



# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jerry Fleagle, IOM, CAE  
Executive Director  
Office: 319-643-5327  
JFleagle@HooverPF.org

### Hoover Presidential Foundation Announces Capital Campaign

**WEST BRANCH, IOWA – Oct. 23, 2014** – Campaign organizers and friends of the Hoover Presidential Foundation will gather for a *Celebration Banquet: Charting the Course!* at the Sheraton Hotel, downtown Iowa City tonight to kick off the Foundation’s capital campaign for the largest exhibit to ever be held at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum. The exhibit is called *The Making of the Great Humanitarian: Herbert Hoover and World War I*.

The fundraising campaign will raise private donations for the construction of five key elements of the exhibit. The total cost is estimated at \$600,000. The exhibit will fill all usable space inside the museum and include outdoor elements as well. It is scheduled to open in April, 2015.

“Our expectation is this exhibit will attract over 100,000 visitors to the Hoover Presidential Library-Museum, and subsequently, the town of West Branch,” said Jerry Fleagle, executive director of the Foundation. “It should be quite a boom for tourism to the area.” Fleagle has been working with local businesses in West Branch along with the Main Street West Branch organization to prepare the town for an increase that could nearly double typical annual attendance figures.

The exhibit will focus on Hoover’s lifetime 100 years ago, at the onset of World War I, and how he gave up his private life and began ‘the slippery path into public service,’ according to his own quote. The five elements of the exhibit include a World War I trench that will give visitors a feel for what the war was like in the trenches. It will utilize immersion technologies, sensor activated effects and simulated battle conditions, all of which can be scaled back for young school children who may visit the museum.

The Figge Auditorium will be converted for a 4-D Hoover experience and feature theatrical effects including surround sound orchestration, narration and special effects combined with three separately placed video screens to immerse the audience in Hoover’s history making life.

There will be a recreation of London’s Savoy Hotel, to tell the story of how Herbert Hoover rescued thousands of Americans stranded overseas at the start of the war.

The two remaining exhibits will be outdoors. A Belgian village, including a café, schoolhouse and warehouse will provide interactive displays relating how Hoover saved millions from starvation in Belgium during the blockade. A 1/6 scale replica of a relief ship has already been built for the exhibit and used in parades in Des Moines, Iowa City and West Branch to build excitement about the upcoming exhibit.

\*\*\*\*\*



“There will be a lot to see and do at this exhibit,” said Charlie Becker, president of the Foundation board of trustees. “It contains a significant portion of Hoover’s life – a story that most people never heard about in school.”

“Through donations from members of our board and friends of the Foundation who wished to contribute from the start, we’re pleased to announce that we’ve already raised 51 percent of our goal,” said James Stein, who co-chairs the campaign with Hoover’s great-granddaughter, Margaret Hoover. “We still have a long road ahead and hope that others will want to participate in this outstanding educational opportunity to tell the Hoover story.”

“A gift to this campaign really is an investment in the future of West Branch,” said Margaret Hoover, campaign co-chair. “The resulting exhibit will increase tourism, raise the level of awareness of the Hoover Presidential Library-Museum, and set the stage for continued improvement in the future.”

In addition to co-chairs Stein and Hoover, there are three honorary chairs including Sally Mason, president of the University of Iowa, Gov. Robert Ray and Andrew Hoover. Others working on the effort include Dave Dierks, Bill Bywater, Ken Fawcett, Waldo Geiger, Matthew Howard, Robert Langholz, Haig Mardikian, Jerry Meis, Sally Novetzke, Fred Schulte and Bob Swain. For more information about the campaign or to make a donation, call the Foundation at 319-643-5327 or visit HooverCookie.com.

###

---

\*\*\*\*\*