

THE POWER OF TWO

The Erickson Historic Residence *The Power of Two, Three, and Many*

By Roxanna Erickson-Klein, Kristina Erickson, and Robert Erickson

This column was developed to show that teamwork is often more effective than the singular efforts of an individual. The first Power of Two column featured our parents, Milton and Elizabeth Erickson. We would like to illustrate the value of the collective efforts and joys of working as a team; whether the team is two, or three, or many more. A team creates an energy that extends far beyond the reach of any one member, and it also extends through time and geography. The three of us Erickson siblings -- Roxanna, Kristina, and Robert -- along with Jeff Zeig, Foundation staff members, and others have contributed to the success of the Erickson Historic Residence.

BACKGROUND: The Erickson Historic Residence on Hayward Avenue in Phoenix, has been previously featured in this newsletter, but for those who are unfamiliar, we will summarize and provide an update.

The Erickson Historic Residence is the home that our parents resided in from 1970 to 1980. Milton Erickson, our father, passed away in 1980, but our mother, Elizabeth, stayed in the home until her death in 2008. Though the idea of making the property into a historic site did not come about during their lifetimes, we were aware that visitors from around the world came to this home.

Prior to 1970, we lived in a small home at 32 West Cypress (near downtown Phoenix) that has since been demolished. That was the first home our parents purchased shortly after moving to Arizona in 1948. We three are the youngest of eight siblings; seven of us lived with our parents on Cypress Street as the oldest had already completed high school and stayed in Michigan when the family moved to Phoenix. The Cypress Street residence is where our father developed his private practice, founded the *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, and started to become widely known for his professional contributions.

On both Cypress Street and Hayward Avenue, our parents integrated the home's living and professional spaces. Our father had an office in both homes and the common living areas served the dual purpose of accommodating both family and patients. In fact, we shared our daily family life with patients, colleagues, visitors, and secretaries. In addition to scheduled appointments, we also welcomed visitors who would stop by to view our home as if it was some sort of tourist attraction. Their often impromptu visits surprised family members who had not yet recognized the impact of our father's work. Our mother enjoyed the visits, and graciously opened our doors with warmth and kindness.

After our father's death, the visits at the Hayward home continued, and Mom made the decision to keep Dad's office where he taught and practiced, intact. She delighted in giving brief tours of the home and invited guests to rest in his office

and sit at his desk.

ESTABLISHING A HISTORIC RESIDENCE: After our mother passed away in 2008, the Erickson Foundation purchased the property on Hayward and the three of us volunteered to assist in the development of the home as a destination for those interested in Milton Erickson's personal and professional life. Robert's wife, Kathy, also contributed many hours. In 2016, our brother, Lance, passed away, and subsequently, his wife, Helen, joined the Foundation's board of directors and committed herself to helping us preserve the residence. Erickson Foundation staff members spent time helping us preserve the historic home and make it an evocative sanctuary.

Each of us have worked as volunteers and have significantly contributed -- do-



nating memorabilia, time, finances, and resources. Robert has given many tours of the home and worked on the security and development of the property. Roxanna has overseen the property's maintenance and is in the process of developing a full inventory of all the items on display. Kristina made many donations and significantly contributed to the exhibit displays. Helen stepped forward to help establish a long-term sustainable vision for the property, ensuring there will be future visitors.

OVER THE PAST YEAR: We have entered a time of transition in which Roxanna and Kristina will be focusing on their own family commitments, while passing the management of this legacy to others. In doing so, we established a residential internship to help with fundraising and growth potential. Lana Heckman, a recent business graduate, was selected as our intern to help us actualize a sustainable budget.

Over the last year, we've had visitors from 16 countries and given more than 80 tours. Visitors delight in the peaceful, healing energy that still radiates from within the office where Milton Erickson worked, and they often report feelings of comfort and inspiration as they sit in his chair, surrounded by his books and artifacts.

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Erickson Historic Residence Donations

The Foundation is accepting donations to further develop the Erickson Historic Residence, formally known as the Milton and Elizabeth Erickson Museum. Built in 1952, the 2,239 square foot home is nearly 70 years old. The Foundation purchased the property in 2010 and continues to maintain the residence. Currently, the museum is being spruced up with structural repair, paint, and additional landscaping.

To learn more about this wonderful opportunity to visit the place where Dr. Erickson lived and worked in the last decade of his life, please visit: <https://www.erickson-foundation.org/erickson-museum/> and read Roxanna Erickson-Klein's "The Erickson Historic Residence: The Power of Two, Three, and Many," (above).

To donate to the museum, please visit: <https://www.erickson-foundation.org/donate/>.

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As siblings, we see our work together as special. It both symbolically and literally demonstrates the values we learned from our parents: to reach out to loved ones in a meaningful way. We are still amazed that so many people come from so far away, making a pilgrimage to see the modest home and office where our father did so much of his work. We now have a broader understanding of the contributions he made, but the home itself has always been simple and ordinary...and perhaps that is the point.

TEAMWORK: As Erickson family members, we were given gifts of learning beyond the ordinary. With our family constellation, we created a gift of harmoniously working together. Robert, Roxanna, and Kristina, alongside Kathy and Helen and with the support of Jeff Zeig and Foundation staff, have made a fine team. We are enjoying the reciprocal energy that comes from working on a project that is simultaneously meaningful and rewarding. We wish to recognize and thank other family members, colleagues, friends, donors, and dedicated volunteers who have generously contributed time and resources to keep our doors open. And



to the all the visitors: Thank you for your part in making this historic residence a reality. And thus, the power of two, three, and many have created energy and a future out of what could be deemed quite ordinary. What a joy it has been to have played an active role in this growth!

Please visit the Erickson Historic Residence:

<https://www.erickson-foundation.org/erickson-museum/>

