PITTSBURGH parks CONSERVANCY
www.pittsburghparks.org

March–April 2015

theVOICE

You bring Pittsburgh's past into the future

Westinghouse Memorial represents your community's passion

photo credit Melissa McMasters

The Westinghouse Memorial has always been a passion of our community. In 1930, long before Kickstarter, 55,000 Westinghouse employees made small contributions to build a tribute to history-making industrialist George Westinghouse in Schenley Park. When the Memorial fell into disrepair, with the pond ultimately drained in 2009, you acted. Thanks to you, we are approaching the finish line to fund the full restoration of this once-exquisite space.

"As a work of art alone the Memorial is a worthy tourist attraction," points out Richard Ekstrom, a former Westinghouse employee who has avidly taken up the cause for restoration. The sculpture was done by artist Daniel Chester French, who also sculpted the seated Lincoln for the memorial in Washington D.C.

Pride in this tribute to one of Pittsburgh's greatest and often unsung industrialists has spread beyond Westinghouse companies.

"It is not often that a person or a city gets to change the world in a big way."
– Joel Ross, Universal Electric Corporation

Joel Ross, President and CEO of Universal Electric Corporation supported the restoration. "It is not often that a person or a city gets to change the world in a big way," says Ross. "The accomplishments of Mr. Westinghouse, his partners, his company, this city and its people did just that."

With your help we have raised over $1.8 million to restore this important landmark and its surrounding landscape. Our remaining fundraising efforts will complete a maintenance fund to ensure the Memorial remains beautiful into the future. We expect the project to break ground this spring.

ENGAGE
contact Kathleen Gaines
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Park champions like you

You inspire a new generation

The Ellis School's Alternative Gift Shop benefits your parks

Each holiday season the Ellis Guild, a student-run group at The Ellis School, holds an "Alternative Gift Shop" to encourage their school community to support local nonprofits. Your parks have been a grateful recipient of this support for several years. "The Parks Conservancy is a vital resource to our local community," says Guild Chairs Claire Priore and Emily West. "The Parks Conservancy's mission to improve and maintain the quality of our city's parks is demonstrated in the work they do and the positive impact the Conservancy has on the Pittsburgh community." This year shop-goers purchased native plant seedlings in honor of Frick Park.

photo courtesy The Ellis School

Claire Priore and Emily West lead the Ellis Guild and Alternative Gift Shop

Programs you make possible

You put the buzz in education

PNC supports Growing Up Great in Homewood

Did you know that from birth to five years old children's brains are rapidly developing? This is prime time for developing vocabulary and communication skills. Buzzword is part of the PNC Grow up Great initiative. The program pairs six arts and science-based organizations to work together in the Homewood community of Pittsburgh.

photo credit Scott Roller

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Homewood Nature Educator Will Tolliver

"Research shows that families play a vital role in helping their children build essential vocabulary skills."
– Sally McCrady, deputy executive director of PNC Grow Up Great

Our energetic Homewood Nature Educator, Will Tolliver, leads the Parks Conservancy's Buzzword program this year in partnership with our friends at Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. "Together we develop cohesive lessons on the themes of dance and nature to promote literary-focused interactions and conversations between pre-k kids and their families," says Tolliver.

Over the next year we will develop six weeks of workshops with our balletic partner. All of the organizations involved are known for quality programming and while the kids are learning we are also learning from each other as educators. "PNC welcomes the opportunity to partner with these organizations to help develop children's vocabulary through creative and engaging programming that brings young children and their families together," says Sally McCrady, deputy executive director of PNC Grow UP Great.

We hope to further engage the Homewood community, which edges Frick Park, but uses the space less than neighbors in Squirrel Hill or Point Breeze. "Part of the point is to reach out to them and encourage them to in turn reach out to us," says Tolliver.

photo credit John Altdorfer

Children in the Homewood community interacting with nature and Parks Conservancy educators

Join us for one of our free Buzzword workshops for pre-K kids beginning in April
Learn more at www.pittsburghparks.org/buzzword

You transform our cherished spaces

Then and Now: Riverview Chapel Shelter

You restored Pittsburgh's most popular gathering place

The oldest building in Riverview Park, the Chapel Shelter was built in the 1800s as the Watson Presbyterian Church at Perrysville and Riverview Avenues. When a new church was built in 1894, the original building was moved into the park where it became a popular destination for picnics and events.

By the 1990s, the building was infested with termites and scheduled for demolition. Thanks to your support we were able to open the fully restored structure and surrounding landscape in 2008. It has become the most rented shelter in the park system.

photo credit Melissa McMasters

The 2015 PNC Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Spring Hat Luncheon *will be held in Riverview Park on May 2nd just steps away from this gem. Contact Savannah for info at (412) 682-7275 x205.*

Hats off for all you do

2015 PNC Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Spring Hat Luncheon

- The Spring Hat Luncheon was **founded in 1999** to support the operations of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.
- Each year Hat Luncheon **attendees purchase trees** to be planted in the park hosting the event.
- The **first Hat Luncheon was held in Frick Park**. Thanks to the dedicated leadership of community volunteers 350 people attended.
- The event now is **attended by over 600 people** each year and has **raised more than $6 million** in total for the parks.
- The event rotates between Pittsburgh's four regional parks – **Frick, Schenley, Highland and Riverview** and generates awareness of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy in local media.

photo credit Stan Franzos

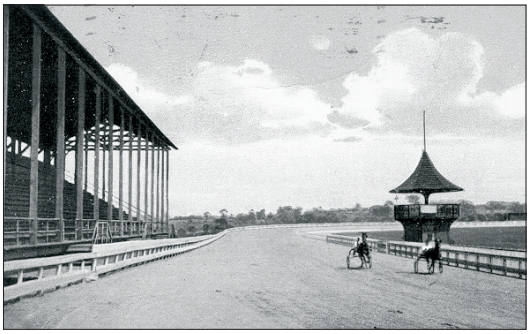
Your parks, your stories

Country living in the city – The Speyers

Three generations inspired by parks

For Alexander Speyer III, Schenley Park is family tradition. He grew up adjacent to the park, as did his father and grandfather. "I understood at a young age that if you live near a park you don't need to live in the country," says Speyer, who now lives near Frick Park.

Growing up on Forbes Avenue near the golf course, Speyer had the childhood of a country boy. One winter his toboggan ended up in a gully at the base of the course, an adventure that still makes him laugh. In the early 1950s he trapped rabbits on the border of the park. "The Game Commission paid 50 cents a rabbit," he recalls.



Stables were built at the Oval in 1911 and horses were kept there for racing until it tragically burned in 1971

Before him his father, Alexander Speyer, Jr., lived with his parents on Bartlett Street. Speyer, Jr. used to walk through the park extensively with his parents. Often their foot-journeys took them past the Westinghouse Memorial on Schenley Drive beside Carnegie Mellon University. Later in life Speyer, Jr. moved to Northumberland Street and served as a board member for the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy until shortly before his death two years ago. While on the board, he made generous gifts to restore fountains in Schenley Park as well as the stairs going into Panther Hollow.

photo credit Scott Roller

Alex and Silvia Speyer beside the historic fountain they restored for Schenley Park

Affection for Schenley Park began with Alexander Speyer, Sr. Once there were stables at the Schenley Oval and the dirt track hosted races. It was here that Speyer, Sr. boarded his beloved horse Bucephalus (aptly named after the horse of Alexander the Great).

When the fundraising for the Westinghouse Memorial restoration began a few years ago, Speyer III made a generous leadership gift to the project in honor of his family and the park. "My father would have loved this project," he says. "My grandfather would have wanted to support it too."

Run Forests, Run!

Are you running in the Pittsburgh Marathon on May 3rd?
Your dedication and accomplishment will inspire people. Support the parks you love to run in!

Join us or support the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy team at **www.crowdrise.com/pittsburghparksconservancy**

photo credit flickr Christopher Porter

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