

# NEWS & NOTES

from the ALLEGHENY REGIONAL ASSET DISTRICT

Fall 2009

## RADical Days '09: Assets Welcome 45,000 Visitors to 39 Locations

The recently concluded *RADical Days '09* celebration opened to glorious notes with a sold-out *Rising Stars* concert by the **Pittsburgh Opera**, and closed with more than 11,000 visitors "wowed" by the **Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium** on a Steeler Sunday.

In between, dozens of regional assets offered free admission days, and free performances and activities. All told, more than 45,000 visitors experienced the annual celebration of the regional assets that took place over 17 days.

"A huge thank you goes out to all of the participating assets for opening their doors to the public, and for creating memorable performances," said David L. Donahoe, RAD's Executive Director. "This event shows some of the best that this region has to offer and in a way that anyone can take part."

The event is a thank you to the public for its support of the RAD sales tax that sup-

ports regional libraries, parks, stadiums and arenas, and arts and cultural programs. It is also a way for assets to reach out to underserved audiences, and for the public to "try out" places that they might never have visited.

If you would like to be on the email alert list for next year's celebration, visit the RAD web site [radworkshere.org](http://radworkshere.org) and click on the link to the RADical Days page.

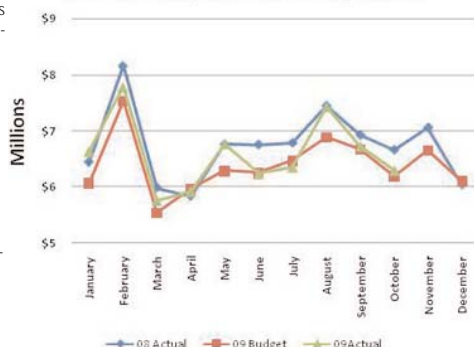
Clockwise from upper right: **Pittsburgh Youth Ballet** at the **Pittsburgh Zoo**; more than 800 visitors came to the **Frick Art & Historical Center** for tours and take-home art (photo courtesy **John Altdorfer**); the studio at the **Children's Museum** was a hit for print-making; visitors of all ages came to the **Pittsburgh Zoo** to check out wild species; at the **Sen. John Heinz History Center**, the voices of the **South Hills Chorale** soared to the atrium rafters. (Pittsburgh Zoo and Children's Museums photos by [www.soraccphoto.com](http://www.soraccphoto.com))



### Tax Revenue Update

Tax revenue through October totals \$65.9 million compared to \$67.8 million for ten months of last year or a 2.8% decline for the year to date. Collections during the early part of the year exceeded budget which assumed a 5% reduction from the prior year in each month. Recently tax revenue has come in at the 5% reduced level. Despite the downturn in the last quarter, the District projects that it will meet its 2009 budget revenue target of \$76.6 million and the board authorized release of the full 2009 grants. Release of the funds began in September.

### 2009 Monthly Revenue Comparison



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## August Wilson Center Opens with Excitement

Nearly 13 years in the making, the **August Wilson Center for African American Culture** (AWC) opened to great acclaim in September and is now open for visitors.

Anchored in Pittsburgh's downtown Cultural District, AWC seeks "to preserve, present, interpret, celebrate and shape the art, culture and history of African Americans in Western Pennsylvania and people of African descent throughout the world."

The 65,000 square-foot facility features a state-of-the-art theater, galleries with interactive exhibits, and multi-purpose spaces.

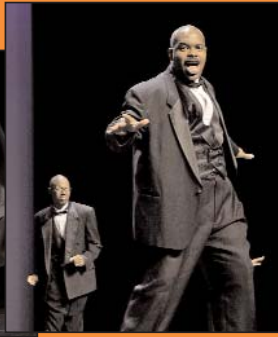
The Regional Asset District was an early supporter of the AWC, awarding a grant in 1997. It has funded AWC since then for a total of \$2.4 million for the project through 2009.

In addition, in 2008, RAD provided a Renaissance Grant for AWC for an oral

history project intended to record, to interpret and to share experiences of African Americans that came of age in Pittsburgh after World War II. Students from Carnegie Mellon University's Center for African American Urban Studies and Economy served as interviewers. The interviews are being incorporated into permanent exhibits.

AWC also is already home to two resident performance companies: the August Wilson Center Dance Ensemble, and the Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra, led by trumpeter Sean Jones. Upcoming programming includes music and dance performances, plays, film series, literary exploration, and lectures. For more information, go to [augustwilsoncenter.org](http://augustwilsoncenter.org).

Clockwise from upper right at the recent AWC RADical Days '09 event: **Jazz Workshop, Inc.** featuring **Dynasty**; exploring one of the interactive exhibits; **Kuntu Repertory Theatre**; and **Chatham Baroque**.



## NEWS FROM THE RAD BOARD

### 2010 Preliminary Budget Released, Comments Welcome

In October, the District released a 2010 preliminary budget that recommends grants totaling \$79.4 million to 89 assets. The proposal is 1% lower than the 2009 budget due to the impact of the ongoing recession on sales tax revenue—the only revenue source available to the District.

"While [the proposed budget] calls for modest changes in some allocations, it maintains current funding for libraries and city and county regional parks, places that are free to the public," according to the Allocations Committee, which recom-

mended the preliminary budget. "The District must adjust its spending to be more in line with the projected revenue level. We believe that this is a prudent course."

The distribution of grants among categories is consistent with the historic record of RAD spending. The largest category of support will go to libraries at 32% of the budget; parks will receive 31%; sports facilities will receive 19%; regional facilities like the Zoo, Phipps and Aviary will receive 9%; with other arts and cultural organizations receiving 9%. Program administration remains at less than 1% of 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 budget may be made prior to its adoption.

Written comments may be sent to the District Office at 425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1610, Pittsburgh PA, 15219 or may be e-mailed to [info@radworkshere.org](mailto:info@radworkshere.org). The Board is expected to vote on the final budget on December 1.

### Reminder: Board-Approved Diversity Plans Required for 2011 Funding

The District Board reminds applicants for year 2011 funding, for which grant applications will be due in July 2010, that all applicants are required to submit an organization diversity plan approved by its board. The District earlier this year approved its own diversity plan, which is available on the RAD web site [radworkshere.org](http://radworkshere.org).