



**For Immediate Release**

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**The Bakken Museum's director, Dr. David Rhees announces retirement**

MINNEAPOLIS, MN— Today, the Board of Directors of The Bakken Museum (The Bakken) announced that executive director Dr. David Rhees will retire in September after 23 years of distinguished service in that role. As the museum prepares to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Dr. Rhees said: "It has been a tremendous privilege and joy to lead an institution founded by Earl Bakken, the 'father' of the Minnesota medical device industry, and to help translate his vision of inspiring a passion for science and its potential for social good into a reality for many thousands of people."

Dr. Rhees came to The Bakken in 1992 as a science historian who had developed a love of museums and libraries after a fellowship at the Smithsonian and a stint at the American Philosophical Society. In 1992, The Bakken had seven employees, a budget of half a million dollars and served about 5,000 people a year. Today, The Bakken serves some 75,000 people a year with a budget of \$2.4 million and a stellar staff of nearly 40 educators, curators and other employees.

A major highlight of Dr. Rhees' tenure was leading an expansion and renovation project, completed in 1999, which doubled the size of the existing Tudor mansion adjacent to Lake Calhoun in Minneapolis. As a result, an organization that was known mainly to international scholars for its rich historical collection, was transformed into a broad-gauged public museum beloved by generations of children, parents, teachers and other adults.

Brad Bakken, president of The Bakken's board of directors, said, "Dr. Rhees oversaw a period of great growth for the museum and for that the board will be forever grateful."

A capstone of Dr. Rhees' career was completed in January with the publication of *Dreaming On With Earl Bakken*, which he co-edited. Based on interviews with Earl Bakken and his friends, family and colleagues, the book was the result in part of an oral history project on Minnesota's medical device industry, or "Medical Alley," which Dr. Rhees initiated. His research also helped inspire and inform a display on Medical Alley that opens on July 1 at the Smithsonian as part of a larger exhibition at the National Museum of American History. The Bakken will mount its own related exhibit, *Inventing for Health: Minnesota's Biomedical Revolution*, in 2017.

In his retirement, Dr. Rhees plans to write a book on the history of Medical Alley. "I also look forward to spending more time playing traditional Irish music with my wife, Suzanne, and especially to bringing our grandson to enjoy future programs and exhibits at The Bakken," he said.

(more)

Board President Brad Bakken announced that the board will begin a national search for an executive director to help guide The Bakken Museum on its next chapter of growth and service to the community. The Twin Cities recruiting firm, Cohen & Taylor, will assist in that search.

The Bakken Museum is a one-of-a-kind museum exploring the mysteries of our electrical world. The museum was created in 1975 to house the sizable collection of books and artifacts belonging to Earl Bakken, co-founder of the medical device company, Medtronic, and inventor of the first external, portable pacemaker. Over the years, the museum has transformed into a place of education, seeking to inspire a passion for science and its potential for social good by helping people explore the history and nature of electricity and magnetism.

For more information contact:

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### **The Bakken Museum**

Located in an intriguing mansion on Lake Calhoun, The Bakken Museum inspires a passion for science and its potential for social good by helping people explore the history and nature of electricity and magnetism. The Bakken was founded in 1975 by Earl E. Bakken, who invented the first wearable, battery-powered, transistorized cardiac pacemaker. The Bakken features The Florence Bakken Medicinal Garden, a world-renowned collection of books and artifacts and multiple galleries focusing on the wonders of electricity.

The Bakken Museum is at the corner of West Calhoun Parkway and 36<sup>th</sup> Street on the west shore of Lake Calhoun. Free parking is available in The Bakken's lot. For more information, visit [www.TheBakken.org](http://www.TheBakken.org) or call 612-926-3878.

### **Museum Hours**

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Thursday: 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Closed Sunday, Monday & major holidays

### **Museum Admission**

Adults: \$7

Students & Seniors: \$5

Children younger than 4: FREE

Members: FREE

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