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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Change of Leadership as Karen Johnson Retires from the Charles M. Schulz Museum

SANTA ROSA, Calif., May 7, 2020—The Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center announced a leadership change beginning July 1, 2020. Director Karen Johnson is set to retire after 15 years at the organization's helm. Gina Huntsinger, who is currently the general manager of Snoopy's Home Ice, will succeed her.



Gina Huntsinger

"I have known Gina Huntsinger since her days working for City Councilwoman Nancy Burton," Jean Schulz said. "I thought she was an amazingly talented young woman then. Gina was someone our family could put its trust in when we were looking for an arena manager three-and-a-half years ago, and the board and I are delighted Gina will be at the helm of the Museum. Gina understands and respects the creativity that Karen Johnson has brought to the Museum in her 15-year tenure."

Huntsinger said, "I am delighted to build from the incredible foundation Karen Johnson has established. It is an honor to uphold and further the legacy of Charles M. Schulz and his cast of beloved characters in the *Peanuts* Gang."

Under Johnson's leadership, the Museum solidified its position in the world as the authority on the life and art of Charles M. Schulz, creator of the *Peanuts* comic strip. The Museum became a staple in the North Bay with events like its New Year's Eve Up/Down Balloon Drop, educational programs for students, and in-depth exhibitions celebrating the life and influences of Schulz. During Johnson's tenure, the Museum brought into Sonoma County many memorable guests, such as Apollo 10 astronauts Thomas Stafford and Eugene Cernan, tennis great Billie Jean King, *MUTTS* creator Patrick McDonnell, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* creator Jeff Kinney, Grateful Dead drummer Mickey Hart, and Bravo icon and host of *Watch What Happens Live* Andy Cohen. Johnson was instrumental in broadening the Museum's influence in the world with traveling exhibitions and the very successful Snoopy Museum Tokyo which is on its second iteration in Japan.

Huntsinger brings extensive leadership experience to the Museum, with longstanding roots in Sonoma County. She previously headed the Santa Rosa Downtown Market and worked in management for both Santa Rosa Plaza and KFTY TV 50. She led the Schulz Museum's marketing department for twelve years until she took over as general manager of Snoopy's Home Ice in December 2016. There she led the ice arena through 2017's Tubb's Fire, its 50th Anniversary Celebration in spring 2019, and its remodeling and reopening last fall.

Huntsinger will be the third director since the Schulz Museum opened nearly 20 years ago in August 2002. Johnson plans to begin volunteering in the community after working over 40 years for various nonprofits in Sonoma County.

ABOUT

Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center
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The Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center opened in August 2002 to fulfill its mission of preserving, displaying, and interpreting the art of Charles M. Schulz. Located 50 miles north of San Francisco in Santa Rosa, California, the Schulz Museum presents changing exhibitions and programming that build an understanding of cartoonists and cartoon art; illustrate the scope of Schulz's multi-faceted career; communicate the stories, inspirations, and influences of Charles Schulz; and celebrate the life of Charles Schulz and the *Peanuts* characters.

HOURS AND ADMISSION

The Schulz Museum is closed until further notice due to COVID-19 precautions.

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