



## Downtown Marceline Foundation begins work on the Zurcher Suite

**Marceline, MO, March 13, 2023** - The Downtown Marceline Foundation has begun extensive renovation of a new vacation rental space on Main Street USA in the heart of Marceline, Missouri - Walt Disney's hometown. Following a project led by the organization to secure the structural integrity of the Zurcher Building and prepare its ground floor for use as a viable business space, expansion is now underway to renovate the second floor as a premium short-term vacation rental for visitors to Marceline.

The second floor was once office space for Albert Zurcher, and later an apartment, but has been unused and has fallen into disrepair over the past 20 or more years. The building was Walt Disney's inspiration for 'Coke Corner' at Disneyland and the more than ten thousand visitors who come to Marceline each year notice the space as a central point on Main Street, as well as the 1905 Coca-Cola mural advertisement painted on the side of the building. "The structure is a focal point for visitors who walk Main Street to get a sense of what Walt Disney saw as a kid, as well as people who want a glimpse of small town America." says Michael Olinger, President of the Downtown Marceline Foundation Board. The iconic building helps define Marceline's unique identity as "Small Town America, Perfectly Imagined."

The renovation project will help bring more life into an historic building, adding to the retail space already being occupied on the first floor. The neighboring Ripley Square park draws pedestrian traffic from locals and visitors making their way to the Walt Disney Hometown Museum to learn more about Walt's hometown and his vision of America that helped drive his passion for wholesome entertainment. The Downtown Marceline Foundation is excited to offer the vacation rental as a unique place to stay when visiting Marceline.

As construction completion nears, more information will be released about rental availability, and special opportunities for donors to experience Marceline this summer. Olinger reminds us that "tax-deductible donations are always helpful in our mission to enhance the community and to help preserve the buildings on the original Main Street USA."

### **About the Zurcher Building**

Built in the early 1900s, the ground floor contained a jewelry store owned by Percy Wilkins and the second floor (originally) served as the Grand Lodge of Pythias, the first fraternal organization to receive a charter under an act of the United States Congress. Later, Jeweler Albert Zurcher operated in the building for over sixty years; his role as the official Santa Fe watch inspector meant that in order to collect a paycheck, railroaders' watches were inspected on site. Since the jewelry store's permanent closure in 1973, the building housed several retail and dining establishments. The building is currently owned by the Downtown Marceline Foundation, received as a donation from the Shirley & Albert Schmidt family in 2020.

For more information, visit [www.DowntownMarceline.org/ZurcherSuite](http://www.DowntownMarceline.org/ZurcherSuite) or contact Dave Tavres at (660) 460-5366 or [contact@DowntownMarceline.org](mailto:contact@DowntownMarceline.org)

### **Downtown Marceline Foundation**

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