

Potter's House selected as 2005 designer showhouse

Potter's House selected as 2005 designer showhouse

 unmc toda

UNMC Today-Over the next several months, the Potter's House will be transformed into a designer's showcase.

 phold

On Monday, the historic residence at 428 S. 38th St. was named the 2005 designer showhouse for the 30th annual Omaha Symphony Guild and American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) fundraiser.

The showhouse will be open to the public between April 16, 2005 and May 8, 2005.

Potter's House is a special place - a safe and comfortable dwelling for families of patients undergoing and recovering from transplants at The Nebraska Medical Center.

Built in 1892, the mansion, situated in Omaha's historic Gold Coast, was once home to a local prominent businessman, Charles Dietz. After his death, the house was converted into apartments and changed hands several times until 1989, when UNMC purchased it.

With the help of hundreds of volunteers, the house was restored to its beauty and dignity and currently provides lodging for up to 11 families at one time.

The Nebraska Medical Center and UNMC are pursuing similar arrangements operated by peer facilities in the community to help place families served by the Potter's House during the preparation period for the Designer Showhouse and the dates open to the public.

Karen Burkley, one of three co-chairs of this year's Showhouse, said the long-term partnership between the Omaha Symphony Guild and ASID designers has been a special one. Caitlin Davis and Kim Banat are the other co-chairs. Funds raised from this event are used to support music education programs for youth throughout Nebraska and western Iowa.

"Having Potter's House makes this event even more meaningful," Burkley said. "The house serves as a safe haven for those dealing with a difficult situation. The very talented designers that we work with will make this house beautiful with the best in interior design. Many people will benefit from this collaboration."

Henrik Dyhre of Sweden relaxes in the lounge area. Dyhre has suffered from neck/back pain as a result of downhill skiing for many years. He came to Omaha for surgery at The Nebraska Medical Center in which he was conscious during the surgery and was able to let the surgeon (Dr. Ake Nystrom) know exactly where his pain was coming from. The surgery was a complete success. Dyhre calls it "a miracle."

Rob Hallam, president and CEO of the Omaha Symphony, says, "we are so appreciative of the Guild's long-standing efforts and funds raised associated with the Designer Showhouse. This year's event with the unique Potter's House partnership will be a

memorable one for us and we hope for the families served by the historic residence."

"UNMC and The Nebraska Medical Center are proud to participate in this worthwhile cause, " said Nizar Mamdani, director of International Health Services for The Nebraska Medical Center. "The Omaha Symphony is an important member of the Omaha community and to be able to support its efforts is important. If we can improve the home décor for our Potter's House residents, it will make this effort even more special."

Chairman of the ASID design team, Lori Anderson, looks forward to getting started. "There are 27 design spaces in this magnificent mansion, and the designers are already planning their themes. Knowing what these families are going through while living here will certainly have an impact on the design," she said. The ASID design team is working with The Nebraska Medical Center and UNMC administration on having elements from the Showhouse become permanent improvements to Potter's House.

Tickets to this year's Showhouse, "Harmony for Hope," will be available at all Omaha and Council Bluffs Hy-Vee Foods stores and the Omaha Symphony box office a few weeks prior to the opening. For more information, visit www.omahasymphonyshowhouse.com.

Date Published: Tuesday, December 7, 2004