

NEWS & NOTES

from the ALLEGHENY REGIONAL ASSET DISTRICT

SPRING 2008

RAD SUPPORT FOR PARKS BLOOMS

If you've skateboarded at one of the new "3B" sites in Boyce or South Park, taken in a free movie at Flagstaff Hill in Schenley Park, listened to great jazz music at Riverview Park, played a ball game at Renziehausen Park, or biked along the Allegheny River Trail, you've experienced first-hand how RAD works in our regional parks and trails. Parks and trails provide no-cost scenic recreational opportunities throughout the county.

RAD is the major funder of our regional parks. This year, RAD grants will fund \$25.2 million for parks, trails and green spaces throughout the county. In fact, support for regional parks, trails and other green spaces is RAD's second largest single category, representing 30% of RAD funds in 2008. Of note in the 2008 budget is an increase of \$2.5 million in operating support to the county parks to begin closing the gap between the costs of operating the parks and the level of District support. Due to revenue limitations in RAD's early years, it was not possible to fully fund the public share of the county parks.

District funds support more than 14,000 acres in 16 regional parks that include a mixture of natural settings, picnic areas, recreational facilities and fields. The District

also funds trails through the Allegheny Land Trust and natural conservation through the highly visible public gardens of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and trails of the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania.

By the end of 2008, parks and trails will have received \$277 million in funds. While operating grants fund everyday park maintenance, RAD funds have helped make possible projects like the two new "3B" (bike, board, blade) facilities in Boyce Park (*bottom left photo*) and South Park, and the new all-weather track in Schenley Park (*top left photo*). This year, capital grants will support such projects as playgrounds with water features at White Oak and Round Hill parks, walking trail renovation at Renziehausen Park, and construction of a trail connector at Boyce-Mayview Park. The District is also providing a \$500,000 capital grant to complete the purchase and construction of the final nine miles of trail needed for the Great Allegheny Passage, one of three key projects of the 250th birthday celebration this year.

Visit www.radworkshere.org for more about RAD support of parks, and for quick links to parks, trails and conservation web sites.



ARAD BOARD ELECTS NEW OFFICERS for 2008

Nominations Sought for Board At-Large Seat

At the annual Board of Directors meeting of the Allegheny Regional Asset District held on March 31, the Board elected officers for the year 2008. The following officers were elected: **Chair: Dusty Elias Kirk, Vice Chair: Daniel J. Griffin, Secretary: Constance Yarris, Treasurer: Stanley Parker.**



Dusty Elias Kirk, new RAD Board Chair

At the same meeting, the Board reorganized its standing committees and Liaison to the Citizens Advisory Board. The Allocations Committee members will be Daniel J. Griffin, Stanley Parker, and Rick Pierchalski. The Library Committee is Robert Jones, Rick Pierchalski, and Constance Yarris. The Audit Committee will be comprised of Herman Jones, Dusty Elias Kirk and Daniel J. Griffin. The Advisory Board Liaison is Constance Yarris.

Nominations Sought for At-Large Seat

The Board of Directors also announces that it is seeking nominations from regional economic and community development organizations for a person to be elected to the seventh, or "at-large" seat on the District Board.

Under state law and the County charter, four members of the Board are appointed by the County Chief Executive, two by the Mayor of Pittsburgh, and the at-large member is elected by the appointed members from a list of nominations secured from developments organizations. The person selected from the nominees serves for a two-year term and may be re-elected, provided that he or she is re-nominated.

Organizations that are qualified may request information from the District office by writing to the District at 425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1610, Pittsburgh, PA 15219; by phoning 412-227-1900; by faxing 412-227-1905; or by email at info@radworkshere.org. Information about the District can be found at www.radworkshere.org. The nomination deadline is May 2, 2008.

RAD Has Moved

A reminder that RAD has moved its office to the Regional Enterprise Tower, 425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1610, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Phone, fax and email remain the same.

Local Government Reminder

Local governments are reminded that participation in the distribution of the county sales tax requires the filing of the annual audit and financial report with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (www.newpa.com). The state uses information from the reports to calculate each municipality's share of the tax proceeds.

Under law, Allegheny County receives 25% of the proceeds each year and the municipalities located wholly within the county divide an equal amount based on a statutory formula. The respective shares were just under \$40 million each in 2007. The balance of the tax is used to support the grants to regional assets including regional parks, libraries, regional facilities like the Pittsburgh Zoo,

National Aviary and Phipps Conservatory, cultural and regional sports facilities.

Although the county and municipalities had to offset this revenue with reductions in other taxes when first enacted in 1994, the funds are now available for general government uses. Most of the governments put the proceeds in their general fund to support public safety and public works functions. In order to continue to receive these funds, local governments are also required to provide a low income senior citizen property tax relief program.

A complete breakdown of sales tax receipts by municipality is available on the District's web site, www.radworkshere.org. Just click on "How Rad Works - Municipal Funding" for the complete list.

IN THIS ISSUE

- RAD Support for Parks Blooms
- New RAD Board Chair
- Renaissance Grant Projects Update
- Local Government Reminder

Contact RAD:
425 Sixth Avenue
Suite 1610
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-227-1900
info@radworkshere.org



NEW RAD ASSETS IN 2008

In 2008, RAD will fund four new organizations with operating and/or capital grants: The **Andrew Carnegie Free Library and Music Hall** (www.carnegiecarnegie.com) is an historic building in Carnegie that houses a library, gymnasium, civil war museum and meeting rooms. RAD is providing capital funds for the renovation of the 500-seat music hall portion of the building. The **North Suburban Symphonic Band** (www.nssband.org) is a community organization of approximately 60 volunteers, founded in 1992. The band performs a wide repertoire of band music from classical to modern. **Pittsburgh Playwrights Theater** (www.pgh-playwrights.com) strives to showcase the works of local playwrights, to develop racially and culturally diverse audiences and to provide an environment for theatre artists to develop their craft. PPTCO will present August Wilson's *Two Trains Running* in May. **Venture Outdoors** supports a wide range of recreational programming in the regional parks, including kayaking, fishing, hiking and biking. Their web site, www.ventureoutdoors.org, has a comprehensive schedule.



Photo courtesy of Venture Outdoors.

2009 APPLICATIONS

Applicants for RAD funding for 2009 are reminded that RAD will use the Pennsylvania Cultural Data Project (PACDP) for its year 2009 application system. Applicants must register with PACDP (there is no charge) in order to apply for RAD funds, and can do so at any time at www.pacdp.org.

There will be two parts to the RAD application. Part 1 will comprise information of specific interest to RAD and is expected to be available for data entry in early June. Part 2 is a set of financial data that applicants can enter now on the PACDP.

RAD will host a training session on May 8. To register for this session, visit www.radpadcp.eventbrite.com.

RENAISSANCE GRANT PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Pittsburgh's 250th birthday celebration is in progress - and so are RAD's Renaissance Grants in support of the celebration's theme *Imagine What You Can Do Here*.

At **WYEP** (photo at bottom), staff and FreeZone student helpers are currently hard at work conducting interviews and collecting audio for WYEP's Pittsburgh performance Project, funded by a RAD Renaissance grant. The students tried out new recording equipment and used their radio journalism skills at the WYEP Community Broadcast Center. After much lively discussion and reminiscing, WYEP listeners and a panel of local music experts nominated the Top 12 most culturally-significant Pittsburgh venues for live music. The venues will be featured in a multi-media presentation and displayed this summer. Stay tuned!

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (image, top right) invites all amateur high school student photographers in grades 9-12 in Allegheny County to compete in its 2008 High School Photo Contest. The RAD-funded project carries the theme *Imagine What You Can Do Here!* and prizes range from \$100 to \$500. In addition, students works will be exhibited at the Library. Deadline for entries is May 1, 2008; visit www.carnegielibrary.org for Contest Rules and Entry Forms.

The **African American Jazz Preservation Society** produced multi-media performances in April at the **Kelly-Strayhorn Theater** that combined film, music and theater to tell the story of the early jazz scene in Pittsburgh.

Students at the **Children's Festival Chorus** (middle photo) have completed lyrics for a commissioned choral piece, *Pittsburgh Portraits*, that will be set to music composed by Dr. Jeffrey Nytch. The piece will be performed at the Chorus' 25th Anniversary Concert on May 4, 2008 at the Byham Theater.

You can follow these and the other 10 Renaissance Grant projects, and search for performance dates, at RAD's web site www.rad-workshere.org. For more about the region's 250th celebration, visit www.imaginepittsburgh.com.

