

BREAKING

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Kinetic sculpture dedication planned Thursday in Cedar Falls

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MATTHEW PUTNEY / Courier Photo Editor

The kinetic wind sculpture along Waterloo Road in Cedar Falls.

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CEDAR FALLS – After a new kinetic sculpture was installed last week along Waterloo Road, adjacent to Cedar Falls Utilities, Mary Brammer and her husband, Dick, packed a picnic lunch and sat down on a bench across the street.

“We wanted to watch the reactions. Several student groups walked up and looked at it, and a young man came riding by on a bike, stopped, got off and started taking photos. That’s when we realized so many people would be walking, biking or driving by who will enjoy the piece for many years to come,” said Brammer, who chaired a subcommittee for the Cedar Falls Public Art Committee that worked with CFU on the project.

A dedication ceremony will take place at 5 p.m. Thursday at the site in front of CFU.

The sculpture is the finishing piece for CFU’s completion of flood control work and an extensive landscaping project on Waterloo Road, said CFU General Manager Jim Krieg.

“We realized it’s a major road into our community from the north, and we wanted to have an attractive entrance. As we put in the landscaping plan and identified the improvements, a feeling came about that it would be nice to have public art at that location. It would complement the Veterans Park on the other side of the road,” he explains.

Steve MacTaggart, CFU general purchasing and facilities manager, coordinated the CFU side of the project. Subcommittee members included artist Jim Kerns, president of the Cedar Falls Art and Cultural Board and liaison to Public Art Committee; Barbara Brown; and Kathy Krieg, a PAC member and Krieg’s wife.

The landscaping project was done by Matthias Landscaping.

Brammer praises the collaborative process. “I was struck by the number of people – at least 50 – who put a stamp on this project in some way or other. I was impressed with what a testament it is to the community of people committed to public art and how it enhances the quality of life in Cedar Falls.”

She discovered the Utah artist’s sculptures in a Santa Fe, N.M., gallery and recommended Whitaker to the committee. The Kriegs were able to view the artist’s sculptures at the Leopold Gallery in Kansas City, Mo.

Whitaker is considered a pioneer in creating wind sculptures, noted for hand-crafting bold, organic-looking metal pieces. The sculpture seems particularly appropriate for a utility company that uses wind energy to generate power for its customers, said Jim Krieg.

“The landscaping softens the industrial look of our company in the middle of town, and the sculpture was the final piece to put in place. We’ve very pleased with the whole project.”