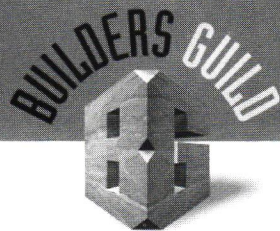


# COLUMNS



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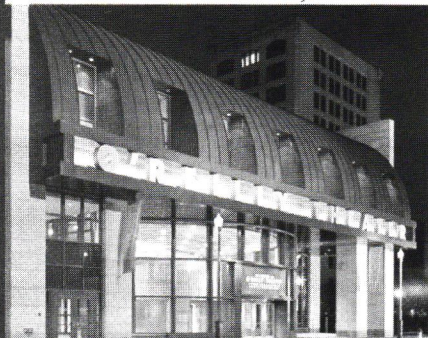
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**Kevin Keane, Sr.**  
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PNC Park



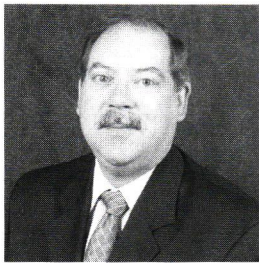
"The unions built PNC Park in just two years--on time, on budget. They were motivated to build the best ballpark in the country, and they did it. It was a great partnership."

**Kevin McClatchy**  
CEO & Managing General Partner  
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# AIA 150

By Tom Briney, AIA



*The new paradigm is that we are being asked to become involved, we are being challenged to think holistically and inclusively, and we are reminded that we have the public credibility to advocate intelligent approaches to problems.*

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**On the cover:** One-room Schoolhouse by Radelet McCarthy Architects and F.J. Busse Company on display at the Pittsburgh Home and Garden Show. Photo by Smathers Photography.

### At this year's Build Pittsburgh Keynote event,

I took the opportunity to remind everyone that almost exactly a year from now, we will be celebrating the American Institute of Architects' 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. For most of us, just spelling "sesquicentennial" is challenge enough.

But if you recall several months ago in separate articles in "Columns", Steve Quick, AIA and I both wrote about the promise of the AIA 150 Blueprint for America Program as an initiative by AIA members and their local components to work with their communities to create a better future by design.

A significant part of the Program will include our gift back to the nation (in some way) of a "vision" to inspire healthy, safe, and sustainable communities and outline necessary steps required to enhance the built environment. At Build Pittsburgh 2005, AIA Pittsburgh firmly stated its commitment to this type of outreach and participation.

Interestingly, we often talk of how our profession is changing (and how quickly it is happening) and the discussion is usually centered on technology. But more recently, I sense the change is more about "who we are." I think we are being summoned to reassert our leadership skills and expand our role. The new paradigm is that we are being asked to become involved, we are being challenged to think holistically and inclusively, and we are reminded that we have the public credibility to advocate intelligent approaches to problems. To me, our response to this challenge is vital, and it's important to see how the character of this change underpins our commitment.

Our role in the future hinges on leadership and our willingness to commit to the set of values that set us apart. Clearly, the future of our profession will be as an expanded profession—one that designs buildings and communities. Also, we acknowledge that our own regional prosperity is linked to the quality of those very communities.

Our visioning and initial planning for the Blueprint initiative have been underway for some time, and we're fortunate that Ed Shriver, AIA has agreed to "champion" the

effort—trust me, he is taking on a large responsibility! As we continue to refine our "Blueprint", it is becoming clear that we intend to pursue a vision for the future of AIA Pittsburgh that will create an enduring legacy, not only for the membership but also for the community.

At Build Pittsburgh, I explained some of the general goals we have established for our AIA 150 participation. They deserve repeating because we envision a project that will demonstrate:

- A collaborative program that fosters community outreach, community participation and community leadership
- The role of community service in promoting the value of design
- A visible, tangible example of the Chapter's commitment to the recovery and future of our region
- The practical value and viability of urban mixed use, inner-city development and sustainability
- And, the practical value (for our membership) of creating greater financial stability, and the benefits of greater recognition for architects as leaders in the design community

If you missed the Keynote at Build Pittsburgh, let me paraphrase the words of Michael Gartner: "There are lots of good ideas out there with lots of energetic people who like a challenge and numerous sources of funding to support them." This comes from an individual who has achieved some truly great things through his own leadership, initiative and vision. After spending time with him, the one thought of his that stayed with me is: "It is activism and collaboration that get things accomplished."

As I said at Build Pittsburgh, on behalf of the Board, stay tuned—this will be an exciting year—we have accepted the challenge and we intend to take a leadership role.



AIA Pittsburgh serves 12 Western Pennsylvania counties as the local component of the American Institute of Architects and AIA Pennsylvania. The objective of AIA Pittsburgh is to improve, for society, the quality of the built environment by further raising the standards of architectural education, training and practice; fostering design excellence; and promoting the value of architectural services to the public. AIA membership is open to all registered architects, architectural interns, and a limited number of professionals in supporting fields.

AIA Pittsburgh  
945 Liberty Avenue, Loft #3  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
Telephone: 412/471-9548  
FAX: 412/471-9501

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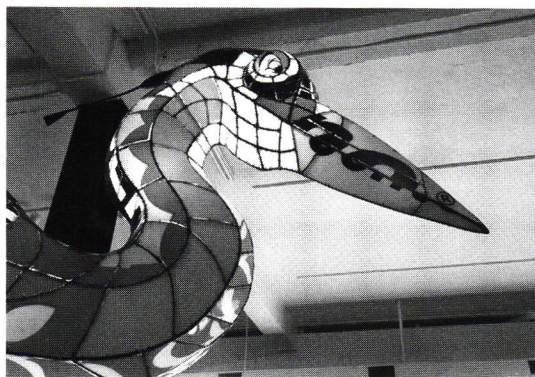
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Online: [www.aiapgh.org](http://www.aiapgh.org)  
email: [info@aiapgh.org](mailto:info@aiapgh.org)

## Greening of Historic Properties National Summit

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation and the Green Building Alliance will be hosting a "Greening of Historic Properties" National Summit on October 30, 2006, to bring together professionals from both disciplines to develop common goals and guidelines for "Greening Historic Properties."

If you are a practitioner of green building or involved with historic preservation, please follow the link to a short survey relating to applying green building standards to historic buildings. The survey answers will help target the key issues for discussion at the Summit.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=934122085351>



## One Great Blue

"One Great Blue" is the latest work of art installed at the award-winning Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, a museum lauded for its architecture and programming that was recently voted tops in the country by a family magazine. Designed by artist Tim Kaulen, "One Great Blue" was officially dedicated on May 4th.

## LEED-Online

The LEED process has gone paperless: instead of turning in binders full of paper documentation to USGBC for review, projects now have the option of submitting 100% of their documentation online in an easy-to-use format. Powered by Adobe LiveCycle technology, LEED-Online is a user-friendly interface that enables project team members to upload credit templates, track Credit Interpretation Requests (CIRs), manage key project details, contact customer service, and communicate with reviewers throughout the design and construction reviews. With LEED-Online, all LEED information, resources and support are accessible in a centralized location.

## Upcoming Issues

- Downtown Living—what's on the horizon for Pittsburgh
- The formation of PTC Group: for productive interaction between people and technology
- Books published by architect firms
- Allentown Architects: a student project
- Rich DeYoung, AIA on AIA Contracts Documents Software
- Interview with Pat Ford, new city planner

If you have content to contribute to *Columns*, contact the editor at: [tcerto@adelphia.net](mailto:tcerto@adelphia.net)







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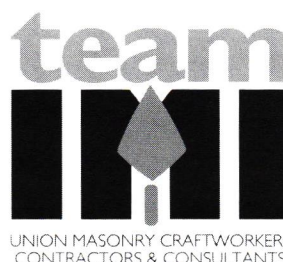
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# DESIGN A PLAYHOUSE, BUILD A DREAM



PHOTOS BY SMATHERS PHOTOGRAPHY

For the architects, building on such a different scale was a lot of fun. And for the Girl Scouts Trillium Council, Build a Dream was a fun and effective way to raise funds for a group that has been building dreams for girls for nearly a century. Build a Dream gave architects and contractor teams a chance to build one-of-a-kind "designer" playhouses that were then available for bid. Houses were on exhibit at the 2006 Pittsburgh Home and Garden Show where voting took place. Awards were given at AIA Pittsburgh's opening night of Build Pittsburgh at the Senator John Heinz History Center.

How did they pull it off? "With 21,000 Girl Scouts in the area, there were connections we could utilize," cracks the Trillium Council's Marlee Flaherty who added that they also begged. Whatever it did, worked. The nine entries were all impressive, the teams enjoyed participating and *Columns* is proud to feature them here. It was a two year effort but most architects didn't get involved until the beginning of summer 2005, says Flaherty.

***With more than 3000 votes tallied, the winners are:***

Adults, People's Choice Award: MLJ Architects, Bruce Monsour for Zendo, an Asian teahouse.

The kids voted for Lami Grubb/Shannon Construction's pirate ship playhouse which prompted Susan Lami, AIA to joke that she would change the name of her firm to Lami Grubb Arrrrgh-itects.

If you missed it this year, there's always next. Contact Marlee Flaherty at [mflaherty@gstrillium.org](mailto:mflaherty@gstrillium.org).

---

## **TIME MACHINE: Peter Margittai Architect, Fisher Renovations**

Attention, time travelers! Be prepared to set off on an adventure to places and times, past, present and future! This whimsical Time Machine has details that any sci-fi adventure lover would embrace!





**ZENDO: MLJ Architects, Bruce Monsour**

Little people with big minds are able to dream inside this Zendo, imagining visiting ancient Asian lands. Serve tea at the window bench, observe your garden, or play peacefully in this joyous Asian teahouse paradise.



**CRAFTSMAN'S COTTAGE: R-Squared Architects Guild, LLC, MJM Remodeling, Inc.**

Imagine living in the late 1800s, when the Arts/Crafts Movement took America by storm. This bungalow is any American child's dream of an ideal playhouse: a simple use of natural materials to build a bungalow that returns us to a time when imagination ruled the land.





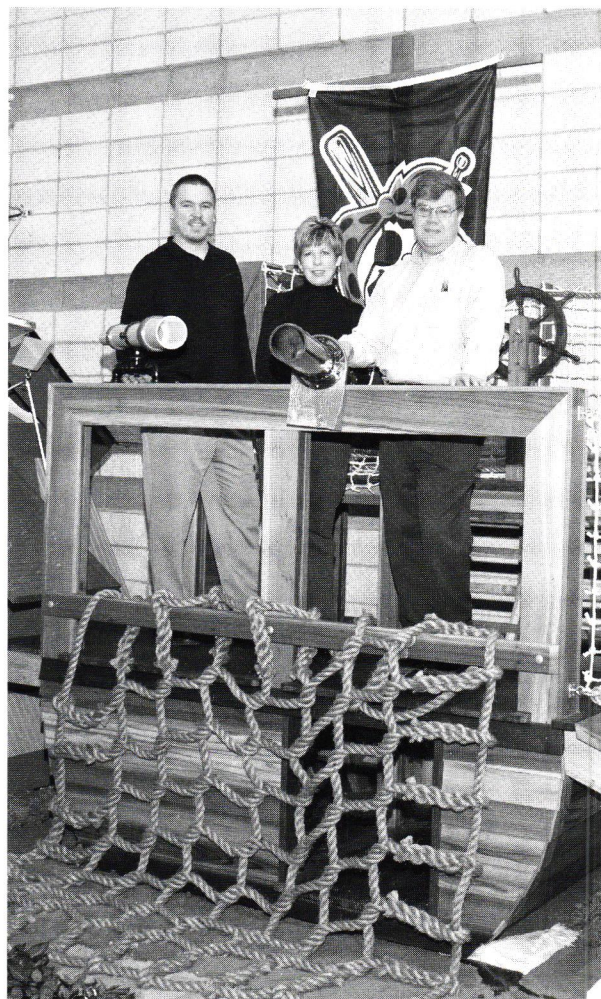
**ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE: Radelet McCarthy Architects, F.J. Busse Company**

There are no complaints about a year-round school year in this playhouse. Children of all ages will enjoy ringing the school bell, gazing out the schoolhouse windows, teaching their class at the chalkboard, and creating imaginary play limited only by their dreams.



**LAKE COTTAGE: Berryman Associates Architects, Peter Perkins, Inc.**

Hardly anything is more fun than being at your own Lake House: hanging out at the open-air bay window, playing in the screened porch, with the screened stage doors wide open. With two outside decks and lots of cool storage, there are things to do for the whole neighborhood.



**PIRATE SHIP: Lami Grubb Architects, Shannon Construction**

Arrrgh! Ahoy, maties: this playhouse was designed to bring out the adventurer in all of us! A secret door, multiple levels, climbing ropes, a cannon, and telescope are necessary for any pirate's voyage. Your ship can be a house, a cave ... the possibilities are limitless!





**FOREST THEATER: Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, BCJ DID**

Your child will discover a backyard "forest theater" with this playhouse - complete with a puppet theater, chalk surface for drawing his/her own scenery, a window seat, an operating chandelier, a magic ceiling, and theatrical pipes that double as chin-up bars.



**PLAYHOUSE THEATER: Design Alliance Architects, Continental Building Systems**

Aspiring actors and actresses can create their own theatre and puppet performances, and even a musical in this Playhouse Theatre. Inspired by the Paris Opera House, the ornate front was designed to inspire the imaginative minds of children.



**PLAY STATION SQUARED: Celli Flynn Brennan Architects and Planners, Volpatt**

PlayStation Squared is equal fun on all four sides! Enter through any of the kid-sized portals, or climb up the wall o' doors and take command of the loft. The mobile monkey bars allow the playhouse to expand, and one luck cowgirl (or cowboy!) can swing in and out.



# REFLECTIONS OF A JUROR

BY ROXANNE SHERBECK, AIA • BOHLIN CYWYNSKI JACKSON

**I must admit I was surprised to be asked to be a juror for last year's Design Excellence awards program for the Boston Society of Architects.**

So surprised in fact, that the email entitled "jury duty?" was dispatched to my junk folder until Richard Fitzgerald, BSA executive director called to make the invitation in person. He called in March so I had until August to get over the guilty feeling accompanying the expense-paid, no-billable-hours trip to BSA's headquarters in Boston. But you would have accepted, too. Spending a day observing the broad range of other peoples' ideas was a refreshing prospect, not to mention the opportunity to learn what I could about running an awards program, or winning an award.

The second surprise in store was the impressive home of the BSA. We spent the day on the top floor of their five-story building, an historic structure, originally a printing house, built with very heavy timber and enormous stone masonry walls. You could see why a group of architects would fall in love with the building, and it was gratifying to hear that, despite a queasy time making the mortgage payments during the early 1990's recession, the Society is now sitting pretty with their investment.

The building isn't the only evidence of BSA's success. The Society boasts 4,800 members and only half are architects. The 12 employees handle everything from the multiple awards programs and interest and educational groups to the publication of a very handsome magazine. And they have the resources to import jurors from around the country. (More expensive than our practice of taking the binders to another chapter... still less elaborate than Seattle's two-day program involving international jurors and visits to local projects.)

Assembling a geographically diverse jury may, or may not, make for better decision-making, but it certainly was a wonderful opportunity to meet new and interesting people. My fellow jurors included: John Czarnecki, an editor of architectural publications for John Wiley & Sons; Beth Dunlop, architectural critic for the Miami Herald; Terry Steelman, AIA, a principal at Ballinger in Philadelphia; and Doug Steidl, FAIA with Braun and Steidl Architects in Akron, Ohio. Doug was also the national AIA president and a really nice guy to boot.

In addition to his hospitality and organizing efforts, Richard Fitzgerald also contributed to the process significantly, using his English major skills to whip together the jury's verbal discussion into comments on the overall program as well as individual projects. We reviewed his draft thereafter, (I can even point to some



*Home of the Boston Society of Architects*



of my specific contributions,) but his talents certainly lightened the jury's responsibilities, (and doing it himself must be easier than wrangling writing out of a group of architects).

The initial stage of the judging process was simple. Each project binder has a post-it note where each juror records his initial impression of the project by checking off "yes," "no" or "maybe." We allotted ourselves the whole morning for this phase of the judging. Sounds easy, but—do the math—there were 141 entries to review in three hours, allowing an average of one minute and twenty-eight seconds per binder. I started out with thoroughness, wanting to give every entry the complete review I felt it deserved, but soon fell behind and had to work over lunch to catch up.

More efficient jurors look at the photos first and if it is immediately apparent that the project is not a winner, they don't waste time garnering a deeper understanding of design issues. Good projects probably don't get eliminated at this stage due to bad photos, but it sure emphasizes the importance of the images in the scheme of things. I also noticed that many presentations did a poor job of distinguishing between existing architecture and new construction. Many texts were too long and involved without a clear story. Too many plans were missing north arrows, a particularly egregious error when the accompanying text relied on language like "north of the lobby," or "east-facing façade."

After all of the jurors had reviewed all the entries, the binders were quickly sorted into three groups: the predominantly "yesses," the mostly "nos" and the solidly "maybes." Each "no" binder was then opened one more time to make sure of the decision, and the group moved

on the "maybe" pile. Many of the "maybe" binders actually had a few "yes" votes, and those responsible for the checkmarks were asked to defend the opinion. Since the overall quality of the field isn't revealed until all of the binders are reviewed, there was some change of earlier opinions at this stage, as well as some persuasive lobbying, and some of the "maybe" projects moved up to the "yes" pile. The "yes" pile was reviewed similarly and a few projects were demoted.

**Spending a day  
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Many terrific projects were submitted, so at 4:00 the "yes" stack was still big despite our attempts to be ruthless. Yet Richard was confident that we would finish before the end of the day. Counter-intuitively, he sent everyone else out for tea time, and instructed me to further sort the "yes" pile into a "final" order, giving whatever awards I wanted...or not. I was fairly quick in assigning about 25% of the projects to a top award pile, a third to a second award pile, and about 40% to a no award pile. Everyone else then re-entered and began to rearrange the choices. Strongly opinionated discussion ensued, but finally eight

Honor Awards, and fifteen Awards were designated, without bloodshed, and sure enough, on time.

...on time, but still too late for me to catch a standby seat back to the 'Burg. So I took a walk around the Aquarium and enjoyed a great seafood dinner. I even attracted an invitation from the cute Moroccan waiter to meet him for a drink after he got off work. He said I had a nice smile, and I suppose that could have been the case since I had a very nice day. If I hadn't been exhausted, I might have considered the opportunity. Judging design takes a lot of effort! But it was well worth it.



# Preservation Awards 2006

*The Historic Review Commission of Pittsburgh recently announced the Preservation Award winners for 2006. COLUMNS recognizes the following winners, designed by AIA architects.*

## **502 West North Avenue Mexican War Streets City Designated and National Register Historic District**

OWNERS: Annie O'Neill and Nancy Andrews

ARCHITECT: Pfaffmann + Associates

SUB CONTRACTORS: Prescott Roofing,  
Cynseer Painting & Restoration  
Andy Anderson, Carpenter

PROJECT: Façade restoration based on the mirrored image house next door. The front door was replaced with a custom made double door, the chimney was rebuilt and the front cornice, cornice brackets and box gutter were restored.

## **One Schenley Drive – Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens City Designated Historic Landmark**

OWNER: City of Pittsburgh

ARCHITECTS: Mike Marcu, AIA, principal-in-charge, Alan Fishman, AIA, Bob Moro, AIA, Joel Bernard, AIA, project manager, Sonny Sanjari, Jim Taylor, AIA, project designers Bob Bailey, AIA, George Bedo, AIA, Mark Brandfass, Margaret Cannell, AIA, Sandy Closson, Kemo Crawford, AIA, Xiaofang Luo, Jen Pavlik, Luis Segarra, Julie Wagner, Assoc. AIA, project team IKM Incorporated – Architects

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Turner Construction Company

SUB CONTRACTORS: Indevco Consultants, Lovorn Engineering – M/E/P Consultants Atlantic Engineering Services, Civic and Environmental Consultants, Marshal Tyler Rausch Architectural Energy Group, Crawford Consulting Services, Hilbish McGee Associates

PROJECT: A new entrance was created that compliments the graceful, historic glass houses and preserves the view of the Palm Court.

PROJECT INITIATED BY: Richard Piacentini, Executive Director, Phipps Conservatory

## **1028 Benton Avenue – Little Sisters of The Poor**

OWNER: Little Sisters of the Poor & The Catholic Institute of Pittsburgh/Diocese of Pittsburgh  
James L. Zielinski, Director of the Office for Property Planning and Development

ARCHITECTS: A. Sheldon Goettel, AIA, Perfido Weiskopf Architects, Janice Held, AIA (now at CMU)

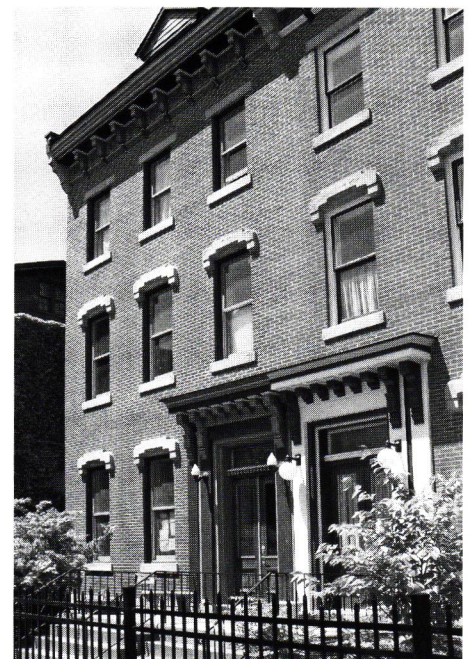
GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Massaro Corporation

SUB CONTRACTORS: T.D. Patrinos Contracting Company, L. & E.T. Company, Star Electric Sauer Incorporated, Massaro Industries

PROJECT: Renovation of the 3,000 square foot chapel and alter originally built in 1923. The chapel received new stone flooring, lighting, audio and visual systems, HVAC system, door frames and trim and moldings. The stained glass windows were replaced with refurbished stained glass windows donated from another local church.



*502 West North Avenue, before and after*







*Little Sisters of The Poor*

**2224 East Carson Street – Ibiza Wine & Tapas Bar**  
**East Carson Street City Designated & National Register Historic Districts**

OWNER: Antonio Pereria

ARCHITECTS: John A. Martine, AIA,  
 Alan J. Cuteri, AIA, Thomas Price, Assoc. AIA, Strada

GENERAL CONTRACTORS: J. Palumbo Contracting

SUB CONTRACTORS: Studio I Lighting Design, Konefal & Company, Elite Heating and Air Conditioning, Deer Lakes Plumbing, Landesberg Design

PROJECT: Renovation of a narrow late 19th century building to create a restaurant with intimate and unique spaces.

**4720 Fifth Avenue – Central Catholic High School Auditorium**

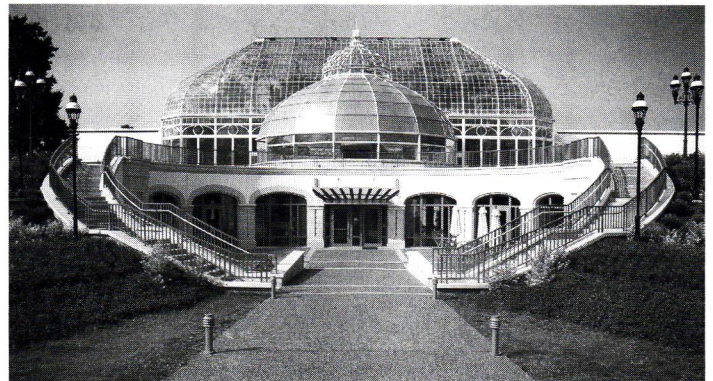
OWNERS: Catholic Institute of Pittsburgh/ Diocese of Pittsburgh James L. Zielinski, Director of the Office for Property Planning and Development

ARCHITECT: Joseph Chaffin, AIA, Desmone & Associates

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Massaro Corporation

SUB CONTRACTORS: T.D. Patrinos & Contracting Company, W & K Steel, The L. & E.T. Company, Caldwell's Windowcare, Gray Flooring

PROJECT: Restoration of 900 seat auditorium to its original appearance including cleaning the red brick herringbone patterned walls and restoring painted surfaces to their original grandeur.



*Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens*



*Central Catholic High School Auditorium*

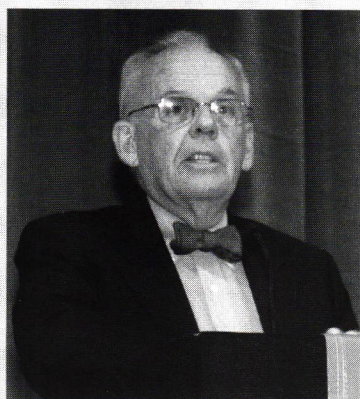


*Ibiza Wine & Tapas Bar*



# YOU CAN'T DO IT ALONE

BUILD PITTSBURGH'S KEYNOTE SESSION FEATURED VISION IOWA CHAIR MICHAEL GARTNER. IN HIS SPEECH, REPRINTED HERE, HE ILLUSTRATED THE ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATIONS THAT TRANSFORMED HIS STATE.



**In a distinguished lifelong career as a journalist, Michael Gartner has served as Page One Editor of The Wall Street Journal, president of NBC news, and editor and president of The Des Moines Register, among many other professional accomplishments. In 1997 he won the Pulitzer Prize for his common sense editorials about issues deeply affecting the lives of the people in his community, written for The Tribune of Ames, Iowa.**

**First of all, I'd like to say that I'm sorry about your baseball team.** But I can sympathize. As a fellow once said, I feel your pain. After all, I am a Cubs fan. The Cubs haven't won a World Series since 1908, but, as another fellow once said, anyone can have a bad century. And look on the bright side. You're not in Kansas City.

As Tom mentioned, I am the majority owner of the Iowa Cubs, which is the Triple-A farm team of the Chicago Cubs. Seven or eight years ago, after I bought the team, I asked my former NBC colleague Bob Costas if he would come to Des Moines one cold February and talk to a luncheon of Cub fans. There were 700 or 800 people in the room, and before Bob spoke, Andy McHale, the head of the Cubs, said a few words. "This could be the year," he told the fans. This could be the year, he said, that the Cubs go all the way — Division title, league title, World Series title. He said Sosa was doing great, there had been some good trades, the farm system guys were coming into their own and, yes, this could be the year. He sat down to a roaring applause.

Then Costas got up. He looked at Andy and smiled, and he looked at the crowd. "You know, folks, that's nice that Andy thinks that. But let me tell you. Talking about the Cubs winning the World Series is a little like leaving the porch light on for Jimmy Hoffa. It's a nice gesture, but nothing will come of it."



And, of course, you know the rest of the story.

My father died about a year and a half ago. He was 102, sound of mind and body until the day he died, and he clearly remembered the last World Series the Cubs won. He kept waiting for the next. He was the eternal optimist. But when he turned 100, he told me he might not make it until the next Series victory. "I don't think I'll live to be 200," he said. Earlier, incidentally, he had told my son that "the first 100 years are a lot easier than the second hundred."

My father and mother were married for 75 years, and once, when they were around 90, the three of us were going somewhere, and my father said, "Do you want to know the secret of a long life?" "I guess so," I said, figuring he was about to come out with another of his droll statements. "No left turns," he said. "What?" I asked. "No left turns. Your mother and I read somewhere that most old people get in accidents because they turn left in front of oncoming cars. As you get old, you lose your depth perception, it said. So about 10 years ago, we made a vow never to make another left turn. And we haven't." "You're kidding!" I said. "No," he replied. "Think about it. Three rights is the same as a left." I turned to my mother, who was the driver in the family while my father always called himself the navigator. "Is that true?" I asked. "Well," she said, "Yes. And it always works — except, of course, when your father loses count." "What?" I asked. Sometimes, she explained, he loses count. "What do you do then?" I asked him. "Just go for seven rights." He said. "It will work just as well." If he loses count at three, I said, mightn't he lose count at seven? "Do you ever go for 11?" I asked. "No," he said, "If that happens, you just call it a bad day and go back home. Nothing is so important you have to do it on any certain day."

As I said, my father was the navigator, not the driver. We grew up in a household without a car, and my brother — who is three years older than I am — and I always asked why we didn't have one. "Because no one in the family knows how to drive," my parents answered, and

## Counties and cities didn't get along with one another particularly well in Iowa, but this program forced cooperation.

### At first warily, then enthusiastically...

they assured us we'd get a car "as soon as one of you boys turns 16." It was as if they weren't sure which one of us was going to turn 16 first. At any rate, he turned 16, my folks bought a used 1950 Chevrolet, and my mother then learned to drive. I asked my father, when he was around 90, if he had ever driven. "Sure, little boy," he said — he called me 'little boy' until the day he died. "When was the last time you drove, and what was the car?" "Well," he said, "it was 1927, and the car was a 1926 Whippet." "Why did you stop driving?" "In those days, little boy, to drive you had to do things with your feet and do things with your hands and keep looking in every direction, and I decided you could drive through life and miss it or walk through life and enjoy it."

I thought that that was quite sweet, but then my mother interrupted: "Oh, bullshit!" she said. "He hit a horse!"

At any rate, I don't know how I got off on my parents — because they were both big Cubs fans, I guess — but I don't think I'm supposed to talk about baseball or my mom and dad here this evening. I am here, I am told, to talk to you about what is in effect a public-works program that has brought new life to the cities and towns of Iowa over the past five or six years. I am 67 years old, and I was born and raised in Iowa and have lived there most of my life, and I think that this program has turned out to be one of the four most important things that have happened in the state in my lifetime. (The others, in case you are wondering, are the establishment of a community-college system, the welcoming of thousands of Southeast Asian refugees when no one else would take them, and the establishment of liquor by the drink. I have not listed them in order of importance.)



*AIA President Tom Briney, AIA introduces Michael Gartner at the Senator John Heinz Regional History Center on April 26.*

PHOTOS BY TRACY CERTO



**We discovered that municipal electric and water utilities were just loaded with unspent money being hoarded by the boards, as were the regional landfill organizations.**

### Vision Iowa

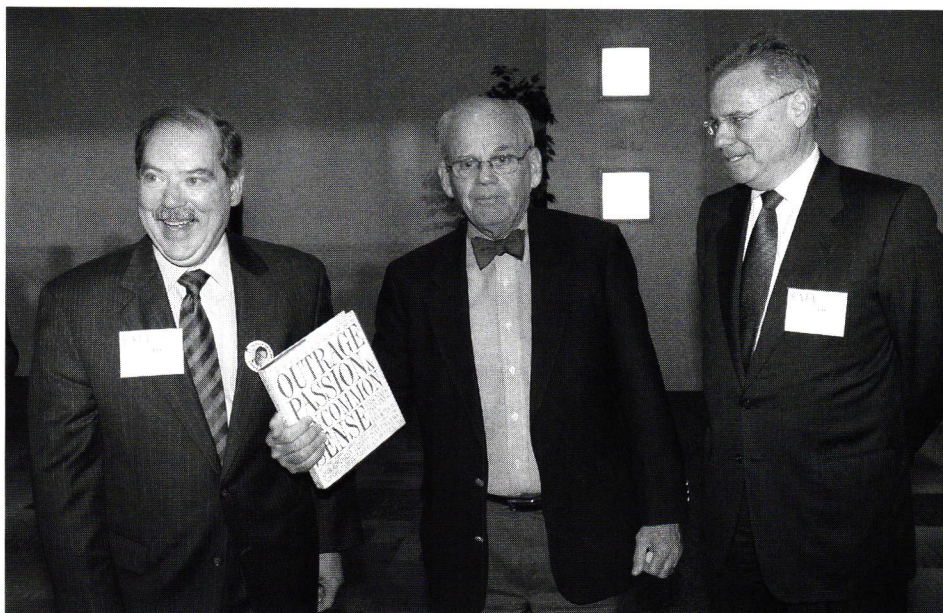
The program I want to tell you about is called Vision Iowa. It was thought up by Gov. Tom Vilsack, a Democrat, and enacted with bipartisan support by the Iowa Legislature, which at the time was controlled by Republicans. The state takes in over \$100 million a year from gambling taxes, and the idea was set aside \$300 million over 20 years — \$15 million a year — and use it to help build things to make life better for those of us who lived in Iowa, to make it more enticing to those who might want to move there, and to make it more attractive to young folks who otherwise would take their new college degrees and head to Minneapolis or New York or San Francisco or Pittsburgh. (Iowa is a net importer of college freshmen and a net exporter of new graduates.) The money was to be spent on big projects, — not just a building here or there but a redevelopment of an entire area — and there was a smaller pool — around \$12 million a year — for smaller projects in

smaller towns. Most people thought that the major money would go for two or three big projects, and that everyone else would be turned down. That meant a few people would be happy and a whole lot would be mad.

The program was to be run by a 13-person board — 10 volunteers and three state officials — and the governor called me one day and asked if I'd serve on the board. "Sure," I said. "Can I ask you another question?" he said. "Would you chair for the board?" I told him I'd have to think about that, and he said that would be fine, that he didn't intend to make an announcement until later that afternoon. I called my wife, who had watched me do battles in Iowa for 10 years as the editor of the newspaper, and I said: "I've just agreed to do something for Vilsack, and when it's over 50 people in this state are going to be happy with me and 500,000 are going to be pissed off." And she replied: 500,000 more."

But it didn't work out that way. By the time I left the board last year, after five years, we had taken that \$250 million — \$225 million for big projects, after we bonded out the future money — and \$50 million for the little ones, and financed nearly 200 projects, leveraged that \$275 million into more than \$2 billion in spending. We changed the face of Iowa.

Downtown Des Moines — sparked by a grant of \$70 million — now is thriving and is home to a grand new \$65 million science center, a brand new \$30 million library, a new \$200 million arena and convention center, a handful of new office buildings and hundreds of new condominiums in buildings old and new. And construction is under way on a Riverwalk that will have about \$70 million in amenities — bridges, sculptures, paths lawns, fields, a skating rink — along with its several mile path on both sides of the two rivers that join in downtown. Downtown employment continues to grow — now, more than 70,000 people work downtown, which is more than work in downtown Denver or downtown Houston. I should explain, for those of you unlucky enough never to have visited Iowa, that there are only three million people in all of Iowa, and the Des Moines metropolitan area has only 500,000 or so — if you count some dogs and cats and pigs. (Indeed, Iowa, has eight pigs for every person — which might be the only fact you remember from my talk this evening.) Des Moines itself has just 200,000 people in the city limits. But, as I said, the program has changed the entire state. Dubuque, a beautiful city in the steep hills of Northeast Iowa, recaptured its riverfront, building a wildly successful Mississippi river museum — as well as a convention center and a walk and plaza on the river, which had long been walled off from the city. Now, Main Street is booming, a luxury hotel has opened, businesses are moving to town, old buildings are being renovated, and the town is soaring. Ames brought back from a developer an old gravel pit that was going to be turned into a lake for lakeside homes, and instead the city has built a 400-acre park and wildlife preserve, where folks hike and paddle canoes and ride bikes and just enjoy nature. It's really wonderful. More than 100 other towns have similar stories, large and small.



*AIA Pittsburgh President Tom Briney, AIA shares a laugh with keynote speaker Michael Gartner and past president Stephen Quick, AIA.*



The whole thing worked because the board — through a little thought and a lot of luck — established three policies early on. They are lessons that would be helpful anywhere. The first was this: No project would be funded unless it also had city, county, and private money that more than equaled the state's share. The second was this: No project would be cut back from its original scope even if (and this always happened) the grant was smaller, even way smaller, than the request. In other words, the applicant would have to find other sources to fill the gap which could be tens of millions of dollars. The third was this: no politics.

The first rule — that there had to be city and county and private money — was vital. It came about in part because of my memory of an argument I had with Tom Brokaw when I was at NBC. I thought something should be on the news that evening, and he thought otherwise — or vice versa, I can't remember the details. But I vividly remember arguing with him, finally saying, "Damnit, Tom, if we don't put this on, we'll have egg on our face!" "No, Michael," he replied, "if we do put this on we'll have egg on our face, and the thing for you to remember is this: It's your egg, but it's my face."

That idea of our partnerships — sometimes it's your egg, sometimes it's your face, but you're not always in it together — stayed with me, and it turned Vision Iowa from a state-handout program into a cooperative venture in which everyone in the area was involved. There had to be a buy-in. Counties and cities didn't get along with one another particularly well in Iowa, but this program forced cooperation. At first warily, then enthusiastically, they joined up, and now they often work together on projects that have no state money but that are just things they think ought to be done. This seldom happened in the past.

The program simply wouldn't have worked without partnerships. In some places, school districts joined in — building joint libraries with the towns, or joint athletic fields, or joint parks. In a couple of instances, the National Guard would come to the table. Local conservation commissions signed on in some places. As the

## **As the program grew, partnerships grew. Everyone brought ideas, enthusiasm, labor, leadership, and — always — money to the table.**

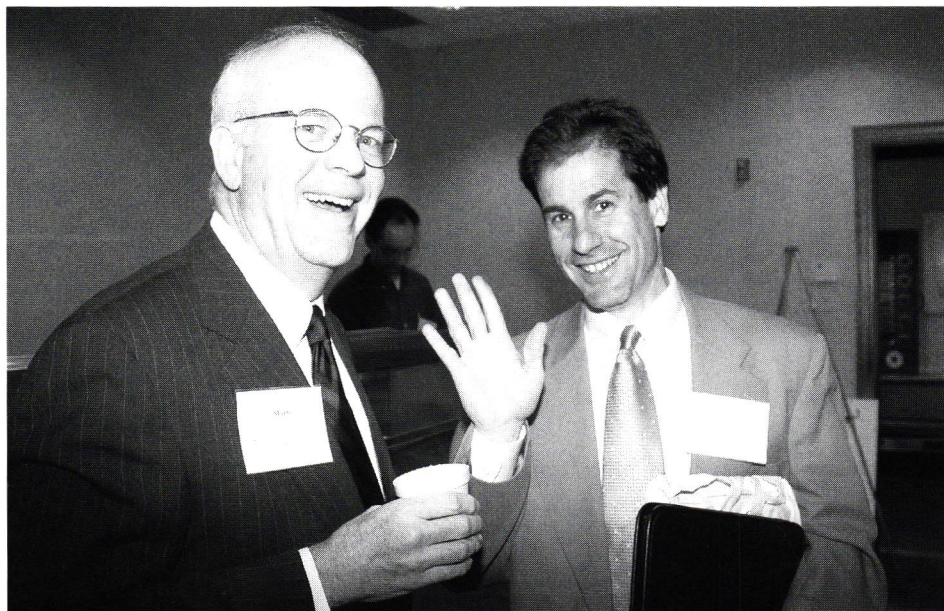
program grew, partnerships grew. Everyone brought ideas, enthusiasm, labor, leadership, and — always — money to the table. The state put in a rule that state money could not exceed 50% of the cost of a project, but, in fact, with all the partners involved, the state funding averaged just around 15% of the projects, big and small. But in the end, it wasn't the money that was so important; it was, instead, the cooperative spirit, the development of ideas, and particularly, the emergence of leaderships for each project.

Never, ever was the state the leader — it was always local folks, folks with vision for their towns, a state board to express that vision to and to receive encouragement from — indeed, we doled out more encouragement than money — and folks with a willingness to take risks.

The second rule, that no project could be cut back even

if the applicant didn't get all the money that was applied for, was also vital. Early on, we decided to see how far we could leverage the state's money, but we didn't want to do it at the expense of half-done projects or projects that started out as a vision and ended up as a real-estate deal. Fortunately, one of our members was a mayor of a small town who understands municipal finance better than anyone I've ever met, and he taught us all.

So with every application, we demanded to see the audits of the town and the county to try to figure out what they really could afford rather than what they reluctantly would come up with. It was amazing. We discovered that municipal electric and water utilities were just loaded with unspent money being hoarded by the boards, as were the regional landfill organizations. We all but forced them to pony up, sometimes big time.



**Marty Powell, AIA of The Design Alliance Architects and Dan Rothschild, AIA of Rothschild Doyno Architects at Build Pittsburgh.**



## **By the time I left the Vision Iowa board last year, after five years...we changed the face of Iowa.**

We urged the cities to dip into their local-option tax revenue and to consider tax-increment financing. We leaned on the private sector to come up with more. It took a lot of persuasion, and more than a little arguing, but in all but three or four cases the towns or cities or counties or private people would find the money. First, of course, they'd run to the governor and say how unfair and unreasonable and unbending we were. He'd always offer a sympathetic ear — but he never interfered. "Gartner's a jerk," they'd say, and he'd agree — but he never leaned on any board members about any project.

Quickly, people began to realize that it was a clean and fair process and that appeals to their legislators or the governor wouldn't work. Indeed, the legislature began to look at the program as a huge success, and the politicians quickly realized that the board could be the bad guys — demanding more partners, demanding more money, demanding more vision — while they could

boast about stretching government dollars and then show up at the groundbreaking, by which time everyone was happy again.

Once a legislator grabbed me by the arm and insisted that his city needed to get X amount of millions for it's project because a rival city had gotten that much. "Not likely," I responded. "Listen," he said, squeezing my arm, "you don't understand. If my town doesn't get that, then I won't be re-elected." "Well," I told him, "then let me be the first to break the news: You aren't going to be re-elected." His city got millions, but not the millions it wanted, and he got re-elected.

We learned a lot of lessons. Here are some of them:

- Nothing can be done alone. Anything can be done cooperatively
- You can leverage money a lot more than most people — especially most government agencies — think.

- There is no shortage of good ideas. Just listen.
- There is no shortage of good leaders. Just look.
- There is no shortage of money. Just hunt. There are all kinds of money pots sitting around that most people don't know or understand — especially in municipal authorities like utilities or land-fills or airports.
- Politicians are great. Politics isn't.

The greatest vision of Vision Iowa was the vision of Tom Vilsack dreaming up the plan. It was innovative — nothing like it had existed anywhere, in any state — and it was doable. It already changed the face of the state, given great new life to scores of communities, invigorated Iowa's biggest city, and forged new alliances in towns large and small — alliances that continue to get great things done on their own, without seeking help from the state. Rarely is there a program that you think will change the lives not only of your generation but also of the generations of your children and grandchildren. But this had done that.

Finally, I must thank you for something. Years ago, I was listening to a talk by some fellow, and it was awful and boring. I was sitting next to a wonderful old editor named Gene Patterson. At one point, he took a sheet of paper out of his pocket, scribbled something on it, and handed it to me.

It said: "If bullshit were asphalt, this guy would be I-95." So I thank you for not scribbling notes this evening.



*Mary Navarro of The Heinz Endowments and Jonathan Hayes of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson at Build Pittsburgh.*





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## From the Firms

► **evolve environment::architecture** has been chosen to provide green building and LEED consulting services to the Milton Hershey School. Other school projects on which evolve is currently consulting include Shady Side Academy and Uniontown High School.

**JSA Architecture Planning Engineering Interior Design** has been selected by local developer RAR Development, LLP to be the architect and engineer for the design/build team, along with Landau Building Company, for five new retail buildings for a new development of Warrendale Village in Marshall Township (below). Three of the five buildings will be retail strip centers with multiple tenants totaling over 38,000 sf and two will be out parcels for a single user at 4,500 sf each.



**Indovina Architects** was named architect for the Hampton Inn and Suites, a new hotel at 13<sup>th</sup> and Smallman Streets and the first for the Strip District. The eight-story, 143-room hotel will be brick-clad by request of City Planning to blend in with its neighbors, the Senator John Heinz Regional History Center and One Waterfront Place where Seagate resides. Completion is expected in June 2007.

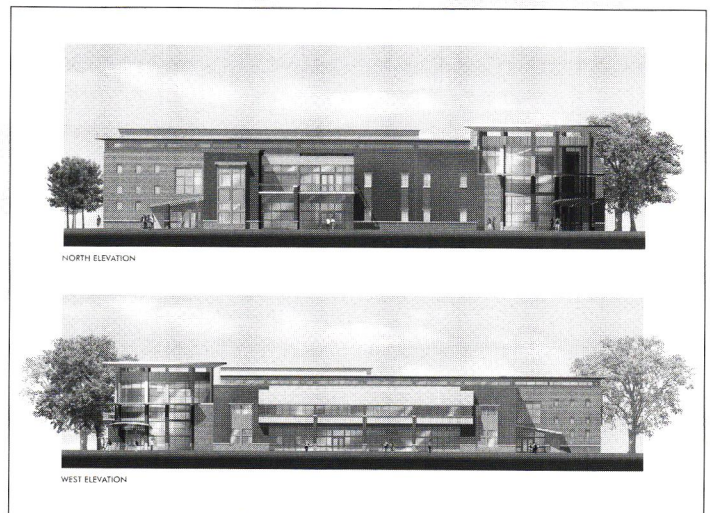
**Strada** and Rycon Construction were recently selected by the Westmoreland Development Council as the design/build team for a four-story 64,000 sf addition above the existing courthouse square extension building (below). The design will connect



the existing annex to the Westmoreland County Courthouse, providing one location for all local development agencies. Construction, starting in July, is scheduled for completion in April, 2007. Strada is also working with Don Barden, owner of PITG Gaming LLC., on his proposed Majestic Star casino. Collaborating with his team, Strada designed the \$410 million North Shore casino with entertainment retail offerings and riverfront views.

The Washington Hospital initiated what will be the largest building expansion project in its nearly 110 year history. **Valentour English Bodnar & Howell, Registered Architects** is serving as the lead architect for the project. The cost of the expansion and renovation project is estimated at \$57 million. It is anticipated that the project will include more than 130,000 sf of new and renovated space.

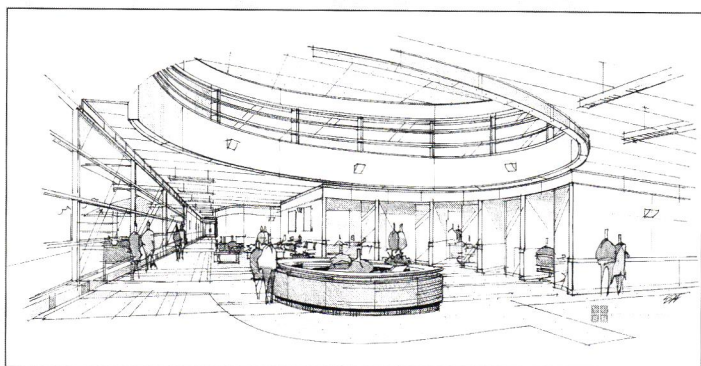
Texas A&M Commerce has selected **WTW Architects** in combination with Gideon Toal Architects of Fort Worth to design the new student center (below). "The new facility," according to **Doug Shuck, AIA** principal-in-charge for **WTW Architects**, "will be a contemporary design encompassing elements of the existing campus and feature extensive use of glass, limestone, and brick. This building will become the true hub of student life for the largely commuter student population located strategically to connect the parking lots to the center of campus."



**Foreman Architects Engineers** is working with the Burrell School District on plans to renovate the existing Charles A. Huston Middle School to create a LEED certified building. The existing 99,000 sf fifty year old facility will receive an updated appearance, with a series of additions, totaling about 25,000 sf.

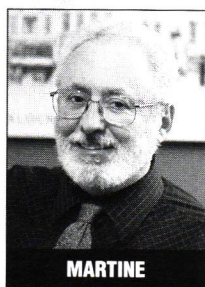


Sharon Regional Health System has announced plans to construct a new Outpatient Diagnostic and Imaging Center (below) to expand its satellite facilities in Hermitage, PA. The new 30,000 sf building is being designed by **Valentour English Bodnar & Howell, Registered Architects**. The firm is also working with Lifecare Hospitals of Pittsburgh to design a new Long-term Acute Care Center that will occupy approximately 25,000 sf.



### Business Briefs

► **John A. Martine, AIA** presented "Building Rehab 101" to the Pennsylvania Heritage Partnerships Conference on May 18th in Franklin, PA. On June 6th, he will join Pittsburgh colleagues to speak on urban Main Street revitalization at the National Main Streets Conference in New Orleans, LA.

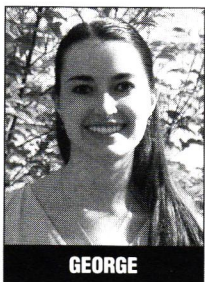


MARTINE

### JSA Architecture Planning Engineering Interior Design

is pleased to announce that Jeffrey D. Martin has joined the firm as an architectural project manager. Mr. Martin comes to JSA from the Soffer Organization, where he had extensive involvement in many of their retail and commercial projects.

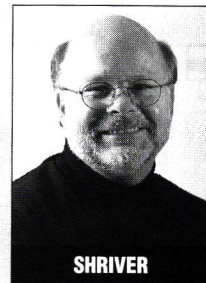
**Foreman Architects Engineers** announces the addition of Christine George as a business development coordinator in their marketing department. Ms. George comes to Foreman Architects Engineers as a recent graduate from Geneva College, holding a masters in business administration.



GEORGE

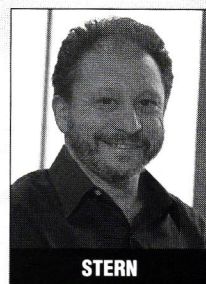
### Kudos

► **Edward A. Shriver, Jr., AIA** of **Strada** was invited to participate in the AIA Regional and Urban Design Committee Spring Roundtable in New Orleans with local and state leaders working on the recovery and rebuilding efforts along the Gulf Coast.



SHRIVER

Michael A. Stern of **Strada** wrote "Pittsburgh Opts for Urban Housing" for the May issue of *Urban Land* magazine. This article focuses on different types of urban living options and features three of Strada's residential projects. To read it, check [www.uli.org](http://www.uli.org) next month.



STERN

**L. Robert Kimball & Associates** was recently named among the nation's top engineering companies by the annual rankings released in *Engineering News-Record Magazine (ENR)*. Kimball is listed at number 163 in ENR's annual Top 500 Design Firms survey, a 20-spot jump from 183 in 2005. Firms are ranked according to revenue for design services performed in 2005.

Soffer Organization has been chosen as a finalist for the Urban Land Institute's Award for Excellence for the SouthSide Works, a 34-acre revitalization of a defunct steel mill yard into a mixed-use enhancement of a successful business district with 600,000 sf of office, 300,000 sf of retail, and 82 apartments.

Massaro Corporation was the recent recipient for multiple Historic Preservation Awards, for the renovations of the Central Catholic High School Auditorium, The Union Project Interior, and the Little Sisters of the Poor Chapel.



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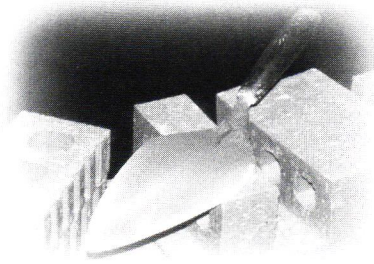
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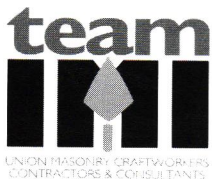
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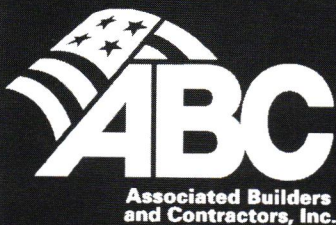
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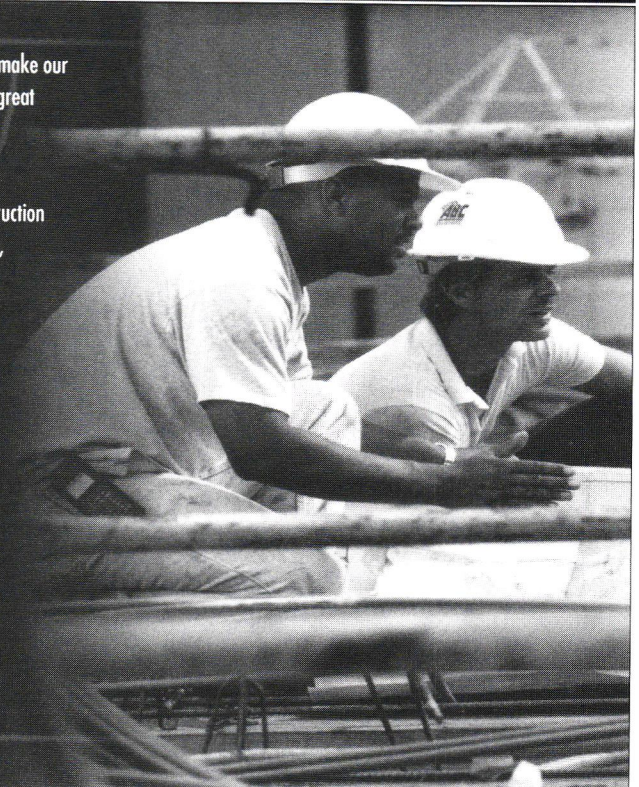
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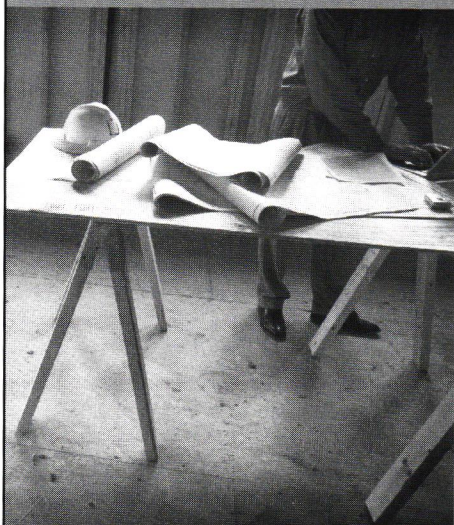
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