

Ribbon Cutting Held for Falter Museum

(KTNC)--People gathered in downtown Falls City Wednesday afternoon to cut the ribbon on Falls City's newest museum.

Work is not yet complete on the museum that will honor the life and work of the prominent 20th century artist John Philip Falter, who grew up in Falls City. The half-hour ceremony included music from Falls City High School and Sacred Heart students, and speeches by several people who have had a hand in making the museum a reality.

Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman, himself a Falls City native, gave the keynote address. He noted that John Falter served the country as Naval Chief Petty Officer and painted recruitment posters and other patriotic pieces.

Deb Arenz, with the Nebraska State Historical Society, put together a recent Falter exhibit at the Historical Society. In the process of preparing the exhibit, she says she learned a lot about the artist. She said John Falter was a kind, funny, and talented man, who loved his family and his country and lived life to the fullest.

Arenz says she concluded that Falter undervalued his talents, but was a fine artist and brilliant illustrator.

John Falter is well known for illustrating 129 Saturday Evening Post covers, the third-most prolific Saturday Evening Post cover illustrator. Arenz said Falter's illustrations helped shape how we view the 1940s and 1950s.

After his death in 1982, Falter's widow donated the contents of his studio to the Nebraska State Historical Society, and the Historical Society has agreed to loan the studio to the Falls City museum, where it will be prominently displayed.

Work continues to prepare the museum in the former Richardson County Bank Building at the corner of 17th and Stone Street. Dobey Falter Haws has been spearheading the effort to open the museum and says they hope to have most of the work done in time for Falls City's Christmas Window opening on November 28.

Haws says the museum will honor the life of John Falter and help to enhance the arts in southeast Nebraska.

Wednesday's ceremony included remarks by Richardson Foundation president Steve Kottich, Sandy Hartman with the Library and Community Foundation, and Mitch Glaeser, who owns the building the museum is located in.

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