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Tom Brokaw to speak at The Hermitage Gala

HERMITAGE, Tenn. (Sept. 13, 2018) – Former longtime journalist for NBC and American media icon Tom Brokaw will serve as the keynote speaker for The Hermitage Gala on Oct. 26 at the [Omni Hotel](#) in downtown Nashville. The Gala serves as the Andrew Jackson Foundation's premiere fundraising event.

Brokaw spent his entire journalism career with NBC News, beginning in 1966 in the Los Angeles bureau, where he covered Ronald Reagan's first run for public office, the rise of the 1960s counterculture, the assassination of Bobby Kennedy and the 1968 presidential campaign.

Brokaw went to Washington as a White House correspondent during Watergate. Next, New York and the "TODAY" show followed by his appointment as anchor and managing editor of "NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw." He took over "Meet the Press" for the 2008 campaign.

He has an impressive list of firsts, including the first interview with Mikhail Gorbachev, and was the only American network anchor to report from Berlin the night the Berlin Wall came down. In 1998, Brokaw published his first book, "The Greatest Generation," one of the most popular nonfiction books of the 20th century. He followed that with six other books, including the most recent, "A Lucky Life Interrupted: A Memoir."

Brokaw has won every major award in his craft, including Peabodys, duPonts, Emmys and lifetime achievement recognition. In 2014, Brokaw was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama; it is the highest civilian award given to those who have made "meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavors." In the spring of 2016, Brokaw was awarded France's Legion of Honor for his work on advocacy for the accomplishments of World War II veterans.

Serving as co-chairwomen for The Hermitage Gala 2018 will be Carol Yochem, First Tennessee Bank in Middle Tennessee president, and Sallie Norton, former finance director for U.S. Sen. Bill Frist.

This year's black-tie event also includes the presentation of the prestigious Lewis R. Donelson Award. This year's recipient is Emily J. Reynolds. Reynolds is a former regent (board chairwoman) of the Andrew Jackson Foundation, formerly the Ladies' Hermitage Association, where she led the board's transition from a local organization to a national scope.

Reynolds has had an extensive career in public service, policy and government. She is currently the vice chairwoman of the Tennessee Board of Regents, the state's governing board for its 13 community colleges and 27 colleges of applied technology. Reynolds serves on the boards of BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee, the state's largest health insurance company, and FB Financial (FirstBank), a public company. At BlueCross, she is chairwoman of the compensation committee, is past chairwoman of the governance and nominating committee, and is on the audit committee. She is also on FirstBank's trust committee. Over the past three years, Reynolds has worked closely with Gov. Bill Haslam on development efforts for the new Tennessee State Museum. She is also a commissioner on the Davidson County Election Commission.

The **Lewis R. Donelson Award**, named after the great-grandson of Andrew Jackson Donelson and longtime supporter of The Hermitage, is awarded to a leader who has supported The Hermitage and its preservation efforts, or has brought honor and recognition to President Andrew Jackson, his era and his legacy.

About Andrew Jackson's Hermitage

Andrew Jackson's Hermitage: Home of the People's President is one of the largest, most well-preserved and most visited presidential homes in the United States. Opened to the public in 1889, The Hermitage is one of America's first presidential museums. Today, The Hermitage is a 1,120-acre National Historic Landmark with 27 historic buildings, including Jackson's mansion and tomb, restored slave cabins, a church, and gardens. In recent years, new interpretive initiatives and educational programs such as on the history of slavery have enhanced the experience of the 228,157 visitors in FY 2018. For more information, visit www.thehermitage.com.

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