

Public remarks to Pittsburgh's City Council by Mark Rauterkus on April 20, 2004.

My family and I live at 108 South 12th Street on the South Side. For five weeks starting May 1, my family and I are going to live in China. We are going to Beijing, (home to the 2008 Olympics), to Western China's Chengdu, and Hong Kong. With luck, a visit to Pittsburgh's Sister City can happen.

Having just given our address and plans, understand we always have housesitters when out of town.

We'll post our journal on the internet at Rauterkus.com. We'll visit swim pools in China, but peace messages for another day. Our return to Pittsburgh occurs as some of the swim pools are opening in mid June.

I'm here, again, to talk about the closed status and the still empty budget matters, concerning the 31 outdoor swim pools, the closed 19 recreation centers and the closed lone indoor ice rink.

For the past year we've been holding community meetings about these facilities. This past weekend's meeting at the Aviary will air on PCTV 21.

Save Our Summer 2004 is an effort to raise money to open some of these facilities.

Mrs. Elsie Hillman and Dr. Bill Trueheart of the Pittsburgh Foundation are the money folks. They have money and are trying to raise more. This pot of money goes to the city in a trust fund. On April 28, more news is expected.

We know: Sixteen pools will open. Fifteen other pools will remain closed and empty for the summer of 2004. Seven Recreation Centers are going to open for LUNCH programs, operated by non-profit agencies. A few other efforts are going to open some of the other sites for limited use.

The SOS fix is a short term, partial, breath of fresh air. SOS is NOT with any LONG TERM vision.

Review: SOS, led by the wealthy, fixes their sight on the money part of the equation. They have money. Raise more money. They give away money. They feel good. Citizens get wet and fed. We all survive.

My role, as a coach and a parent who uses and visits these centers, as one who takes kids to play elsewhere with others, is NOT about looking into people's wallets.



I want to look into people's hearts. I want to get those hearts pounding, hard, so we can worry about fitness, performance, sportsmanship and playing well with others -- regardless of your money. I'm about ideas, development, self-improvement, community interactions and learning.

Today I'm here to say I have a POSITION PAPER I, too, am looking for contributions. I'm looking for ideas, solutions, and editors for the position paper.

I hope each of you spend some hours with the paper in the weeks and months to come. SOS 2004 is short term. The POSITION PAPER is long term.

Next weeks message will deliver the table of contents and links to download the document.

Last night I went to the School Board. Tomorrow I'll try to find the Oversight Board -- Act 47 Coordinators. Soon this goes to County Council and Harrisburg. I've already spoken to many including: Dan Onorato, Catherine Baker Knoll, County Councilman Tom Schumaker, Dr. John Thompson, Associated Press, etc.

Perhaps we hold a POST AGENDA briefing in mid June, after the reopening of some of the pools. Then we can look into the future together.

<http://DSL.CLOH.Org>

