



Press Release

People, Progress, Impact: business finance, entrepreneurial coaching, community revitalization

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jim Gonsman
Senior Commercial Loan Officer
The Progress Fund
(814) 207-1260
jgonsman@progressfund.org

Neill or Evelyn Andritz
Co-owners
The River's Edge Landscaping and Garden Center
(724) 845-9501
nandritz@comcast.net

Grand Opening of The River's Edge Landscaping and Garden Center

Leechburg, PA – Saturday, May 26, 2007 – Kayakers and canoeists are soon to have a great place to rent equipment along the scenic Kiski River. Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday – Sunday.

Evelyn and Neill Andritz grew up near the banks of the Kiski River, and saw it transformed from a tainted waterway to the state's River of the Year in 2000. A businesswoman and a chemist, respectively, they knew clean water could be a catalyst for growth. They set out to buy a landscaping store with seven riverfront acres. Then they added fishing supplies and canoe and kayak rentals to its offerings.

Banks were willing to finance the store's purchase. But talks ran aground when the couple sought enough capital to buy boats and get the business afloat. They found The Progress Fund's website, and with it a different philosophy of lending. "Every time we ran into a roadblock, we called and they were willing to work with us," says Evelyn.

The Progress Fund loaned \$130,000, and helped with marketing and networking. From there, everything flowed. Restaurants are drooling over the hungry, thirsty boaters. Trail builders want to tie into the new riverfront amenity. The chance to canoe or kayak the Kiski is creating excitement for miles around. "The freedom it offers to explore the entire river," says Neill, "makes it a unique opportunity to see nature."

The Progress Fund is a vigorous non-profit loan fund that creates jobs and improves communities by providing entrepreneurial coaching and capital to small businesses in the travel & tourism industry. The Progress Fund serves 39 counties in Pennsylvania, Appalachian Ohio and West Virginia. The Progress Fund was founded in 1997, and has loaned more than \$18 million to 207 enterprises, creating or preserving more than 1,573 jobs.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.