

## The Newsletter of the Port of Pittsburgh Commission

2025 Vol 3 (issue #22)

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Hello! I hope everyone has been enjoying our hot summer. After all the rain we had, it seems like we are having more than our usual share of sunshine, a rarity for Pittsburgh! Speaking of weather, we'll feature a special report from Alicia Miller with the National Weather Service in this issue.

In terms of what's happening in the Port District, we are pleased to report on the new abandoned boats law in Pennsylvania. Also, the Port was pleased to support the recent MSU Pittsburgh's Industry Day event, and we'll have a recap from the event.

And our featured guest for 3 Rivers / 3 Questions is Mark Kessinger of DLZ, who is working in partnership with the Port of Pittsburgh to study the dredging needs for the extended Braddock pool on the Lower Mon. Lastly, our own Marketing and Program Manager, Scott Harshman received a special invitation to accompany USDOT for a Port Engagement in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam in July.

So, enjoy the rest of your summer, and we will have more for you in the Autumn!

*Mary Ann Bucci* Executive Director, Port of Pittsburgh Commission

### New abandoned boats law in PA

If you live, work, or recreate along our three rivers, you're sure to have seen an abandoned boat at one time or another. It is a growing problem in the region and not only is a public nuisance but also poses a threat to commercial and recreational boats, infrastructure, and the environment.



Tim Schaeffer, Executive Director for the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and members of the Pittsburgh Safe Boating Council recognized PA Rep. Anita Kulik on her abandoned boats bill becoming law at the August 5th PSBC general meeting.

continued on page 2 . . .



### 3 RIVERS, 3 QUESTIONS

with *Mark Kessinger*



*Mark is DLZ's Vice President of Water Resources and Dam Safety and has served with the US Army Corps of Engineers.*

1. Mark, the Port of Pittsburgh Commission is very pleased to be working with DLZ! Tell us a bit about your role, and DLZ's focus as a consultant in the field of engineering?

I'm the Project Manager of DLZ's team that is working to determine what driveways from commercial docks to the main channel need to be dredged in the lower Mon River between the Braddock Locks and Dam and the John P. Murtha Locks and Dam (formerly Charleroi). The goal of the project is to allow commercial towboats with barges to safely move between their docks to the main channel of the river. We will be determining which industries have been affected, how much of the river bottom along these driveways will need to

continued on page 3 . . .



GOOD THINGS FLOW FROM HERE



## Abandoned boats law (continued)

Introduced by PA State Rep. Anita Kulik, House Bill 103 was signed into law by Governor Josh Shapiro on July 7th as Act 28 of 2025 and takes effect in January 2026. The new law defines “abandoned,” “at-risk” and “derelict” boats and provides local authorities with a better process to investigate and remove problem vessels while also holding accountable negligent boat owners.

PA State Senator Devlin Robinson, who also serves as a Port of Pittsburgh Commissioner, sponsored the companion bill in the Senate. “This is a win for public safety, for the environment and responsible boaters,” Robinson said. “I commend Rep. Kulik for her leadership in advancing this important reform, and I was glad to champion it in the Senate. This is exactly the kind of bipartisan, good-governance legislation Pennsylvanians expect from their elected officials.”



## 3 Rivers, 3 Questions with Mark Kessinger (cont.)

be dredged, where the dredged materials can be disposed of, and how much the project will cost. As for DLZ, we are a full-service engineering and architectural consulting firm that has been in business for over 100 years. Since our beginning, one of our primary focuses has been the modernization of locks and dams on the Ohio, Allegheny, and Monongahela Rivers.

**2. The PPC has entered into a partnership with DLZ, to assist dredging in the Lower Mon area outside of the navigation channel since the removal of the Elizabeth Lock and Dam. Can you elaborate on your role and goals for this project?**

DLZ is working to determine the amount of dredging required and the associated costs for dredging the driveways to allow towboats and barges to safely travel back and forth from their docks to the main channel. As a first step, Dan Davis of our staff, has accompanied the PPC in talking with industries to determine who has been affected by lower pool elevations on the lower Mon River. The Corps of Engineers is responsible for dredging the main channel of the river and the industries are responsible for dredging their docks. The primary goals of our project are to determine the amount of river bottom that needs to be dredged for the driveways between the docks and the main channel, to design the driveways, to obtain permits for dredging, to estimate the cost to dredge and dispose of the materials, and to monitor the dredging once it begins.

continued on page 3 . . .

## PortPitt Participates in Ports Engagement in Viet Nam

Scott Harshman, PortPitt’s Marketing & Program Manager, was invited by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation’s Maritime Administration to attend and present at the 2nd Association of Southeast Asian Nations - USDOT Port Engagement in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam on July 22 - 24.

The focus of this event was to provide an opportunity for exchange among U.S. and ASEAN officials and technical experts on policy and planning strategies leading to improved inland waterways freight transport, multimodal connectivity, and overall supply chain resilience. As part of the engagement, the group also did a site visit to Saigon Port.



Scott gave presentations on U.S. Experiences in Maritime/Inland Waterway Planning and Decision-Making and Optimizing Local Multimodal Connectivity for the Port of Pittsburgh while also participating in a panel discussion on Strengthening Partnerships to Support Maritime/Inland Waterways Policy Goals.

The ASEAN member nations are: Brunei Darrusalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.



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## 3 Rivers, 3 Questions with Mark Kessinger (cont.)

**3. Can you inform our readers as to DLZ's previous work in the Port of Pittsburgh area, in terms of experience and work on our rivers and does DLZ have any current or future projects in mind for our Port of Pittsburgh region, in terms of infrastructure or more efficient movement of goods and services?**

DLZ has a long history of working on the Port of Pittsburgh's rivers. We have been working on the modernization of the John P. Murtha Locks and Dam for over 30 years to improve the efficiency of movement of products on the Mon River. On the Ohio River, recently we completed the design of new dam emergency bulkheads for the Montgomery Locks and Dam and designed the stabilization of the upper guide wall at the Dashields Locks and Dam. Jamie North, who manages our Bridgeville Office, and his staff are currently working along the Ohio River on the ALCOSAN Wet Weather Plant Expansion Project, and on all three rivers for ALCOSAN's Clean Water Plan. DLZ is also part of various improvement projects along the Allegheny River for Pittsburgh Water, including the intake improvements at the Aspinwall Pump Station. And just downstream of the pump station, DLZ has been working on improvements at the Allegheny River Lock and Dam #2. As modernization of the locks and dams on all three rivers continues well into the future, DLZ will be here to work together alongside the Port of Pittsburgh and the Corps of Engineers to meet the future transportation demands of the Pittsburgh region.



## Pittsburgh Area Weather Outlook

by Alicia Miller, NOAA/National Weather Service Pittsburgh

This summer has seen significant weather activity across the upper Ohio Valley, including extreme heat, severe thunderstorms, and flash flooding.

### Heat

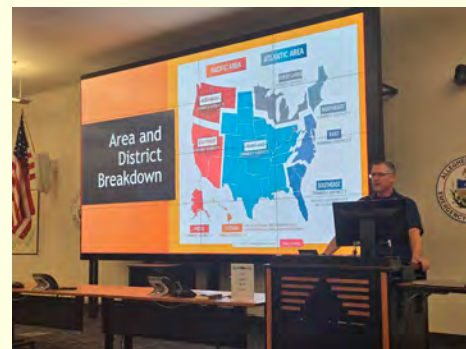
If you've felt like this summer has been a warm one, you are not wrong. There were two stretches this summer with temperatures exceeding 90 degrees. While 90 degrees in the summer is not unusual, the 5 day stretch was the 8th longest stretch in June. June was 3.7 degrees above average across Southwestern Pennsylvania and 3.8 degrees above average in July. This actually put July in the top 10 for warmest Julys since records began in 1871. The average temperature for June and July combined puts Pittsburgh at the 8th warmest and 3rd warmest for low temperature. Adding to the heat, the

continued on page 4 . . .

## US Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Pittsburgh hosts Industry Day

The USCG Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Pittsburgh hosted their annual "Industry Day" on August 7, 2025, at the Allegheny County Emergency Services Building in Coraopolis, PA. Nearly 130 attendees registered for the day's event. MSU Pittsburgh Commanding Officer Justin Jolley and his staff welcomed the guests and facilitated the event where various leaders, experts, and operators in the marine transportation and security industry met to discuss policies and issues impacting the field. Amongst the topics covered included organizational updates from USCG Captain Randy Preston, who recently replaced Captain Heather Mattern as Sector Ohio Valley Commanding Officer; cyber security readiness and response, towing vessels and Subchapter M compliance, as well as Merchant Mariner credentialing. MSU Pittsburgh also recognized Captain Chris Patton, of Cruisin' Tikis Pittsburgh, with an award for saving a capsized kayaker on the Allegheny River.

Additional presentations also included an update on active construction projects on the three rivers from the US Army Corps of Engineers, weather forecasting from the National Weather Service, and an oil spill response presentation by Mack Flood of McCutcheon Enterprises.



LCDR Matt Zanella, Executive Officer of MSU Pittsburgh, had this to say about the event, "MSU Pittsburgh is excited to host this annual event and to provide an informative program which covers the important issues facing our region's stakeholders. We appreciate the turnout, and for the chance to inform, educate, and make connections for those navigating and working on our rivers."

Special thanks to the Three Rivers Pollution Response Council



for sponsoring the event (along with the Port of Pittsburgh Commission) and Allegheny County Emergency Services for hosting at their site.



*Pittsburgh Area Weather Outlook by Alicia Miller, NOAA/National Weather Service, Pittsburgh (continued)*

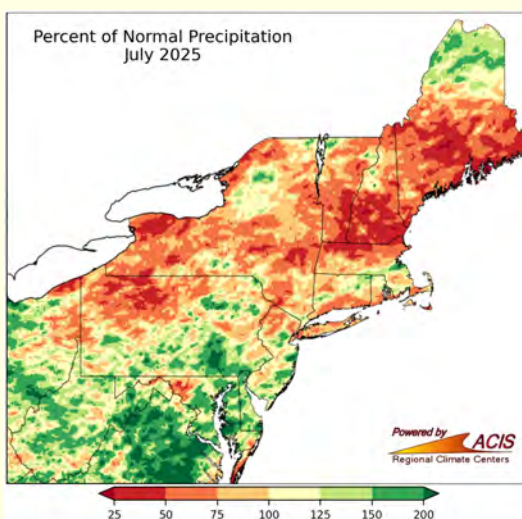
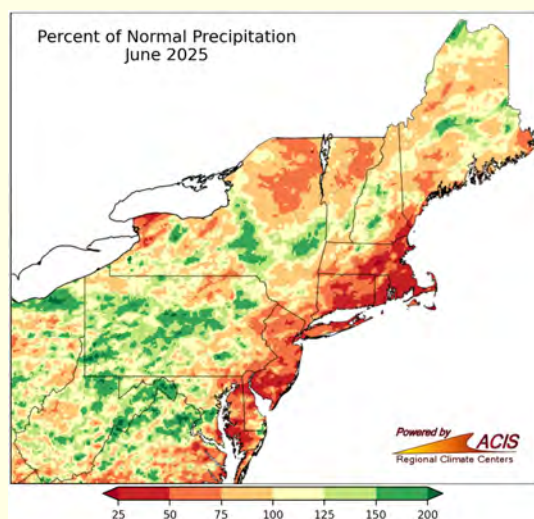
dewpoint has been above average as well. The higher the dewpoint, the greater the amount of moisture in the air. Which is why when we have had thunderstorms it has rained hard.

<u>Pittsburgh Area Seasonal Stats</u>	<u>Average Temperature</u> (Departure from Normal; <i>red=above</i> <i>blue=below</i> )	<u>Average High Temperature</u> (Departure from Normal; <i>red=above</i> <i>blue=below</i> )	<u>Average Low Temperature</u> (Departure from Normal; <i>red=above</i> <i>blue=below</i> )	<u>Precipitation</u> (Departure from Normal; <i>red=above</i> <i>blue=below</i> )	<u>Warmest Temperature</u> (Date(s))	<u>Coldest Temperature</u> (Date(s))
June	73.1° F (+3.7°F) <i>*Tied for 11th Warmest on Record*</i>	82.7° F (+3.3°F)	63.5° F (+4.2°F) <i>*Tied for 7th Warmest on Record*</i>	5.57" (+1.45")	94°F (6/24)	40°F (6/2)
July	77.0° F (+3.8°F) <i>*Tied for 10th Warmest on Record*</i>	85.9° F (+3.0°F)	68.2° F (+4.8°F) <i>*Tied for 4th Warmest on Record*</i>	2.27" (-1.99")	92°F (7/30)	58°F (7/23)

*Pittsburgh Area monthly temperature data for June and July. Period of Record is 1871-2025*

## Severe Thunderstorms and Flash Flooding

Through the summer we have seen several rounds of severe thunderstorms and flash flooding. While climatologically this is not unusual for Pittsburgh, as we usually see our most active months in late Spring and Summer, we have had more reports of flash flooding than we have in the last several years. But shower and thunderstorm coverage has varied. So while some areas in SW PA are wetter than average for the first 2 months of the summer, there are others that have been drier. This is particularly noticeable for July for much of the area north of Pittsburgh.



## What's in store for the rest of the Summer?

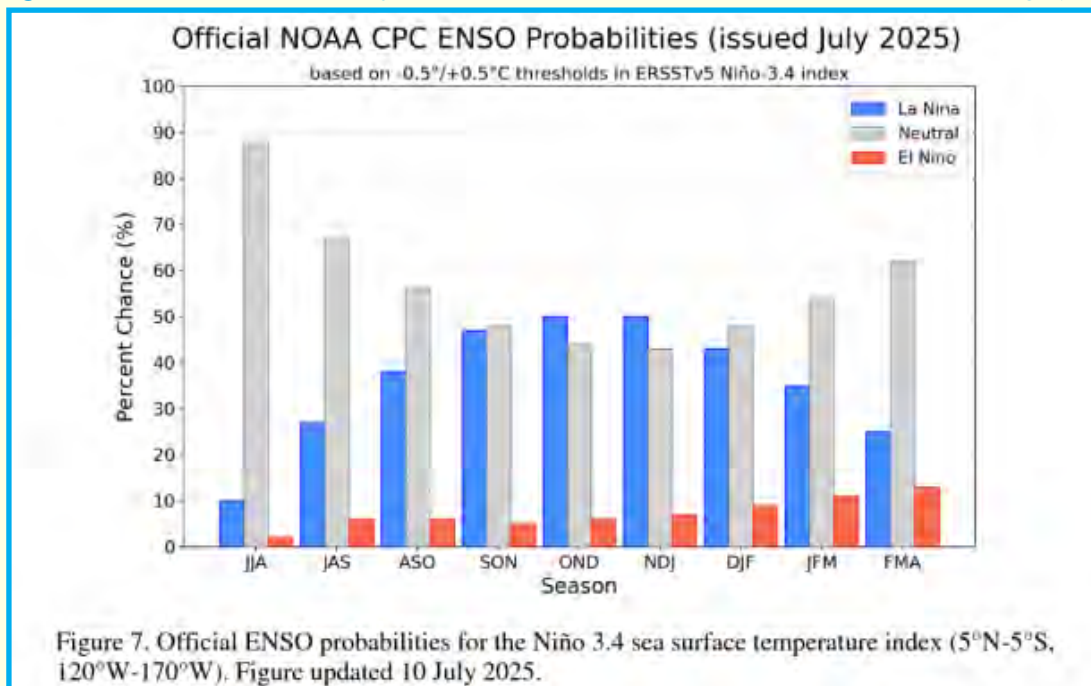
After a brief reprieve to start the month of August, it does look like the remainder of the month will be above average for temperature and only slightly favored for above average precipitation. At this time, tropical activity remains focused in the Pacific but we will need to watch for development as we go into late August and September, some of the activity we'd expect might be explained by ENSO.

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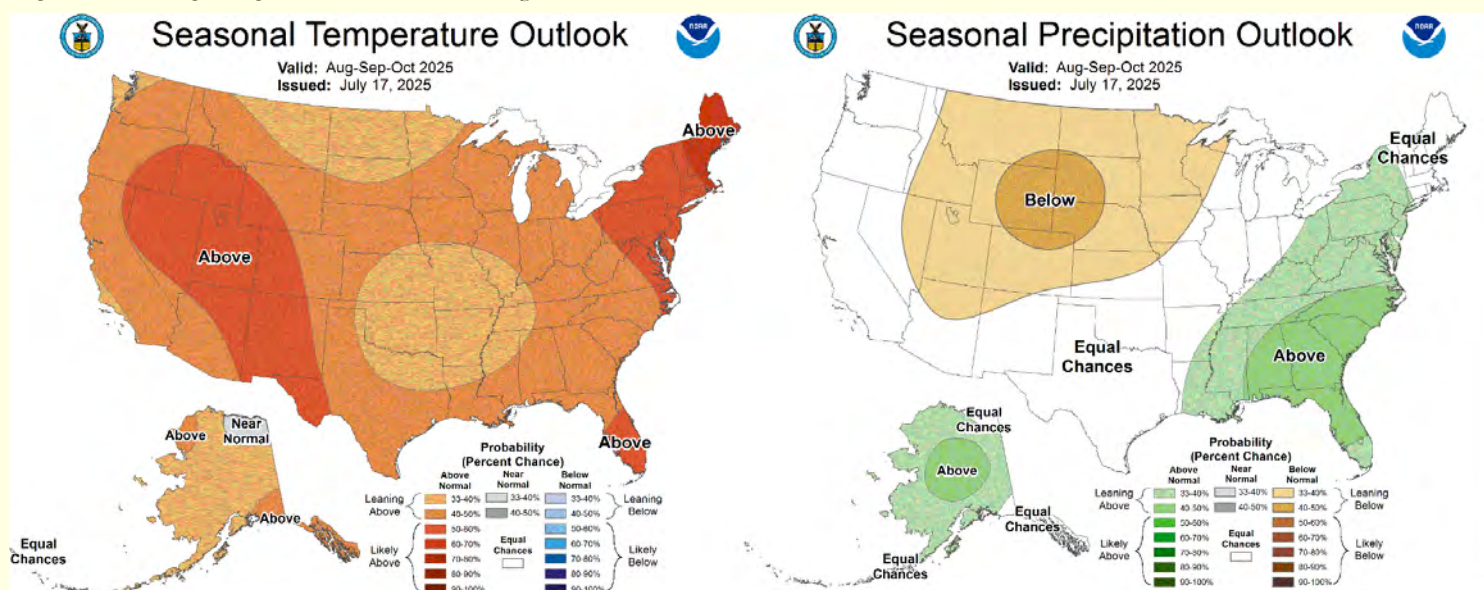




*Pittsburgh Area Weather Outlook by Alicia Miller, NOAA/National Weather Service, Pittsburgh (continued)*



Looking at the ENSO probabilities . . . which is a fancy name for Pacific ocean temperatures that impact our weather patterns some, we are slightly favored for ENSO neutral conditions through September/October/November that flip slightly towards La Nina conditions for the winter. Generally, the more “La-Nina-like” we are, the more active we might expect tropical activity in the Atlantic ocean to be more active. However, locally, 67% of tropical cyclones to be within 60 nautical miles of Pittsburgh since 1950 were during ENSO neutral years, compared to 25% during weak El Ninos, and 8% during weak La Ninas. This trend towards La Nina conditions while still being an ENSO neutral phase with anomalously warm Atlantic Ocean temperature might suggest a slightly higher chance than normal Pittsburgh is impacted by tropical systems in 2025, particularly into September and perhaps even October (though not a sure bet).



Apart from this, the August-September-October period is generally favored to remain warm with medium confidence, and slightly wet with low confidence.





# SHORE THING

## Riverlife



### A Shore Thing for summer fun in the heart of the Sister Bridges Experience.

Shore Thing is Riverlife's newest riverfront destination: a floating platform on the Allegheny River where you can relax and recharge. Listen to live music, learn at a workshop, or take in the amazing Pittsburgh views while enjoying something from BG Brewing's specialty menu.

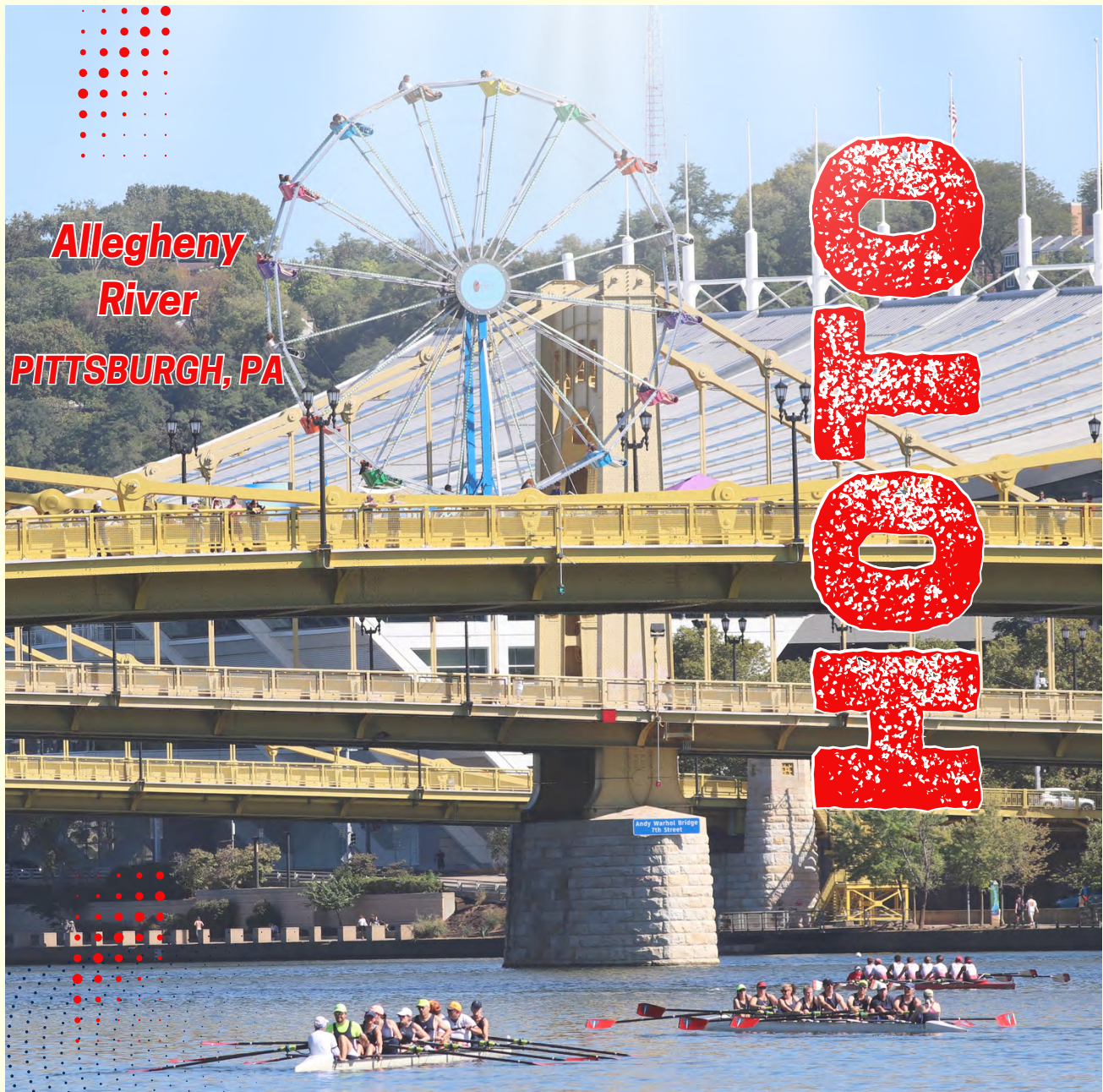


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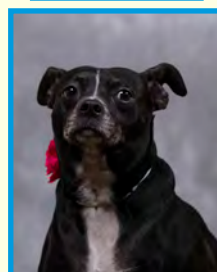
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Executive  
Director



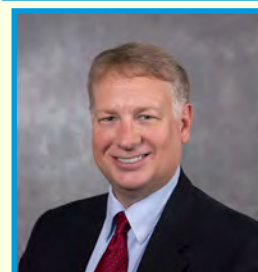
**MATT PAVLOSKY**  
Assitant Executive  
Director



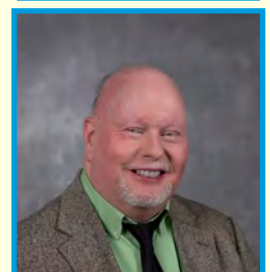
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PortPitt  
Mascot



**SCOTT HARSHMAN**  
Marketing and  
Program Manager



**MIKE BRINZA**  
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