

# NEWS & NOTES

from the ALLEGHENY REGIONAL ASSET DISTRICT

FALL 2005

## “RADical Days 2005” Draws 31,000+ Visitors to Regional Assets



From gallery crawls to skating at Mellon Arena, from chorale to contemporary dance, more than 31,000 visitors took part in “RADical Days 2005,” a celebration of the regional assets that featured free admissions, performances and family activities with more than 50 regional assets. Now in its fourth year, “RADical Days,” drew diverse crowds to a wide range of venues and performances, and was a way for the assets to thank the public for its support of the county sales tax. See additional coverage on the back page of the newsletter, including a new offer of free skating lessons from the Allegheny County Dept. of Parks in honor of RADical Days.

*Clockwise from left: Gallery Crawl after-party at the Cabaret Theater, sponsored by the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, photo by Larry Rippel; skaters at Mellon Arena; visitors at the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History.*



### TAX REVENUE UPDATE

#### Year 2006 Preliminary Budget Announced

Tax revenue for the first nine months of 2005 totals \$56.7 million, about \$1.6 million ahead of the same period last year.

The growth this year occurred largely in the first quarter. The numbers represent sales through July prior to the recent significant spike in energy costs and drop in consumer confidence.

As a result of continually rising interest rates this year, interest earnings now total \$374,000 exceeding both the total for 2004 and the 2005 budget estimate.

On October 3, the Allocations Committee submitted a 2006 preliminary

budget totalling \$73.7 million. The committee is projecting a decrease in sales tax revenue for 2006. The proposal would fund 81 operating and capital grants to 78 organizations, utilizing an estimate \$71.9 million in tax collections and interest, and \$1.8 million of the District's reserve. Funding by category is consistent with prior District's budgets; 61% would go to libraries and parks, places that are free to the public.

Monthly financial summaries are posted on the web site and are available in detail from the District office. A final budget is expected to be adopted on December 1. Public comment is welcome and can be submitted by mail, email or phone.

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- Asset Feature: Shared Service Program at City Theatre

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## RADical Days 2005

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To continue the RADical Days spirit, the Allegheny County Department of Parks will offer free learn-to-skate lessons at the North Park Ice Rink and the South Park Ice Rink.

Details and restrictions are the following: skaters are limited to age 5 and older, no exceptions; Session 1 begins Tues., Nov. 15 (last names A-K) and Thurs., Nov. 17 (L-Z); Session 2 begins Tues. Jan. 3 (A-K) and Thurs. Jan. 5 (L-Z); sign-up from 3:30-4:30PM; lessons from 4:30-5:10PM; lessons run for four weeks; limited number of spaces; small fee for skate rental. Call (724) 935-1280 for more information.

*Clockwise from top right: Demonstration by North Pittsburgh Philharmonic; glass-blowing demonstration at Pittsburgh Glass Center; preparing bird meals at the National Aviary; celebrating the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh-East Liberty 100th Anniversary, photo by John W. Davis; the Pittsburgh CLO's "Forever Plaid" ensemble performing at the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium; visitors to Soldiers & Sailors National Military Museum & Memorial.*



## Shared Service Opportunity: Audio Description Service via City Theatre

City Theatre has been named VSA Arts/Pennsylvania's Western PA partner for a new program that makes theatrical performances more accessible to patrons who are blind or have low vision. Thanks to the Verizon Foundation, City Theatre has received a portable audio description system, including 40 receivers and a variety of headsets, from VSA Arts. This system will be used once during the run of each show in City Theatre's 2005-2006 season to make performances accessible to people with vision problems, those who are blind or have low-vision. City Theatre is making this program available to other performing arts venues.

The first Audio Description performance at City Theatre took place on Sunday, October 2. During a pre-show presentation, six patrons with blind or low-vision and their companions were introduced to the *Crowns* set, costumes (including hats) and voices of the performers. A team of two newly-trained audio describers provided the service; other recent trainees listened in on their work.

Other performing arts venues that know that they want to make audio description available to their patrons or that simply want an introduction to the program should contact Diane Nutting, City Theatre's Director of Education/Accessibility Coordinator, at [dnutting@citytheatrecompany.org](mailto:dnutting@citytheatrecompany.org). (There is a nominal charge to theatres for the use of the portable audio description system.)

## RAD BOARD SEEKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Board of Directors of the Regional Asset District is seeking nominations from the community for persons to serve on the District's Citizen Advisory Board. There are several positions available.

The 27-member panel is charged with providing advice on policies and special projects, and meets about three times a year. The Board seeks diverse representation on the Board from throughout Allegheny County. Any interested persons should send a letter and resume to David Donahoe, Executive Director, Allegheny Regional Asset District, One Smithfield Street, Suite 310, Pittsburgh, PA 15222, or email that information to [info@radworkshere.org](mailto:info@radworkshere.org).



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