



Journal photo by Misty Higgins

Partners in Anvil Works, Lee Badger, center, and associates watch as the 34-foot-tall clock tower that they spent 10 months constructing was loaded in pieces by crane onto trucks before being shipped to Chicago.

Making time for Chicago

Hedgesville men construct clock tower for metro business

By MISTY HIGGINS
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

HEDGESVILLE — After 10 months of long hours and meticulous metal work, a 34-foot-tall clock tower constructed for a Chicago businessman was loaded in pieces by crane onto the two trucks that will transport the tower to its owner.

Lee Badger and partner Steve Dykstra of Anvil Works in Hedgesville constructed the tower for Jasper San Fillipo, who contracted the men to build the tower last December.

San Fillipo is the owner of John S. San Fillipo and Son, a Fortune 400

The width of the tower is more than 11 feet and 24,000 pounds of steel were used in the project.

nutmeat company. The tower was completed Monday and the various pieces loaded by crane onto trucks Tuesday with the destination of Elk Grove, Chicago, where the tower will be placed in an airplane hangar-sized building used by San Fillipo as a showcase for his many collectibles of Victorian

mechanical machinery.

After seeing another clock tower that Badger and Dykstra had constructed, San Fillipo contacted the men to build the tower, which is adorned with ornate scrolling and leaf designs. Badger said the two primarily construct small-scale architectural projects and sculptures for customers mostly around the East Coast.

On a scale of 1 to 10, Badger said, the two agreed the project was about a 9 for the difficulty and intricacy involved.

"It's one of the largest things I've done," Badger said of the tower.

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11 feet and used in the project were 24,000 pounds of steel along with castings and sheet metal weighing in at another 4,000 to 5,000 pounds, Badger said. Not disclosing the amount the two were paid for the tower, Badger did say that San Fillipo paid "a lot" for the tower, but added "but we're not getting rich from it."

With only a set of blueprints

much like a design concept and an artist's rendering of the tower, Badger said there was much that had to be figured out as they worked.

"I think we've learned a lot from this project," he added. "We had to figure out a lot and that has given us a great deal of insight into our next one."

Workers from D&L Welding on Rock Cliff Drive in Martinsburg spent six hours loading the pieces onto the trucks. Despite the work involved and the beauty of the piece they created, Badger said it wasn't hard to see the piece go.

As an artist, he said, it is important to move on.

"Once you are done, it's over," he said of the project. "I learned when I was in art school that most people in art school still have their first piece of art. You need to learn to let go of it."

"The first thing you realize when you let go of it is that it makes more room to create."

— Staff writer Misty Higgins can be reached at 263-8931, Ext. 135, or by email at mhiggins@journal-news.net.