

## Arts Advocate

### Retired Pittsburgh banker lends expertise to Arts Center

As a highly successful Pittsburgh banker with extensive corporate ties, Fred Beard spent many years as vice chairman of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's Corporate Sustaining Fund and on the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's board of trustees.

Now retired and splitting his time between Fox Chapel, Pennsylvania and Hilton Head Island, Fred has stepped back into the arts scene, only this time his focus is on theater.

Elected two years ago to the Arts Center's board of trustees, he has quickly become a trusted adviser, lending his many years of financial and performing arts board experience to the Arts Center.

"We have a lot of part-time residents and regular annual visitors who come to our shows but don't contribute beyond the cost of their ticket," Beard said. "We need to demonstrate to them the value of this organization. Hilton Head would be a lesser place without it."

Beard first volunteered to help the Pittsburgh Symphony's Corporate Sustaining Fund campaign in the '80s. "At the time, Pittsburgh was the third largest Fortune 500 headquarters city in America," said Beard, who was formerly Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Mellon Bank

(MDNA), a wholly owned subsidiary of Mellon Financial Corporation.

"I managed the bank's major commercial lending businesses so I knew most of the CEOs and CFOs in town. I was also acquainted with a number of the private endowment funds in the region."

He used his business connections to raise funds for the symphony's endowment. At the ballet he became more involved, helping to develop long-term fundraising strategies as Treasurer on the board's executive and finance committees.

"Things have changed dramatically for nonprofits in the last 20 years," said Beard, who began living here part-time with his wife Dottie after retiring in 2002.

They have three married daughters and six grandchildren. In addition to his board officer service at the Arts Center, Beard's island lifestyle keeps him busy as President of the Gull Point Owners Association, along with golf, boating, kayaking and keeping up with their yellow lab Daisy.

Fred and Dottie have attended scores of performances in cities like London, New York, San Francisco, Toronto and of course Pitts-

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Frederick K. Beard Photo by John Brackett

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burgh. They find the Arts Center's quality of theater "truly amazing."

"I understand creative people and let them do their job," Beard said. "Our skill needs to be in finding the funds to let them be creative."

"I don't think the community appreciates what goes on behind the scenes to keep the Arts Center going. Ticket prices only cover

half the operating costs, so it's imperative that we increase individual giving, and that patrons become donors.

"When it comes to financial stewardship, it's important for donors to know that the Arts Center is financially responsible," he said. "I can tell you there is no frivolous spending here. The staff is very thoughtful about cost containment."