

# NEWS & NOTES

from the ALLEGHENY REGIONAL ASSET DISTRICT

Spring 2005

## ASSET FEATURE: "GETTING TO KNOW YOU"

On any given day in the County, there are numerous arts and culture experiences to tempt a patron. RAD alone funds more than 70 such organizations that span the geography of the County, and cross many artistic disciplines and styles. In this space we offer a few gems that you might not have discovered and encourage you to visit our web site ([www.radworkshere.org](http://www.radworkshere.org); click on 2005 funded assets) for links to dozens more.

**Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre**  
[www.picttheatre.org](http://www.picttheatre.org)  
412-561-6000



Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre's "James Joyce's The Dead," its first musical production. Photo by Suellen Fitzsimmons.

The Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre was founded in 1996 by local artists Andrew S. Paul and Stephanie Riso to diversify the region's theatrical offerings by providing Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania audiences with high-quality, text-driven, affordable productions of classical theatre and the works of classical and contemporary Irish playwrights.

PICT has experienced tremendous growth, doubling both its budget and audience over the past three years. It has increased the number of main-stage productions from three to five per season, and earned income of 57% is better than national average (currently 53%, according to the

Theatre Communications Group). Subscriptions have risen dramatically from 1,200 in 2003 to more than 1,800 in 2004 (an increase of 50%). Interestingly, with its move to Oakland and proximity to universities, nearly 20% of all PICT attendees are under25/full time students.

PICT attributes its success to a clear mission, high quality product, consistent audience growth and reputation for sound fiscal management. The company's productions are consistently ranked among the year's best. In December, PICT produced its first musical, *James Joyce's The Dead*. It will continue with other productions including a major large cast Shakespeare play (*Henry IV*), and a commissioned work to star Oscar-nominated Irish actor Stephen Rea. Its Storytellers Series and Cabaret Pittsburgh both reach out to new audiences.

**Jazz Workshop**  
[www.jazzworkshopinc.org](http://www.jazzworkshopinc.org)  
412-242-4399



Jazz Workshop, Inc. can be found performing on the steps of the Carnegie Library-Homewood, every Wednesday evening in June and July from 6-7:30PM. Performances are free of charge.

Often expressed as "America's music," jazz is kept alive, well and growing at the Jazz Workshop, Inc. Founded thirty years ago by jazz musician Harold Young, Jazz Workshop, Inc. provides music education that teaches jazz and other forms of music to under-served students and other populations to promote jazz as an art form and to build multi-cultural understanding and self-expression through music.

Jazz Workshop offers many hours of jazz performance throughout the County, and  
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## RECENT RAD BOARD ACTION

### Board Adopts New Policy on Asset Board Diversity

To reaffirm its commitment to diversity among the regional assets, the District Board recently adopted a new policy to encourage assets to diversify the racial composition of their boards and employees. The new policy was recommended by an Ad Hoc Committee appointed in January, and will be incorporated into the District's year 2006 applications.

The new policy states, "It is the intent of the District Board to make progress towards increasing minority representation on boards and among employees of funded assets. In addition to submitting statistical information, applicants in the future will be asked to outline plans and activities designed to achieve diversity goals they have set for their organization."

RAD staff will be informing the assets about this new policy, on community resources to assist them, and will develop data collections and analysis procedures to allow the Board to monitor progress on this policy's objectives.

While the Committee did not recommend a specific goal that would apply to each asset, the Committee found that additional progress can and should be made on diversifying representation on asset boards and employment, and that the District should adopt a stated policy in order to express its substantial interest in this issue.

### RAD Approves Storm Grants

The District Board in April also approved three capital grants to eligible assets that were impacted by the storm from September of 2004: \$50,000 to Montour Trail Corporation for the repair of trail bridges and stabilizing the base along the trail area that winds through western Allegheny County; \$10,000 to Southwest Ballet Company of Carnegie, PA for the replacement of equipment; \$2,000 to Pittsburgh Musical Theater for the replacement of a stage curtain at their West End school and studio.

## TAX REVENUE UPDATE

Tax revenue for the first four months of 2005 totals \$25.5 million, about \$1.4 million ahead of the same period last year. This growth occurred in January and February and represented strong holiday sales from late last year. March and April have been more consistent with the same months last year.

Although it is too early to know if this trend will continue, it does represent the strongest quarter growth in three years. It does not, however, represent new found money as the District has been

balancing its budget with diminishing reserve funds during this time. Interest earnings for the first quarter total \$108,000 which is also ahead of budget due to several increases in the rates already this year.

The District is also pleased to report that the new sales tax collection system implemented by the state in March appears to have met its objectives and there was no disruption in the flow of funds to the District.

Monthly financial summaries are also available on the District's web site and from the District office.

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is particularly noted for its Family Nights, and Jazz on the Steps of Carnegie Library programs, featuring students and other musicians. Jazz Workshop has experienced additional growth in student enrollment and additional programming at its home, the Carnegie Library Homewood branch, particularly since the library's renovation. Programming includes class instruction, outreach to day care and senior care center, and even Jazz for Tots, which integrates percussion with sing-along.

Students at Jazz Workshop are encouraged to stay committed to music programs, to make improvements in their academic achievements and to increase their self-esteem.

**South Park Theatre**  
[www.southparktheatre.com](http://www.southparktheatre.com)  
412-831-8552



South Park Theatre's production of "Funny Money" in the summer of 2004.

Founded in 1995, South Park Theatre started as a small, summer production company with four plays in the summer. Now, South Park Theatre spans three seasons with eight mainstage productions, and five classic children's tales each summer.

South Park Theatre introduces affordable, quality theatre to children and families to encourage participation and involvement in the arts through children's productions, adult productions and educational programs. The theatre relies heavily on the talent of both local students and professionals and is looking to increase apprenticeship opportunities

Working to grow its audiences and provide quality theater with additional shows, South Park Theatre now includes Saturday matinees for mainstage productions. This has paid off with an increase of 2000 patrons for the 2004 season compared with 2003.

This spring, South Park Theatre will bring back its record-breaking *Always...Patsy Cline*, and is adding another Main Stage show in October. Tickets for children's theater productions are only \$2 for ages two and up.

**Artists Image Resource, Inc.**  
[www.artistsimageresource.org](http://www.artistsimageresource.org)  
412-321-8664

Ever wonder just how Andy Warhol printed those soup cans? Well, check out Artists Image Resource (AIR). AIR is the only fine art printmaking studio in the region. It provides educational and print-related programs and services to a wide variety of populations.

Located on the North Side, AIR serves

arts organizations and area students by designing collaborative programs that investigate issues like visual literacy, critical thinking, teamwork and creativity. AIR is a working studio and is open and accessible to the public on a walk-in basis. Its goal is to provide an active and vital imaging laboratory to support artists and facilitate creative activity.

Over the past eight years, AIR has executed 50 artists' projects, 30 collaborative educational projects, 20 exhibitions and numerous other programs. Its current exhibit "Hoverings," by artist Patricia Villalobos Echeverria and AIR Open Studio Participants,

At its next Open House on July 23, families, younger students, educators and the general public can gain insights into the creative process and image-making through demonstrations, gallery talks and exhibits.



AIR collaborative educational projects bring dynamic educational possibilities to students at a number of area high schools including the Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts.



## ASSET FEATURED PHOTO: Highland Park

Work continues for an expected spring re-opening of the renovated entrance to Highland Park, one of four RAD-funded City of Pittsburgh Regional Parks. In 2005, the District will provide the City of Pittsburgh Regional Parks with grants of \$4,431,000 for operating costs (used for maintenance) and \$722,000 in capital grants (for various projects including tennis court rehabilitation, shelter and sidewalk repairs). Improvements are being led by the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, with \$475,000 of the \$1.2m budget provided by RAD through its grants to the City.



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