

WEIRD SCIENCE

Looking for something new, maybe even an adventure? Tucked beside the stadiums along the lovely Ohio sits your excitement—the Carnegie Science Center. Step inside and prepare yourself for an array of stimulating and exhilarating experiences.

A Not-So-Yellow Submarine

You're on the edge of the Ohio River, admiring the sparkling Pittsburgh skyline and learning a thing or two about science. The next thing you know, it's 1945, and you're 20,000 leagues under the sea, slowly and stealthily swimming through the ocean's depths with 79 other men in the USS Requin submarine. For the last three weeks, you've been living in a mechanical metal tube, longing for the comfort and space given to sardines. Check out tournaments and poker games have lost all entertainment. You sleep in the forward torpedo room with eighteen torpedoes, each carrying 700 pounds of explosives. You wonder if they will ever blast out into the sea, reducing enemy ships to smithereens. They won't. Your beloved Requin will never see battle, but it will see hundreds of thousands of Pittsburghers.

Let's Get Physical

You're on a quest—a SciQuest. The forces of nature and physical science are against you. The blustery weather has blown a squadron of paper airplanes astray; you can barely move your black foam wings in the wind tunnel; how will you ever be able to build an earthquake-proof Lincoln log cabin? You give up against the wind and begin to spin and spin the sparkly blue hurricane, making it whirl faster and faster until the blue overtakes you and you slam down your hands, halting the storm in its place. With the tempest at rest, you sit down at a diner for lunch. Just as your food arrives, the floor begins to shake; the light turns into a pendulum, flickering and swaying above you; the table starts to rattle, spilling your pretend Coke and French fries all over your lap. You dive under the table and wait it out, safe from the Earth's



wicked movements. You stumble out, tired and still hungry, and face the other elements that await you.

They Might Not Be Giants

Fee fi fo fum, you're a giant and here you come... right into peaceful, historical Western Pennsylvania. Trains are the size of your fingers, your hands cover whole neighborhoods, rivers are barely trickles of water to your oversized eyes. Peer into minuscule houses, spy on families enjoying their quaint dinners. Step gently as you watch children spin round and round on the Rub-A-Dub Tubs in Luna Park. A Ferris wheel towers over the tiny people, but fits in the palm of your hand.



You watch the Pirates play ball from a bird's eye view, finding it tempting to pluck their pinhead-sized baseball from the game. Horses smaller than baby mice clop down gravel roads, pulling carriages filled with people and buggies loaded with goods. The stacks of the coal mines blow thin puffs of smoke into the air. Their fires glow like lightning bugs, fueled by pebble-sized coal. You marvel at the intimate world, but your colossal size makes you feel precarious, so you step back into reality.

Can't Wait For You to Operate

Zap! You're in the operating room and the patient's simulated life is in your hands. Make the incision and carefully maneuver through his lungs with endoscopic instruments to repair the damage. Watch the arteries—a single, tiny wrong move can snip one open. Sew up his chest and you're done. Success. No time to celebrate; on



This page, clockwise from top:

1) University of Pittsburgh students Emily Smith (left) and Jon Varian (right) pose on a photofluorescent background at the SciQuest exhibit; 2) A view of the museum from the USS Requin; 3) At the Exploration Station, visitors build structures with magnetic rods and balls. *Opposite:* Emily and Jon learn about light at the SciQuest exhibit.

to save more lives. Cautiously remove the patient's injured parts, but make sure you don't touch anything else because he's electrified. Handle his broken heart with care, set the butterflies in his stomach free, take out the strained rubber band that connects his ankle bone to his knee bone. So far, so good, but can your hand remain steady for the other nine removals?



Under the Sea

Take a vacation. Travel to the coast and dive into the ocean for a nautical adventure. Move around a coral reef that houses over 400 animal and plant species. See anemones slide across its bottom, looking for prey; fan worms swaying in the water, soaking in nutrients; and sea urchins pointing in every direction, ready to defend. Play with clownfish that hide among the anemone's tentacles. Watch blue tangs prepare to spar with each other, while a colorful Mandarin dragonet goby blends into the rocks to stay out of trouble. A seahorse swims up to you and several jellyfish bob past. The natural beauty of the sea soothes you. You move away from the reef and into a quiet lagoon. The water is calm, shallow, and warm because of the sunlight. You pause, wanting to stay longer, but you emerge from the water to explore somewhere else.

Explore Something More

You're a scientist at the Exploration Station. Study the efficiency of insulation and light bulbs to make our world a greener place. Build rockets and launch them into the air to study their physics. Play the laser harp and PVC pipe organ to create scientific music. Engineer a dam in the river to control its flow. If it doesn't work, try making a lock, channel or flood plain. Connect wires to light bulbs, screws, and switches to discover how electricity works. Use giant magnets to determine magnetic forces. Observe Madagascar hissing cockroaches skittering around each other. Watch giant black African millipedes wiggling in their tank next to the 100-degree climate of a Uromastix lizard. The eggs you use to study embryology lie in the corner of the lizard's tank, protected by

grass. Your experiments are going according to your plans and soon you will discover everything you want to know.

Let Me See Your Body

Welcome to your body. Examine your entire skeletal frame. Note each tiny bone in your feet, the ridges around your eye sockets, the length of your femur. See each of your pieces lying in separate boxes and then constructed as a whole, kicking a soccer ball. Your skin is peeled off and laid out like an animal pelt. Without your body's protective covering, all your muscles are revealed, their veins and lines clearly defined. Light pink and rough-looking, they appear nothing like your textbook pictures. A muscular skeleton dives for a volleyball. Your nervous system lies on a table, helpless without the body it commands. Your brain is cut in half, exposing the inner workings of your mind. Your organs are in cases with their veins and arteries glowing red, showing how your blood flows. You can see what you looked like two, three, four, five weeks after conception. Look at all the different parts of yourself in a way that will completely change what you think of the human body.

You step into the parking lot and blink in the bright sunlight. Hours have passed and your boredom has long subsided. Your adventure is over, but you know you'll be back, sure that your next trip through the fascinating levels of the Science Center will bring entirely different encounters. ★

Carnegie Science Center: One Allegheny Ave.; general adult admission \$14, open Su-F 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sa 10 a.m.-7 p.m. ☎ (412) 237-3400, www.carnegiesciencecenter.org

CRAIGSLIST.ORG

Lydia Pudzianowski delves into the seedy underbelly of Craigslist, Pittsburgh-style.

I'm very familiar with Craigslist. Not because I search for apartments often or need a date, but because I've never seen anything so entertaining that isn't made up. I'm a people-watcher, and in the age of the internet, this is just another way of doing it. Added bonus: total anonymity. I never post anything. I just browse. This is a quick how-to guide: I've waded through the crap to bring you guaranteed Craigslist entertainment, Pittsburgh-style. You can thank me later.

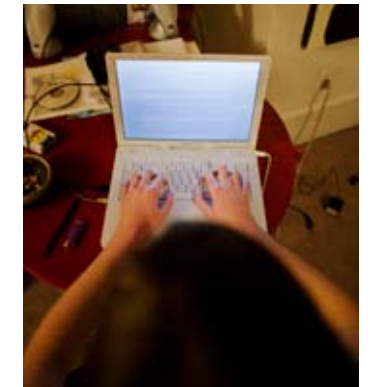
First things first: the website is divided into categories and sub-categories. For example, under "discussion forums" (the website's creator is evidently not fond of capitalization), one can peruse such subjects as "haiku," "linux," and "over 50." My favorite section, though, is part of "personals" and is entitled "missed connections." This is for deluded people who not only believe in love at first sight, but in love at no sight. It's a lot of "you were the blonde girl in the green coat on the 500 yesterday. Who are you?" Incidentally, I've noticed that of all the buses, everyone who rides the 500 is apparently trying to get some. Either that or they're just very observant, because a good percentage of missed connections take place on that bus. I avoid it.

Come along with me to a section of Craigslist I've never visited. We're going to the "gigs" section, located at the bottom of the page and easily overlooked. Let's see... "computer," "talent," eh. Is "adult" too obvious? Too easy? Let's find out.

Perhaps we are in a bit over our heads here. "BIZARREMED. COM LOOKING FOR ACTRESS." Alright, I need some cash, let's see. "We are seeking female models for bizarre emergency room scenes." Next. "Ladies—Do you have a long coat?" Why yes, yes I do. "I'm looking for women that have a long coat that they can wear out and about in the city with nothing on underneath it. Every so often, I'll ask you to flash me."

As your guide, I'd like to apologize. It seems I was a little overzealous. After all, you're just starting out. Let's try something else. Might I suggest the tried-and-true "free" section, under "for sale"? A little oxymoronic, but my favorite category, second only to "missed connections." This week, there are lots of TVs up for grabs, some moving boxes, "a craption of wood." Here we go: "Hot Air Pop Corn Popper (missing top)." Luckily, I have a Popcorn Pumper top, type PP01, lying around. "FREE SIMPSONS MOVIE DVD. hi, i know this seems a little odd, but the first person who can sing the spider pig theme to me will get it. we got two copies for christmas and figure i could make someone work a little for it." Sadism at its best. "Booths. 10 booths of various sizes. Good condition. FREE."

See what I mean? Who needs to pay for entertainment, or booths, when both are right at your fingertips for free? Now go forth, young grasshopper, and use this knowledge wisely.—LYDIA PUDZIANOWSKI



SOME GOOD ADVICE



SIDEWALKS: Walk slowly. People like it. Everyone is in too much of a hurry, so slow them down by moseying along on the sidewalk. It helps if you walk three or four people across, too. Then no one can pass you. When you're saying goodbye, make sure you stop in the middle of the walk and hug for at least fifteen seconds so you create a road block. If you're lucky, your farewell will result in a people jam, which, aside from strawberry, is everyone's favorite kind of jam.—JESSICA DAILEY