

C O L U M N S

Long range planning is like

SPINACH

(see page 6)

WE'RE BIG ON COLOR.

When you like color as much as we do, being limited to 11" x 17" copies just doesn't cut the mustard. And certainly not the ochre.

That's why we've invested in one of the best full-color plotters on the market. Which makes picture-perfect copies up to 36" wide by any reasonable length. Whether you're working from hard copy as big as 11" x 17", Postscript or other software files.

And here's the cherry on top: our turnaround time would make a photo lab turn distinct shades of green.

So give us a call to find out more.

Because the biggest news in color this winter is not on Park Avenue. But Penn Avenue.

TRISTATE
BLUEPRINTING

911 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15222
8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Phone 281-3538

An Art of Wonder

Michelle Fanzo, Editor

My mother came to visit me

for the holidays this year. As it wasn't her first trek to the 'burgh, she'd already been dragged to the top of Mt. Washington via the atmospheric incline, spun around the Nationality Rooms, shown the verdancy of the Phipps Conservatory and even whisked over to the city's largest birdhouse and made to buy a Save the Aviary button. So what now, I thought, insisting that she couldn't just relax.



We went to Clayton to gape at the Victorian-decorated mansion. On the way out, our docent remarked that all year long people from around the world come to tour Henry Clay Frick's house, but it takes Christmas to bring out the Pittsburghers.

This made me think about AIA Pittsburgh. An outsider to the profession, I am drawn to architecture—its history, its longevity, its engineering—without being bogged down by the reality of practicing the art. This is akin to visiting a new place whose wonders demand to be ogled, tasted, smelled, and appreciated. But if you have always lived there, getting the copier fixed and organizing meetings take precedent over nonpareil marvels. They may even be taken for granted, rather like the landmarks of Pittsburgh's steel heritage are to a Pittsburgher or the unique artistry and potential of architectural skills to an architect.

Every year AIA Pittsburgh temporarily forgets about the numerous little fires clamoring for attention and makes time to generate a long-range plan for the chapter (p. 6). Seeing long range goals rather than short term concerns helps people regain some of that youthful enthusiasm. As an outsider, I see Pittsburgh as a gem and architecture as an art of wonder, full of puzzles and purpose. Architects in this city work from an esteemed position. They shape, influence and create the built environment of one of the nation's most promising cities. And if it's not your skyscraper that shows up on the souvenir stand postcards, your stadium that appears on Wide World of Sports or your school or hospital renovation which helps to educate or heal thousands, it'll be your thoughtful addition which gives me a place to write, or a new kitchen where I can be inspired to learn to cook.

This issue of *Columns* exhibits the chapter's 1993 long-range vision, examining where it has been and where the organization wants to go. This is a good time for individual reflection as well. Forget the bidding wars, the pen in the plotter than never works, the time wasted on trivia. Take a moment to recall what you've accomplished since that first year of architecture school, and consider just how far you could yet go. Architecture is an art of wonder. Keep it in sight. 🏠

Michelle C. Fanzo

Architects in this city work from an esteemed position. They shape, influence and create the built environment of one of the nation's most promising cities.

In This Issue

Ambition and Advocacy 6	Home Front 3
AIA Pittsburgh's long-range plan for '93.	Executive Director 4
Desperate to Create 9	Bricks and Mortar/Breaking Ground 8
Lou Astorino tells us what he thinks of the latest Frank Lloyd Wright biography—and doesn't pull any punches.	Calendar 11
New Building Guide 14	Dossier 10
Check out this new guide to environmentally responsible building material.	Contractors' Directory 12
	Engineers' Directory 13
	Marketplace 15
	February Meeting 15

The Pittsburgh Chapter AIA serves 12 Western Pennsylvania counties as the local component of the American Institute of Architects and the Pennsylvania Society of Architects. The objective of the Chapter 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. Chapter Headquarters: CNG Tower, 625 Liberty Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15222 Telephone: 412/471-9548; FAX: 412/471-9501.

Chapter Officers

Douglas L. Shuck, AIA, President
 Karen A. Loysen, AIA, 1st V. President
 Susan Tusick, AIA, 2nd V. President
 Roger Kingsland, AIA, Secretary
 Deepak Wadhvani, AIA, Treasurer
 Anne Swager, Executive Director

COLUMNS is published ten times a year by the Pittsburgh Chapter AIA in association with the Cantor Group. Telephone: 412/661-3734; FAX: 412/661-6287.

Connie Cantor/Executive Editor
 Michelle Fanzo/Managing Editor
 Joseph P. Cooper-Silvis/Art Director
 Bill Ivins/Production Manager
 Tom Lavelle/Advertising Manager

Editorial Board

Robert S. Pfaffman, AIA
 William Brocius, AIA
 Edward Dapper, intern member
 Alan L. Fishman, AIA
 Anthony G. Poli, AIA
 David J. Roth, AIA
 Douglas L. Shuck, AIA
 Deepak Wadhvani, AIA

COLUMNS is published by, and primarily for, the members of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Preference may be given to the selection of works, articles, opinions, letters, etc. of members for publication. However, in the interest of furthering the goals of the Chapter, as stated monthly at the top of the masthead and in the membership directory, COLUMNS will publish the names of and properly credit non-members, whether as participants in the design of works submitted by a member, or as designers of their own work, or as authors of articles, opinions or letters.

Opinions expressed by editors and contributors are not necessarily those of the Pittsburgh Chapter, AIA. The Chapter has made every reasonable effort to provide accurate and authoritative information, but assumes no liability for the contents.

Lobbying, Leashes and Long-Range Thinking

Anne Swager, Executive Director

In my past career life,

an associate and I, faced with the task of replacing a long standing festival with a new gala event, planned and held a state fair for our community, Mt. Lebanon. Replete with cow plop, bingo, country cloggers and booths designed to encourage every parent to spend money entertaining junior all in the name of a good cause, the weekend event was a success. Our fair was an original for Mt. Lebanon but the idea came from Neil Spence of radio rush hour reporting fame. Apparently, he endured one too many parking fines for overstaying his welcome at a parking meter and dubbed the community *The Great State of Mt. Lebanon*. The moniker stuck especially with those of us familiar with Mt. Lebanon's desire to regulate everything possible, including satellite dishes and in home businesses to name only a few I can remember. Best of all, Mt. Lebanon always put a cheery face on this continuing stream of ordinances by explaining them all and making them sound like fun in their very own community magazine. One thing for sure, the community is exceedingly well run. Streets are cleared at the first sign of a snow fall, the police arrive no more than three minutes after you have called, and my kids have known to stop, drop, and roll at the first hint of fire long before they ever knew how to spell fire engine.

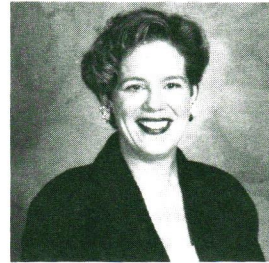
Occasionally, however, *The Great State* is plagued by civil war. The issues that cause these great rifts in the citizenry are varied. One of the worst battles erupted over the building of a much needed soccer field in Bird Park, considered by

many to be a wild life sanctuary. Recently, there have been many late night meetings devoted to exploring the pros and cons of a leash law for cats. I've never known a cat that would willingly do anything you wanted it to do much less follow docilely behind you tethered to a leash but the ongoing battle as reported by the local suburban newspaper has made for some great reading. Mostly, I have stayed removed

from these occasional outbreaks of mass hysteria which should not mislead you into thinking I don't have a very strong opinion on each and every issue. It is just that I already go to more than my share of meetings and I don't need to alienate any of my neighbors with a disdainful eyeroll when they suggest that their back yard is being run over by a pack of unruly felines. Age has afforded me the wisdom of knowing that it is best for me to confine my rantings on any given subject to the privacy of my armchair. Unfortunately, once a decade I have to abandon this common sense approach and throw myself headlong into the fracas. This seemed like the ideal time.

Our community's long-range plan calls for us to study whether or not we should put sidewalks throughout the community. The process has already begun via

a task force of citizens. The opposition has also already begun even though there is as yet no plan to oppose. I came home from work the other night to find a flyer stuffed through my mail slot. It was produced by "my neighborhood association." I had never heard of the group and I am still not sure who they are or how you join. The flyer was filled with inflammatory rhetoric. "Losing frontage on your



We need to be more effective in our lobbying efforts if we want the business of architecture to improve.

yard...green space will be destroyed...inner city urban look...tax increase...legally responsible" jumped off the page at me. I was amused and at the same time appalled. Thirteen year old Betsy is a perfect example of why children should be walled off from moving vehicles. Her vision field sees only 13 to 18 year old members of the opposite sex. Cars, to her, are a way to get to the mall not a life threatening situation if you happen to walk out in front of one. The flyer neglected to mention the fact that it is less than ideal for pedestrians and moving vehicles to occupy the same pathway. Then there is the issue of green space. From the flyer, you would assume we were going to transform our tranquil green community into a sea of concrete. Not so. About two-thirds of the community already has sidewalks. In my neighborhood, average lot size

hovers between one-fourth to an occasional generous one-third of an acre. I would willingly trade some of my green space for a sidewalk. After all, my tranquillity is more disturbed by the PAT bus that races down my street at 6:00 every morning than it would be by my neighbors strolling that much closer to my front door.

I did learn one thing from my years of involvement in the *Great State*, elected officials mostly listen to the people who elect them. It will take no more than 15 minutes of my time one evening to let my commissioner know that I think our community would be better with more sidewalks, not less.

Throughout the next year, we will ask you to do the same thing. Take 15 minutes and call one of your legislators to inform him (or her) of your feelings on a particular issue.

We will let you know who to call, what the issue is, and what our position is but you need to make the call. Legislators don't care as much about what an official group says as they do about what the voters say. We need to be more effective in our lobbying efforts if we want the business of architecture to improve. At this month's membership meeting, we will ask for your input on our long-range plan. Improving our lobbying effort with your help is just one part of it. I hope you will plan on attending and letting us know what you think. I'll see you then, now I have to get home to the *Great State*. Apparently, both my cats are under house arrest for jaywalking in front of my house without their leashes. 🏠

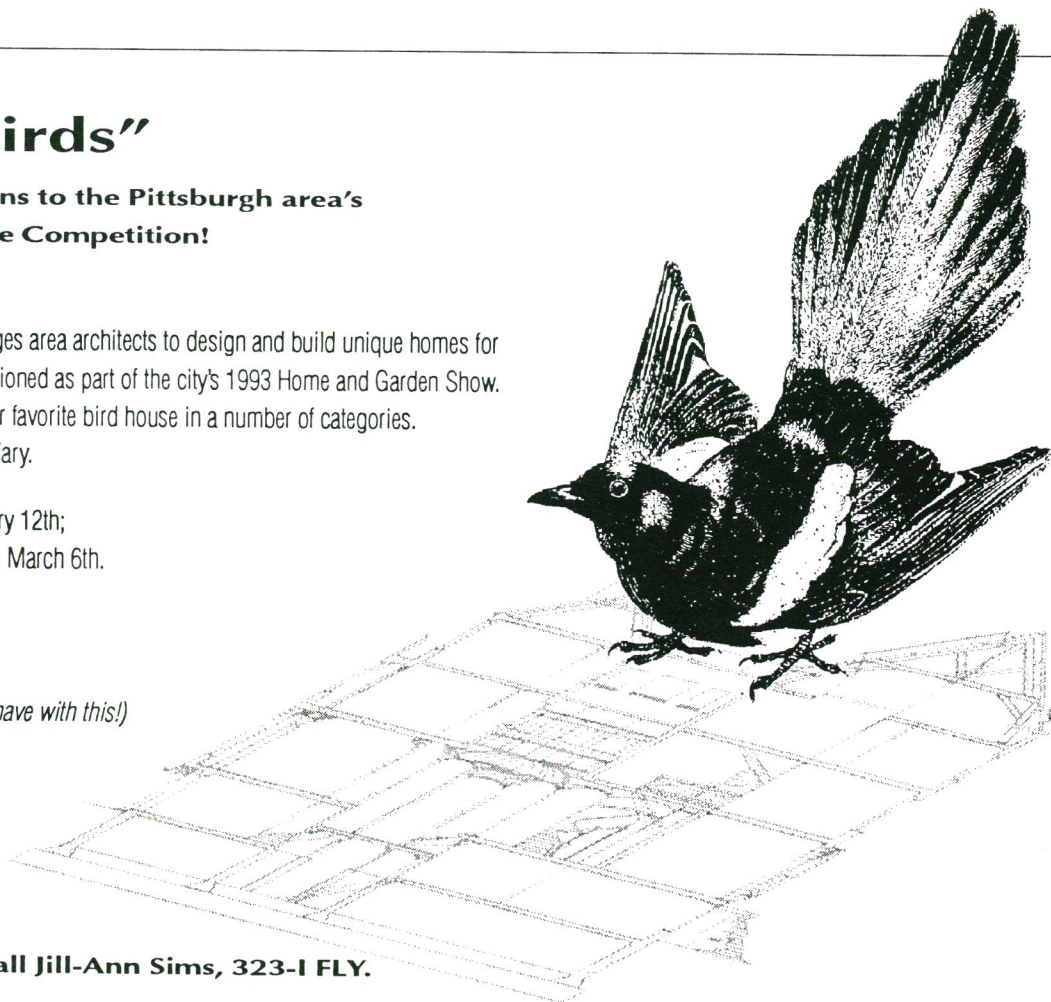
"For the Birds"

A call for submissions to the Pittsburgh area's first ever Bird House Competition!

The Pittsburgh Aviary encourages area architects to design and build unique homes for our feathered friends to be auctioned as part of the city's 1993 Home and Garden Show. Attendees will also vote on their favorite bird house in a number of categories. All proceeds will benefit the Aviary.

Registration deadline is February 12th;
Completed bird houses are due March 6th.

*Think feathers!
Think bird condo!
(Think of the fun you can have with this!)*



For more information call Jill-Ann Sims, 323-I FLY.