

Calling for an approach that soars

Presented to City Council at public comment on April 7, 2004.

My name is Mark Rauterkus. My family and I reside at 108 South 12th Street, South Side. My home on the internet is at Rauterkus.com.

Recently I've published some info and calls to action at PLAY.CLOH.Org

Our next open community meeting is on Sunday, April 18, on the North Side at the National Aviary. At 2 pm I'll hold a briefing and issue a position paper. At 3 pm we'll have an open discussion.

The AVIARY is a great place to have a community meeting and launch some lofty ideas.

Birds fly. The eagle, our national symbol, or a hawk, can soar high and look over the landscape. We need to soar too.

Pittsburgh has been knocked in a rut. Not only do we have to pick-ourselves up by the bootstraps. But, if we stand around in the gutter, we'll only get knocked down again.

The approach I crave and the approach that I feel Pittsburgh is thirsty for is much different from what we've been seeing.

I don't like the idea of putting a band-aid upon another band-aid to cover a wound that has no hope of healing.

Foundations and Corporate donors are coming to the scene with Save Our Summer, 2004.

They hope to raise \$800,000 and put it into a trust fund. This is a short-term fix and it is like a new band-aid.

Meanwhile, the pools, for years, have been held together by a band-aid. And the only thing worse is the plan behind it all. The wound is the mastermind -- personified by Citiparks vision.

I don't want to heap a lot of insults at those who are trying to make chicken soup without all the ingredients.

Our kids are not to blame, but they are being held hostage.

To fly, to soar, to lift ourselves takes an extended hand to the right, an extended hand to the left, and a number of tail feathers too. We have to get the whole body into this.

Community College of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Allegheny County Parks Department, Citiparks, the sporting community --

such as those that ran the GREAT REPLACEMENT RACE, expert coaches, die-hard volunteers. We all must play.

I was part of the Aquatics Task Force. That was a joke. You've called post agenda in these chambers in past years. You've been able to measure the leadership's will to "accomplish."

John Clark managed that process. He is full of *wait and see*. Joan Clary on Allegheny Council -- she managed the task force on Parks and Rec -- another wait and see advocate. John Denny of the Hillman Co.



--- wait and see. They've been waiting for 9 months. If you want to write a check for a new band-aid -- fine. But, I'm going to call them as I see them.

We have an eagle in the aviary with one wing. It's a beautiful creature within a fine sanctuary. That bird isn't going out into the rest of the world.

Our kids, they are going to need to compete, live and thrive, with the rest of the world.

Yesterday, hopes of hosting an Olympic Gold Medalists at today's meeting were revealed in the morning and then dashed in the afternoon.

The former athlete called and was very apologetic and was under the weather and far to ill to travel last night to be here this morning.

A bug had been going around the squad and its 48-hour stay -- perhaps similar to that of Cornell -- made it necessary to delay the presentation.

We have a 'rain check.'

To be continued. Read at <http://Play.CLOH.Org>. Call me at 412-298-3432.