

# NEWS & NOTES

from the ALLEGHENY REGIONAL ASSET DISTRICT

FALL 2008

## REGIONAL ASSETS SAY "THANK YOU" WITH RADICAL DAYS CELEBRATION

Nearly 50,000 people, a record-breaking number, celebrated the 7th annual RADical Days event by enjoying free admission, performances and demonstrations with RAD-funded assets. An all-time high 39 organizations said "thank you" to the public for its sales tax dollar support by opening their doors.

Photos clock-wise from upper left: trying on costumes at the **Pittsburgh Opera's** Open House at its new location in the Strip District; performance by **Attack Theatre**; performance by **Pittsburgh Youth Ballet** at the Children's Museum; visitors at **Phipps Conservatory & Botanical Gardens**; skating, tours and watching the Penguins from Sweden at **Mellon Arena**; tours of **Heinz Field**; an old-fashioned hoop roll at the **Frick Art & Historical Center**; the **Pittsburgh Cultural Trust's** Gallery Crawl.



## RAD BOARD RELEASES YEAR 2009 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

In October, the RAD Board released a 2009 Preliminary Budget that recommends 96 operating and capital grants totaling \$80.3 million to 90 assets. The proposal is \$3.7 million lower than the 2008 budget largely due to a reduction in discretionary capital grants linked to declining revenue.

The preliminary 2009 budget is in the form of a report from the Board's Allocations Committee. The Committee described the plan as a "hold the line" budget which maintains both contractual and annual grant assets at 2008 operating levels.

In addition to \$78.4 million in operating grants, the plan calls for \$1.9 million in capital grants for regional parks as well as several other parks and trail projects. Last year an additional \$3.1 million in discretionary capital grants were included in the budget.

Under the District's governing act, a budget vote does not take place until after a period for public comment. Therefore, changes in the size and scope of the budget may be made before its adoption.

In its report to the Board the committee noted that projecting sales tax into next year has been complicated by the uncertainty in financial markets, increase in local unemployment and dropping consumer confidence. "All of these factors individually point to a reduction in retail sales but all of them happening together is uncharted territory," said the committee.

After a public hearing in late October, the Board is expected to adopt a final year 2009 budget in December. Details about the budget are at [radworkshere.org](http://radworkshere.org).

## RAD HELPS TO CLOSE THE "GAP"



In honor of Pittsburgh's 250th birthday, RAD provided a grant of \$500,000 to help close the final 9-mile gap in the Great Allegheny Passage trail.

Using these funds, the Allegheny Trail Alliance recently prepared and paved a trail on either side of the Riverton Bridge in McKeesport, helping make possible a non-stop ride from Washington, D.C. to downtown Pittsburgh.

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## RAD RENAISSANCE GRANTS CELEBRATE PITTSBURGH'S 250<sup>th</sup>

Through RAD, Pittsburgh has been celebrating the region's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday with more than a dozen "Renaissance Grant" projects that tied into the official theme, "Imagine What You Can Do Here."

RAD's Renaissance Grant program pairs the work of artists with students living and studying in Allegheny County to produce projects of real value to the community.

An update on projects:

### Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area: *Seeing Pittsburgh exhibit*

Now on display at the Bost Building in Homestead, the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area worked with 44 Pittsburghers, from age seven to 70-plus, to define their 11 Pittsburgh communities with photos and stories of their daily lives. The photographers used disposable, film, digital and even cell phone cameras to record their impressions. "The project exceeded our expectations," said Ron Baraff, curator at Rivers of Steel. "These photographers are seeing Pittsburgh today, not how it was, but what it means to be a Pittsburgher right now."



"Seeing Pittsburgh" at the Bost Building in Homestead.

### Saltworks Theatre Company: *Imagining Pittsburgh through Plays*

Kelsey Miller (age 13) of Beechview and Langston MacDiarmid (age 13) of Lawrenceville are budding playwrights at Rogers CAPA School in Pittsburgh who worked with Saltworks Theatre Company to write plays imagining what can happen in Pittsburgh - and won the opportunity to have their plays produced.

*Appreciation*, written by Kelsey, transports two disillusioned teenage girls to the Hill District of the 1930s and ultimately shows "you can do anything here and rebuild the riches in the city," according to Kelsey.

Dylan's play, *Chauncey*, is set in 1889 and features a gruff, humorous steamboat captain who is faced with the competition of trolleys and learns to accept change. "In Pittsburgh, I imagine not just what you can see, but also the growth and challenges that are here. I imagine growing here," said Langston.

Over the last six months, Rogers students researched the "imagine" theme, wrote their own drafts of plays, and worked with Saltworks staff and students on revisions. The winning plays were chosen from these efforts and will be produced on stage at Rogers CAPA in November.



Rogers CAPA students Kelsey Miller and Langston MacDiarmid.

### Calliope Folk Music: *When We Shine*

The new CD *When We Shine* is the product of Calliope's Songwriting Project funded by a RAD Renaissance Grant. "When we shine in this city, we really do shine, whether it's helping our country to win a war with manpower and steel, inventing the air-brake, curing polio, or winning a sports championship," Calliope writes in the CD liner notes. "When the chips are down, this city always seems to rise to the challenge and brings out the best qualities that make Pittsburghers a



The "When We Shine" concert was presented in July by Calliope's Songwriting Project.

unique, hardworking, humble, passionate, brilliant, and compassionate people."

The songwriting project teamed up veterans Rick Mailis and Tom Breiding with Calliope Folk Music School graduates to collaborate on songs that "touch on our city's history, accomplishments, and unique character." The songs were also performed at Calliope's summer festival this past July.

### Renaissance and Baroque Society: *The Battle of Ft. Duquesne concert*

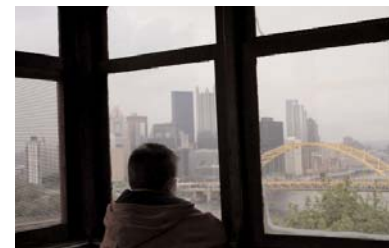
The commissioned concert *The Battle of Ft. Duquesne*, highlighting the rich history of the historic battle, was presented in September. The Chris Norman Ensemble paired 18<sup>th</sup> century music with student actors from Carnegie Mellon University, who researched and read from works of the time.



The Chris Norman Ensemble in rehearsal.

### Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh: *Imaging Pittsburgh through Photography*

Tom Morrison (now an 11<sup>th</sup> grader at Chartiers Valley High School) won "Best Achievement in Photography" in the Carnegie Library's annual high school photography contest, this year sponsored by a RAD Renaissance grant. All student photo entries will become part of the library's historic collection. Some of the photographs will be also featured in a photo book *Pittsburgh: 1758-2008* (a joint publication of Carnegie Library and the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*) to be published in November.



Tom Morrison's winning photograph: "Morrison 2- Boy viewing the city from the incline."