



changes lives.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Rosemary Martinelli
412-622-6433
rmartine@wqed.org

George Hazimanolis
412-622-1366
ghaziman@wqed.org

A HOT DOG PROGRAM – AN ALL-AMERICAN CULINARY CRUISE THROUGH HOT DOG HISTORY

PITTSBURGH – How about a hot dog for lunch? *A Hot Dog Program* is an all-American celebration of those fabulous and phenomenally popular little sausages in their soft little buns. Whether you like your dog with mustard and sauerkraut, chili and cheese, or with the “works,” this program is sure to please.

From a Fourth of July hot dog-eating contest at Coney Island to a gourmet reindeer-dog vendor at the start of the Iditarod sled dog race, *A Hot Dog Program*, produced by WQED Pittsburgh, visits some of the country’s coolest hot dog places.

During the one-hour documentary, we find out what makes a Chicago-style dog, go inside a giant hot-dog-shaped building, stop at some late-night stands and see how hot dogs are made.

A Hot Dog Program travels across the country to visit outstanding hot dog shops like Pink’s in Hollywood – where a spot on the “wall of fame” is proof that you’ve made it,

but it's the hot dogs that have made Pink's an institution since 1939. We go from Frank's Hot Dogs (where you can get a Slaw Dog) in Columbia, South Carolina, to the Original Hot Dog Shop in Pittsburgh to Slots-A-Fun on the Strip in Las Vegas, where the wieners are as amazing as the city itself.

A Hot Dog Program looks at secret sauces, countless condiments and talks to some hot dog connoisseurs along the way. On Wednesday evenings at Law Dogs in Los Angeles, Jesus Perez offers free legal advice to customers while they sample the stand's specialties – appropriately titles “the Judge” and “the Plaintiff.” In Chicago, which may be the hot dog capital, we meet Loyola University psychology professors Rich Bowen and Dick Fay, authors of the rare out-of-print guide titled “Hot Dog Chicago.” These two sausage specialists take us on a tour of their favorite Windy City hot dog spots and philosophize about Chicago dogs.

In Fairfield, Connecticut, Gary Zemola, a.k.a. “The Super Duper Weenie Man,” a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, sells “killer dogs” out of a GMC Stepvan just off Interstate 95. Customers cheer for his homemade relishes and specialty dogs – called things like the “New Yorker” and the “New Englander.” Zemola, who has a passion for his product, also has a pet peeve: “People will order the most loaded dogs you can get and an order of fries. Then I hear ‘diet soda’ ad the hair on my neck goes up. Diet doesn't exist here,” says Zemola. “You're here to splurge, you're here to relax, enjoy!” Enough said.

A Hot Dog Program is a fun look at some hot dog history, a guide to some of the finest hot dog houses in the country, and an unabashedly friendly look at these finely ground sausages and their fans.

“This program is an explosion of people talking about food that seems to be a beloved part of the American diet. It's perfect summertime TV,” said award-winning producer Rick Sebak of WQED Pittsburgh. “I've always loved hot dogs myself, and there are obviously a lot of people out there who agree with me. I ate at least one dog at all the places we visited across the country, and it's impossible to say which was best. What we've tried to do with this program is celebrate family-owned places, incredible local loyalties and a diversity of condiments. And I end up loving hot dogs more than ever.”

A Hot Dog Program is a production of WQED Pittsburgh. Funding for this program was made possible by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Public Broadcasting Service and public television viewers. Producer/Writer/Narrator is Rick Sebak; Associate Producer is Nancy Coates Greenwood; Editor is Dickran Manoogian' Executive Producer is Deborah Acklin.

WQED Pittsburgh, honored with the 2007 and 2006 Mid-Atlantic Emmy® Award for Station Excellence, was founded in 1954 as the nation's first community-supported broadcaster. WQED creates, produces and distributes quality programs, products and services to engage, inform, educate and entertain the public within its community and around the world. WQED Pittsburgh is one of the first broadcasters in the country to be

fully high-definition (HD) in its studio and field production capabilities. It is the parent company of WQED-TV (PBS); WQED: The Neighborhood Channel; WQED: The Create Channel; WQEX-TV (A ShopNBC affiliate); Classical WQED-FM 89.3/Pittsburgh; WQEJ-FM 89.7/Johnstown; local and national television and radio productions; WQED Interactive (www.wqed.org); and The WQED Education Department.