

HILL SIDES

Plans for a new hockey arena reopen 50-year-old urban renewal wounds and spur neighbors to stake their claims on the development.

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The Magazine of The Heinz Endowments



inside

The Heinz Endowments was formed from the Howard Heinz Endowment, established in 1941, and the Vira I. Heinz Endowment, established in 1986. It is the product of a deep family commitment to community and the common good that began with H.J. Heinz, and which continues to this day.

The Endowments is based in Pittsburgh, where we use our region as a laboratory for the development of solutions to challenges that are national in scope. Although the majority of our giving is concentrated within southwestern Pennsylvania, we work wherever necessary, including statewide and nationally, to fulfill our mission.

That mission is to help our region thrive as a whole community—economically, ecologically, educationally and culturally—while advancing the

state of knowledge and practice in the fields in which we work. Our fields of emphasis include philanthropy in general and the disciplines represented by our five grant-making programs: Arts & Culture; Children, Youth & Families; Education; Environment; and Innovation Economy.

In life, Howard Heinz and Vira I. Heinz set high expectations for their philanthropy. Today, the Endowments is committed to doing the same. Our charge is to be diligent, thoughtful and creative in continually working to set new standards of philanthropic excellence. Recognizing that none of our work would be possible without a sound financial base, we also are committed to preserving and enhancing the Endowments' assets through prudent investment management.

h magazine is a publication of The Heinz Endowments. At the Endowments, we are committed to promoting learning in philanthropy and in the specific fields represented by our grant-making programs. As an expression of that commitment, this publication is intended to share information about significant lessons and insights we are deriving from our work.

Editorial Team Linda Bannon, Linda Braund, Donna Evans, Carmen Lee, Douglas Root, Robert Vagt. Design: Landesberg Design

About the cover Protesting outside Mellon Arena in 2007, Brenda Tate joined many other Hill District residents and supporters in demanding a written contract of community benefits from a new hockey arena. Less visible but also important was the foundation-supported technical assistance provided for the year-long bargaining process. Photo: Copyright, © Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 2009, all rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

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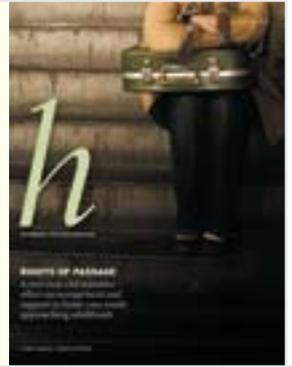
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feedback

Our Fall issue looked at a foundation-supported program in Allegheny County that helps youth in foster care make successful transitions to adulthood. We also highlighted a project to plant more trees in Pittsburgh neighborhoods of all incomes and examined plans at Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens to construct a new education-and-research center as a “living building,” the cutting edge in green design.



Taking Root

Trees. They're not just for forests anymore. Of course, they never were—although in many urban areas, it may have seemed that way. Carmen Lee's story "Taking Root" highlights TreeVitalize Pittsburgh's work to reverse the decline in the urban tree canopy in southwestern Pennsylvania. As manager of the Philadelphia program, I have been working with colleagues on a similar effort since the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources launched the TreeVitalize initiative in 2004. More than 20,000 street trees later, we're still at it, and setting our sights ever higher. And the department is now taking the program to other metro areas across the state.

The challenges are many, including limited resources, limited sidewalk space for tree pits, limited local stewardship capacity, and overall harsh urban conditions. But those obstacles are surmountable and well worth the effort in order to achieve the many benefits of urban trees, so well-described in your article: shade, oxygen, health and recreation, cleaner air and water, wildlife habitat, energy conservation, economic development, community revitalization and, my personal favorite, spiritual sustenance.

We can make great strides if we work together—federal and state agencies, local municipalities, nonprofit organizations, corporate sponsors, neighborhood Tree Tenders, schoolchildren and tree huggers everywhere. The steps we are taking today show our faith in our shared future.

Michael Leff
TreeVitalize Program Manager
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
Philadelphia, Pa.

Living Building

In my dual capacity as a research director and a designer, I was heartened by Jeffery Fraser's article "Living Building" about the Center for Sustainable Landscapes at Phipps

Conservatory. I am the Cascadia Region Green Building Council staff person dedicated to the development and deployment of the Living Building Challenge, so I appreciate the Phipps design team's persistence and proficiency. As an architect, I also am galvanized by the many ecological solutions proposed on this project and installed throughout the campus. Indeed, Phipps Conservatory is a sanctuary—not only for flora conservation but also for sustainable design practices.

It is hardly a surprise that the Center for Sustainable Landscapes is being designed to meet the Living Building Challenge. The goals of the program clearly align with Phipps Conservatory's mission to be "a strong advocate for advanced green-building practices, sustainable gardening and a new environmental awareness." In parallel, the Living Building Challenge stipulates that each building functions as elegantly and efficiently as a flower: having been informed by its eco-region's characteristics; generating all of its own energy with renewable resources; capturing and treating all of its water; and operating efficiently and for maximum beauty. The challenge is a rigorous performance-based standard that relies on restorative principles to inform design and construction processes. This allows projects in every region to be in harmony with the specifics of their particular environment and reflect the needs and aspirations of future inhabitants.

Eden Brukman
Research Director,
Cascadia Region Green Building Council
Portland, Ore.

Independence Day

Christine O'Toole's story "Independence Day" vividly describes Allegheny County's Independent Living Program and Independent Living Initiative, two long-overdue and much-needed programs.

As the CEO of Familylinks, one of the 25 largest social service nonprofits in southwestern Pennsylvania with shelter/residential programs for at-risk youth, I see firsthand how the social service system fails this population. While very diligent in areas such as providing safe environments, access to medical services, individual and group treatment, and recreation, many of the region's agencies fail their responsibility to provide for the transition of these youth into a responsible level of independence. This is especially true of youth who have essentially "grown up" in the foster care system.

What Familylinks has found is that many of these youth become so frustrated with the "system," they sign themselves out of care upon their 18th birthday, regardless of their readiness. Many seek to return to the same family and unhealthy surroundings they left when they entered foster care. In many of these cases, the issues that led to the youth's removal remain. Surviving, rather than thriving, becomes the theme.

Funding support of the Independent Living Program and the Independent Living Initiative has allowed social service providers like Familylinks to establish relationships with these youth while they are high school age. The programs also provide opportunities for youth to become explorers. By spending less time thinking about how their basic needs will be met, the youth can focus on creative ideas that may ultimately lead to successful career paths.

It is important that these services connect to foster care youth as early as possible. When they receive valuable guidance and support within a healthy relationship framework, these youth can succeed in significant numbers—and do.

Frederick A. Massey, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer
Familylinks
Pittsburgh, Pa.

message



Barry Lavery

By *Teresa Heinz*
Chairman, The Heinz Endowments

Back in 1993, I had a press conference at my home in Pittsburgh—an unusually private setting for a very public decision—to announce that I would not pursue the U.S. Senate seat held for 14 years by my late husband, John Heinz.

The family home backdrop for this gathering was not chosen for the sake of convenience. I wanted to demonstrate how deeply personal this decision was for me, and how it flowed directly from my love for my family and my passion for improving the health and vitality of my hometown Pittsburgh, my state and my country.

In announcing the decision not to run, I praised those who devote their lives to public service, but I criticized political campaigns then as the graveyard of real ideas and the birthplace of empty promises.

The more inspiring place that called out to me, and the one that seemed primed to act on promising ideas for improving the lives of people in the communities I know so well, was philanthropy. I believed that with effective leadership, philanthropy could be more innovative, more focused in solving problems and more collaborative with those who stand to benefit from the programs we fund.

Sixteen years later, I participated in an extraordinary presidential election and witnessed an inauguration in which some two million people covered the Mall in front of the U.S. Capitol like a giant national quilt stitched with patches of hope and goodwill. This year, it seemed that a politics of inclusion and big ideas was finally emerging. And it was happening just as the country was facing the most wrenching economic crisis since the 1930s.

Yet, within a month of a new president taking office and a new Congress being sworn in, the all-too-familiar campaign-style backbiting, the “gotcha” and hope-you-fail politics, were on full display.

This speedy return of petty partisanship and nay-saying in the face of unprecedented economic troubles has served to highlight philanthropy’s special leadership-by-example role.

Certainly, the stakes are such that we in philanthropy have a responsibility to not let government or corporations lose sight of the opportunities that lie beyond stock market plunges and financial system convulsions. As just one example, foundations can collaborate with government agencies in support of directing the stimulus money where it will meet the greatest need and with the best chance of lasting change.

It is the philanthropic sector that is uniquely positioned to seize this “teachable moment” and do a better job of demonstrating work habits for which we are known—collaborating instead of carping, focusing instead of flailing.

In Pittsburgh, for example, foundation community–government–nonprofit collaboration resulted in the creation of a special emergency human services fund known as Neighbor Aid, designed to get resources to groups overwhelmed by requests from neighbors in need of help. In the environment sector, a broad and successful green-building movement, with new public–private industry partnerships, has given a sharper focus to developing a green-building products industry in the region, creating new jobs that will last long after this recession is behind us.

Many philanthropies also have another trait that gives them great public credibility in these tumultuous times. The legendary corporate management consultant Jim Collins, author of such business-book classics as “Good to Great” and “Built to Last,” describes it as “minding your moorings.” What really matters, he said in a *Fortune Magazine* interview in January, “is that you actually have core values. . . . The more challenged you are, the more you have to be grounded in your values. And you need to preserve them consistently over time.”

In reading the stories for this issue, I am heartened at how well the voices within them reflect the values that the Endowments has stood for through the decades. The cover story, “Uphill Battle,” reporting on how Pittsburgh’s mostly Black Hill District community was able to begin recovery from an urban renewal travesty of 50 years ago by negotiating an unprecedented community benefits agreement, shows the power of philanthropy–community collaboration. In “Trail Ways,” a decade of unrelenting focus by the Environment Program on efforts to complete the Great Allegheny Passage trail system has brought a surge of economic development along with recreational users in rural towns along the path from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C. In “Stage Craft,” leaders of Pittsburgh’s small arts organizations show their determination to survive in a toxic economy.

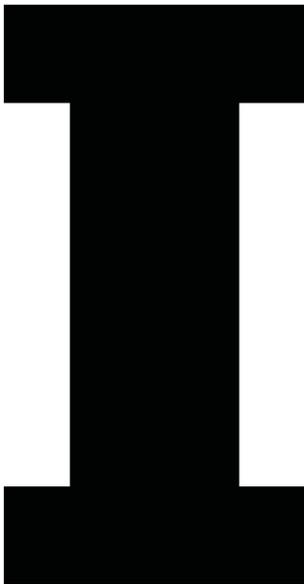
“Look, we’re not feeding the homeless,” says Janera Solomon, executive director of East Liberty’s Kelly-Strayhorn Theater. “We work in the arts. Our job is to be creative. And this crisis is an opportunity to show what we can do under pressure.”

I am wondering if Janera’s message shouldn’t apply to all of us working in the nonprofit world—to use this crisis to find opportunities and to lead creatively. My hope is that, when we emerge from this troubled period, it will be said that American philanthropy did some of its best work ever. *h*

STAGE CRAFT

A photograph of a theater stage. A single spotlight illuminates a small area on the wooden floor, where a single US dollar bill lies flat. The rest of the stage and the dark theater seats in the foreground are in shadow.

AS THE PLOT UNFOLDS IN THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS, SMALL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS
ARE CENTER STAGE IN THE DRAMA, SCRAMBLING TO FIND NEW STRATEGIES AND SUPPORTERS
TO KEEP THEATERS AND GALLERIES FROM GOING DARK. IN PITTSBURGH, A REPORT
ON PERFORMERS IN SURVIVAL MODE. BY JEFF SEWALD ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL RICCI



If the recent history of small arts organizations in Pittsburgh were staged as a three-act play, the gripping drama would be sure to pack the house.

In Act I, small arts groups burst onto the scene with fresh ideas and experimental productions. In Act II, they each carve out their niche, overcoming daunting odds to secure a home on the cultural landscape.

That could have neatly ended the play, but in a startling twist, Act III opens with a treacherous economy threatening to wipe out all that the groups have struggled to achieve. Will they survive? What changes will they make to regain their financial footing? What will local philanthropies do?

It's a dramatic climax that's all too real for small arts organizations in Pittsburgh and across the country as they look for new ways to reduce expenses and attract funding during this latest economic freefall.

KARLA BOOS *artistic director*

“I can do a lot, cost-cutting and so on, but I can’t easily replace a \$75,000 foundation grant that I was counting on if it doesn’t materialize.”

Known in Pittsburgh for its innovative performance locations as well as its unique plays, Quantum Theatre draws both loyal supporters and curiosity seekers. In February, the company presented Kevin Elyot’s “Mouth to Mouth” in a vacant downtown office building. From left, the actors in the performance are Ken Bolden, Jeffrey Carpenter, John Shepard and Robyne Parrish.

QUANTUM THEATRE

Heather Mull





In one sense, working within the confines of limited staffs and tight budgets is what small arts organizations always do, says Gwen Hunter, the director of Laboratory Company Dance in Pittsburgh. But the current economic crisis has her worried.

“We sent out our individual donor appeal letter in the fall,” she says, “and got back half of what we usually get.” To make matters worse, some of her foundation funding has been put on hold. “We intend to survive, but we will have to scale back our productions.” She sees a limit, however, to the trimming any arts organization can do if it is to fulfill its mission and offer value to its audience.

Many arts leaders in the Pittsburgh region expect government, corporate and individual giving to continue their trends downward, along with bank lending. And the future of foundation grants is a real source of anxiety. That’s why a number of these arts groups are focusing more energy on finding new ways to become self-sufficient and diversifying their program offerings to draw new audiences.

“Everyone’s feeling it,” says David Seals, programs manager for the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council. “We’ve chosen to focus on helping arts organizations plan today for what we see as potentially significant funding decreases down the road.”

Probably nowhere was this foreboding more evident in Pittsburgh than at a packed March 3 meeting in which the Arts Council released a survey showing that only a slim majority—51 percent—of the arts groups responding said they had enough funding to make it through the year. The mood was somber among members of the region’s arts community as they heard those results and listened to a panel of funders, including Janet Sarbaugh, senior program director for Arts & Culture at The Heinz Endowments, give sobering accounts of their grants budgets.

Sarbaugh told the audience that the Endowments is committed to preserving existing

programs and grants, but she also predicted that they hadn’t seen the full impact of the souring economy. Even as the group discussed ways that arts organizations and administrators might be able to devise creative responses to the gloomy forecast, it was evident that hard decisions lay ahead.

Richard Armstrong, former head of the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh and now director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and Museum in New York, says larger institutions, such as the Guggenheim, with histories of invested money and big audiences will be able to survive. But he and others familiar with the national arts scene describe widely varying fates for other groups.

Mid-size organizations, for example, such as symphonies and museums that attract regional audiences and have sizeable staffs but small endowments, if any, are more likely to face financial binds as contributions and ticket sales decline. Meanwhile, size will probably be an advantage for small groups that are accustomed to creating on the cheap.

“The nation’s 100,000 nonprofit arts organizations—of every size and discipline—are being hurt by the recession, and up to 10 percent of them could close this year,” says Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, a national nonprofit dedicated to advancing the arts in this country. “However, smaller arts groups are notoriously resilient. Already operating with small staffs and limited budgets, they are often thinking of creative ways to stretch their operating and production costs and can be quite nimble. A little incentive support to small arts organizations can often leverage very big returns.”

Tommer Peterson of the national Grantmakers in the Arts points out that foundations remained steadfast in their grant making during the last two economic recessions. His wish is for them to maintain funding levels until the markets have had a chance to recover and arts organizations have had a chance to retool.



“Some foundations are looking to cut their own administrative costs,” he says, “in order to keep money going out the door.” Peterson believes, however, that more foundations will be expanding reductions to other areas, which will mean that arts groups will need to apply their creativity to their finances. “No matter what funders decide to do, organizations can’t stand there with their hands out. They have to be part of the solution.”

Justin Laing, a program officer for Arts & Culture at the Endowments, has heard the concerns permeating the foundation’s roster of smaller grantees and grant hopefuls, and says the Endowments staff wants to help.

“We imagine the arts community as an ‘ecology’ with various sizes, genres and ethnicities of organizations feeding one another and improving the climate for audiences and participants,” he says. “To ignore the work of small arts organizations would weaken the general environment. Supporting them has been a priority of our Arts & Culture Program since 1995, and it is difficult to envision a time when that would not be so.”

Laing estimates the Endowments’ investments in the local Small Arts and Multi-Cultural Arts initiatives to be \$400,000 each. When other grants to specific organizations are added, the foundation invests between \$900,000 and \$1 million annually in small to mid-size arts organizations.

And the Endowments is not alone when it comes to supporting small arts in Pittsburgh. Several organizations fund select pieces of the local small arts world. For example, the Grable and Buhl foundations often support education-based arts efforts. But five organizations in particular—the Endowments, The Pittsburgh Foundation, the Allegheny County Regional Asset District, the Multi-Cultural Arts Initiative and the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council—have begun talking about how they might work better together to support arts groups.

Still, Karla Boos, Quantum Theatre’s artistic director, believes that raising big money in the current environment will be extremely difficult. So far, ticket sales for Quantum’s innovative and experimental productions have remained steady, which means Boos is not worried so much about today, but about a year from now, especially when it comes to foundation support. “I can do a lot, cost-cutting and so on, but I can’t easily replace a \$75,000 foundation grant that I was counting on if it doesn’t materialize.”

At the Kelly-Strayhorn Theater in Pittsburgh’s East Liberty neighborhood, Executive Director Janera Solomon says the theater’s advanced ticket sales have not kept pace with expenses in recent months. As a result, Solomon may be forced to host only artists whose fees are in line with a reduced cost structure. This is not optimal, but Solomon is philosophical about it.

“Look, we’re not feeding the homeless,” she says. “We work in the arts. Our job is to be creative. And this crisis is an opportunity to show what we can do under pressure.”

As part of its response to this financial crisis, the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council has launched a new market-research effort and an expanded community-wide database for small to mid-sized arts organizations to help them improve their skills in marketing on their own and in collaboration with others. It also is disbursing several corporate-funded grants aimed at audience-building and is offering workshops and pro bono consulting on a variety of pertinent topics, including arts marketing, financial competence and arts law.

“The goal is to facilitate strategic collaboration between the arts and business as well as to support self-sufficiency for artists and arts organizations,” says the Arts Council’s Seals.

For the past 18 years, Chatham Baroque has been captivating audiences at home and abroad with lively interpretations of 17th- and 18th-century



Sam Newbury

CHATHAM BAROQUE

Chatham Baroque has attracted praise locally, nationally and internationally for its ensemble's mastery of 17th- and 18th-century music using authentic instruments of that period. On stage during an October videotaping at Synod Hall in Pittsburgh's Oakland neighborhood are Andrew Fouts, left, on the violin; Patty Halverson, center, on the viola da gamba; and Scott Pauley, right, on the theorbo.

“I think it was pretty clear that we had to strengthen our ability to demonstrate value to corporations. And we did.”

JOSHUA FOSTER *executive director*

JEFFREY CARPENTER *artistic director*

“We’re hoping one day to be able to pay for our programming as we go. We know that we have to work within our means.”

During the Bricolage production company's annual Urban Scrawl fundraiser, Pittsburgh artists produce 10-minute plays in 24 hours based on incidents from the playwrights' city bus rides.

The resulting works provide opportunities for actors like George Dalzell, center, to audition for the performances that are staged the day after actors, directors and playwrights meet.

BRICOLAGE

Joshua Frenzo





music played on authentic period instruments. Joshua Foster, the group's executive director, says subscriptions are down slightly. But what's more problematic are looming cuts in government and foundation funding.

Like many small arts heads, Foster has been working as a staff of one since Thanksgiving. But thanks to efforts by his 23-member board, corporate funding has been taking up the financial support slack.

"UPMC Health Plan signed on last year as an underwriter of our performances for children and our main concert series," he says. "I think it was pretty clear that we had to strengthen our ability to demonstrate value to corporations. And we did."

At the Society for Contemporary Craft, contributed income has been holding, and registrations for studio classes, which are taught by artists, have been steady, says Executive Director Jim Wilkinson. There's little doubt, however, that if the recession deepens, students will be more selective about the courses they take, given that they aren't inexpensive.

Then there's the organization's store. "Like a gallery, we sell items from about \$20 up to several thousand dollars," Wilkinson says. And for gallery sales, which account for about one-third of the society's annual revenue, the bottom has fallen out. "We made no sales in January. It's as though we closed the store and didn't know it."

As a result, Wilkinson and his colleagues have been busy rethinking their organization, looking for ways to increase earned revenue. The high-quality craft exhibitions that they produce and dispatch around the country present a significant opportunity. "Exporting what we do is a big part of who we are," he says.

Bricolage Production Company is another organization trying to survive by exercising the entrepreneurialism for which small arts groups

are known. In just its fourth year of operation in downtown Pittsburgh, the group offers six months of free programming plus a staged reading series and several delightfully unusual events. These include an annual fundraiser called the "Urban Scrawl," in which playwrights have 12 hours to write a 10-minute play inspired by a 90-minute ride on a city bus. Then the writers have 12 more hours to ready their plays for production—a "play in a day," if you will.

"We do an annual appeal," says Artistic Director Jeffrey Carpenter, "which usually indicates people's willingness to give—and we're definitely down. So we've decided to cut our number of productions in half, alternating them with a program we call 'Midnight Radio,' which is a source of income for us."

Carpenter describes the program as a cross between "Prairie Home Companion" and "The Rocky Horror Picture Show," featuring classic radio dramas and comedy sketches, music, live "foley" sound effects and an audience "rant box."

Foundations provide Bricolage with 40 percent of its support, with gifts from individuals and proceeds from its fundraiser providing another 40 percent. The remaining 20 percent is generated by ticket sales.

"We're trying hard to bring our foundation numbers down," Carpenter says. "By alternating our free shows with 'Midnight Radio,' we're hoping one day to be able to pay for our programming as we go. We know that we have to work within our means."

In the small arts community, budgets may be hobbled but creative spirits are not. Act III continues with benefactors, funders and lovers of the arts all on the edges of their seats, waiting for a spectacular ending. *h*



UPHILL

THE LAST TIME PITTSBURGH PUBLIC OFFICIALS BUILT A SPORTS-ENTERTAINMENT ARENA IN THE CITY'S FIFTY YEARS LATER, WITH A NEW ARENA RISING, HILL LEADERS USE FOUNDATION SUPPORT

An overflow crowd anxiously waits outside a Pittsburgh Planning Commission meeting to learn whether the panel will approve a master plan for a new hockey arena in the city's Hill District. The plan was passed after the meeting last January, despite objections from residents seeking a contract for how the development would benefit the neighborhood.





BATTLE

MOSTLY BLACK HILL DISTRICT, BULLDOZERS UPENDED A VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOOD AND DISPLACED THOUSANDS. TO FORGE A NOVEL AGREEMENT AND RECLAIM PRECIOUS GROUND. BY JEFFERY FRASER



It was the first Monday of last year. Hill House Association building in Pittsburgh neighborhood leaders from city and Allegheny County officials to to the development of a new hockey arena. The reporters were about

Hope had been building in the beleaguered neighborhood for months. In 2007, thousands of volunteer hours were spent organizing and canvassing. There were heated debates over the issues. And very public negotiations began with the city, county and Pittsburgh Penguins over a contract to ensure that jobs and other benefits would flow to the Hill District from construction of a \$321 million hockey arena, financed largely with public funds, along with a hotel and other development.

Now, out of the blue, came this unilateral agreement from the city and county—released through the news media—that was neither a product of those negotiations nor the legally binding contract neighborhood leaders had sought from the outset. “I don’t anticipate any significant adjustments,” Mayor Luke Ravenstahl had told reporters. “The proposal we put forth was a fair one.”

But on that January evening, with television cameras rolling, lifelong Hill District resident Brenda Tate held up a copy of the city and county’s offer and asked: “Anybody got a match?” Someone put a lighter to the three-page document, and it went up in flames.

“We’re standing here collectively as a community to say that what was put on the table is unacceptable,” said Evan Frazier, the Hill House Association’s executive director and chief

negotiator for the One Hill Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) Coalition, which represented the Hill District at the bargaining table. At that moment, it became clear that nothing short of a legal contract spelling out negotiated benefits and giving residents a voice in shaping the future of their neighborhood would prevent community opposition to the arena and help mend lingering wounds inflicted by a failed urban renewal project some 50 years earlier.

“That was a turning point,” says Gabe Morgan, a veteran Service Employees International Union negotiator and co-chairman of the nonprofit Pittsburgh UNITED, an alliance of union, community and political groups that was part of the Hill District bargaining team. “The community’s reaction convinced everyone at the table that this was just going to have to get done.”

Eight months later, the city, county, Penguins and One Hill CBA Coalition signed a legally binding community benefits agreement—the first of its kind successfully negotiated in Pennsylvania. It includes funds to establish a job center, money to attract a grocery store to the neighborhood and other benefits related to the development of a new arena and an adjacent 28-acre tract of land. The deal also enables the coalition and neighborhood elected officials to participate in drafting a master development plan for the Hill District.

Reporters had gathered at the that cold evening to hear what Hill District thought of an unexpected offer attach certain community benefits

to get a response tailor-made for the cameras.

But perhaps most important, the agreement reveals how a community found the will and a way to begin healing the wounds from evictions and bulldozers five decades earlier. By rejecting a politically expedient deal, neighborhood leaders gained a document that has the power to breathe new energy into the Hill District and offers promise for its future.

By measure of endurance alone, arriving at a settlement was an achievement. The difficult negotiations took nearly a year to complete, and everyone involved faced challenges. It required government officials and the developer to shed traditional top-down tactics and accommodate the community will, championed by the One Hill CBA Coalition, an amalgam of some 100 Hill District organizations, unions and other supporters. It required Hill District leaders to navigate neighborhood politics, build a coalition, galvanize support, draft a bargaining platform and speak with one voice during the negotiations.

It meant a group of local foundations had to avoid influencing, as much as possible, such sensitive issues as community representation, bargaining goals and negotiations outcomes—even though they had introduced the benefits agreement concept to the region and their grants helped provide the community with legal and other technical support. Led by the Falk Foundation, the collaboration included The Heinz Endowments, The Pittsburgh Foundation, POISE, and the Women and Girls Foundation of Southwest Pennsylvania, and marked one of the nation's first local philanthropic efforts connected with such agreements.

“From our point of view, it was very important to be supportive, but not directive,” says Endowments President Bobby Vagt. “I think that is an absolutely critical distinction.”

And it was a challenging line to draw given that several Endowments staff members had personal ties to the neighborhood.

One of the Hill-connected staffers, Bomani Howze, who works in the Innovation Economy section, draws on family history in describing the significance of the benefits contract. “The Hill was politically and economically disenfranchised under segregation when my grandparents and parents were forcibly removed from the 28-acre site,” he says. “Today the community is striving to leverage its political representation and grassroots organizing to translate into community revitalization.”

For all parties, successfully negotiating the community benefits agreement required overcoming the weight of history. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, much of the Lower Hill District was demolished to make way for new cultural amenities, including a municipal arena with a retractable dome. The late Mayor David L. Lawrence's grand vision of a cultural center on the hill overlooking downtown was abandoned after the 1962 opening of the arena, known today as Mellon Arena—but not before some 100 acres of houses and businesses were razed and 8,000 residents displaced. The neighborhood's business core was left crippled. Population fell steadily and steeply. Crime and widespread poverty emerged as inexorable problems.

Researchers have found that the destruction of large established neighborhoods inflicts psychological wounds much like the traumatic stress response seen among victims of hurricanes, tornadoes and floods. For individuals, the loss of a neighborhood can be disorienting and disruptive to their senses of attachment and identity. For a community, social disruption, including an increase in violence, is often seen when such severe stress is coupled with inadequate resources for managing it.

“It doesn’t just tear the social fabric. It destroys it,” says Columbia University psychiatry professor Mindy Fullilove, who has studied the impact of urban renewal on neighborhoods, including the Hill. She writes about the consequences in her book “Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and What We Can Do About It.”

A community benefits agreement is an emerging strategy that attempts to prevent such devastation. It is a legally binding contract that developers, government officials and coalitions of neighborhood organizations negotiate to ensure that communities share in the benefits of major development projects, particularly those that receive significant public subsidies. These contracts give residents a voice in shaping projects in their neighborhoods and provide a way to enforce benefits negotiated to address certain neighborhood needs. In return, developers faithful to the agreement get assurances that the community won’t stand in the way of the permits and other government approvals necessary for a project to move forward.

These agreements are relatively young. The first was struck in 2001 and involved a coalition of Los Angeles community organizations and unions and a developer who received \$150 million in public subsidies to help build a sports and entertainment district adjacent to the downtown Staples Center sports arena. Benefits won by community negotiators included an agreement to give low-income residents first consideration for jobs created by the project, a developer commitment of seed money

for affordable housing and \$1 million from the developer to provide community park and recreation amenities. The deal was the genesis of a national movement, which has since led to agreements in places such as San Diego, Denver, New York and Chicago.

In Pittsburgh, the first written demands for community benefits from the arena development were presented to city and county officials in April 2007 by a group of about 20 Hill District ministers and business leaders led by Marimba Milliones, a community leader and businesswoman, and the Rev. Johnnie Monroe, pastor of Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church.

The benefits they sought included a \$10 million development fund to be paid up front, annual contributions thereafter, a share of the arena revenues and a pledge to hire minority workers to fill 30 percent of the jobs created by the arena and nearby development. Their stand drew widespread news coverage as did disagreement among political factions, which surfaced immediately. Tonya Payne, the Hill District’s city councilwoman, characterized the group’s approach as smacking of entitlement and criticized them for presenting demands that were not the result of neighborhood-wide meetings or other means of polling the broader community.

Meanwhile, officials of a prominent neighborhood coalition, the Hill District Consensus Group, were talking with the fledgling Pittsburgh UNITED about the possibility of negotiating a community benefits agreement that would be attached to the arena development. The One Hill CBA Coalition was soon organized around that idea, gaining the support of Pittsburgh UNITED and access to funding from the Fulfilling the Dream Fund, which was established in 2004 with \$10 million from the Ford Foundation. By matching support from local philanthropies, the national initiative defends, supports and expands affirmative action and other efforts to promote racial and gender inclusion.

POINTS IN TIME

Early 1800s The Hill District starts as "Farm Number Three," which a grandson of William Penn had sold to Gen. Adamson Tannehill, a Revolutionary War veteran. Thomas Mellon later buys a tract of this farmland that is on the slopes nearest the city and subdivides it into small plots, beginning the Hill's transition into a residential community.

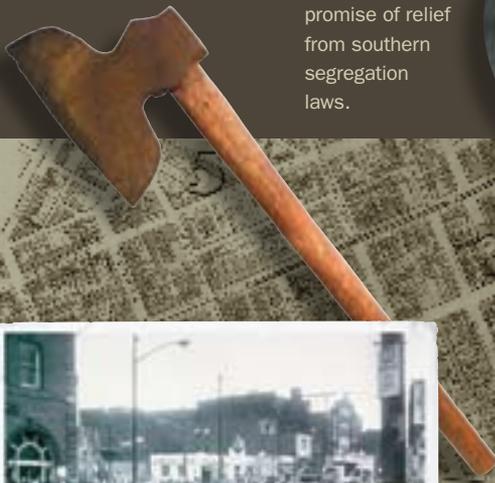
1870-1890 Jewish immigrants begin to replace the original settlers on the Hill. Following them are Italians, Syrians, Greeks and Poles. African Americans begin arriving from the South between 1880 and 1890, drawn by the promise of relief from southern segregation laws.

1930s and 1940s

The Hill District thrives during this period. It pulses with round-the-clock activity and is one of the most influential Black neighborhoods in the country. It is world-renowned for its music. Nearly every great jazz musician plays at the Crawford Grill, the historic jazz club on Wylie Avenue.

1950-1955 Pittsburgh receives more than \$32 million in federal funds and \$1 million from the state for urban renewal in the Hill District as part of the Pittsburgh Renaissance. Original plans call for the construction of theaters, retail stores, luxury apartments, a new symphony hall and a municipal arena with a retractable dome roof.

1956-1961 Hill District redevelopment displaces 416 businesses and more than 8,000 people. In 1960, residents opposing further urban renewal in the neighborhood erect a billboard at the corner of Centre Avenue and Crawford Street that says, "No redevelopment beyond this point!" Forty-one years later, a monument is erected on that spot to commemorate their stand. In 1961, the Civic Arena, now known as the Mellon Arena, is dedicated. It would be the only significant structure from the original cultural center plans to be built.



1963-1968 Reflecting the civil rights movement that is sweeping the country, more than 2,000 people march in August 1963 from the Hill District to downtown for job opportunities at Duquesne Light. Other protests follow, including marches against discrimination at Mine Safety Appliances, local department stores, the Pittsburgh Board of Education and the University of Pittsburgh. In 1968, riots in the Hill begin on April 5, the day after the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is slain, and last until April 12. In that week, 505 fires lead to \$620,000 in property damage, one death and 926 arrests.

1972 The current Hill House building is completed. Designed by African American architect Walter Roberts, the Hill House is the home of the Hill House Association, which was founded in 1964 and provides social services to the community.

1980s Playwright and Hill District native August Wilson begins to garner national acclaim for his plays, particularly "Fences" and "The Piano Lesson," which receive the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1987 and 1990, respectively. The two plays are part of a set of 10, collectively called the "Pittsburgh Cycle," that chronicle the African American experience in the 20th century. Nine of these plays, including "Fences" and "The Piano Lesson," are set in the Hill District, bringing attention to the cultural legacy and socio-economic struggles of the community.

1993 The first phase of Crawford Square is completed. The mixed-income, residential development sits on 17.5 acres in the Lower Hill District. As the development coordinator for the project, McCormack Baron had formed a joint venture with the Hill Community Development Corp., the Hill Project Area Committee, and the Pittsburgh Urban Redevelopment Authority.

2007-2008 In August 2007, One Hill CBA Coalition, a group representing more than 100 Hill District community organizations and other supporters, begins meeting with city, county and Pittsburgh Penguins officials to negotiate a community benefits agreement for the new hockey arena development in the neighborhood. A year later, representatives from all parties sign an agreement at the historic Freedom Corner at Centre Avenue and Crawford Street in the Hill District.



URBAN REMOVAL



The bottom 100 acres of the Hill District were razed between 1956 and 1961, uprooting more than 400 businesses and 8,000 residents, including 1,550 families, Nesbit's among them. The removal of those living there outpaced the construction of low-cost housing for all who needed it. Two-thirds of those displaced were African American. The shortage of low-cost housing for the city's Black population became a crisis. By 1960, Pittsburgh ranked the worst among the 14 largest U.S. cities in the percentage of housing units occupied by non-whites that were classified as deteriorating or dilapidated dwellings.

"When they built the arena, they weren't concerned about where they put people. They just scattered them," Nesbit recalls. "It was like your life was in someone else's hands."

City officials considered extending the cultural district project into the Upper Hill neighborhood, but protestors drew their line in the sand at the corner of Centre Avenue and Crawford Street, erecting a billboard in 1960 that declared, "No redevelopment beyond this point!" In 1962, the arena opened. But soon afterward, rising community activism, organized opposition to urban renewal and the growing civil rights movement led public officials to lean toward the idea of improving "blighted" neighborhoods rather than razing homes and businesses and relocating residents—but little progress was made in ensuing years.

For decades, Pittsburgh's largest Black neighborhood had been known for its vibrant cultural life that included jazz clubs like the Crawford Grill, Hurricane Lounge and Savoy Ballroom—essential stops along the national jazz circuit. Much of that commercial and social center was now gone. The out-migration of Jews, Italians and other non-African American residents intensified, bleeding diversity from a neighborhood once known for it. Crime and poverty worsened. Damage from riots that erupted in the wake of the 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. left additional scars.

In 1971, the renovated Heinz Hall opened downtown as the new home of the Pittsburgh Symphony, and the Lower Hill as the site of a cultural center was abandoned in favor of the city's core. Only the arena blossomed from those original plans.

The neighborhood population continued to fall so that by 1990 there were only 15,000 Hill District residents, a steep drop from more than 50,000 in 1950.

Some 50 years after construction of the first arena, when city, county and Pittsburgh Penguins officials announced plans for a new home for the hockey team, they could not divorce the development from that painful chapter in Hill District history.

For Ken Nesbit, the 1950s Lower Hill District of his childhood was a melting pot of race and ethnic origin where families crowded into substandard housing were bonded by the hardships of the poverty they shared. "Nobody had anything," Nesbit, now 60, remembers. "Everyone was the same. It was like an extended family. Other parents treated you like your parents. If you ran out of food or needed a place to stay, someone looked out for you."

Pittsburgh Mayor David L. Lawrence saw the poverty as well—and something young Ken Nesbit couldn't envision. To the powerful mayor, the Lower Hill was prime real estate, a place where a city cultural district would rise from the slums as part of the Pittsburgh Renaissance, the city's first period of urban renewal begun after World War II.

That renaissance vision transformed the downtown core. Point State Park replaced a grimy warehouse district. New office development enhanced the city as a corporate headquarters. Air quality policies started to change the image of Pittsburgh as the "Smoky City." In the Lower Hill, the architects of the renaissance drew up plans for a \$100 million cultural district that included a new symphony hall, an art museum and luxury apartments. It would be anchored by a municipal arena and financed with public and private dollars. The Howard Heinz Endowment, an early contributor, helped pay for the study and planning of the symphony hall.

At first, Lower Hill residents expressed little opposition. That soon changed.

Even as controversy was building over urban renewal in the Lower Hill District, the then-Civic Arena was hailed as an architectural achievement in 1961 because it featured the world's largest retractable, stainless-steel dome roof.

“Two important things got us involved with the community benefits agreement,” says Carl Redwood, One Hill CBA Coalition chairman and convener of the Hill District Consensus Group, a coalition organized nearly two decades ago. “We feel developers who come to our community need to be responsible and responsive to the people here. Second, developers who receive public subsidies must give back to the community. That money is not a gift. It’s an investment and it’s supposed to help. We need to know how it’s going to help and get that in writing.”

The emergence of the One Hill CBA Coalition meant two neighborhood groups were now seeking to negotiate on behalf of the Hill District. Over the summer of 2007, the One Hill CBA Coalition gathered strength by investing upwards of 7,000 volunteer hours to build a negotiating platform informed by citizen input solicited through a series of public meetings and door-to-door canvassing. By early September 2007, the One Hill CBA Coalition became the recognized negotiator for the Hill District when its nine-member bargaining team sat down with city, county and Penguins officials to begin formal talks over its set of demands, the “Blueprint for a Livable Hill.”

The months of internal struggle to determine community representation challenged foundation officials to understand the neighborhood political terrain, with which they had little experience. “It was complicated, and the process initially was rushed due to the Penguins’ construction schedule,” says Mary Navarro, senior program officer for Arts & Culture at the Endowments and chair of an internal team working to support revitalization efforts in downtown Pittsburgh and adjacent communities. “We needed to try and understand the issues involved. The voice of the Hill community needed to be heard. In this politically charged and fast-moving situation, it was better to sit back and provide the appropriate support so the community could come together and decide what it wanted out of an agreement.”

Once at the bargaining table, the availability of technical support provided through the local foundations-funded Dream Fund proved particularly helpful, says Morgan, the Pittsburgh UNITED co-chairman who had negotiated some 100 labor contracts as a Service Employees International Union official. “Look, the other side had several different layers of attorneys. But because of those resources, so did we. That’s invaluable because if you’ve never gone through a negotiating process before, it could become a mess. Or worse, it could become nothing at all, particularly when you’re sitting across from people who do negotiations for a living.”

The Penguins, for their part, publicly recognized the legacy of failed urban renewal in the Hill and expressed a readiness to negotiate a deal that would prevent history from repeating itself. “There’s a great opportunity here for the city and the region,” Tom McMillan, the Penguins spokesman, told reporters a few days before the first bargaining session. “The arena can be an economic generator, more than just a hockey arena. We acknowledge that what happened here 50 years ago was a travesty.”

The talks, however, still traveled a crooked road. There were the continued attempts by a group of Hill District ministers to negotiate separately from the One Hill CBA Coalition. There were the pickets outside Mellon Arena. There was the media-highlighted burning of the city and county’s proposal that was not the negotiated contract Hill District leaders sought.

Adding to the tension was the city Planning Commission’s approval of an arena master plan while community benefits were still in talks. One Hill responded by flexing its litigation muscles in Common Pleas Court, appealing the commission ruling, which threatened to delay construction. Penguins officials, meanwhile, were absent from negotiations for several months without explanation, a situation that changed after One Hill made





Less than 24 hours after Hill District community leaders reject city and county officials' proposed community benefits agreement—and watch a copy of it go up in flames—One Hill CBA Coalition Chairman Carl Redwood, standing center, leads a tour of the neighborhood to point out sites residents want to be developed as a result of the new arena construction.

In a ceremony befitting the historic nature of Pittsburgh's first community benefits agreement, Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato, left foreground, and Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, right foreground, meet with Penguins President David Morehouse, left at podium, and community representatives at Freedom Corner in the Hill District to sign the contract.



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repeated public appeals for the team to come back to the table. When the Penguins returned, a sense of hope grew that an agreement would be reached. Finally, last April, there was a tentative agreement endorsed by the neighborhood's negotiators, with the final version signed by all parties in August.

The key provision of the agreement is a comprehensive development plan for the Hill District that the city is required to draft by next February with significant input from the community, which historically had little influence in such matters. One Hill occupies four of the nine seats on the committee charged with shaping the master plan, and the Hill's elected state representative, state senator and city councilmember hold another three.

The deal also calls for the Penguins and the city to contribute \$1 million each toward development of a grocery store, now in planning, which the Hill has gone without for nearly three decades. The city

relies on contributions from groups other than the primary developer. Millions believes that the agreement should have required the Penguins to foot the bill for most of the community investment because the team received the public subsidy.

The Hill House Association's Frazier says, however, that the package was significant because it marked "the first time there was such broad collective community thinking and vetting of the direction the neighborhood wants to go."

"It was through that community effort that we ended up with a negotiated agreement that

"IN PITTSBURGH, I WITNESSED YOUNG, EMERGE TO GUIDE THIS INITIATIVE TO SUCCESS. ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT

and county agreed to contribute money to create a model "first-source referral center" to prepare residents for the workforce and refer qualified Hill District residents to employers connected with the arena project, who agree to give them first consideration when hiring. Another negotiated benefit is the Neighborhood Partnership Program fund to support further economic development, education, training, youth services and other improvements. The program will receive \$3 million over six years from the Bank of New York Mellon, which gets a tax credit for its contribution.

As one of the neighborhood leaders, Millions says she's grateful for the resources that will be flowing into the Hill District. But she contends that the contract does not follow the pattern set by other community benefits agreements in that it

I think will have impact for years to come," he says.

From a national perspective, Pittsburgh foundations' key role in introducing the benefits agreement concept and supporting efforts to negotiate the contract also was unique. The philanthropic collaborative was among the first in the nation to use local and Fulfilling the Dream Fund matching grants to support efforts to negotiate a community benefits agreement. That strategy also was used in California to support a Los Angeles community coalition that negotiated a 2004 community benefits agreement related to the \$11 billion expansion of Los Angeles International Airport. It remains the largest such agreement to date, providing an estimated \$500 million in labor, environmental and other benefits.

A year later, Falk President Kerry O'Donnell approached several foundations about creating a funding collaborative in Pittsburgh to address school finance reform and to help replicate locally the community benefits agreement model to address several of the foundations' goals for promoting diversity and inclusion. Although the foundations had no specific development project in mind at the time, Falk and the other four foundations pooled \$500,000. That amount included \$200,000 from the Endowments, nearly half of which supported the CBA process. When contributions from the local foundations were matched by the national Dream Fund established in 2004, the total reached \$1 million.

Still, support for this new concept posed some risk.

"I knew this could be contentious ...

Foundations here don't have a history of supporting

guide this initiative to success. Their voices are vital as we collectively engage in discussions about the future of our city."

For Pittsburgh officials, this first encounter with a community benefits agreement revealed both promise and risks. "If it is approached in such a way as to say, 'How can we make this deal happen and be the best it can be for everyone?' great things can materialize," says Rob Stephany, executive director of the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh. "If the approach is, 'We can stop this thing unless you pay us'—that poses a risk of slowing down or stopping deals that are financially marginal to begin with."

For neighborhood leaders, the agreement means more work ahead to sustain the organization and drive that enabled them to succeed at the bargaining table, to negotiate a crucial neighborhood master development plan and to make sure all

PROGRESSIVE AND DIVERSE LEADERS THEIR VOICES ARE VITAL AS WE COLLECTIVELY THE FUTURE OF OUR CITY."

KERRY O'DONNELL *president, Falk Foundation*

community organizing activities," says Jane Downing, senior program officer for Economics and Community Development at The Pittsburgh Foundation. "I had conversations with our board and some other people who understood minority contracting about whether they thought that if we explored this opportunity it would be a good thing for Pittsburgh. The question for us was: Do we think this could help address hiring opportunities on publicly financed projects? The answer was yes."

Achieving a signed CBA agreement for the Hill District has increased the visibility nationally of promising practices in both racial inclusion and community-labor partnerships, adds the Falk Foundation's O'Donnell. "In Pittsburgh, I witnessed young, progressive and diverse leaders emerge to

parties comply with the contract. "It's one thing to get the agreement, but it's another to take the steps necessary to make sure the community will actually benefit from it," says Frazier.

But Redwood, the One Hill co-chair, believes that enduring the arduous bargaining process already has lasting implications for the neighborhood. "A lot of people look at it as organizing the community to get a community benefits agreement. I see it as working on the community benefits agreement to organize the community. The lasting impact is that, as we move forward, our community is better organized and stronger than before." *h*

Points in Time photo credits,
page 17, clockwise from top left:

1872 plat map courtesy of Historic
Pittsburgh

Axe photo courtesy of Sen. John Heinz
History Center

Charles "Teenie" Harris, Man playing
piano in Crawford Grill No. 2, c. 1945–
1970, Housing advocacy billboard,
Lower Hill District, c. 1960–1970,
Heinz Family Fund, Copyright, © 2009
Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh

Crawford Square photo courtesy of
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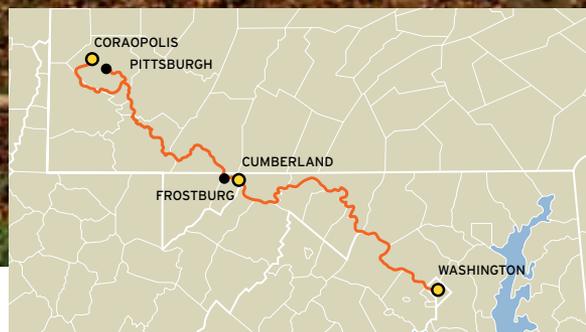
August Wilson at the New Granada
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Hill House

National Guard in Hill District,
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TRAIL

Growing numbers of bicyclists, skiers and hikers have been pumping up rural economies as much as heart rates as they converge on the Great Allegheny Passage and other southwestern Pennsylvania trails. That combination exercise is boosting the region's image nationally, and even internationally, as a premier recreation center. By Lawrence Walsh



Bill Metzger

The Great Allegheny Passage is a nature lover's scenic route through southwestern Pennsylvania and western Maryland. Sections like this one that's nearly halfway between Pittsburgh and Washington offer a picturesque backdrop for trail travelers.

WAYS

If you're a true trail believer, what you discover at a Pennsylvania Pedal, Cycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting might change your life. That was the case for Bill and Pam Metzger. They discovered each other.

It was August 1996. He was a co-founder of the Montour Trail near Pittsburgh. She was a staff member of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a national trails advocacy organization. Something in that trail mix sparked a romance that blossomed after the meeting in Harrisburg.



The beauty along the 150-mile passage changes with the seasons. In the winter, a cross-country skier near Rockwood, Pa., above, can enjoy ice formations as well as an exhilarating trek on the trail. In warmer weather, those following the passage often take advantage of the businesses that have cropped up along the route, such as the River's Edge Café, below, in Confluence, Pa.



When they married the following June—the second time around for each—they broke with the traditions of their first weddings: his an elaborate Catholic ceremony, hers a simple justice-of-the-peace affair. Instead, friends and family wore light, summer clothes and reclined on lawn chairs as they watched Bill and Pam exchange vows at the Hendersonville trailhead of the Montour Trail. A guitarist and singer duet serenaded the gathering.

“A couple of people rode through on bikes, but they weren’t guests,” says Pam. “It was an appropriate setting. Next to me, the trail was the most

important thing in Bill’s life.”

Her husband flashes his trademark gotcha-grin and adds: “We were both trail people, and it seemed to be the right thing to do. It also was cheap.”

The couple moved to Confluence, a town 90 miles east of Pittsburgh, into a

home with a “down our driveway” proximity to the Great Allegheny Passage. Today, the Metzgers bike an average 10 miles daily and often more. Bill rides a hand-powered recumbent trike because he has a neuromuscular condition similar to multiple sclerosis that affects his ability to walk. Pam uses a recumbent bike that, like her husband’s, has a wide seat and a comfortable backrest. On their rides, they’ve spotted a wide array of animals—bald eagles, osprey, a bobcat, beavers, river otters, turkeys and deer—as well as neighbors and long-distance riders.

Bill, who bikes an average of 2,600 miles a year, primarily on the passage, also put his familiarity with the trail and his background as a writer, editor, photographer, mapmaker and railroader to creative use. He penned “The Great Allegheny Passage

Companion,” a mile-by-mile guide to the history and heritage of the trail.

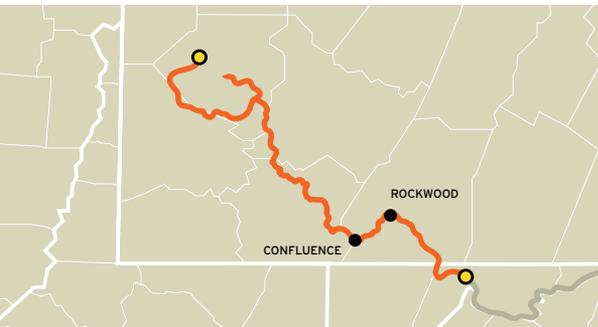
“I thought I was as qualified as anyone to do it, and I’ve always had a strong interest in local history,” he says. “Biking on that trail has saved my life. I had a stent placed in one of my arteries in 2004 and [biking] helps my heart. Trails are good for your physical, mental and emotional well-being.”

And apparently for marital well-being as well. The Metzgers’ story is one of many connected to the Great Allegheny Passage that are as varied as the modes of transportation used on the trail. Even the passage itself has a story. The internationally known and award-winning pathway meanders 150 miles through the rolling hills of southwestern Pennsylvania and western Maryland, connecting Pittsburgh to Cumberland. Along the way are tales of rivers and railroads and foundation-supported efforts to offer the public a year-round experience of the region’s beauty.

It all began in 1983 with plans to extend a parking lot and improve an access path to the Youghiogheny River in Ohiopyle State Park, 75 miles southeast of Pittsburgh.

At the time, the only passage of note in the area was the abandoned right-of-way of the Western Maryland Railway, which intersected the access path from the parking lot known as the Ramcat Trailhead. Rafters, kayakers and canoeists would park their cars at the trailhead and carry their watercraft along the rough dirt path through about 150 feet of woods before they reached the Youghiogheny.

While work was being done on the parking lot and the path, Park Manager Larry Adams decided to start a bike trail by clearing a three-mile segment of the Western Maryland right-of-way that ran from the trailhead to a hiking path descending



from Sugarloaf Mountain. Initially, he did not continue clearing the right-of-way any farther, but that soon changed as the trail grew in popularity.

“People began riding their bikes on it and wanted to know when it would be completed to Ohiopyle,” Adams recalls. The first section, a 9.5-mile segment that runs southeast from the park, officially opened in 1986 and used part of the abandoned Western Maryland Railway.

It was the start of a movement in southwestern Pennsylvania to create a network of trails, most converted from abandoned railroad rights-of-way, which could be used for a variety of non-motorized

“We were both mountain bikers. We had heard about the trail and thought we’d try it out. It was in pretty good shape but felt very isolated. I don’t think we saw anyone else on it that day.”

When they arrived in Confluence, they saw a For Sale sign posted on a large hemlock in front of two rundown frame houses along the Youghiogheny River. They made a \$200 down payment on the spot.

“Our friends told us the houses were too far gone to be saved,” Yakubisin recalls. “They told us to push them into the river. We told them to give us nine months.”

We believed that the passage would give a big boost to this growing reputation of our region as a green and healthy place to live. It has put Pittsburgh on the map of bicycling destinations.

Caren Glotfelty, Environment Program director, The Heinz Endowments

travel. It also marked a more intentional effort to unite expansion of recreational opportunities with promotion of the region’s natural and built environment.

Today there are a number of trails in different stages of development throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. In addition to the Great Allegheny Passage, other regional trails include the Allegheny Valley Trail, destined to connect Pittsburgh and Erie; the Three Rivers Heritage Trail, designed to run in and around Pittsburgh; and the Montour Trail, which will link Coraopolis, a community west of Pittsburgh, to Clairton, a town south of the city.

Anna Marie Yakubisin of Squirrel Hill and her late husband, Bob Bennis, took their first bike trip in June 1988 from Ohiopyle to Confluence. “It was a spur-of-the-moment decision,” she says.

The couple opened the River’s Edge Café and Bed & Breakfast the following April. They sand-blasted the exterior wooden siding and painted it a deep rose color. The café and its oak tables and chairs occupy the first floor of the two-story house. The one-story B&B with three bedrooms is behind it. The River’s Edge was the first B&B in Confluence. Since then, three restaurants and more than a dozen B&Bs and guest houses have opened in and around the town.

The growing number of trails in southwestern Pennsylvania has opened up the region to a range of visitors and economic opportunities. Along with bicyclists, there are anglers, birders, hikers, walkers, runners, cross-country skiers and snowshoers who use the trails. Some have traveled thousands of miles to cross them.

John Markle, co-owner of the Trailside, a restaurant in West Newton, has met a lot of these trekkers. Since his restaurant opened in May 2007, it has had customers from every state and more than 20 foreign countries, including China, Israel, Japan and New Zealand. Markle says the Great Allegheny Passage is popular with out-of-state and foreign visitors—even among those from the most scenic territories on earth—“because of the friendliness of the people they meet along the way. That’s one comment we hear all the time. People say they also are pleased with how smooth and well-maintained the trail is. And they like the fact that it goes somewhere—all the way from Pittsburgh to our nation’s capital. It gives them a sense of accomplishment, and rightfully so.”

The passage got a public relations boost in 2007 when the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, the nation’s largest trails organization, chose it as the first inductee into the group’s hall of fame because of its “beauty, number of users, historical significance, total length and geographic diversity.” Adding to the passage’s appeal has been its connection to the C&O Canal Towpath that runs from Cumberland, Md., to Washington, D.C. Together, the two trails total an almost continuous 335 miles, with the exception of a few gaps, and can take travelers from downtown Pittsburgh to the U.S. capital.

The Heinz Endowments has invested \$1.5 million in grants for the development of the Great Allegheny Passage. The foundation also has joined other funders in supporting various conservation and recreational organizations whose work includes promoting development and use of land and water trails. Among these groups are Bike Pittsburgh, Friends of the Riverfront, Riverlife Task Force, Venture Outdoors, the Nine Mile Run Watershed Association and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

“We believed that the passage would give a big boost to this growing reputation of our region as a green and healthy place to live,” says Caren Glotfelty, the foundation’s Environment Program director. Last summer, she joined the increasing number of bicyclists who have traveled from Washington, D.C., to Pittsburgh on the Great Allegheny Passage. “It has put Pittsburgh on the map of bicycling destinations.”

Encouraging local residents to use the region’s recreational assets also is among the foundation’s environmental priorities, adds Glotfelty. Tom Baxter, executive director of Friends of the Riverfront, which is based on Pittsburgh’s South Side, appreciates that emphasis. “[The Endowments] understands what it takes to introduce or re-introduce the public to all the natural resources the city and region offers,” he says. “There’s been an amazing upsurge in local and long-distance [trail] usage . . . I’m seeing more and more riders from my office window.”

Alice Cottone, who retired in 2006 after 35 years as an art teacher in the Steel Valley School District, is a lifelong outdoors enthusiast. The former Girl Scout leader backpacks, camps, canoes and kayaks. She began biking as a child and started cross-country skiing in the early 1980s.

Today, Cottone is a year-round trail user. She rides and cross-country skis on the Montour Trail and the Great Allegheny Passage, which is close to her home in Munhall, a borough south of Pittsburgh. When there is enough snow, she skis about five miles, round trip, on the trail every morning from the Hot Metal Bridge on Pittsburgh’s South Side to the Glenwood Bridge near the city’s Hazelwood neighborhood.

“That’s the great thing about retirement. I have more time to bike and ski,” she says. “I get out several times a week . . . I love it because the passage runs along the [Monongahela] river. You see the birds on the water, the city skyline. Even though it’s urban, it’s a nice experience.”



Joshua Franzos

Bicyclist Max Kellog, above, stocks up on energy drinks at the Trailside convenience store in West Newton before returning to his 50-mile ride on the Great Allegheny Passage. The store and adjoining restaurant do brisk business because of their proximity to the trail. Below, joggers follow the Three Rivers Heritage Trail along the North Shore section of Pittsburgh, which is across from downtown. Work is under way to connect this trail with others in the region.

MeiLissa Farlow



The unfinished sections of the passage total only about four miles, including a 0.7-mile portion through Sandcastle water park east of Pittsburgh. Work on these gaps has been held up by several obstacles. Among them have been challenges in obtaining money and permits to build a bridge over active railroads, and difficulties in reaching an agreement with the water park's previous owner, who recently sold the property. Completion of the entire Great Allegheny Passage is now scheduled for next year.

Other challenges have included debates over



the conversion of abandoned railroad rights-of-way into trails, a process that intensified in the early 1990s. Some individuals and groups have been concerned that such conversions would harm industrial growth along these corridors by eliminating rail service or limiting the

availability of rail lines that might be needed for economical transportation in the future.

However, Jennifer Kaleba, spokeswoman for the national Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, says rights-of-way on the Great Allegheny Passage and other trails across the country were abandoned because rail companies determined that they were no longer viable. If trail organizations had not obtained those corridors, private individuals or organizations could have purchased them and blocked access by residents and visitors. "The reality is that trail conversion is preserving these corridors for the public," she says.

Linda McKenna Boxx, president of the Allegheny Trail Alliance, agrees. She adds that the abandoned rights-of-way that are now part of the Great Allegheny Passage had little future usefulness because of the redundancy between the abandoned Western Maryland corridor and one still used by CSX Corp. In fact, CSX trains run parallel to the passage along its entire route, Boxx says.

Addressing concerns like these as well as the technical and logistical issues that arise with a massive trail project has not been easy for the alliance, a coalition of seven rail-trail organizations in southwestern Pennsylvania and western Maryland. It was formed more than 15 years ago to coordinate and encourage those working on the trail, even as many public officials and even some regional trail builders expressed doubts that the project could be completed.

"[The Great Allegheny Passage] in those years was considered a pipe dream, even by some of our supporters ... They thought it was just too big, too ambitious, too hard," recalls Boxx, whose dedication to the development of the passage has never wavered. "But we were determined to make the dream a reality, and the Endowments has been with us since the early years."

Boxx, who bicycles frequently along the passage, says the 2006 renovation of the 3,300-foot Big Savage Tunnel near the Pennsylvania/Maryland border finally convinced the skeptics that the trail would be completed. The deteriorated tunnel had to be rehabilitated because there was no way around it to make the Maryland connections to the C&O Canal Towpath that link the passage to Washington. Work on the deteriorated tunnel included stabilizing the existing, but decaying, concrete liner in the tunnel; installing an aggressive drainage system; and adding lights and big metal doors that could be closed to prevent the tunnel lining from freezing and cracking during harsh winter weather.

"The opening of the Big Savage Tunnel was the key to the success of the trail," she explains. "[Without it] we would have had a nice regional trail, but not an international bike touring destination." *h*

here & there

INTERNATIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE AWARDS

Endowments Chairman Teresa Heinz, below left, greets musician Emmylou Harris, far right, during the International Quality of Life Awards ceremony earlier this year. Looking on is June Henton, dean of the College of Human Sciences at Auburn University in Alabama. The event at the United Nations in New York City honored Teresa Heinz as the 2008 International Quality of Life laureate in recognition of her vision and achievement in the areas of public policy, human rights, the economy, the arts and environmental sustainability. Harris, whose music career has spanned several genres, was awarded the College of Human Sciences Lifetime Achievement Award.

Auburn's College of Human Sciences launched the International Quality of Life Awards in 1994 in conjunction with the United Nations' International Year of the Family. The awards honor exceptional professional achievement and a strong commitment to empower others through public policy and education. International Quality of Life laureates represent a diverse array of fields that include economics, business, nonprofit, medicine, government and social justice.

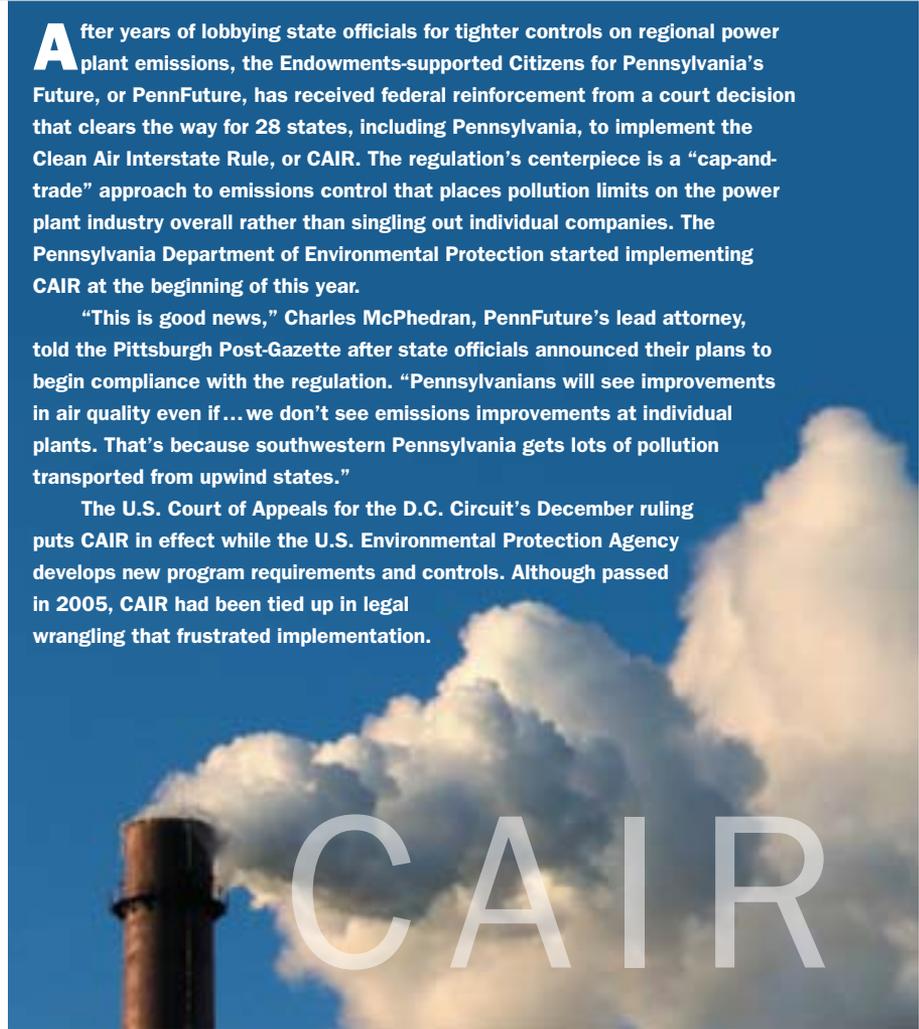
Jeff Etheridge



After years of lobbying state officials for tighter controls on regional power plant emissions, the Endowments-supported Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future, or PennFuture, has received federal reinforcement from a court decision that clears the way for 28 states, including Pennsylvania, to implement the Clean Air Interstate Rule, or CAIR. The regulation's centerpiece is a "cap-and-trade" approach to emissions control that places pollution limits on the power plant industry overall rather than singling out individual companies. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection started implementing CAIR at the beginning of this year.

"This is good news," Charles McPhedran, PennFuture's lead attorney, told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette after state officials announced their plans to begin compliance with the regulation. "Pennsylvanians will see improvements in air quality even if... we don't see emissions improvements at individual plants. That's because southwestern Pennsylvania gets lots of pollution transported from upwind states."

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit's December ruling puts CAIR in effect while the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency develops new program requirements and controls. Although passed in 2005, CAIR had been tied up in legal wrangling that frustrated implementation.



Endowments Names Senior Officer

Philip Johnson, who is completing a doctoral program in environmental health and risk management at Yale University, has joined the Endowments as senior program officer for the Environment section. Before beginning his doctoral work, he was a senior scientist and program manager for the Boston-based nonprofit NESCAUM, which provides scientific analysis and policy advising to the air-quality agencies of the eight northeastern states.

Johnson founded the nonprofit Air Intelligence, a Washington state-based organization that provided legal expertise to communities facing serious contamination issues. He earned two master's degrees from Yale, one in environmental science and the other in public health, and received an undergraduate degree in philosophy from Northwestern University in 1991.

Johnson will be managing a grants portfolio and community initiatives focused on environmental health.





Arts Education Initiative In this Internet age, it often takes more than a modest amount of creativity to spark students' interest in school. To help engage more students, particularly those who are African American, the Pittsburgh Public Schools has launched an arts education initiative developed in partnership with the Endowments. Called "culturally responsive arts education," the program aims to increase students' achievement and personal growth through artistic skill development, strengthened racial identity and enriched academic content.

The Endowments has given \$1 million for the initiative, which includes funding for a project manager and three-year artist residencies in three schools. The program also will support city school officials as they address issues raised in a 2006 Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission settlement of a discrimination complaint. Under the agreement, the district agreed to take steps such as increasing the amount of African American history and culture in the curriculum while improving instruction and employee training to better serve Black students.



Photo courtesy of The Sprout Fund

NEW PUBLIC ARTS MANAGER

Artist Morton Brown, shown speaking at a 2006 mural dedication on Pittsburgh's South Side, is the city's new public arts manager. The Endowments-funded position was created in 2007 to promote the use of art in public spaces and to encourage partnerships between artists and communities. Brown's work has included painting murals for homes, businesses, churches and public buildings. He helped create and administer the Sprout Public Art Program in

Pittsburgh, and has worked as a public artist and an art consultant for the city's Department of Parks and Recreation. Brown replaces Kim Baker, who is working with public art projects across the country in her new project management position with the General Services Administration in Washington, D.C.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Heinz Endowments board member and former Steelers football great Franco Harris, below right, talks with his son Franco Dok Harris, center, and filmmaker Carl Kurlander, left, about the young, creative talent at Pittsburgh universities, during the filming of Kurlander's "My Tale of Two Cities." In the movie, the Steelers Hall of Famer joins Endowments Chairman Teresa Heinz in discussing their commitment to the city. The film is being shown across the country, most recently in New York City and Pittsburgh in March. The Pittsburgh screenings included a



showing to benefit the Steeltown Entertainment Project's Youth and Media Initiative and the Endowments-supported Pittsburgh Promise scholarship program.

Kurlander, a Pittsburgh native with a successful Hollywood career in film and television, chronicles in the movie both Pittsburgh's attempt to reinvent itself and his return to his hometown roots. The filmmaker told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette in November that the Endowments board members delivered two of the movie's key messages, with Teresa Heinz giving her signature call for dreamers to help transform the region and Franco Harris urging expatriates to bring their talent back to Pittsburgh.

Photo courtesy of 1905 Productions/Mark Knobli



CLINICAL DIRECTOR NAMED

Nationally renowned asthma researcher Dr. Fernando Holguin has been hired as the clinical director of the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh's new Pediatric Environmental Medicine Program. The Endowments is funding the initiative with a five-year, \$5 million grant. "This moves our region one step further toward the Endowments' ultimate goal, which is to see every health care system incorporating environmental medicine as a routine part of comprehensive health care," says foundation Chairman Teresa Heinz.

Holguin is a physician with a master's degree in public health. He served as director of Emory University's Translational Asthma Research Program in Atlanta, and had a joint appointment in the respiratory air pollution health branch of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In Pittsburgh, he is leading research in identifying how environmental risk factors affect children with asthma so that education, prevention and treatment strategies can be developed to address the problems.

THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS

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Fixing what's baroque. PAGE 4

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