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Yough ‘Til You Drop!

Youghioghenny Canoe Outfitters expands offerings, thanks in part to The Progress Fund

West Newton, PA – March 2, 2009 – Youghioghenny Canoe Outfitters, long a leader of the area’s riverfront revitalization, will open this weekend with a new pavilion perfect for gatherings of up to 75 people, and is in the midst of an expansion of its boat rental offerings.

The 22-by-32-foot pavilion, with running water and electrical outlets, is set apart from the canoe rental area for groups that “just want a quiet place, by the river,” says Andrea Berarducci. It’s perfect for reunions, graduation parties, or getaways of any kind, for boaters or land lovers.

The pavilion opens for business just as Youghioghenny Canoe Outfitters gears up for another season, which starts with the March 7 stocking of the river. Coming later in the spring are trout fishing and smallmouth bass fishing contests.

Launched in 2000 by the Berarducci family, Youghioghenny Canoe Outfitters’ business grew so much that by the end of last season they knew they’d need a van, plus more canoes, kayaks and life preservers.

The Progress Fund operates the Trail Town Program, dedicated to retaining, expanding and recruiting businesses along the Great Allegheny Passage. The Passage, from Pittsburgh to Cumberland, Md., runs through the Westmoreland County town of West Newton, where Youghioghenny Canoe Outfitters is located.

The Trail Town Program made the Berarduccis aware of The Progress Fund’s tourism-friendly lending program. Youghioghenny Canoe Outfitters got a \$52,000 loan, with payment terms tailored to the seasonal nature of their business.

Youghioghenny Canoe Outfitters brings to the West Newton area visitors – and their wallets. “They’re here visiting family and they come here for a day of canoeing,” says Andrea. “They come here, and they want to know a good place to eat, or a nice place to stay over night.”

For directions, interviews or information on rentals, call (724) 872-7585. For further information on The Progress Fund, call (724) 216-9160, or visit www.progressfund.org.

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 and the entire state of West Virginia. The Progress Fund was founded in 1997, and has made 259 loans totaling more than \$23.8 million to 164 enterprises, creating or preserving more than 1,820 jobs. The Progress Fund is an Equal Opportunity Lender. Discrimination is prohibited by Federal Law. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington , DC 20250.