

Central Minnesota  
Community Foundation

*Engaging People, Building Community*

NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

**Date: July 20, 2009**

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**The CMCF announces that work has begun on the final phase of the Clemens Garden's original plan.**

Mary Sue and Durand Potter, who are spearheading this project, say that this historical piece will fulfill the family's original concept for the Gardens and has been 10 years in the planning. It will center around realistic, life sized, bronze statues of Virginia and William Clemens, depicting them strolling through the Gardens in its formative years. These statues are often referred to as Tribute Statues and are the creation of artists, Teena Stern Haugen and Donald Haugen of Marietta, Georgia. Later this summer, the statues will be housed in the first phase of a Garden Gazebo, created by Robinson Iron the provider for all of the fountains and iron features in the Gardens.

In the coming years this endeavor will expand to include doming the Gazebo, decorative fencing, and lastly signage telling of the Gardens development and history.

The Potters hope this historical feature will be a fitting tribute to the generosity of Virginia and William Clemens and also preserve the story of the Gardens for generations to come.

In 1990, Virginia and William Clemens donated the land, roses and first Robinson Iron fountain to create what is now known as the Virginia Clemens Rose Garden. Since that humble beginning, the Clemens Family continued to donate millions of dollars, which led to the expansion of the six additional gardens along Killian Boulevard. They also established an endowment at the Community Foundation to help fund the operational costs of the Gardens.

Bill and Virginia Clemens are noted for their philanthropy in the St. Cloud area. Prior to the death of Mrs. Clemens, the couple gifted millions of dollars to various institutions in our community. The recipients of their generosity include the College of St. Benedict, Saint John's University, the Diocese of St. Cloud, and the Diocese of Fargo, North Dakota, and of course, the many visitors who enjoy their most beloved gift to our community, the Clemens Gardens.

CMCF, based in St. Cloud, is a public charity with \$50 million in assets that attracts and administers charitable funds for the benefit of the residents of various Central Minnesota counties. It is one of more than 700 community foundations nationwide.



Mary Sue and Randy Potter with statue



Artists: Donald Haugen and Teena Stern Haugen