

A float builder's journal

Community spirit has risen, and there is already talk of next year's float. Steno Pool staff and friends worked for a year (since last year's Rose Parade) to raise funds for this year's entry in the 72nd annual Grand Floral Parade. Sack lunch sales, barbecues, and various other projects brought in nearly \$5,000. And to bring the total up to \$8,000 (the cost of the float), Tribal Council donated \$3,000.

Although this was the third float the Tribes entered in a Rose Parade since 1976, it was the first that Warm Springs employees, community members and friends actually worked on and finished themselves. It was also the first time it had been designed by someone other than a professional float builder. Carol Allison, who works at the Community Center, designed the float which closely resembled a huge headdress.

DAY ONE...A day of learning

Nine o'clock came early on this damp Thursday morning. Our supervisor Glenn Renay was working closely with Steno Pool manager Juanita Bourland, giving her instructions and guidelines on how to put the hundreds of black magnolia leaves and nearly 7,000 daisies on the 23 feathers that formed the headdress of the 45-foot, low-lying float.

After receiving our basic lessons, we all began gluing leaves. It was a gooey, sticky mess and, regrettably, the glue was not watersoluble. Absolutely everything stuck to our fingers, especially the velvet-like fuzz off the back of the leaves.

With the just the few of us there it seemed like it would take more than two days to complete the float. We had no idea how we would ever

complete the job before Saturday.

The day was saved, however, by a group of teenagers from the Evangel Baptist Church. They were hired, by our "conspirator" Eric Sundholm to help us. The group of kids was working to earn \$450 for their tournament-winning basketball team, and they were more than eager to get gluey and sticky right along with us.

We all worked through the morning until early afternoon when we broke for lunch. Luckily, the rain subsided long enough for us to devour our food outside in the "fresh" air. We needed to escape the intoxicating aroma of the glue, but outside?

After lunch, we resumed our work of gluing daisies on the three-foot feathers. With about 300 flowers on each feather, the work seemed endless. There was also a horse which required a new hide of wheat-colored seeds.

The hardest part of the decorating was reaching the top six feathers which were about 30-feet high. Because there were ten other floats being built in the warehouse, we had to compete for ladders, scaffolds and 2" x 6"s. Needless to say, it was difficult for us to reach the top. Oswalk Tias, Danny Martinez, Franko Martinez and other light-weights skillfully and carefully climbed atop the melange of boards and ladders to place the last of the flowers on the last of the feathers. Agility was a necessity.

Finally, at 8 o'clock, we were finished with the beginnings of our float. It really didn't look like much, but we knew we "done good". We looked like we had been through war...we were a mess.

Later that evening, Mount

St. Helens erupted and by 11 o'clock, ash was falling. Thoughts of a cancelled parade and a ruined float rushed through our minds. At three the next morning, officials gathered to decide whether to go on with the parade. Ash or no, the parade was to go on as scheduled.

DAY 2...A day of finishing touches

Nine o'clock came early the second morning, also. Added to puffy eyes and yawns were aches and pains in muscles we had forgotten existed. The unanimous decision was that "float building is hard work but fun."

This day we were to do the "beadwork" on the headband. Elina Langnese and I were assigned to the scaffold to work on the top of the headband, closely following a color-coded pattern. The work was slow, but couldn't be done any faster...only two could work by the pattern. About eight hours and 7,863 daisies later the headband was completed.

Ranay and Sundholm informed us that during the day sometime, judges would be by to look at the float and the progress we had made. The judges also determine points on neatness of the work area. Some of us grabbed brooms and quickly swept up the flower-strewn floor.

By six o'clock, our work was done except for the flower arrangements that were to be done by the professional florist. Stepping back and eyeing the entire float made us all proud. Our consolation was that we had put out our best effort. Even if we didn't win a big prize, we knew we had done the best we could.

DAY 3...A day of waiting

We began arriving at the Coliseum parking lot around 6 a.m. in ash-filled drizzle. We could see the floats being brought across the bridge and we knew that it was judgement day.

The morning seemed to drag on and on. At six in the morning there were very few of us, but as the morning wore on, more and more, people stopped by the coliseum to view the floats. Reporters, photo-

graphers and TV crews could be seen focusing in on numerous people all over the parking lot.

Come time for the ribbon-awarding, we were all clenching our fists or biting out nails. Floats all around us were receiving green, yellow or lavender ribbons. We kept wondering where our prize was. Finally a nice Rosarian awarded us with a blue ribbon, first-prize in the non-commercial, category. We were hoping for the silver rose award or theme prize. But for the third time we received the blue ribbon and that's an accomplishment we can all be proud of.



Last minute preparations

Rose Parade Text and photos by Donna Behrend

Delta Park photos and story by Marsha Shewczyk



"Gee, a real Indian"



An entourage of horses preceded the float