Art Lends Vibrant Hand in Plans For 'Come-Back City'

By PHYLLIS REINEMER

CRESCENT CITY (Del Norte Co.)—Crescent City will receive an entirely new face in the near future as the mall and pavilion area of the city is developed and new builders begin construction in the tidal wave devastated business district under a Disaster Redevelopment Plan adopted last April by the Crescent City Council.

The new mall area will include a pool spraying fountain as a focal point along with other sculpture both in natural woods and metals. Final plans are not completed but under consideration is a bronze work by Bruno Groth called, "Rite of the Herons," to be cast in bronze for the center of the fountain. "Bronze is 90 per cent copper and with weathering by salt air acquires a green patina with highlights of other colors," Groth explained. "It really becomes more beautiful with age."

The fountain with the sculpture and pool will be located in the pavilion area of the mall that will have a multiple use for the core area. Native plants, trees and shrubs will be used for additional beautification in the core area and throughout the redeveloped area when it is realized.

Robert Scalia, executive director of the Crescent City Redevelopment Agency, explained none of the beautification may be purchased with government funds but must be provided in another manner, either through public subscription or through the city. At the present time, Scalia is appearing before various service clubs and other organizations appealing for public support of the statutory. As soon as sufficient pledges of funds warrant the artist can be commissioned to create the sculpture. "We don't want cash sent to the agency," Scalia said, "we want pledges to use in negotiating for the art work, and then the pledges will be collected when the work is commissioned and completed." Pledges may be sent by letter to the Redevelopment Agency office at 220 H Street in Crescent City.

The exact proportions of the bronze work are not known but will be determined by the size of the fountain and pool. Jets of water will play on the bronze Herons set on a pedestal in the center of the pool. Scalia also explained a plan to obtain native plants, shrubs and trees will begin this winter. Members of 4-H Clubs in the county will work with an experienced nurseryman in obtaining the specimens which will be installed on vacant Agency land until they are placed permanently.

To some maybe the idea of a modern shopping center in downtown Crescent City seems like a far away dream, but the actual shape of the mall will be evident in the near future. The first demolitions should start on Monday at Third and J Streets. They will be followed closely by others.

Scalia also reports new building plans on the mall and in the project area are now under study by the Urban Renewal Agency. A public hearing on the negotiation of sale and leasehold and acquisition of property is scheduled for January 4. The advertisements for this hearing will appear in the next few days.

Seven projects are under consideration for Wells Fargo Bank, the Del Norte Triangle, Victor W. Nash, Fredrik Amundson, Herb Newman, Del Norte Garden and Pet Shop, now Del Norte Feed and Crescent Lumber Company which will use the new name, Crescent Building Materials. An enlarged parking area is also planned for downtown.

A meeting Tuesday evening with the Small Business Administration, development companies and possible tenants will be held at the Surf Hotel ballroom at 8 p.m. to discuss financing for redevelopment corporations. Scalia said with as little as 20 per cent of the capital put up by the local corporate, loans can be made on the remaining 80 per cent to build the new business and office space in the redeveloped project area.

March 28 seems to be a long way off and some complainers are heard about the slowness of the redevelopment in the downtown area. Vacant land and entire blocks once held business buildings. In the wake of the waves, three entirely new buildings have been completed and several others renovated to look like new condition. Glen's Bakery, the Turf Club and Trehearne are now open for business in completely new structures.

In addition to this construction the Municipal Swimming Pool is being constructed along with the Crescent City Beach Front Development, an entirely separate project from the disaster redevelopment project for the downtown area.

The slogan, "Come Back Town, U.S.A."

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"Rite of the Herons," a statue in bronze created by Bruno Groth, noted Humboldt County artist who makes his home in Trinidad, is being considered for the fountain and pool in the pavilion area of the mall to be constructed in the six-block core area of Crescent City. Groth specializes in native wildlife in his creations and is completing a six-foot bronze piece, "Rite of the Crane," to be used in Fresno.

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The slogan, "Come Back Town. U.S.A.," is well earned by Crescent City and the next few months will see some drastic changes in the 111-year old city.