



Perpetuating the **Greater Good**

by **Sylvia Myers Maurin**, Source One, LLC

Andrew Carnegie, who is often referred to as the father of American philanthropy, amassed wealth totaling an estimated \$350 million, 95% of which he had given to charitable causes by his death in 1919. Expressed in 2005 dollars, Carnegie's contributions would amount to over six billion dollars!

Like Carnegie, many Pittsburgh benefactors were builders of grand institutions that continue to serve the public today. Museums, libraries, grand theaters for the performing arts, educational institutions and more were financed by the industrialists, among them the Heinz family, the Fricks, the Mellons, the Phipps family, and others. Beacons of their philanthropy still dot the Pittsburgh cityscape. Their endowments and foundations continue to perpetuate their good works by truly serving the greater good.

A number of philanthropists also donated land. Those public parks that offered respite from the grim industrial life of the time have become today's green spaces. The generosity of Mary Schenley gave us Schenley Park. At just 17 years old, Helen Clay Frick convinced her industrialist father to bequeath a park for Pittsburgh's children. That park became Frick Park. In all, Highland, Riverview, Schenley and Frick Parks comprise more than 1,700 acres of lawns, giant trees, ponds, woodlands, scenic drives and trails.

The National Aviary, originally built and operated by the City of Pittsburgh, is one of the first zoological institutions in the world to display animals in naturalistic exhibits. The generosity of the family of Sarah M. Scaife has helped move the organization forward. In 1992, the Aviary gained recognition by Congress as the *National Aviary*.

Like all tax-exempt charitable organizations, the Aviary has a perpetual life expectancy. The Aviary will be on-going, and so will the need for donations to keep the organizational legacy alive and growing. As one of Pittsburgh's great assets, it serves to pass along to coming generations a respect for nature and knowledge about our interdependent relationship with birds and all living things.

You, too, can be a philanthropist, and it doesn't take six billion dollars. We invite you to consider leaving a legacy to the National Aviary in your estate and financial plans. For more information, please contact Patricia Rambasek, Director of Development and Communications, at 412-323-7235, extension 214.

Memorial fund for pet birds

Avian Rainbow Bridge Fund

When cockatiel owners Rik Laird and Patti Rambasek lost their beloved pet of 21 years, Chica, last October, they searched for a meaningful way to honor her life. They established the Avian Rainbow Bridge Fund to encourage other bird owners to leave a lasting legacy in their pet's memory. Contributions to the Fund will benefit the general operations of the Avian Veterinary and Research Hospital.

When asked why the fund was established, Rik said, "It is our hope that this fund will provide bird owners with a way to memorialize their pets while supporting the fine work being done by Dr. Pilar Fish and her staff at the hospital."

Donors to the fund will receive a copy of the "Rainbow Bridge" poem and a one year sponsorship of a National Aviary bird.

Rik often shared his breakfast with Chica, an extremely curious bird.

