Didja know?
A few quick facts from History Center exhibits.

In 30 years of programming, Fred Rogers of *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* changed into more than two dozen cardigan sweaters, many of them made by his mother, Nancy McFeely Rogers. He donated a green cardigan to the History Center, which can be seen in the *What We Wore* exhibit.

Maxo Vanka, the artist known for his socially conscious murals in a Millvale church, was known for his “gift of sympathy,” even, apparently, to the animal kingdom. Birds were known to alight on the artist’s body and feed out of his pockets.

Meadowcroft Museum of Rural Life is one of two outdoor museums working with the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy to help preserve the Delaine Merino sheep breed for its genetic qualities as well as its historic significance. The breed, known for producing high quality wool, was developed in southwestern Pennsylvania in the mid-19th century.

**Architecture Around Us**
By Lu Donnelly

**Monongahela National Bank**
Brownsville, Fayette County

Banking has changed considerably since 1812, but only in Brownsville, Pa., can you chart those changes — at least in architectural terms. In this town stand four buildings, each of which housed the Monongahela National Bank for a time. Although the earliest bank has been drastically altered, the other three are remarkably intact, each adopting the most popular architectural expression of its era.

The earliest bank, from 1812, was a simple, three-bay brick structure with a central doorway. Located at 221 Front Street (at Grog Lane), it could have passed for a dwelling along the mixed commercial/residential street. It was only a block from the home of its first president, Jacob Bowman (1763 – 1847). Bowman came to Brownsville in 1786 to run a store for Elliot, Williams & Co., which owned a chain of trading posts along the Monongahela River. Bowman purchased the store in 1794, just in time to provide for the 15,000 troops amassing in Monongahela to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion.

When the Brownsville section of the National Road opened in 1817, its route through town followed Market Street, two blocks north of the bank. Between 1844 and 1852, more than 200,000 travelers travelled by rail to Cumberland, Md., continued overland to Brownsville, then transferred to steamers to travel the Monongahela to Ohio and west.

Brownsville catered to these travelers and the boatbuilders who transported them. The town was also a locus for manufacturers of iron and glass, products difficult to ship over the mountains.

The Monongahela National Bank survived the shift away from Front Street, but the real problem came with the town’s tactical error of denying the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad access to Fayette County. City fathers thought they were protecting the commerce along the turnpike, and for many years, National Road traffic held Brownsville in good stead. But after 1852, when Pittsburgh was joined to Philadelphia by rail, Brownsville became isolated from the commerce to the north. The fact that the Monongahela National Bank remained in its 1812, vernacular building for 61 years is a sign of the stagnant financial climate.

In 1873, a new bank was built at 320 Market Street — the National Road, today’s Route 40. This prominent Italianate brick building is one of the few of this era in Brownsville. It is an anomaly, responding more to the mature wealth of the area than to a shift in the economy. The design looks like the work of a local builder who assembled its parts from the day’s architectural pattern books: the components, from the window frames to the sash, could have been ordered through a catalog and
delivered by riverboat to Brownsville, the region's pre-eminent boatbuilding site. The building remains the tallest along this stretch of the National Road.

Twenty years later, Brownsville's commercial corridor was closer to the railroad tracks which had moved to the west side of the Monongahela River. This part of Brownsville was called "the neck" because it was a spit of land leading to the old covered bridge across the river. In 1900, the bank built a florid, two-story, storefront building with Corinthian and Ionic pilasters and a clock in the balustrade for good measure. What we see today at 39-41 Market Street, however, is a four-story row building with a cupola, and red and pink terra cotta trim.

In 1924, the need to aggrandize struck the bank again. The New York firm of Morgan, French & Co., which specialized in banks, designed a sophisticated gray limestone building protected by massive columns and topped with a graceful balustrade at 46 Market Street. Brownsville finally had its temple of finance, coincidentally the same year that Trowbridge and Livingston, with E. P. Mellon, designed Mellon Bank's grand banking space in Pittsburgh.

Though underutilized today, the four buildings graphically tell the story of the bank that grew with Brownsville from a river town to a rail town and finally to a town now looking forward to the completion of the Mon Valley Expressway.

L&A Treasures
By Lora Hershey
Publications Assistant

Surrounded by Union forces in summer 1863, the town of Vicksburg, Miss., managed to print a newspaper despite a severe shortage of paper — but it was reduced to printing on the back of wallpaper. Still, The Daily Citizen continued to brag of the Confederate Army's exploits up North with its accounts of the "gallant corps of Gen. Lee in Virginia" and their "brilliant victories."

Another article in that July 2 edition ridiculed General Grant's reported desire for a Fourth of July dinner in Vicksburg. "Ulysses must get into the city before he dines in it," baited the author. "The way to cook the rabbit is 'first catch the rabbit.'"

Writers. Their words often come back to haunt them.

The Fourth of July marked the end of independence for Vicksburg as it surrendered to Grant that day. According to Library of Congress records, Union troops discovered The Daily Citizen for July 2 still on press, its publisher having fled.

The soldiers completed the job, adding a mocking addendum (right). Their message was self-fulfilling, as the artifact is listed as an American Treasure of the Library of Congress. The paper, in fact, gained fame in its own day and was reprinted an estimated 30 times. One of the reprints was printed on the back of wallpaper that originated in Rochester, Pa., and now resides in the History Center's Library & Archives (top).

The Library & Archives collects materials that were produced or used locally. The L&A is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or visit http://digital.library.pitt.edu/hswp to search the L&A catalog.