more than 100 local artists on exhibit fabrication and public art pieces, the *Only Local Initiative* reflects the museum’s pledge to create a true community museum while reducing its carbon footprint.

Madison Children’s Museum will open with three times the space of its previous location. Some of the museum’s unique features include:

- a free Community Concourse, for those who stop by briefly — for instance, during a Saturday morning visit to the Dane County Farmers’ Market.
- an open Rooftop Ramble, to serve as a four-season “park in the sky” with breathtaking views.
- an original 1838 log cabin, reassembled on the museum’s lot and outfitted with period-appropriate artifacts.
- a Bean Sprouts café that offers healthy, organic, whimsically presented food for all ages.

Madison Children’s Museum: Madison Children’s Museum (MCM) is an award-winning organization which fosters family and community connections, and provides a place where every child can learn through play in an interactive environment. MCM’s hands-on exhibits and programs celebrate and encourage children’s imaginations and the power of play as the cornerstone of learning.

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