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Michael Nerpel and Mark Vaeretti pour bronze into a mold.

Photo by Scott Newton

Bronzes now cast locally

Portlandia project was labor of love for supporter

by SCOTT NEWTON

It wasn't Media Day at Maiden Bronze, but it just as well have been. An Oregonian reporter and photographer, a KGW-TV reporter and cameraman, and a representative of The Post were all on hand Tuesday to hear about the casting of eight-inch Portlandia bronzes.

Through it all, Charles Hall, who represents the artist, and Lyle Isaak, general manager of Maiden Bronze, were congenial, answering the same questions over and over.

Hall even maintained his sense of humor. Watching a Maiden Bronze employee knocking the ceramic molding from a bronze, he turned to Isaak and said, "Will they use a sledgehammer on the Portlandia, too?"

Fact is, they will. They hammer on the "gate," a solid piece on the bottom and not a piece of the statue.

The process begins in Walla Walla, where Owner Mike Maiden lives. A wax pattern is sent to Sandy, where it is dipped in a liquid solution and given a sand-like silicon coating. The process is repeated once a day for seven days.

The ceramic shell is then placed in a furnace heated to 1800 degrees Fahrenheit, a process called dewaxing.

Following an inspection — there are lots of inspections — the shell is heated again and, while still hot, placed upside down in a sand pit. It is at this point the molten bronze, heated to 2100 degrees, is poured in.

When the bronze cools, the ceramic shell is removed — with a sledgehammer, for starters — and the statue is cleaned and assembled. Some pieces may be welded together, and some grinding or other work may be necessary to remove sprues and gates.

The bronze is patinated with a mild acid to give it color. The acid is sprayed on while the bronze is heated with a torch.

The Portlandia is a refined copy of the original statue produced by Washington, D.C., artist Raymond Kaskey.

If the orders come in, Maiden Bronze could cast an edition of up to 500. The first 22 — plus an artist's proof — are being cast at present. They sold for \$550. The prices has gone up to \$595 for the second casting. All are signed and numbered.

A limited edition of 12 34-inch bronzes is also planned, Hall said. They will sell for \$15,000; then the mold will be broken and each owner will get a piece of it.

Hall, who represents Portlandia Productions and will get a commission off the sale of the eight-inch bronzes, originally got his start in the Portlandia project because of his love of art.

He read a front page story in The Oregonian in December, 1984 about Kaskey's problems in mak-

ing Portlandia. The project was commissioned as part of the city of Portland's "1 percent for art" program following completion of the Portland Building.

He got in contact with representatives of the Metropolitan Arts Commission, who put him in touch with Kaskey. A story in the Eugene Register-Guard, quoting Kaskey, backs up Hall's version. Hall called up Kaskey and asked him what he needed.

The decision regarding how Portlandia would be transported from a warehouse in Maryland to downtown Portland would determine how Kaskey put the statue together.

Hall, with the help of numerous other people, arranged for railroad services, cranes and a storage area in which to complete the final stages.

The 600 hours of donated time paid off for Hall when Portlandia was taken by barge from Ferguson Inc.'s warehouse to Waterfront Park, much to the delight of thousands of people.

Hall, who said they garnered about \$175,000 worth of donated services for moving and setting up Portlandia, is a marketing specialist in a business owned by he and his wife, Suzan, called S & C Hall Associates.

Hall's experience includes work in an advertising agency in New York City, where he worked on projects for General Mills, Proctor & Gamble, and Blue Nun Wine, and a stint as product manager for Colgate-Palmolive, also in New York.



Charles Hall

If the lady stood up she would be 50 feet tall, a third of the size of the Statue of Liberty.

The eight-inch statues are selling not only as an investment, Hall said, but because people are excited about Portlandia. One woman, on a card along with her final payment for a bronze, wrote: "To Portlandia with Love."

Lyle Isaak agreed that people in the metropolitan area are excited about the statue. In addition, \$595 is a "rare (low) price" for a bronze, though an edition of 500 is a large one.

One sale from among the 22 was to a Mt. Hood couple, and they were on hand Tuesday to observe the process. "We've talked to a lot of people who don't normally buy bronzes," Isaak said. "That's always kind of rewarding."

The statues are about 10 percent

'We've talked to a lot of people who don't normally buy bronzes.'

Since coming to Portland in 1979 he has worked for Gerber Advertising and the Chas. H. Lilly Company. He and his wife have been in business about two years.

Hall works a good deal with Artist Scott McIntire, who produced the Chamber Music Northwest logo, which is a curled shell.

The two of them put together the KKS "Classical Pursuit" poster, which celebrates the 300th birthdays of Bach, Handel and Scarlatti.

Hall comes across as a businessman who enjoys his association with artists. He is cautious not to put works in other people's mouths — especially Kaskey's — but he is also excited about Portlandia. He believes what critic and writer Thomas Wolf said, that Portlandia is a move toward more representational art — art that means something — and away from the highly abstract.

Portlandia, he points out, is the largest hammered copper sculpture built entirely in the U.S. At 38 feet and weighing 6½ tons, it is second in size, in the U.S., only to the Statue of Liberty.

of the work load at present, Isaak said, although that varies a good deal. For example, it may go up to 40 percent next week, but for several weeks it was only a small part of the work the 15-member crew performed. It just depends on what part of the process the statue is in, he said.

Maiden Bronze had bid on the original proposal, hoping that Kaskey would utilize their facilities in creating Portlandia. When Kaskey came to Oregon, people in City Hall reportedly told him about work Maiden Bronze had done producing awards, which were given out by former-Mayor Frank Ivancie. At that point, it was just natural Kaskey consider Maiden Bronze for the eight-inch bronzes.

One other thing came up during the tour at Maiden Bronze. There is a 13-foot statue of John Wayne sitting on a horse. With all those media people around, that's a story that won't hold for long.

Surveying the visitors, cameramen and others, Isaak admitted that working at Maiden Bronze is not your run-of-the-mill job. "It's a new day every day."

Committee debates options, approves smaller tax levy

It took three and a half hours, but the Sandy Elementary School District's 10-member budget committee completed its work Thursday evening at the second working session.

The district will hold a tax base election, as required by state law, on Tuesday, May 20. A public hearing on the budget will be held Thursday, March 20.

According to the budget message, the board of directors instructed Superintendent Clark Lund to prepare an operating budget with no increase in property taxes and, preferably, to decrease the taxes levied to balance the budget. "That assignment has been accomplished," the budget message reads.

The total requirements for the 1986-87 budget are \$6,423,123. The tax levy required to balance the budget is \$2,159,700, or \$76,200 less than the current year. In addition, the amount required for bonded indebtedness is down \$23,207. The total taxes to be levied for 1986-87 are \$99,407 less. This should produce a decrease in the tax rate by approximately 45 cents per thousand valuation.

Over 45 people attended the meeting, which began at 7:30 p.m. and ended at 11. Toward the end, budget committee members appeared to be considering a suggestion by Dan Gracia, a member of the audience, who said two science teachers for Cedar Ridge was not sufficient.

Lund said the two science teachers have 25 or 26 students per class and attempt to do laboratory work at least once a week.

Gracia asked if anyone had ever tried to do hands-on work with 25 or 26 junior high students. "It doesn't work," he said. Science and math skills are going to be essential if Sandy students are to compete in an increasingly high-tech world, Gracia said.

Board Member Dorothy Mills asked how Cedar Ridge students were faring in science at Sandy High School.

They are "very well prepared for what the high school has to offer," Lund said.

Barbara Sah, a budget committee member, also said it was her opinion

that Cedar Ridge students were well prepared for high school science.

On a suggestion from budget committee member Arthur Lowery, Lund has been directed to investigate the cost of having an outside company provide janitorial services. It was decided the budgeting process did not need to be held up because of such a study. If a less expensive method of maintaining the buildings can be found, the district can then follow through and realize a savings.

Lund said the Sandy Busing Cooperative studied transportation a few years ago and determined they could run their own system as efficiently as a private business. However, he added, in both transportation and janitorial services, it is always a good idea to investigate what private industry charges for similar services.

Following that discussion, Board Member Sharron Cox moved, and Mills seconded, a motion to approve the budget. It was approved unanimously.

Earlier in the meeting, Lowery had asked Lund a series of questions concerning the amount of money paid to summer help for maintenance of the buildings, PERS benefits for employees, and the feasibility of forming an insurance pool to bring down the cost of liability and casualty insurance.

Gerald Hale, committee chairman, asked about the effect Gramm-Rudman might have on the budget. Lund said they could expect to see cuts in special education.

Lund said during the school closure people would say the district should be spending its federal dollars, but Lund said that money is earmarked for special programs. For example, the district receives \$87,000 to run its school lunch program. That money cannot be spent on other programs.

Expenditure distribution of general fund dollars

Programs	Cost	% of budget
Regular elementary program	\$2,553,353	50.4
Student activities	16,194	.3
Special education	297,069	5.9
Guidance and counseling	66,784	1.3
Health services	12,952	.2
Improvement of instruction	35,701	.7
Library-media services	160,398	3.2
Board of education	39,200	.8
Office of superintendent	97,881	1.9
Office of principals	301,851	5.9
Business office	78,811	1.6
Care and upkeep of buildings	775,042	15.3
Care and upkeep of grounds	49,841	1.0
Pupil transportation	311,098	6.1
Swim pool-community	31,783	2.6
School lunch	13,517	.3
Unappropriated balance	100,000	2.0
Contingency	128,000	2.5
Total	\$5,069,475	100.0



Photo by Pat O'Halloran

Victory

Sandy High School students were in a losses in previous weeks. The Pioneers downboisterous mood Friday night as the Pioneers ed Gresham 66-63. Other pictures in sports. finally nabbed a victory after four two-point