

A CHORAL COUNTDOWN



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SUNDAY, JULY 1, 2012

Roaring to the finish

Brad Keselowski wins the Quaker State 400 at the Kentucky Speedway, **C1**



Drivers line up to start the Quaker State 400 at Kentucky Speedway on Saturday. THE ENQUIRER/PATRICK REDDY

Finding the next billion-dollar business

ENQUIRER EXCLUSIVE: Area's big companies hope to spark high-tech growth here

By Laura Baverman
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DOWNTOWN — Efforts of the region's top business leaders have led to \$384 million in new residences and historic restorations, restaurants and retail, offices and parks to revitalize Cincinnati's urban core.

Now, the CEOs are putting tens of millions of dollars, hours of manpower and

top Procter & Gamble leadership into a major initiative to help the region compete internationally for new high-tech jobs and business.

It's called Cintrifuse, envisioned as the most ambitious corporate effort yet to reignite the local economy around innovation. Succeed and the region could see its next set of billion-dollar businesses with high-paying jobs. Fail and the Next Big Thing surely will sprout up

elsewhere.

Leaders outlined the effort exclusively to The Enquirer. It includes:

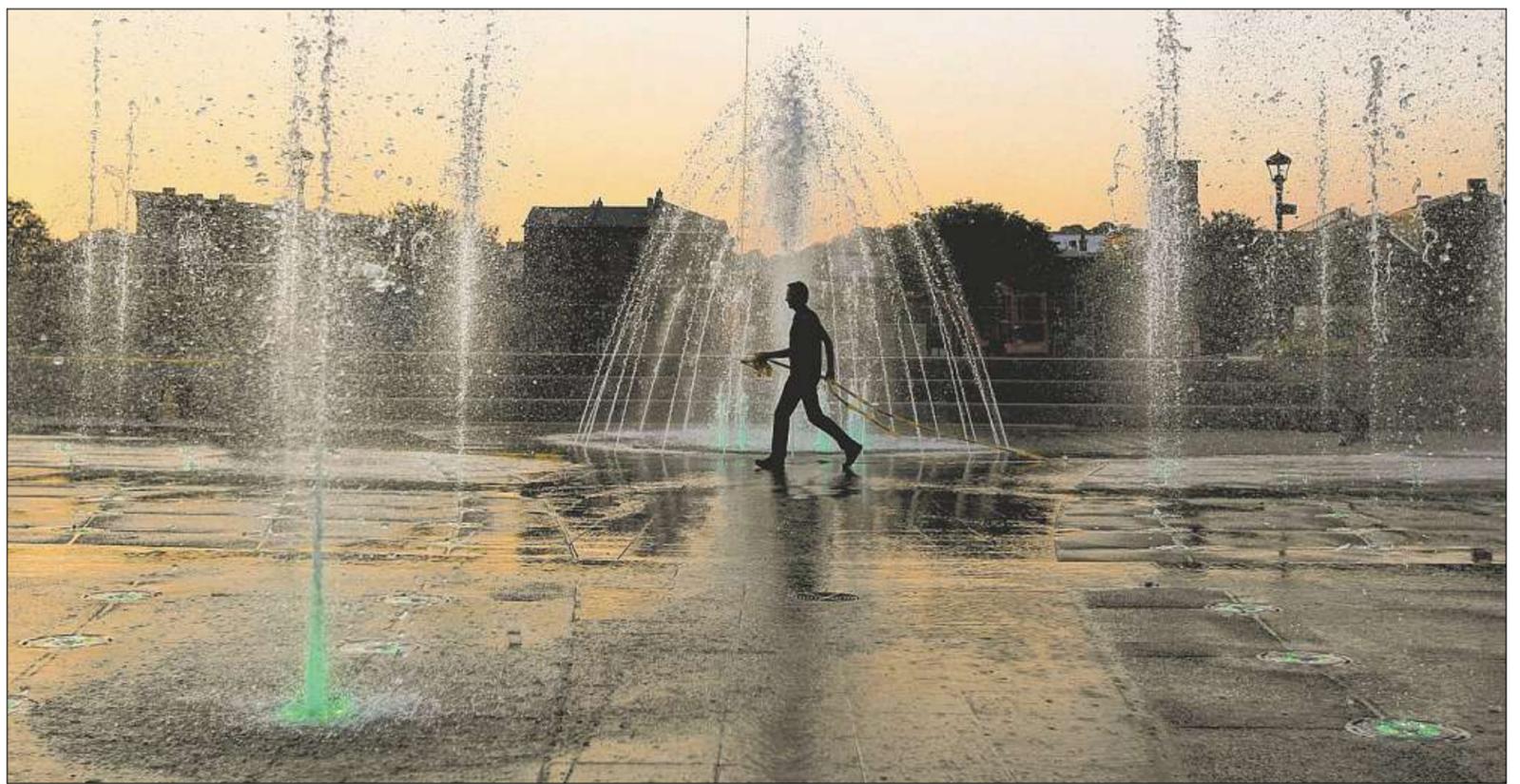
» Venture capital of at least \$55 million invested by the region's largest institutions to support fast-growing startups and lure new venture investors to town.

» The leadership of P&G's top global innovation officer, on loan for two years

See **CINTRIFUSE**, Page A8



Procter & Gamble Vice President of Global Business Development Jeff Weedman will lead Cintrifuse's efforts. PROVIDED



Scott Palamar of H2O Arts, a California business, walks through Washington Park's interactive water feature, part of \$48 million in improvements there. THE ENQUIRER/CARA OWSLEY

Extreme Makeover: Park edition

A \$48 MILLION RECONSTRUCTION OF WASHINGTON PARK has transformed it from frightful to friendly. Here are details of the plan to make sure that it succeeds.

By Laura Baverman
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OVER-THE-RHINE — Short decorative iron fences have replaced the ugly concrete walls that just two years ago surrounded old and battered Washington Park.

With the view now unobstructed, people see grassy lawns and blossoming beds, carefully crafted play structures and streams of clear blue water shooting

in the air. Stages suggest lively entertainment. Simple strands of lighting promise romantic evening strolls. And 124 wooden benches ensure seating for all.

In six days, Washington Park becomes Over-the-Rhine's latest symbol of transformation, revealing \$48 million worth of improvements to create a place that complements a new school, new residents, new businesses and, soon, a new Music Hall.

A lot is being asked of the park. By promoters who hope it creates constant

activity in another quadrant of Over-the-Rhine. By developers who plan to open restaurants, retail stores and more residences around it. By arts patrons who'd like to linger safely before and after concerts and to enjoy free entertainment on the park's lawns and stages. And by residents of the surrounding neighborhood, which has housed two generations of the city's poorest people. They just want to feel welcome as one of the region's oldest communities evolves.

See **PARK**, Page A10

GRAND OPENING FRIDAY

Mayor Mark Mallory and Parks Director Willie Carden will cut a ribbon at 10 a.m. They'll be joined by summer campers from Emanuel Community Center and Peaslee Neighborhood Center, circus performers from Emanuel's My Nose Turns Red and other musical entertainment. Over-the-Rhine businesses Street Pops and Taste of Belgium will give out popsicles, waffles and iced tea. **Parking** will be free in Washington Park Garage 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. **More information** can be found at www.washingtonpark.org.

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