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The Magazine of The Heinz Endowments

WHO'S INVITING THE GUESTS?

As Pittsburgh's marketing and promotional groups try to set the pace in the high-stakes race for tourist dollars, some see our stars tripping over one another in the quest for an elusive finish line.

inside

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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 that 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 A world-record-breaking flotilla of kayaks and canoes at the convergence of Pittsburgh's three rivers is colorful validation of progress made using waterways to boost the region's appeal. More than 1,600 boats showed up for "Paddle at the Point" near Point State Park, Downtown, and enabled Pittsburgh to take the title previously held by Inlet, N.Y. Photo by Mike Vindler.

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River City

Pittsburgh's waterfronts have become prime real estate for recreation and business development, thanks to Riverlife, the nonprofit now celebrating a decade of re-connecting the region to its most precious natural asset.

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Destination: Pittsburgh

Staging the occasional blockbuster has been a sure formula for attracting tourist dollars, but that strategy is hardly enough to achieve the region's marketing dream of visitor critical mass.



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It was a spoke-and-wheel revolution that moved Pittsburgh to the front ranks of bicycle-friendly cities. Leading that pack has been Bike Pittsburgh, a passionate promoter of the good things that happen to city dwellers who embrace pedal-powered transportation.

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feedback

Our end-of-2010 issue of *h* was an all-photograph portrayal of programs and services that represent The Heinz Endowments' successes and continuing challenges in the quest to improve quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania.



Sharper Image

Curiosity. Wonder. Intensity. And even joy. Isn't that what learning should be about? These are the expressions on the faces of learners in the section "A Center for Learning and Education Excellence" of the special photography issue of *h*. Without the photographic framing of these experiences, I believe it would be difficult to get across the emotions of the learners, the depth of their genuine feelings, and their apparent absorption in learning.

As co-director of the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Child Development, I make rounds of visits to programs for young children, and I leave feeling energetic and positive about the future of this region and our society. This same sort of emotion is conveyed in these photographs.

Learners also are diverse, as are the learning environments and activities that generate such enthusiasm for learning; all of this is reflected in the engaging photo of children clapping to music at the Children's Museum Early Childhood Center. The picture captures the hands-on experiences and interactive play offered at the center. Having children "open to learning" is critical for sustaining, growing and applying knowledge.

The Office of Child Development transfers knowledge into practice by providing technical and other support to early learning facilities in the region, including the museum center. We look for evidence of quality in programs and practices. We review findings from around the country and the world, and use quantitative data to determine whether quality exists. But this magazine's visual recording of programs offers the most compelling data through images that tell stories more directly and vividly than any quantitative research findings.

Christina J. Groark
Co-Director, University of Pittsburgh
Office of Child Development
Pittsburgh, Pa.

As we move deeper into the 21st century, our world is getting smaller. Through today's technology, you can video chat face-to-face with someone in China with a few clicks of a mouse. It is imperative that we educate not only our youth, but also our entire community about different cultures and customs, so that our country can continue to be successful. The importance of this understanding is strikingly illustrated in the "Home for Diversity and Inclusion" section of the special photography issue of *h*.

Some of the programs featured, such as Hip-Hop On L.O.C.K. and the Bethany House Academy's African-centered rites-of-passage initiative, give our youth opportunities to supplement classwork with quality, meaningful hands-on experiences that they—and the entire community—will learn from and remember. As founder of Hip-Hop On L.O.C.K.—which stands for leadership skills, organizational skills, cooperative economics and knowledge of the music business—I am amazed at the transformation in adults as well as youth through hands-on education.

Our organization has served more than 700 youth since its inception in 2007, and we have seen what might be described as the most rhythmically challenged person evolve into an individual who can design some of the most intelligent, thought-provoking rhymes. By giving people in our communities a variety of tools to connect with different cultures, we are opening a new world of possibilities that might change them forever.

Through The Heinz Endowments' work, we are bridging not only gaps in education, but also gaps between communities and cultures. That is the key to our successful future and to a world in which everyone can have a better understanding of others' thoughts and ideas.

Emmai Alaquiva
Founder and Executive Director
Hip-Hop On L.O.C.K.
Pittsburgh, Pa.

How wonderful to see Nine Mile Run so prominently featured in the stunning photographic issue of *h*. The images in the introduction, "A Vision of Prosperity," and in the "Premier Place to Both Live and Work" section vividly portrayed the beauty of what had been a dangerous eyesore. The Endowments should proudly trumpet this accomplishment, recently cited by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' leading stream restoration expert as the most successful urban stream and wetlands restoration in the country. As the Nine Mile Run Association's executive director, I know that while many partners worked together over a long period of time to transform the area into a regional amenity, it is unlikely that this would have happened without the Endowments' substantial support.

Only a few years ago many scoffed at the notion of fish returning to Nine Mile Run. But as the scenic image in *h* of a fisherman illustrated, our monitoring committee's annual fish survey has reported increases in number, size and species diversity each year since the restoration's completion. Regularly monitoring water quality, habitat and other parameters is one way we work to protect the restoration and to continue improving conditions in the stream and surrounding watershed.

It also was important to include among attractive images of regional progress, photographs of difficulties local communities still face. One example pictured was excessive stormwater runoff, which plagues our region, causing frequent sewer overflows and flooding. Programs such as our Rain Barrel Initiative, which has installed 1,400 rain barrels on watershed homes, and GreenLinks, which has mobilized volunteers to plant and care for hundreds of trees, offer cost-effective ways to help solve this problem.

Brenda L. Smith
Executive Director
Nine Mile Run Watershed Association

message



Berry Leary

As I was reviewing the stories for this issue, it occurred to me that we are very fortunate to have such showcase examples of beautiful results that happen when a foundation allows grantees and community stakeholders to help shape its grant making. I hope you will find these stories great sources of inspiration for what you might offer in the places where you live and work.

I also hope that you will take another message from these examples: There are few limits to what can be achieved when a foundation commits to smart and patient investing in a single area of endeavor; when nurturing is elevated to a philanthropic value; when every grant bestowed today carries promise for the next generation and, perhaps, even the one after that.

Teresa Heinz Chairman, The Heinz Endowments

Brian Cohen

In "The Studio" of the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, substitute teacher Cathy Snyder helps children in the Pittsburgh Public Schools Early Childhood Program complete hands-on learning projects. The museum is the location of two of the school district's pre-kindergarten/Head Start classes that serve children ages 4 and 5 and are provided at no cost to families from various neighborhoods and socioeconomic backgrounds.





Photo: Rick Kohn/Chicago Tribune

A North Shore Riverfront Park and Trail | Completed 2001 | \$35 million

Tree-lined trails, open green space and picturesque housing are all orchestrated design elements that draw people to riverfronts. They also demonstrate the value of patient investment in an organization tasked with envisioning design principles and implementing them.



B Washington's Landing | Completed 2004 | \$70.7 million



Photo: Alamy



C South Side Riverfront Trail | Completed 2005 | \$0.9 million

AS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS SPREADS AND THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF WATERFRONT ACTIVITY INCREASES, PITTSBURGH'S INDUSTRY-WORN SHORELINES HAVE BEEN GETTING A MUCH-NEEDED MAKEOVER. MONITORING EVERY MOVE IS RIVERLIFE, AN ENDOWMENTS GRANTEE THAT TRIES TO ENSURE THAT THE TRANSFORMATION IS MORE THAN JUST COSMETIC. BY JEFFERY FRASER

A CITY RIVER

decade ago, Brian Hannan would not have been able to hike the route that he takes along and across two rivers to his job on Pittsburgh's South Side. Ralph Falbo wouldn't have been interested in developing 151 First Side, an 18-story downtown luxury condominium that rises above the Monongahela River. The riverside apartment in a former cork factory that drew Jeanette Oliver to the banks of the Allegheny didn't exist. And 21 miles of riverfront trails—a key reason for the city's soaring national reputation among cyclists—were more concept than reality.

The smokestacks of industry that for a century had defined Pittsburgh's waterfront may have been extinguished years earlier, but vestiges of that era of three hard-working rivers remained. Travelers into the city through the Fort Pitt Tunnel saw a stunning Downtown skyline radiate before them only to have the vista quickly marred by rusting shells of abandoned mills, factories and warehouses; retired industrial bridges; and tainted brownfields. These physical barriers to the public use of the city's waterfront challenged its potential as a catalyst for urban revitalization.

Now, many structural remnants of Pittsburgh's steel-producing heyday no longer line its river shores. They have been replaced with walkways, grass and trees that create an attractive park setting as people stroll, jog and cycle along the water.

"When you look at Pittsburgh today and think about all of the linear feet of riverbank that have been converted to public space, recreational space and green space, the transformation has been quite substantial and impressive," says Alex Krieger, chair of the Department of Urban Planning and Design at Harvard University and principal of Chan Krieger NBBJ. The Cambridge, Mass., architecture and urban design firm has recent projects that include redesigning The Bund in Shanghai and turning former docklands along the Huangpu River into a public promenade.

Kreiger came to Pittsburgh in 2000 when his firm was hired by Riverlife, a public-private nonprofit established in 1999 to develop a vision and master plan for reinventing the city's riverfronts. The physical barriers to the riverfronts that were imposed by the city's industrial legacy were difficult enough to address. But there also was a question of whether public and private support could be sustained for a long-term, radical



Riverlife's influence on major riverfront projects can be seen across Pittsburgh. The renovated 16th Street Bridge, below, is one of several spans with custom-designed guardrails that don't block river views. Rivers Casino is marked by an attractive glass façade, landscaping and trails. The Gold LEED-certified David L. Lawrence Convention Center's new plaza provides river access, connection to markets and restaurants in the nearby Strip District, and additional public green space and boat landings.

transformation of the city's waterfront, the details of which had not yet been conceived.

"It felt like a city that was somewhat reluctant to let go of that tradition of the river being an 'arsenal of democracy' in favor of thinking about the uses of the river in the 21st century," says Kreiger, using President Franklin Roosevelt's World War II term for American industrial and technological power. "This wasn't only the case in Pittsburgh. It's a worldwide phenomenon. People understand that the way we have historically used riverfronts is quite different from how we will be using them in the future. But some cities are quicker than others in making that transition. Pittsburgh became one of those cities."

In October, Riverlife recognized the evolution by celebrating its 10th anniversary at the city's Market Street Pier, nestled between Pittsburgh's football and baseball stadiums, along the Allegheny River on the city's North Shore. A sold-out crowd of nearly 500 people attended the "Party on the Pier" and mingled under giant white tents that overlooked the water and had the skyline as a backdrop. Guests were serenaded by the Latin jazz group Salsamba and took short river excursions on the Gateway Clipper to get an up-close look at how the nonprofit that hired Krieger's firm had helped to transform the region's riverfronts.

"The event brought together dozens and dozens of people from all walks of the community," recalls former Heinz Endowments President Maxwell King, an early co-chairman of the organization's board. "It reflected the diversity, the breadth and the strength of Riverlife."

For the past decade, no organization has been more influential in the revitalization of the city's riverfronts than Riverlife. It conceived Three Rivers Park, a continuous 13-mile waterfront park along the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio rivers consisting of trails, green space and riverfront development built according to design guidelines that set high-quality standards. Today, despite some challenges along the way, more than 70 percent of that vision has been realized through the power of persuasion and without the force of law or regulation.



As part of that work, the organization joined Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl and the Urban Redevelopment Authority earlier this year in releasing an ambitious 20-year plan for sustainable development along 6.5 miles of Allegheny River shoreline, from Downtown and into the city's eastern neighborhoods. Proposed projects include commuter rail lines and bike lanes, commercial and residential construction, environmentally minded landscaping, and improvements to the sewage overflow system to help clean up the river. The nonprofit also is crafting plans for Headwaters Lagoon, which will be a riverfront complex between the Rivers Casino and the Carnegie Science Center on Pittsburgh's North Shore. The development will offer dining, shopping and recreation in an intimate setting along the water.

"The impetus [behind Riverlife] was that if an environment is going to be created along the rivers, let's do it in a thoughtful, holistic, design-conscious way," says Caren Grotfelty, director of the Endowments Environment Program.

That was the sentiment in the spring of 1999 when Endowments Chairman Teresa Heinz and other board members looked out the windows of the foundation's 30th-floor boardroom in Downtown Pittsburgh and insisted something needed to be done to ensure that abandoned steel mills and industrial warehouses along the riverfronts were replaced with attractive, high-quality development. Mrs. Heinz, her son André and the late board member J. Carter Brown, former director of the National Gallery of Art, were particularly enthusiastic about advocating for changes that represented the best in design, and board members agreed to contribute \$1 million to the effort. Mrs. Heinz followed up the boardroom discussions with a dinner



E Rivers Casino | Completed 2009 | \$450 million

Bottom: Brian Cohen; Top: Shonda/Devon Manning



F Convention Center Riverfront Plaza | Completed 2011 | \$9.5 million

at Rosemont, her farm north of Pittsburgh, where business and political leaders were invited to talk about concrete steps to spur transformation of the city's riverfronts.

These early conversations about riverfront development coincided with the beginning of King's tenure as Endowments president and the similar, though separately evolving, interests of the late John Craig, then editor of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. The two men joined forces and began meeting with other civic leaders about implementing shared visions for the riverfronts. Out of these meetings came the idea to create Riverlife, which drew support from powerful community leaders such as then-Pittsburgh Mayor Tom Murphy and U.S. Secretary of the Treasury and former Alcoa CEO Paul O'Neill, and from a number of philanthropies, including the Richard King Mellon, McCune, Benedum, Grable, Hillman and Pittsburgh foundations.

"I think Riverlife has made all the difference in the world," says King. "We now have in Pittsburgh very coherent, high-quality

development and design along the riverfronts because of the work Riverlife did to bring everybody together, bringing commercial interests together with political and foundation interests."

As the organization was formed and the concept of Three Rivers Park began to take shape, Riverlife's board realized that its credibility and viability were dependent on not letting its master plan for the riverfront park become just one of many documents that laid out aspirations for the city, explains Lisa Schroeder, Riverlife president and CEO. "We began the exercise that we are still engaged in—to be the keeper of that dream over the long term, across [mayoral] administrations, and to be flexible enough to work with many different property owners."

Those stakeholders include private corporations and developers as well as state and city governments, nearly all of whom are aware of Riverlife's role and reputation. Those who are not find out soon enough. "Riverlife has established itself as the protector of the rivers, so much so that if a riverfront project goes through the development review process, the applicants are told they have to run it by Riverlife, and most of the time they do," says Noor Ismail, planning director for the City of Pittsburgh.

Since its inception, the nonprofit's ability to influence the development of the city's riverfronts has been helped by the diversity of its ardent supporters. Its board has included public officials, corporate leaders, private developers, foundation officials and environmentalists. Its first co-chairmen were Craig and O'Neill. When O'Neill left to serve as Treasury secretary, King replaced him, once again partnering with Craig in championing high-quality shoreline improvements.

Riverlife is pursuing riverfront revitalization with the support of local civic and government leaders such as, starting from left, Allegheny County Executive Dan Onorato, Congressman Mike Doyle and Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl. The three joined Riverlife President and CEO Lisa Schroeder, second from right, at a 2009 ribbon-cutting ceremony that marked the opening of the Mon Wharf Landing, a 2,017-foot stretch of linear park along the Monongahela River.

For the Endowments, Riverlife's goal of developing a grand urban-scale waterfront park with an emphasis on quality design fit well with the aesthetic endeavors of the foundation's Arts & Culture Program, the lifestyle goals of its civic design initiative, and the smart growth and land-use planning priorities of the Environment Program. In fact, while the Environment Program staff has recently embarked on an ambitious campaign to remedy local industrial pollution and its harmful, though less visible, impact on the region's rivers and air quality, Riverlife's work still complements the program's efforts to improve the region's natural and built environments. Since 1999, the Endowments has awarded the nonprofit 23 grants totaling nearly \$7.2 million to help cover operating costs and other expenses. Included has been support related to developing the master plan and undertaking projects such as the completion of the fountain at Point State Park, design advocacy related to the building of the Rivers Casino at the headwaters of the Ohio River, and landscape design of the park and trail at the Mon Wharf.

Riverlife was established as part of a growing movement to explore ideas for transforming the riverfronts into public spaces and creating a centerpiece for revitalization that a few cities already practiced. Chattanooga had gained national attention in the 1990s for a series of downtown and neighborhood revitalization initiatives, including Tennessee Riverpark, a complex of riverfront green spaces with a walking trail extending from downtown across 11 miles to the Chickamauga Dam. Urban renewal in Boston included recovering a substantial portion of its historic waterfront, such as renovating the Quincy Market at Boston Harbor as the first example of a festival marketplace, a concept that involved creating a critical mass of trendy restaurants, shops, entertainment and other amenities to draw suburban residents and tourists to downtown.

Craig, who was editor of the Post-Gazette from 1977 to 2003 and who died a year ago, was an early advocate of a similar transformation in Pittsburgh. He wrote op-ed pieces about the issue and challenged property owners and civic leaders alike to join a citizen's coalition to explore the opportunities the city's rivers offered. "John, to me, is who really solidified the idea of Riverlife, of a more thoughtful planning organization," says Murphy, Pittsburgh's mayor from 1994 to 2006 and today the Washington, D.C.-based Urban Land Institute's senior resident fellow and ULI/Klingbeil Family Chair for Urban Development. An avid runner and cyclist, Murphy helped organize Friends of



Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

the Riverfront in the late 1980s, an advocacy group for riverfront access and recreational trails. "I was more interested in just putting the trail down and worrying about design later. But John was very focused on quality—that if we're going to do this, we're going to do it with high-quality design and construction."

Riverfront trail development has flourished in the region over the past decade to include 21 miles along the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio rivers, the majority of which are in the city and an integral part of Riverlife's Three Rivers Park vision. It's not a coincidence that the city's reputation among cyclists has done an about-face since 1990, when *Bicycling Magazine* listed it among the nation's three worst places to bike. In 2010, the magazine ranked Pittsburgh the 28th most bike-friendly city in the nation, and the League of American Bicyclists gave the city its bronze bike-friendly community award. Bike traffic also has soared, according to U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data. In 2009, an estimated 1.4 percent of city residents identified biking as their primary mode of transportation to and from their jobs—a 206 percent increase in bike commuters since 2000.

"The trail system is the backbone of what has made bicycling a viable option in Pittsburgh," says Scott Bricker, executive director of the nonprofit bicycling advocacy organization, Bike Pittsburgh, whose membership has risen from about 100 to nearly 1,500 in the past five years.

Walking is another popular alternative mode of transportation. An estimated 12.4 percent of Pittsburgh residents walk to work—a rate of pedestrian commuters second only to Boston among major U.S. cities, according to the American Community Survey.

Brian "B-Man" Hannan is one of them. He sold the last car he owned 10 years ago in favor of hiking to wherever he needs to go. On workdays, that means an hour-long trek from his home on Troy Hill across two rivers to his sales job at REI in the SouthSide Works, an open-air retail, office, entertainment and residential complex built on the site of a former steel mill along the Monongahela River. Not only did SouthSide Works not exist a decade ago, but Hannan's route would have been impossible to navigate without several trail and bridge projects that were part of Riverlife's plan to improve riverfront access and amenities.

CURRENT

All images courtesy of Riverlife



The realization of Riverlife's vision for Three Rivers Park involves the completion of a number of riverfront developments. Among them, shown below clockwise are renovation of the Point State Park fountain, Downtown; conversion of a former steel mill barge dock into a South Side riverfront park; and an overall Point State Park upgrade.



FUTURE



Future projects, shown below clockwise from top left, include construction of a "switchback" ramp to connect Downtown to the Mon Wharf Landing park and trail; addition of a combined pedestrian-bicycle span to the West End Bridge; development of a recreation complex at the West End Bridge's northern base; completion of Allegheny Riverfront Green Boulevard, based on the Allegheny Riverfront Vision Plan; and installation of artistic river-surface lighting.



One of Riverlife's important achievements has been persuading business and government leaders to have construction and renovation projects complement and connect to Three Rivers Park. The Hot Metal Bridge, originally built to carry crucibles of molten steel, was converted into two separate spans, one for vehicles, the other for bicycles and pedestrians. Improvements at Station Square, below left, a riverfront retail and entertainment complex, include better pedestrian connections to the rivers. And the Mon Wharf Landing, below right, was converted from a deteriorating, five-acre parking lot to a linear park and trail that retains some parking spaces but features steps that descend to the river and increase appeal to people who enjoy water activities such as fishing.

Perhaps the most important to Hannan are the renovations to the Hot Metal Bridge, originally built to carry crucibles of molten steel across the Monongahela River. Today, separate spans have been built for vehicles and pedestrians traveling to and from the South Side. "It's very convenient for me," says Hannan. "And I can say I'm never on the bridge alone. It's pretty well traveled."

Over the course of 10 years, Riverlife has tried to persuade riverfront property owners to create pieces of Three Rivers Park as part of their developments. The organization also has encouraged owners to use its set of design guidelines, which include principles for landscaping, paving, architectural materials, view corridors, and pedestrian connections between the water and the community. The process has not always gone smoothly.

A high-profile example that tested Riverlife's influence and yielded mixed success involved efforts to ensure that a proposed casino complemented the riverfront landscape. Controversial from the start, the casino project generated heated debates about the impact of legalized gambling and the competition to award the city's casino license. Yet, preparations for the winning bid, which called for building the facility on the North Shore riverfront, began without incident. Using Riverlife guidelines, the original license owners designed what is today Rivers Casino with a broad glass façade, bicycle trails in the landscape on the upper promenade that connected to Three Rivers Park trails and an amphitheater that also served as a water landing.

Before construction began, however, the design of the 3,800-space parking garage changed dramatically. Rather than hide part of the 10-story garage underground as was originally proposed, the entire structure would be built above ground, to a height of 119 feet, taller than the casino itself. Riverlife and its supporters were alarmed, fearing a negative impact on city skyline views and development along the North Shore. After attempts at the local level to halt approval of the garage failed, the organization sued to block the redesigned structure, taking the case to the state Supreme Court. It lost.

But rather than wallow in defeat, Riverlife developed a relationship with the new casino owners, an investment group led by Chicago developer Neil Bluhm, who agreed to architecturally face the garage and worked with the organization on lighting and design scenarios to minimize the impact of the 6-acre parking deck. Stormwater management infrastructure also was added as part of a project promoted by Riverlife to explore ways of collecting and cleansing storm water and preventing it from

entering the city's overtaxed sewer system, which frequently overflows during wet weather, driving sewage into the rivers.

"We see the third generation of projects in our next 10 years being focused on completing Three Rivers Park," says Schroeder. "And one of the most important things those projects need to achieve is to re-create, sometimes mitigate and restore an ecology, and add environmental preservation and improvement to the list of achievements on our riverfronts."

Riverlife estimates that \$112 million has been spent so far on developing Three Rivers Park's green space and trails. Meanwhile, the city's riverfronts have attracted more than \$4 billion in development, half of which came from private investments.

Developer Ralph Falbo says planned and completed riverfront improvements, such as a park and trail extension along the Mon Wharf, were critical in deciding to develop the 82-unit 151 First Side downtown condominium above the Monongahela River. "To have the ability to say to a prospective buyer, 'You will be able to walk across the street and down the steps and sit on the riverfront and walk or run or bike' is an added feature to urban living and probably the most important thing to a developer from a marketing standpoint," says Falbo, CEO of Ralph Falbo Inc. and Riverlife board member. "I certainly wouldn't have built that building if the rivers weren't going to be cleaned up and the riverfronts weren't going to be accessible."

When Jeanette Oliver moved into the Cork Factory apartments in the city's Strip District more than three years ago, she liked the convenient walk to work—she's an attorney with a Downtown law firm—and the fact that the tenants trended younger and there was "a neat vibe going on." But it was its proximity to the Allegheny River and easy access to the riverfront that made the difference. "It's fair to say the river was a huge selling point in justifying the rent," says Oliver, who moved to Mount Washington late last year after her boyfriend proposed marriage. "I loved to sit out there on nice days and evenings and to walk my dog on the trail along the river. I even paid extra for a river view."

Such stories suggest the value of reinventing urban waterfronts, which more cities are recognizing.

"Everyone is trying to capture their waterways, even if it's just a bayou in Houston," says Murphy, former Pittsburgh mayor. "It's because waterfronts are magical places. They create a place of peace and excitement. In Pittsburgh, they're a celebration of our success story—and that's an important story for us, one that we need to continue to celebrate." *h*



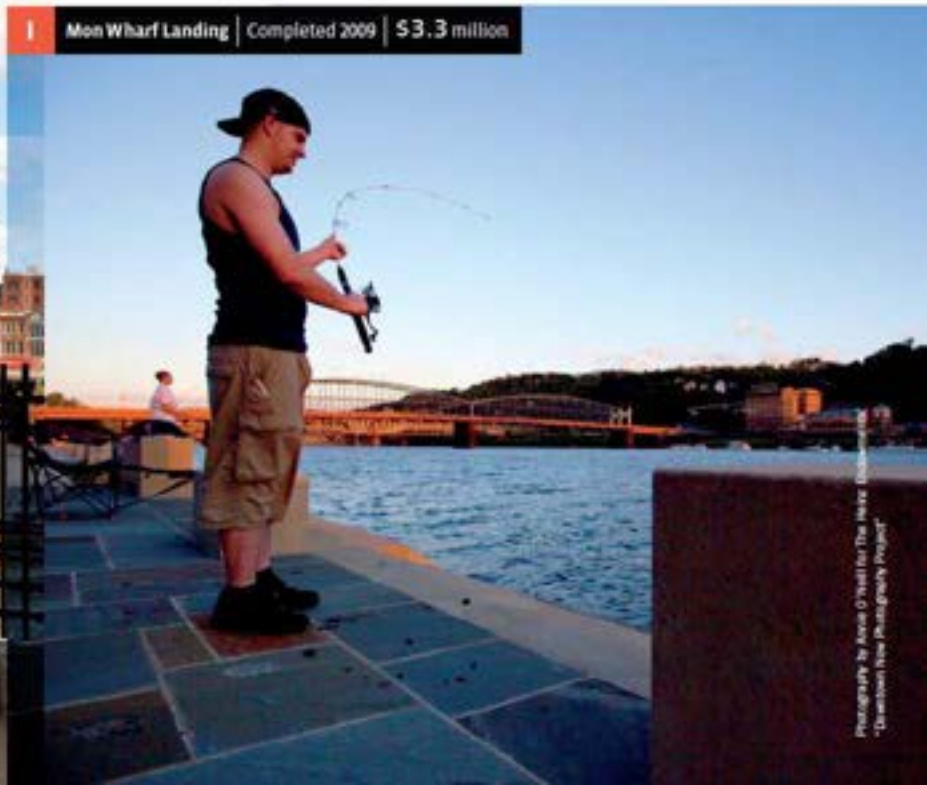
G Hot Metal Bridge | Completed 2007 | \$9.2 million



H Station Square | Completed 2007 | \$9.0 million



I Mon Wharf Landing | Completed 2009 | \$3.3 million





Pittsburgh was *the* place to be for hockey fans on New Year's Day this year. The 30,000 visitors who filled Downtown hotels during the National Hockey League's Winter Classic included those rooting for the Washington Capitals, the Pittsburgh Penguins' opponents for the game.

When Pittsburgh hosts major events, visitors pour in.
For the long stretches between, it's more of a trickle. A report on the region's many marketers
and their struggle to find year-round tourist love. by Christine H. O'Toole

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DESTINATION: PITTSBURGH





ECONOMY: THE WINTER CLASSIC NOT ONLY PACKED 67,000-SEAT HEINZ FIELD,

By every conceivable measure, the National Hockey League's Winter Classic, held at Pittsburgh's misty Heinz Field on New Year's Day 2011, was The Hot Ticket. The league's fourth annual outdoor event matched the city's top-ranked Penguins against the Washington Capitals, and 67,000 seats were sold out months in advance. An HBO documentary series had breathlessly chronicled the story of the rivals and their cities during the previous four weeks. Thirty thousand out-of-towners had snapped up every available Downtown hotel. The cash infusion for the city: more than \$22 million, higher than either of the Steelers playoff games held a few weeks later. Put another way, the 60-minute match-up gushed cash for the region at a rate of \$366,600 per minute.

With a television audience of another two million fans for the Crosby-Ovechkin face-off, the Classic delivered more than cash. It burnished the image of a city trying to sustain the momentum of recent accolades through a serious economic recession.



\$22M

IT ALSO GENERATED MORE THAN \$22 MILLION FOR THE REGION.

THAT'S \$366,600 PER MINUTE FOR A 60-MINUTE MATCH-UP.

Visitors can enjoy Pittsburgh's diverse hotel options, such as the luxury Fairmont Pittsburgh, top, and varied restaurant offerings, such as Olive or Twist, below, a Downtown martini bar, restaurant and lounge.

61,700

JOBS: TOURISM HAS BROUGHT 61,700 JOBS AND
\$4.7 BILLION ANNUALLY INTO THE REGION.



That momentum had peaked in September 2009, when international leaders descended on the city for a two-day visit. The G-20 Summit generated more than \$34 million in direct spending, booked 26,000 hotel room-nights and generated international media coverage, which marketing experts say would have been worth \$12 million if purchased as ad space.

City leaders were ecstatic. The story of Pittsburgh's transformation in bioscience research and development, arts and culture, and green building had sparked the interest of a vast global audience, despite funding cuts that halved the 2009 marketing budget of the local convention and visitors' bureau. But the question that followed the afterglow persists: Why hasn't Pittsburgh kept the spotlight and translated the exposure into more visitors to the city?

Like the old adage of the blind men and the elephant, the answer to that question depends on whom you ask.

The cooperation that produced the economic and promotional successes heralded during the G-20 has been curiously missing in nurturing tourism long term. Without a defined local brand or national ad campaign, business and civic groups continue to segment their marketing message into categories: tourists, talent and business. VisitPittsburgh handles the first; colleges and other nonprofits address the second. The Allegheny Conference on Community Development, the strongest public voice on regional economic growth, embraces the third. The different emphases have made it difficult to establish a collaborative and integrated approach to promoting the region, a task already bedeviled by a lack of consistent financial support.

There have been a few examples of sector cooperation on a limited scale, and hosting the G-20 Summit did inspire the groups to coordinate their messages about the city—temporarily. But 21 months later, some Pittsburghers worry that the attention is fading, while tourism budgets remain critically low. Without a more focused effort to attract visitors to Pittsburgh, the region could miss the full potential of this revenue generator.

"We know opinions about the city have been changed. Writers from all over the world now have Pittsburgh on the radar. Our mayor was invited to speak about our success in China. Four national conventions came to Pittsburgh as a direct result. Business site visits have increased. But as good as the results of the G-20 have been, we have squandered a tremendous opportunity, in my view," says Joe McGrath, VisitPittsburgh's CEO. "Not totally and not for lack of trying, but for lack of resources. We should have been all over it, [with] a separate war chest. What happens next? Unless we can keep up the drive, we're yesterday's news."

Allegheny Conference spokesman Bill Flanagan agrees. "There's pent-up demand. People want to see the region promoted," he says. But while there's no shortage of groups to shoulder the task, from the Butler County Visitors Bureau to the Allegheny Conference, there's no consensus on a brand that fits all needs, or even if one is necessary.

Janet Sarbaugh, director of the Endowments Arts & Culture Program, puts the problem bluntly: "Who decides what gets promoted? There were and still are too many people involved. There hasn't been one place where informed leaders decide, 'This is Pittsburgh's big story for a year or two.'"

Across the country, many cities, including Pittsburgh, are eyeing leisure tourism as an economic driver. The sector already contributes \$4.7 billion annually and 61,700 jobs to the region. Hotel guests pay taxes that fund county programs, including convention center costs and tourism.

Investment in an asset that will never leave town makes sense. But the economic argument for boosting tourism has gained little traction.

"I'm not sure the business community ever sees itself as part of the tourism effort," says Linda Dickerson, who chaired VisitPittsburgh's board of directors from 2001 to 2003. "They see that as a government purview—'not our job.' And it's complicated by the fact that a segment of for-profit enterprises benefits, and some nonprofits benefit."

Meanwhile, public funding for tourism, in the form of state grants, has been deeply slashed. Philanthropies might once again be expected to step into the breach. Local foundations, including Richard King Mellon, Benedum, Grable, Alcoa,

When the Endowments made a \$200,000 marketing grant to Pittsburgh International Airport last year, it was betting a second time on efforts to enhance the public profile of a gleaming but underused facility. In 2007, with passenger traffic at a low ebb following the removal of the USAirways hub, the foundation had made a grant of \$300,000 for airport officials to market available space to passenger

and cargo airlines. Among the positive results of that campaign was the city's 2009 announcement that Delta Airlines would offer a direct flight from Pittsburgh to Paris five days a week. Eagerly sought by an airport that had seen its last international flights depart in 2004, Delta's flight carried a two-year commitment. The new Endowments monies will help the airport authority generate interest in the flight throughout the region.

"Because of FAA guidelines, we are not allowed to use airport rates-and-charges dollars to promote a specific flight," explains authority director Brad Penrod. The latest grant gives the authority "a significant nest egg, to get exposure for a critical regional asset."

Penrod sees market potential to attract Cleveland passengers to Pittsburgh's overseas flight, since Continental ceased its Cleveland-to-Paris

flights in mid-2009. Publicity will include Cleveland airport billboards, and buys in the Pittsburgh and Cleveland media markets. Penrod believes advertising will insure that the two-year Delta agreement can be extended. "Usually after two years, it's a mature market, with little advertising needed," he says.

INTERNATIONAL ACCESS

Hunt and Pittsburgh, have all supported tourism with past grants. Between 1998 and 2007, the Endowments alone gave \$2.3 million in unrestricted funding to encourage cultural and heritage tourism efforts.

"The original hope was that [philanthropic] dollars would provide the time to build a strong cultural tourism effort and the leverage to attract long-term state investment," explains Sarbaugh. "Unfortunately, state support for tourism promotion agencies has now vanished."

Sustainable funding is the key to encouraging leisure travel, says tourism consultant Gary Esolen, who organized innovative programs for New Orleans and Philadelphia. "My gospel is, have a sizeable protected fund for leisure tourism," he insists firmly. "No bucks, no Buck Rogers."

Beyond Conventions: Marketing to Consumers

Until the 1990s, few American cities directed their marketing efforts to leisure travel. Convention and visitors bureaus concentrated on luring large meetings, building cavernous convention centers and booking groups years in advance. VisitPittsburgh's McGrath calls the meetings side of the business "forced tourism," since visitors follow their groups to a predetermined destination. In fact, conventions represent only a fraction of business travel, which in turn comprises just 16 percent of the global total. Leisure travelers represent 84 percent. (Even nationally, the United States has lagged far behind other nations in marketing to global visitors; President Obama signed a bill to create the first national tourist promotion agency, U.S. Travel, in 2009.)

One of the first cities to focus on leisure tourism as an economic generator was Philadelphia, with

the Pew Trusts as an essential early partner. Pew commissioned a 1994 report that pointed to hospitality as a replacement industry for the region. Intrigued by the potential for leisure tourism, the foundation made a \$6 million grant over three years to create the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corp. The new nonprofit, separate from the city's convention and visitors bureau, had another \$3 million in funding from both the city and the state, thanks to the political clout of then-Mayor Ed Rendell.

"The city and state were committed in advance," recalls Pew Trusts' Managing Director Don Kimelman.

"Everyone agreed [the tourism marketing corporation] had to be sustainable. It had to have a revenue stream." The source: a dedicated hotel tax.

After the debut of the city's first advertising campaign, targeted at consumers in major East Coast cities, hotel occupancy soared by 39,000 room-nights in one year.

"Hotels said, 'This is working.' They saw it," says Kimelman. The following year, the local hotel association led the campaign for a 1 percent addition to the city's hotel occupancy tax, dedicated to the tourism marketing corporation's efforts. The increase sailed through the state legislature. It has now grown to 8.2 percent, while the city has increased leisure travel by 75 percent, from 6.5 million visitors in 1997 to 11.4 million in 2009.

The hotel tax softens the sting of reduced state funding. The Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corp. continues to market the overall region, creating promotions tied to blockbuster exhibits, restaurant weeks and annual events. Foundations, including the William Penn Foundation, continue to generously fund special projects.

The Endowments' interest in cultural tourism pre-dated the Philadelphia effort. It was stirred by a 1997 McKinsey report that recommended marketing the region's cultural attractions. The next year, an Endowments grant for \$250,000 helped establish a local Office of Cultural Tourism, headed by the former marketing director for the Pittsburgh Symphony, Tinsy Lipchak. Local funders, including the Richard King Mellon and Alcoa foundations, pitched in early; others, such as the Benedum and Pittsburgh foundations, followed with support.

"Both VisitPittsburgh and the foundations thought that there should be a period of time where the potential fit [of the two efforts] was tested," recalls Sarbaugh. "It was modeled on cultural tourism programs in other communities that also were housed in visitors and convention bureaus."

With a modest budget of \$1.5 million for five trial projects, Lipchak devised itineraries centered on the arts, particularly high-profile museum exhibits. Early efforts included the 1999 Carnegie International and 2000's "Aluminum by Design," both staged by the Museum of Art. The strategy gained momentum in 2001 with "Pittsburgh Shines!" Centered on a 16-week art exhibit, the promotion pulled record crowds to the Museum of Art, bringing an estimated \$2.5 million in visitor spending.

The carefully tracked results showed that 15 percent of exhibit patrons came from out of town and prompted confidence that leisure visits were worth the investment.

Lipchak's office formally merged with VisitPittsburgh in 2004 as its division of tourism and cultural heritage. Although the Endowments' support continued through 2007, Lipchak was preoccupied with future funding.

"How are we going to support cultural tourism when foundations aren't involved?" she remembers worrying. As the impact of the recent recession continues, the question has remained, and change in state leadership hasn't helped matters. On March 9, newly elected Gov. Tom Corbett eliminated funding for the region's major state grants from his proposed budget. That leaves the region scrambling to replace a source that had yielded \$3.1 million a decade ago.

Following Philadelphia's example of using a hotel tax increase to provide additional income could be a possibility. VisitPittsburgh's portion of the Allegheny County hotel levy, now generating \$6.3 million a year for the agency, has grown steadily, as the city's hotel occupancy rate outperforms cities of similar size. Since most of the 7 percent tax defrays convention center costs, an increase in the tax for cultural tourism could offer needed revenue.



Source: VisitPittsburgh—These figures encompass local and out-of-town spending, including any ticket sales (if relevant), hotel room rates and average meal prices for destination, as well as expected local transportation costs and ancillary spending. Out-of-town spending is estimated using industry standards determined by Destination Marketing Association International, the world's largest association of official destination marketing organizations.

A photograph of President Barack Obama and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in conversation at the 2009 G-20 Summit. They are seated at a long table, leaning in and talking. In the background, other world leaders and flags are visible, along with a large screen displaying the summit logo.

The 2009 G-20 Summit demonstrated Pittsburgh's ability to host vital international talks between President Barack Obama, right, and world leaders such as Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, center. Journalists from around the globe told the story of the region's transformation from industrial center to pacesetter in advancing innovations in the arts, bioscience and sustainability.

3,500

IMAGE: THE 2009 G-20 SUMMIT BROUGHT MORE THAN 3,500 JOURNALISTS TO PITTSBURGH TO TELL THE STORIES OF THE REGION'S TRANSFORMATION.

Flanagan says, however, that pushing for such a change would have to be led by hotels, not the Allegheny Conference—“It’s not on our agenda,” he contends—while VisitPittsburgh’s McGrath believes that Allegheny County’s controversial alcohol tax has made the hotel industry wary of new levies.

Even Pennsylvania’s former deputy secretary for tourism won’t bank on the prospect. “I don’t see that deal today,” Mickey Rowley says frankly. Any regional hike would have to be approved by the state legislature, now preoccupied with an overall revenue crisis.

Events and Messages

Individuals with marketing expertise would argue that another essential ingredient for boosting tourism is defining a coordinated message. “You need a single message that’s clear and concise and applicable to all audiences,” says Reynolds Clark, vice chancellor at the University of Pittsburgh and a former VisitPittsburgh board member. “There’s a mystique to it, but if you pull that off, you have success.”

But the Pittsburgh region falls short in this area as well. Efforts to create the region’s magic message go back at least a decade. In 2003, a blue-ribbon local panel with representatives from 120 firms deliberated for months on a branding statement for the region. The resulting declaration, praising “connected individuality,” was widely derided. “Brand balderdash,” thundered a Post-Gazette editorial. The \$200,000 project failed to resolve the so-called “image gap” between outsiders’ perceptions of Pittsburgh and its reality.

By contrast, Cleveland’s community effort to define its brand, launched three years later, moved beyond research to action. With seed money from the Cleveland, Gund, and other local foundations, the Cleveland Plus Marketing Alliance debuted in 2007. Three organizations—the Greater Cleveland Partnership, the regional chamber of commerce; Team NEO, a business attraction effort; and Positively Cleveland, the region’s tourism agency—pooled funds with corporate sponsors to fuel the project, with a \$1.7 million annual budget.

Rick Batyko, who directs the regional marketing project, says that the “Cleveland Plus” brand benefits all three outreach efforts.

“It’s a global economy. Cleveland alone, or one entity’s talent or tourism effort, isn’t enough any more,” he says. Batyko reports to the directors of the three founding organizations, guiding internal efforts and the work of outside agencies. The alliance has helped boost positive national media coverage and employment. With dedicated ongoing funding, it also has given northeast Ohio the lion’s share of the state’s total tourism revenue: 36 percent.

Meanwhile, though the regional branding effort in southwestern Pennsylvania stalled, a string of high-profile events kept Pittsburgh in national headlines. From 2005 through 2009, the Bassmaster Classic pro fishing tournament, Major League Baseball’s All-Star Game, the “Glass!” blockbuster art show, national Steelers and Penguins championships, golf’s U.S. Open, the city’s 250th anniversary and the G-20 Summit built the region’s tourism revenue, briefly, to the highest in the state.

Bill Flanagan, who served as chair of a cooperative marketing effort dubbed Events Pittsburgh, still believes in the power of one-off national events to create a positive image for the city. He took the helm of the new effort in 2005, drawing support from the Allegheny Conference, the state and foundations.

“I’m biased, but look at those five years,” Flanagan says. “I’m a believer that big events equal national television coverage.” He credits collaboration among the Allegheny Conference, VisitPittsburgh and other partners as helping to refine key messages about the region. The high-profile activities also drew willing corporate sponsors. “An annual event platform can give value to the sponsor, more so than [giving money to fund] an ad campaign,” he says. “There’s less interest in a brand and more interest in strategically targeting companies that are good matches” for individual projects.

Pitt’s Clark agrees. “Over time, corporate giving has gotten more targeted. In the past, corporations had deep roots; their leadership grew up here. Newer Pittsburgh is more diversified.”

In 2009, Events Pittsburgh went dormant, succumbing to the same root problem frustrating VisitPittsburgh: a lack of ongoing funding. “You need core operating support, but government doesn’t support that function. It’s a conundrum,” Flanagan sighs.

Making Do vs. Making Progress

Recent shifts in the agenda of the Allegheny Conference have focused its efforts more narrowly on jobs, rather than on amenities, and its regional marketing committee was dissolved in 2008.

Dennis Yablonsky, the CEO who arrived the next year to implement a new three-year strategic plan, explains that the organization's marketing is more targeted, less "general purpose."

"It's two layers: delivering a message about the region as a place to work and to live, and specifically, continuing our efforts on talent attraction and business attraction and retention," he says. Yablonsky notes that the conference worked closely with VisitPittsburgh's communications staff during the G-20 and its aftermath, scheduling media events in New York and Washington, D.C., and co-sponsoring a media tour that highlighted economic good news and the opening of CONSOL Energy Center, the Penguins' new downtown arena. But as his membership begins deliberation on the next strategic plan later this year, he says it will look to the business community for recommendations concerning future marketing efforts.

At VisitPittsburgh, the leisure tourism promotional model is "pay to play," says Lipchak. Attractions such as the Pittsburgh Zoo, the Children's Museum and Phipps Conservatory pool their marketing dollars with the tourism agency to maximize media buys in other markets. Last summer's campaign, targeting Cleveland and other nearby towns, lured 11 percent more visitors from those areas, Lipchak notes. The current "Pittsburgh

is Art" campaign, reprised from last year, will invite influential national and international art writers for tours of private and public art collections here.

And with state government support for tourism in free fall, VisitPittsburgh's bootstraps approach—sharing out-of-town advertising and promotion costs with local attractions, aggressively pursuing news coverage, and extending its reach through its website and social media—is the type of guerrilla marketing that makes sense in tough times, says emerita board member Dickerson.

"When you're in the budget situation that this community faces, you need to make every penny count," she says. She believes that collaboration, not centralization, should drive the regional marketing effort. "It's less about who controls the brand and more about who interprets that for an audience segment," she argues.

Meanwhile, Pittsburgh continues to collect laurels for its sports teams, its economy and its quality of life. In the absence of events that devastate tourism—witness Hurricane Katrina, the Gulf oil spill or 9/11—there's little pressure to change tactics, to do more to draw visitors.

Tourism "is an invisible industry until disaster strikes," says Meryl Levitz, who engineered the turnaround in Philadelphia's leisure tourism.

Pittsburgh's fragile tourism infrastructure looks sound for the moment, as long as it is not scrutinized too closely. But with debates continuing about promotion approaches and funding sources, the status quo may not be good enough—especially in the longer term—for "America's Most Livable City." *h*

A visitor stepping to a Downtown Pittsburgh curb to hail a cab may wave awhile. Unlike in larger cities, passengers can't be assured of getting a ride merely by beckoning with a hand. While cabs wait at more than a dozen taxi stands around town, strangers who want transport to Oakland museums or from late-night South Side clubs often can't find them, leading to complaints for Pittsburgh Transportation Company, operators of the Yellow Cab service.

Jamie Campolongo, CEO of the company and a board member of VisitPittsburgh, has heard the complaints, but says they're fewer of late.

"The magic number is one cab for each 1,000 residents," he says, citing standard trade group formulas. "For Pittsburgh [with a population of 308,000], we're reasonably well served," with 325 Yellow cabs in the fleet and another 35 to be deployed this year. Campolongo points out that small cities with outsized convention traffic, like Las Vegas,

can support bigger fleets.

Pittsburgh is unlikely to attract similar numbers until a major convention center hotel adds Downtown hotel rooms.

The state Public Utilities Commission, VisitPittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership have advocated simple signage and awareness campaigns to connect passengers and cabbies, but Campolongo says there's a familiar problem: lack of funding. "To do it right, \$20,000 or \$30,000 would be nothing," he argues.

Satellite dispatching, using cabs' GPS, has improved the company's response rate considerably, Campolongo says. Cellular hailing, successfully launched in London, will someday allow Pittsburgh customers with GPS-enabled phones to let their cell phones find the nearest ride.

PITTSBURGH: ALL HAIL



6.3M

FUNDING: VISITPITTSBURGH'S PORTION OF THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY
HOTEL TAX GENERATES \$6.3 MILLION A YEAR.



VisitPittsburgh uses its county tax revenue to promote the city and popular venues such as Heinz Hall, above, and the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh.

Bike Pittsburgh Executive Director Scott Bricker practices what he promotes. He commutes to work on his bicycle, traveling through Pittsburgh neighborhoods on dedicated bike lanes and “sharrows,” lanes marked to indicate that they can be used by both motorists and cyclists.



THE PASSION AND ENERGY OF BIKE PITTSBURGH — ALONG WITH SUPPORT FROM PHILANTHROPIC BELIEVERS — HAVE HELPED PROPEL THE CITY FROM THE BOTTOM RUNGS OF CYCLING CIRCLES TO THE TOP TIER OF BIKE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES. AND THE MOMENTUM DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE WANING.

BY CRISTINA ROUVALIS PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSHUA FRANZOS



LIFE CYCLE

S

cott Bricker was biking uphill in Pittsburgh's Squirrel Hill neighborhood on a warm evening when a man driving a white van screamed at him to pull over. As Bricker slowed down in rush-hour traffic, the irate motorist threatened to beat him up. • It was 2002, and Bricker was a member of the fledgling advocacy group called Bike Pittsburgh. Ordinarily, he was fearless when pedaling in traffic and thick-skinned about the angry honking and constant taunts aimed his way. But this was different. The enraged driver was climbing out of his van, ready to make good on his threat.

Marketing professional Mary Franzen pedals her bike to work along the busy Forbes Avenue corridor, often used by commuting motorists.

17

PITTSBURGH RANKS 17TH AMONG THE NATION'S 70 LARGEST CITIES IN PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION THAT COMMUTES PRIMARILY BY BIKE, ACCORDING TO CENSUS DATA.



Bricker knew the risks of bike commuting, including the occasional act of violence. In fact, his colleague David Hoffman had founded Bike Pittsburgh earlier that year after a motorist struck and injured him. "Get on the sidewalk!" the man had screamed at Hoffman before speeding away from the scene.

Fortunately, Bricker avoided an altercation by flagging down a passing bicycle policeman who ordered the raging motorist to move along.

Today, almost a decade later, Bricker, the executive director of Bike Pittsburgh, encounters much less hostility on his bike. He can go days or even weeks without finding himself on the receiving end of a honk or a profane tirade.

He pedals on bike lanes his group helped engineer and passes buses equipped with bike racks he fought to have installed. "It is so much better now," Bricker says. "It is completely re-envisioning how we get around."

Pittsburgh has gone from a cycling dead-zone to a magnet for bike commuters largely through the persistence of Bricker and Hoffman, who wouldn't take "You're crazy" as an answer.

"I was called an idiot, a fool and Don Quixote," Hoffman says of his crusade to transform what *Bicycling Magazine* once called the "worst city in the United States to bike."

Though still not on a par with Portland, Ore., or San Francisco, Pittsburgh won a 2010 bronze award for bike-friendliness from the League of American Bicyclists—a prize that enhances the overall stature and appeal of the city. Such recognition means that offering good biking experiences not only yields environmental and health benefits but can have economic and other implications as well. The cycling dead-zone reputation is gone.

"The communities on our bike-friendly list are on the top of the lists of best places to live by U.S. News & World Report," says Bill Nesper, director of the Bicycle Friendly America Program of the League of American Bicyclists. "Biking and walking correlates with livability. It attracts young people."

Adds Lindsay Patross, editor of the *IheartPGH* blog: "How do we get young people to stay here instead of going to Austin and New York? Talking about bike lanes is as important as job creation."



The Heinz Endowments has helped Bike Pittsburgh spread its message that cycling deserves a place on the road as a blood-pumping, non-polluting and utterly fun way to commute. In 2007, the Endowments awarded the group \$49,200 to produce the first bicycle map of Pittsburgh published in 15 years. The colorful guide shows bike lanes and hill steepness, and gives the scoop on bridges. "Don't even think of biking on this one," reads the caption by the Veterans Bridge.

"It was so creative," says Caren Glotfelty, director of the Endowments' Environment Program. She was so impressed with the small but scrappy group that she awarded it an additional \$90,000 in 2008 and \$50,000 in 2009 to increase staff hours and strengthen advocacy efforts. "Scott is one of those low-key, friendly people who sells the cause. It's hard to say no to him."

Interest in the cause was brewing back in 2002 when Hoffman started his Bike Pittsburgh website on bicycle safety after his accident. The site attracted not only Bricker and others who were eager to get involved with the organization, but also thousands of online visitors. Hoffman, currently director of administration and human resources at Bike and Roll San Francisco, a bicycle rental and tour company, formed a board

of directors that year. In the summer of 2004, he quit his full-time job as project manager for Summa Technology to become Bike Pittsburgh's acting executive director on a volunteer basis. In 2005, the organization received funding from the Richard King Mellon Foundation and the Sprout Fund, an Endowments grantee that supports innovative community projects, which enabled the nonprofit to hire Bricker as its first full-time executive director and Eric Boerer as membership and outreach coordinator.

Bike Pittsburgh has grown from a handful of activists with no budget to an organization with nearly 1,500 members, a \$300,000 budget, a staff of four and its own office.

Although it vigorously promotes cycling, the nonprofit treats the health benefits—reducing heart risks, toning muscles, building stamina, alleviating stress, burning calories—as a given and focuses most of its energies on advocating for changes to make Pittsburgh more receptive to those who use this mode of transportation. In business districts throughout the city, Bike Pittsburgh has worked with the mayor's office to install 200 bike racks and paid for 100 of them through grants from the Richard King Mellon and William Benter foundations. The organization also successfully lobbied city officials for a full-time bike/pedestrian coordinator, Stephen Patchan.



Bike Pittsburgh's colorful bicycle map, left, was recognized in Print Magazine's 2008 Regional Design Annual, a national graphic design survey, as one of the year's best graphic design projects. That same year, the 420-mile "Tour of Pennsylvania," the first international bicycle race across Pennsylvania, started in Philadelphia and concluded on the streets of Downtown Pittsburgh, above right. Meanwhile, 200 bike racks, below right, scattered across neighborhood business districts are a testament to Bike Pittsburgh's success in making the city more bicycle-friendly.



"Scott's fighting an uphill battle," Patchan says. "But the bike community is what it is because of Scott."

The sandy-haired Bricker, 33, has the wiry build of someone who physically propels himself to work instead of stepping on an accelerator. "I am not a bike fundamentalist," he says in his soft-spoken voice. "Cars are tools. Bikes are like friends. I think cars are way overused. We should not be taking cars for every small trip to pick up a new toothbrush."

Wearing a blue blazer over jeans, Bricker recently pedaled his Surly Cross-Check on one of his favorite routes in Squirrel Hill. Here on a new bike lane on Wightman Avenue, a buffer zone separates bicycles from parked cars, preventing cyclists from getting hit by car doors swinging open.

The fact that this bike lane even exists is a testament to Bricker's grit. When the city took on the project four years ago, it did not have a traffic engineer on staff. So to design the new lanes, Bike Pittsburgh used a grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation to hire URS Corp., an engineering design firm.

As far as Bricker knows, his is the only bike organization in the United States that pays for traffic engineering. Of some 15 miles of city bike lanes and "sharrows"—lanes marked for both motorists and cyclists—URS Corp. engineered about 10 miles. That includes lanes on a variety of roads in Pittsburgh's East End: long, winding East Liberty and Beechwood boulevards; shorter, neighborhood-based Wightman and Beacon streets; and the main thoroughfares of Highland and Penn avenues.

Bricker also worked with the Port Authority of Allegheny County to install bike racks on the front of all city buses. When

Port Authority needed more money to outfit the 30 percent of the buses without racks, he directed them to federal funding: the Congestion Mitigation and Quality Improvement Program, which matched Richard King Mellon Foundation grants.

"He's a persistent pest," Port Authority CEO Steve Bland says about Bricker. "But I mean it as a compliment."

In national cycling circles, Pittsburgh is a rising star.

"When we talk to communities around the country, we use Pittsburgh as an example," says Nesper of the League of American Bicyclists. "It's a surprising story. Pittsburgh is a post-industrial city that isn't Boulder, Colo., or Portland, Ore., or New York."

"When you say 'Pittsburgh,' cycling isn't what pops into your head. Then you realize what is happening. It's 'Wow.'"

Pittsburgh ranks 17th among the 70 largest U.S. cities in percentage of the population that commutes primarily by bike, according to 2009 census data. While still a tiny sliver—1.4 percent—of the driving population, that's above the national average of 0.5 percent. (Bricker believes that those numbers underestimate bike commuting because they exclude people who bike to work only once or twice a week.)

Nesper credits Bike Pittsburgh for selling the cause creatively through its interactive website; its annual BikeFest, a 10-day celebration with rides, auctions, bike-in movies and events; and its map—"The best bike map I have ever seen," he says—which Print Magazine recognized in its 2008 Regional Design Annual as one of the top graphic design projects in the mid-Atlantic region. Bike Pittsburgh's comic-style handbook, "Bike Commuting 101," was praised by federal Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood on



his blog. The handbook, festival and other advocacy efforts were funded by a grant from the Sprout Fund.

The organization's efforts also were honored in March by the Alliance for Biking and Walking, which presented Bike Pittsburgh with its 2011 Advocacy Organization of the Year Award. The alliance is the coalition of more than 170 state and local bicycle and pedestrian organizations that promote bicycling and walking in North American communities.

Despite the recent accolades, Bricker didn't set out to become a bike activist. He graduated from Carnegie Mellon University in 1999 with a degree in public policy and management and a

concentration in environmental policy. After graduation, he worked for Verde Media in San Francisco, where he fell in love with bike commuting. He figured that the city had installed bike lanes and other amenities, unaware of the behind-the-scenes advocacy of the San Francisco Bike Coalition. He wasn't even a member. "I was young and oblivious," he says.

After the dot.com bust cost him his job, Bricker moved back to Pittsburgh. Spoiled by San Francisco, he was shocked by the rude reception he and his bike received from Pittsburgh drivers. "Every three seconds, we were beeped at," he says.

In 2002, Bricker agreed to work for his friend as a carpenter and general contractor. He enjoyed using his hands to re-create a room, much the way he would later use his mind to re-envision city streets. He chanced upon Hoffman's Bike Pittsburgh website and photos detailing the damage to his face, limbs and wrist after the hit-and-run accident. Bricker was appalled, but not surprised. He and current program manager Lou Fineberg quickly joined Hoffman's cause.

Hoffman remembers meeting Bricker, a young "in-your-face" activist who wanted to put up billboards that make people's temples throb. He had the fire in his belly that all activists have. We had to rein him in a little. He has mellowed."

For its first two years, the group operated on a shoestring budget and met in Hoffman's living room. As membership grew, Bike Pittsburgh shared office space with Venture Outdoors, a nonprofit that promotes outdoor activity, before moving into its South Side offices in 2004 and then to Lawrenceville.

When Bricker was planning to attend the University of Michigan in 2005 to pursue a master's degree in urban planning, Hoffman decided to head out to California to continue his bike advocacy work. Wanting to leave Bike Pittsburgh in capable hands, Hoffman asked Bricker to become his successor.

Bricker agonized over the decision. He was set on grad school, but he didn't want to pass up this opportunity. So he deferred his acceptance for a year. He caught the bike advocacy bug, and "I deferred it forever," he quips.

"I just wanted to have fun and ride my bike," Bricker says. "I didn't want to die. I didn't want my friends to get hurt. This is the way you have to do it. You don't change it by being silent and hoping and praying that things change."

With his laptop sometimes tucked into his saddlebag, he commutes from his Garfield home to the Lawrenceville office and meetings Downtown, rain, shine or snow.

"I love seeing [bicycle] tire tracks on freshly laid snow," he says. "People say it's dangerous. I don't see it. You have to go slowly. It's the same law of physics as any moving vehicle."

Unlike some hard-core outdoor enthusiasts, Bricker doesn't condescend to the less hearty. He tells people to ride to work when it's comfortable and fun. Those who love to bike but are skittish about traffic can read Bike Pittsburgh's handbook and its lively online board for tips and route information.

The group also offers support when a rider is hit or attacked.

Justin Checile, 31, of Lawrenceville, was riding his bike through the East Liberty neighborhood on Memorial Day last year when a youth heaved another bike at him, sending him crashing to the ground. Checile broke his collar bone and was so rattled he stayed off his bike for a few months. But he was heartened when Pittsburgh bikers came to rallies to support him and another victim of bike violence.

He is happily back in the saddle of his one-speed Charger, zipping between home and his North Side office. "I love riding in traffic. It's fun. I like watching traffic happen, how people and cars and bikes interact," he says. "It feels like a living thing."

Of course, not all motorists enjoy driving behind or alongside a cyclist. Dan Thompson, a 54-year-old accountant who commutes by car from Wilkins to Downtown, says he has no problem with law-abiding cyclists, but too many flout the rules.

"They think they don't have to stop for a stop sign," Thompson says. "They weave between lanes of traffic. They get mad when you don't see them."



Some cyclists do need a refresher course on sharing the road, Bricker says. "But so do some motorists." He argues that a cyclist whose face is visible is an easy target for rage, while a speeding motorist is anonymous behind a "faceless box of glass and metal."

Mary Franzen gets frustrated when friends mention reckless cyclists. The 44-year-old marketing professional, who commutes by bike from her home in Regent Square to South Side, says she doesn't blame all motorists when she sees a reckless driver. Why should she be blamed for the sins of a few cyclists?

Despite recent progress, Franzen says many Pittsburghers still look down on bike commuters. "There is a prejudice," she says. "Grown-ups ride in cars. Kids ride bikes."



Justin Checile bears physical scars from injuries he received when a youth threw a bike at him. Still a cycling believer, he rides to work on the narrow lanes of Penn Avenue, one of the city's most car-clogged streets.

1,500

But she wouldn't trade her two-wheeled commute for anything. "People who get around on bikes love their bikes. They are happy. A bike moves at the right speed. You are connected to the outside. Pedestrians smile at you." Pedaling across the Hot Metal Bridge, an inspired Franzen always blows a kiss to the city.

That feeling of euphoria may be one reason Bricker sees more cyclists riding to work. The activist who once knew almost all of the bike commuters in town now doesn't know most of them. Not that Bricker is complaining.

"I hope biking becomes so popular it is mathematically impossible to know all the cyclists." *h*

FORMERLY AN ORGANIZATION WITH ONLY A HANDFUL OF ACTIVISTS, BIKE PITTSBURGH TODAY HAS NEARLY 1,500 DUES-PAYING MEMBERS, A \$300,000 BUDGET AND A STAFF OF FOUR.

here & there

ENDOWMENTS BOARD TOUR

Endowments Chairman Teresa Heinz, middle, and Saeha Heinz, left, a foundation board member, observe a child care worker at Hosanna House, a multi-purpose community center in Wilkinsburg Borough, east of Pittsburgh. The longtime Endowments grantee provides health and human services to more than 27,000 people a year.



Jim Adkins

The Mountain Watershed Association has joined with six other nonprofits to empower Pennsylvania citizens to monitor Marcellus shale development in their communities and to help with local environmental protection efforts. The Marcellus Citizen Stewardship Project offers "visual assessment trainings" during which participants learn to use their senses of sight, hearing and smell to identify potential problems resulting from drilling operations. The data collected can be uploaded using online forms and eventually integrated into

FracTracker, an interactive website designed to track the impact of Pennsylvania's growing natural gas industry. The site also can provide individuals with a place to learn about and share information on Marcellus shale gas operations. In addition to explaining how to identify drilling problems, visual assessment trainings

will give participants background on safety issues, permits and regulations, air and water pollution, the use of FracTracker and the complaint-filing process.

The other organizations involved in this project are Three Rivers Waterkeeper, GASP Pittsburgh, Clean Water Action, the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Healthy Environments and Communities, PennEnvironment, and the Fayette County Conservation District.



B. Mark Schenck

Campaign Success

The Pittsburgh is Art Day of Giving, a 24-hour online campaign to support the arts, raised more than \$1.4 million on May 11. Another \$475,000 in matching funds was donated from the Endowments and the Hillman, Claude Worthington Benedum, Buhl and Grable foundations. Initiated by the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council and the Endowments, the event was sponsored by The Pittsburgh Foundation, which had organized two previous days of giving for local nonprofit groups. But this event was the first to raise support for 147 arts groups in Allegheny, Butler, Fayette, Indiana, Washington and Westmoreland counties.

PILOTING ARTS CAREER

Twenty artists have been chosen as the Pittsburgh region's first Flight School Fellows. The eight-week professional development program is designed to help artists advance in their fields by providing workshops, mentoring and career planning. Endowments grantee Pittsburgh Filmmakers is administering the program, with the New York-based nonprofit Creative Capital and other artists and arts professionals providing a broad range of expertise.

The Flight School Fellowship is a result of the Creative Entrepreneurs Report, a six-month research project conducted by Carnegie Mellon University and funded by the Endowments, which includes strategies to support individual artists. The professional development program is funded by Creative Capital, the Endowments, and the Fine and Pittsburgh foundations.

Board and Staff Honors

Endowments board member **Judith Davenport** and her husband, Ronald Davenport Sr., chairman of Sheridan Broadcasting Corp., co-chairman of the American Urban Radio Networks and Heinz Awards board member, were among those recently honored at this year's Legends in Leadership celebration sponsored by the Community College of Allegheny County Educational Foundation. The Davenports were given the award for their community leadership in Pittsburgh.

The Pennsylvania Early Learning Investment Commission awarded its 2011 Champion for Children award to Endowments board member **James E. Rohr**, chairman and CEO of the PNC Financial Services Group. The award recognizes business officials who have educated civic and government leaders about the benefits of early childhood education programs to businesses. Rohr provided the vision for PNC Grow Up Great, the company's 10-year, \$100 million investment in school readiness for children from birth to age 5.

Endowments Board member **Franco Harris**, a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame and owner-president of the Pittsburgh-based Super Bakery, was the keynote speaker for the Community College of Allegheny County commencement. At the ceremony, he was awarded an honorary associate of arts in humane letters in recognition of his contributions to the community. Harris also recently received the Manny Gold Humanitarian Award, given to him by the Western Pennsylvania Jewish Sports Hall of Fame for his work on behalf of youth education.

The American Forest Foundation recently honored Environment Program Director **Caren Giotfelty** and five other women as part of an effort to showcase Pittsburgh's environmental progress. The Washington, D.C.-based group works to establish and maintain sustainable forests, and recognized Giotfelty for her commitment to the environment, demonstrated by the Endowments' extensive environmental grant making.

The YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh has selected Arts & Culture Senior Director **Janet Sarbaugh** as its Arts & Culture Tribute to Women Leadership Awardee for this year. Sarbaugh is among seven women honored as part of the organization's annual recognition of women who have helped shape the direction of southwestern Pennsylvania and improved the lives of others.

Children, Youth & Families Senior Program Officer **Carmen Anderson** was among 23 Pittsburgh women recently recognized at the Celebrate & Share 6th Annual Women of Achievement Awards Dinner because of their accomplishments and contributions to the Pittsburgh region.

Education Program Director **Stanley Thompson** is one of three recipients of the Homeless Education Network's first-ever Unsung Hero Awards. Thompson was honored for his support of efforts to promote academic success among students who also live in Sisters Place, a shelter for homeless women and their children.

The Center for Coalfield Justice has created a Greene and Washington County Watershed Atlas that shows mining activities and potential mining-related environmental impacts within the two counties' 23 watersheds. Each map has thumbnail references

describing where the watershed is located; a table of statistics for each feature shown on the map; a graph that explains the acreage of each watershed and the acres of longwall mining panels, if any, under each watershed; the number of stream miles; and the

stream miles that do not meet water quality standards. PDFs of individual watershed maps can be downloaded from the CCJ website, www.coalfieldjustice.org. Bound copies of the atlas also are available through the organization.

MINE MAPPING



Clean Air Advocacy

During a March news conference at the Endowments' Downtown Pittsburgh office, John Graham, left, a senior scientist with the Boston-based Clean Air Task Force, presents results from a study on western Pennsylvania's air pollution after being introduced by foundation president Bobby Vagt, right. The independent research and analysis project found the region's air ranks among the worst in the country, spurring the Endowments to launch a clean air initiative and a new website section devoted to increasing awareness and developing solutions. The foundation also intends to empower its grantees and other air quality-improvement advocates to push for more active federal oversight of regulations that will restrict wind-carried pollution from other states. A key finding of the six-month study, "Fine Particulate Matter and Ozone Air Quality in Western Pennsylvania in the 2000s," was that much of the region's poor air quality is due to in-state sources. This means that local communities have the power to make changes that will lift Pittsburgh from the ranks of the worst-air regions.

The air quality awareness and action center on the Endowments' website, www.heinz.org, provides a place for people in the region to get direct access to the latest science and to better understand health implications. The microsite eventually will be supplanted with a larger, independent website once other sectors of the community are engaged. The pollution study was commissioned by the Endowments last year during an internal assessment of progress made from the foundation's nearly two decades of grant making for air quality-improvement efforts.



SMART PHONE READY

For h magazine readers who have been eager to download the stories and photographs in formats more compatible with their Smart phones—and we know you're out there—the wait is over. A mobile version of the Endowments website, www.heinz.org, is now available.

THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS

Howard Heinz Endowment
Vira I. Heinz Endowment
625 Liberty Avenue
30th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-3115
412.281.5777
www.heinz.org

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Ride of passage. PAGE 24



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