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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wanek Family Supports Arcadia Community Tree Initiative

ARCADIA, Wis. – Arcadia, Wisconsin, is a blooming city – especially after the completion of the recent tree planting initiative made possible with a \$55,000 donation from the Ronald and Joyce Wanek Family. This initiative included the planting of nearly 150 trees including a variety of maples, elm, locust, and crab apple – some ranging up to 20 feet tall.

“A tree serves a critical role in creating and sustaining a healthy ecosystem,” said Dr. Paul Dettloff, Veterinarian and Industry Consultant on Sustainable Agriculture who has planted more than 260,000 trees locally in his lifetime. “They help moderate climate, improve air quality, reduce stormwater runoff, and harbor wildlife. Tree leaves also absorb carbon dioxide while releasing the life-giving oxygen that we breathe.”

Momentum is building among communities nationwide to be attractive places to live and work. Many towns and cities are committed to beautification efforts to not only better the environment but to attract new residents and businesses to also boost local economics.

“Arcadia is proud to be amongst the communities investing in trees,” said Arcadia Mayor Rob Reichwein. “As our community fights for businesses, residents and employees I believe this effort really makes our city stand out.”

According to the International Society of Arboriculture, shoppers report more frequent shopping, longer shopping trips, willingness to pay more for parking and willingness to spend more for goods in tree-lined commercial districts.

“Property values of landscaped homes are between 5 to 20 percent higher than those of non-landscaped homes,” said Tom Schank, Real Estate Broker and Appraiser. “Residential and commercial properties that feature mature trees have superior curb appeal.”

“Human response to trees goes well beyond simply observing their beauty,” said Chamber President Cole Bawek. “We feel peace and tranquility in a grove of trees. We are “at home” there. The planting of these new trees makes Arcadia feel like home to many.”

Wanek made this donation in memory and honor of Doctor Leon English (1923-2020), who dedicated his life to serving the Arcadia and surrounding community. Over the years, English served on the Board of Directors for St. Joseph Hospital in Arcadia, chaired the “Make A Splash” Campaign for the Arcadia swimming pool, supported the Arcadia Catholic Schools, and much more. The Wisconsin Bankers



Association recognized him in 2013, for 50 years of service to the banking industry during which time he was the Chairman of the Board of the State Bank of Arcadia.

“Doc English gave me my first significant loan through the State Bank of Arcadia,” said Ron Wanek, Founder and Chairman of Ashley Furniture Industries. “Without that loan, there may not be an Ashley Furniture in Arcadia. These trees are in honor of Doc’s generosity and willingness to help and contribute to anything that was needed within the community.”

In addition to the trees planted throughout the city, Ron Wanek and Ashley Furniture recently partnered with the Arcadia School District planting 100 additional trees on the school grounds. After developing a love for trees as a schoolboy in the FFA (Future Farmers of America), Wanek has been passionate about supporting tree planting. He has funded the planting of trees in the City of Arcadia for many years valuing over \$200,000. He has also planted over 1,000 trees on Ashley campuses and over 6,000 trees are distributed to Ashley employees annually in celebration of Arbor Day.

Ashley Furniture representatives led the planning and execution of this initiative and Sokup landscaping assisted with planting. The City of Arcadia will appreciate and maintain this investment for years to come as the value of these trees increase exponentially over time.

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