



E-Blast

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What's so great about the city?



"pastel, 2003" by Bernadette Kazmarski, is part of the "Carnegie Painted" show at the 3rd Street Gallery in Carnegie.

Art can be seen everywhere

Greetings!

For many of us January is the time to get back into the swing of things at work, and it's no different here at Cool Space Locator. As we prepare for a busy year ahead, Kyra Straussman has been appointed by the Board as acting CEO & President, and Cool Space Awards nominations are coming through the doors daily (and they look great)!

In this issue we bring you an update on the Cool Space Awards, share with you how communities across the nation are reusing the "Big Box", and feature Carnegie, one of southwestern PA's towns.

• Cool Space Awards



You may know Cool Space - where you work, shop and eat. Or spaces that are still hidden - on the top floors of buildings or in renovated warehouses. Help us to recognize Cool Space and the workers that use them, and encourage adaptive reuse in urban places!

Entering is easy. Visit the link below for details and to download a nomination form. Nominations must be submitted by February 17th!

Eligible spaces must be in one of Southwestern PA's "walkable" urban neighborhoods. They should currently or

in the city and communities where people value artistic expression. It can be found in galleries, sculptures, blown glass, paintings, murals, artists, theaters, exhibitions...

Sharing creativity and culture with those around us is one of the things that makes city living so great - art and culture can be found all around us!

What do you love about your city? If you have a photograph of urban life that you would like to see featured here, please send it to us, and be sure to tell us what you love about urban living.

potentially house businesses or other enterprises where people work. *(Sorry, residential spaces aren't eligible.)*

Cool Space Awards 2005

- **Cool Space Awards Sponsors**

Cool Space Locator is joined by PNC Bank, the title sponsor of the event, and an impressive list of partners including: 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania; Community Design Center of Pittsburgh (CDCP); Carnegie Mellon University Center for Economic Development; Green Building Alliance (GBA); Western PA Chapter of National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP); Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation (PHLF); Pittsburgh Technology Council; Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project (PUMP); Sustainable Pittsburgh; Urban Land Institute (ULI); and the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA).

Other sponsors include The Sprout Fund, Mellon Financial Corporation, and The Soffer Organization.

Media sponsors are The Pittsburgh Business Times, Pittsburgh TEQ, Pittsburgh City Paper, and WDUQ 90.5FM.

- **Bix Box Reuse**



The term "big box" refers to a large, free-standing building with one major room, a box-like exterior, and at least 20,000 square feet of retail space. This model was made popular by the corporations that have created stores with minimal storage space, the stock items simply coming in off the truck and on to the shelves. Many big boxes have been built (and will continue to be built) across the nation, but what happens to the box when a corporation picks up and moves elsewhere?

Julia Christensen, a multi-disciplinary artist based in upstate New York, began investigating "How Communities are Re-Using the Big Box" in January of 2004. Growing up in Bardstown, Kentucky, Julia saw three generations of Wal-Mart buildings as they upgraded to the super center. As a result, the town had to deal with two empty big boxes; one was torn down and the other was used for a courthouse. This reuse of space compelled her to find other communities that had reclaimed their abandoned spaces. Julia has traveled over 17,000 miles around the

country to visit the sites and meet the people who are finding ways to transform the big box. She has a growing collection of photographs, interviews, stories, and documents relating to the renovations, and has been giving presentations in communities about how towns are dealing with this common situation.

Julia's website www.bigboxreuse.com describes big box transformations in communities from all across the nation, including an elementary school in Wyoming, a medical center in Kentucky, an indoor raceway in Texas, a Library in Georgia, and many more.

One of the most unique transformations is of a former K-Mart in Austin Minnesota, aka Spam Town, USA. When K-Mart moved out of the building to a new location across town, the empty box sat for many years and the surrounding community began to decline. But in September of 2001 the space became the new Hormel Headquarters, complete with The Spam Museum, which features exhibits about Spam's role in WWII, a wall of spam, a Spam theater, and others. The building now houses 35 employees in the museum and about 200 employees in the offices. Roughly 100,000 people visit the Spam Museum every year, and the guest register from 2003 showed people from all 50 states in the USA, every province in Canada, and 53 countries. Needless to say the surrounding community and businesses have benefited greatly from the arrival of the museum!

"It has been so exciting to see how my big box research has been helping out groups who are moving into these buildings. I have even received emails from the institutions featured on the web site, saying that they have been contacted by other groups that are currently moving INTO big box buildings, asking for help/guidance from the experienced big box renovators! I love for these connections to happen!"-Julia Christensen

For more case studies:

Big Box Reuse

- **Featured Neighborhood: Carnegie**

Take a walk through Carnegie and you'll notice signs of rebuilding everywhere- hammers pound nails behind closed doors, carpet is being delivered, floorboards are



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exposed in empty storefronts. Carnegie was hard hit by the remnants of Hurricane Ivan last September when Chartiers Creek spilled up to eight feet of rushing water through the town, but beyond the devastation, the community is now realizing that their town is built by more than just hammers, nails, and hard work, but through the relationships they share with each other.

Once a steel town, Carnegie is located just six miles southwest of Pittsburgh, at the intersection of Interstates 279 and 79, and at the end of the Port Authority Transit's West Busway. The town was formed in 1894 when the two boroughs of Mansfield and Chartiers consolidated under a new name in hopes of encouraging philanthropist Andrew Carnegie to donate a library and high school to the new community. In 1901 the Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall (ACFL&MH) was built atop a bluff, one of only four libraries in the nation endowed by Carnegie. The attached 780 seat music hall is still in use and was modeled after Carnegie Hall in New York. Today the ACFL&MH is \$2.4 million into a campaign to renovate the "Italianate" style building. (More on the ACFL&MH can be found at www.carnegiecarnegie.com.)

Today Carnegie is "Bursting with Culture", boasting two ballet schools, a music academy, and three art galleries. The original owner of the 3rd Street Gallery building in Carnegie was Struzka's Hardware more than 100 years ago. Since then the building has seen several uses, including a flower shop, a succession of pizza shops, and an accountant's office. Phil and Jean Salvato bought the building back in 1990 and have since restored it. Now the space boasts the original hardwood floors, painted tin ceilings, colorful walls, a 3rd floor studio space, 2nd floor lofts, and an original working hand pulley elevator to move large items between floors. The first floor serves not only as an art gallery and framing shop, but as a yoga studio as well. Phil believes that "wherever there is art, people can prosper around it".

Carnegie at one time had 31 churches to serve the faithful in a town of immigrants from many lands. As the population has changed and parishes have consolidated, many church buildings in town have been restored for different uses. One such example is the former Christ United Presbyterian Church, built in 1889, which now houses the Renaissance Gallery and Cefalo's Restaurant & Nightclub. The upper-level gallery space was once used for Sunday school classes, but now it holds a wide variety of paintings and several Disney animation cels (short for acetate celluloid) from several original Disney cartoons, including 101 Dalmatians and Snow White. Pat Jander, owner of the gallery, sees these Disney masterpieces as "the only truly American Art form" because they were not influenced by European art. Renovations of the church's

lower level are nearing completion; Cefalo's nightclub should be open by the end of January, and the restaurant within a few months.

Carnegie's third gallery, Black Swan Gallery on West Main Street, features original art and prints by local artists, especially nature and wildlife, Linda Barnicott's images of Pittsburgh and a large selection of sports art (especially the Pirates and Steelers). While all three of Carnegie's galleries carry a different line of art, they work together to complement each other to bring gallery visitors to town.

Lisa Rasmussen, owner of Eccentricities: An Eclectic Café, serves selections from a menu that changes daily from the first floor of a house that she renovated to fit her café and gift shop while she lives upstairs. Many new retail, restaurant, and service businesses have opened in the past five years, but many more businesses are Carnegie institutions that have built the town's stability, including Izzy Miller Furniture Store since 1946; Hanna's Clothing Store since 1903; Puhlman Flower Shoppe since 1908, and Carnegie Supply since 1945. Carnegie has a long tradition of small and family-owned businesses that offer direct and personal service to the community along with a unique blend of merchandise and services, and the layout and design of the retail space lends itself to a continuation of this tradition; aside from banks and a few non-retail office businesses, there are few chains or franchises in town.

Carnegie also hosts a three-day "Arts & Heritage Festival" on Main Street the weekend after Labor Day. It's become known as the "Carnegie Blues Festival" because it's one of the biggest free blues festivals in the eastern United States, and a visitor can enjoy pierogies, haluska, and hot sausage sandwiches offered by churches and organizations in town while they watch four stages of local and regional blues artists.

Thanks to Bernadette Kazmarski and the town of Carnegie for your assistance in writing this article. The photographs featured here are from Bernadette as well - Thank you!

- **Carnegie Renaissance**

In addition to Carnegie's Community Development Corporation whose mission is to alleviate and prevent community blight and deterioration, another organization was formed in January 2003 to help Carnegie businesses and residents connect in order to increase the town's social capital.

The mission of Carnegie

Renaissance is to position the town as a cultural area, and to promote the town as a whole by combining the



resources of its cultural and social assets with the restaurants and social outlets. Bernadette Kazmarski, one of the founders of the organization, believes that communication builds everything. She and several others have worked to promote communication and interaction through gallery walks, business mixers, and other activities.

The organization also organized a banner sale, where local businesses could purchase a turquoise banner with their name and "Welcome to Carnegie" to display on the town's light poles, and an Adopt-a-Planter campaign for businesses, organizations, residents, or employees in the businesses in town to donate a small sum to plant and care for flowers in the large concrete planters along Main Street and have a plaque with their name affixed to their adopted planter.

For more information:

[Carnegie Renaissance](#)

● **About Us**

Cool Space Locator, a project of the Tides Center (PA), is a non-profit that helps find locations for office based organizations in Pittsburgh's urban core. Aside from working directly with companies to find space, we work with government, economic and community development agencies, and commercial property owners to help boost the growth of office based jobs in the great urban commercial districts of Pittsburgh. We are supported by:

- Richard King Mellon Foundation
- The Heinz Endowments
- The Pittsburgh Foundation
- Roy A. Hunt Foundation
- State of PA; Stay Invent the Future
- The Urban Redevelopment Authority of the City of Pittsburgh
- City of Pittsburgh, Mayor's Office
- Councilman Bill Peduto