

Hayes Center's inaugural presidential film, literary fest wraps up

[Jon Stinchcomb](#), Fremont News-Messenger Published 10:12 a.m. ET Oct. 8, 2018

On Sunday, the American Presidents Film and Literary Festival finished with a wreath laying ceremony honoring President Rutherford B. Hayes. Jon Stinchcomb, Reporter



(Photo: Submitted)
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FREMONT - The inaugural American Presidents Film and Literary Festival wrapped up on Sunday after more than a week of screenings and activities around Fremont all celebrating presidential film, literature, history and education.

The festival, organized in collaboration by the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Library and Museums, Fremont City Schools, and Friends of the Birchard Public Library, kicked off on Thursday, Sept. 27, and continued through Sunday, Oct. 7.

The festival began with screenings and book discussions with respective authors leading up to last weekend's activities, which included an abundance of events for all audiences, such as "living history" lantern walks, artifact interaction, educational talks, wine tasting and more.



Kirk Ellis, screenwriter for the HBO series “John Adams,” delivers the keynote talk at the American Presidents Film and Literary Festival on Saturday. (Photo: Submitted)

“We had a really good turnout,” said Kristina Smith, marketing and communications director at Hayes and a member of the festival steering committee. “We had people at pretty much every film. The event turned out very well and we’re very positive about it.”

One of the festival’s most popular events was a meet and greet with keynote speaker Kirk Ellis, screenwriter for the HBO series “John Adams,” on Saturday night.

“Kirk Ellis’ talk was amazing,” Smith said. “He shared some of the letters John Adams and Thomas Jefferson wrote back and forth. It was wonderful.”

The festival also held multiple film and literary contests, which included categories for both short and full-length features and writing from students and adults.

And while being presidential was what they all had in common, there was actually a lot of diversity among the entries.

“Subjects were across the board,” Smith said. “There was a variety of topics. There was a lot to see.”



Pam Faulkenberg, left, and Jack Cochran, right, a Fremont native, receive their award for People’s Choice from Kirk Ellis, screenwriter for the HBO miniseries “John Adams” and keynote speaker for the event. Faulkenberg and Cochran created the short film “Teddy Roosevelt and Fracking.” (Photo: Submitted)

Winners of the film and literary contests are:

- Best short film - “Writing the Peace” by A.D. Cooper.
- Best feature-length film and best production - “The Reagan Show” by Sierra Pettengill and Pacho Velez.
- People’s choice - “Teddy Roosevelt and Fracking” by Pamela Falkenberg and Fremont native Jack Cochran.
- Student writing award - Lyla Miller, of Fremont.
- Youth essay, age 12-18 winner - Adele Bosma, of Georgetown, Texas.
- Adult literary winner - Carol Polter, of Fremont.

On Sunday, the festival included the annual wreath-laying ceremony honoring the life and service of President Rutherford B. Hayes at his tomb at Spiegel Grove.

“We have been honoring presidents all weekend and it’s particularly poignant to conclude with this type of ceremony,” said Christie Weininger, Hayes executive director. “It’s brief, but it’s very special and I still get a little choked up at ‘Taps’ even after these years.”



The Fremont VFW Post 2947's Honor Guard prepare for the precision of a 21-gun salute during a wreath-laying ceremony in honor of President Rutherford B. Hayes at his tomb on Sunday. (Photo: Jon Stinchcomb/The News-Messenger)

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