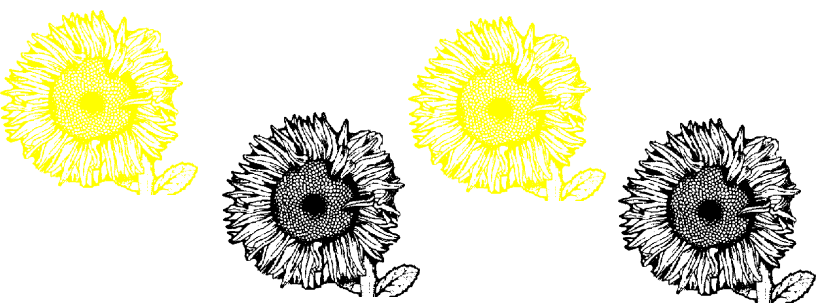


Decorating the sky



Workers spent most of Tuesday placing a giant replica of a Vincent van Gogh sunflower painting at a site north of the Business U.S. 24/Cherry Street junction. Suzie Butts (above) stood south of the site videotaping the process. Her husband, Rod Butts, helped weld the 24- by 32-foot painting's steel easel to the base. Pete Whalen (below), president of Sunflowers U.S.A., the group that raised money to bring the painting here, and Jacen Owens, a crane operator, pushed and pulled one of the 80-foot easel's three legs onto the concrete and steel base.



Photos by
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Eryn Topliff (left), 11, watched as Samantha Raymer, 11, helped touch up nicks and scratches on the huge painting before it was lifted into place. The North Elementary School students have been following the project with their fifth-grade class. Jessy Juarez (far left, from left to right), Kenneth Franklin and Clark Jordan maneuvered one of the easel's legs onto its base. Juarez helped assemble the 80-foot steel easel and Franklin and Jordan, a Rotarian, volunteered their help.