

Operation Our Town Reporter

a monthly newsletter by our volunteers to our volunteers about our fight against drugs and crime in Central PA

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November 2010

PUSH OUT THE PUSHER 814-693-3020



OperationOurTown.org

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Ward Trucking
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Committed Businesses:

American Eagle Paper Mills
Grainger Industrial Supply
Norfolk-Southern Foundation
Small Tube Products

Operation Our Town Impacting Northern Blair County

By Jim Kilmartin, Chair

Members of the Tyrone community gathered with Michael Fiore and several OOT board members in late spring to discuss the potential of OOT expanding into the Northern Blair County area. From this meeting, a committee was formed to start a Tyrone Roundtable which has now expanded to include Bellwood to become the Northern Blair County Roundtable.

The Northern Blair RT is meeting monthly at the Bull Pen Restaurant for breakfast. The November meeting will focus on doing a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for Northern Blair. Each roundtable member was asked to provide a SWOT analysis from their area of professional expertise. Following the SWOT Analysis, the roundtable will develop objectives and set some goals to impact Northern Blair County.

Recent Meetings:

- Local law enforcements agencies (Tyrone Borough, State Police and AG's Office) gave reports and outlook for northern Blair County.
- Kathy Muller gave a presentation regarding Bridges Out of Poverty.

The next meeting of the Northern Blair County Roundtable will take place on **December 8th, 2010 at 7:00 am** at the Bull Pen Restaurant in Tyrone. For more information or if you are interested in attending, please e-mail me at jim@joshuahousetyrone.org.

New "Taking Back Our Neighborhoods" Episodes To Air

The fourth episode of Operation Our Town's cable access show, "Taking Back Our Neighborhoods" has been filmed and is scheduled to air in December and January. This episode focuses on treatment options available in Blair County and features guests Judy Rosser from the Blair County Drug & Alcohol Program, Inc.; Nate Germany from the Crossroads Recovery Clubhouse and Terriann Grove from Contact Altoona. We would also like to welcome the new moderator for "Taking Back Our Neighborhoods", Dean McKnight. Be sure to check your local listings to catch the new episodes!

Mission

Facilitating partnerships between community and business to fight drug use and crime through proven law enforcement, treatment, and prevention techniques.

Our Partners & Friends

[Blair Countians for Drug Free Communities](#)

[Crime Solvers of Blair County](#)

[Pennsylvania Gang Investigators Association](#)

[United Way of Blair County](#)

"No one made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little."

-Edmund Burke

[CLICK HERE to register as an Operation Our Town Volunteer](#)



To serve on an Operation Our Town Roundtable, to become a Committed Business or to make a tax-deductible donation, contact Shawna Hoover by [email](#) or call 814-296-8730.

Upcoming Operation Our Town & Partner Meetings and Events

Wed. HOPE Support Group Meeting (weekly meeting)	7:00pm Crossroads in Altoona
11/16 K12 Education RT	11:00am Bellwood District Office
11/16 OOT Steering Committee	6:00pm OOT Office
11/17 Crime Solvers Meeting	9:00am PSP Hollidaysburg
11/17 Marketing RT	4:00pm OOT Office
11/18 CJAB Meeting	11:45am Blair County Courthouse
11/19 Health & Welfare Council	8:00am The Arc of Blair County
12/8 Northern Blair County RT	7:00am Bull Pen Restaurant
12/9 Gang Roundtable	5:00pm OOT Office
12/13 Booker T. Washington Meeting	4:00pm Community Action Agency
12/15 Crime Solvers Meeting	TBA TBA
12/16 CJAB Meeting	11:45am Blair County Courthouse
12/16 Faith-based RT	2:00pm Wehwood Methodist Church

***OOT Meetings:** For more information about Operation Our Town meetings, contact Shawna Hoover at oot@lsfiore.com or call 296-8730.

Drug Bust Results in 45 Arrests

On October 19th, forty-five suspected drug dealers were arrested in a street-level sweep that encompassed Blair and Bedford counties. These arrests, funded by Operation Our Town, were the culmination of an eight month investigation by the Attorney General's office and the Blair County Drug Task force. While some suspects were arrested for street drugs, such as marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, most of the arrests centered around the illegal distribution of prescription pills, such as Suboxone, Oxycontin, Xanax, Hydrocodone, Opana, Vicodin, Lorcet and Roxycodone. "The prescription drug problem is the biggest trend we've got right now," said Randy Feathers of the Attorney General's office. Tom Corbett, the governor-elect and Pennsylvania Attorney General, thanked Blair County District Attorney Richard Consiglio's office, the Altoona Police, Hollidaysburg Borough Police Department, Blair Township Police Department, the other police departments that participate in the Blair County Drug Task Force and the Pennsylvania State Police, for their assistance with the investigation. For ways you can help fight the drug problem and more information on these arrests, please visit <http://www.operationourtown.org>

Drug Prevention Starts At Home

A recent study from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America indicates that as many as one in five teenagers is abusing prescription drugs, and trends in Blair County indicate that this is a growing problem. Some reasons teens give for abusing prescription drugs include using stimulants to focus in school and study or using pain relievers or tranquilizers like OxyContin or Xanax to cope with stress and academic pressures.

One important thing to note is that most teens abusing prescription drugs say that they get them out of their friends and families' medicine cabinets. An important step you as a parent can do to prevent your child from abusing prescription drugs is to safeguard your own medicines. Keep them in a secure place and count the number of pills you have.

Other important steps you can take to prevent prescription drug abuse is to communicate the risks with your child often and early. Studies show that children who learn a lot about the risk of drug abuse are 50% less likely to experiment with prescription or illicit drugs. It's also important to educate yourself about the dangers and signs of prescription drug abuse so you can communicate effectively and monitor your child's behavior.

For more information and resources about prescription drug abuse, visit the Partnership for a Drug-Free America at www.drugfree.org.

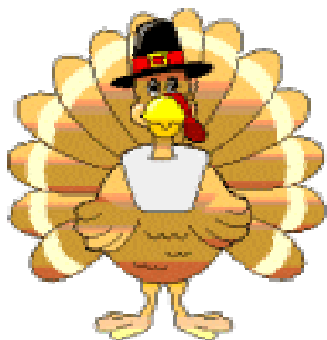
Upcoming Events

Due to construction, **United Way's Winter Wonderland** has been **postponed** until further notice.

Watch for more information after the holidays!

Nov. 25th

Happy Thanksgiving!



The R.O.C.K.
(Reaching Out to
Community Kids)
Benefit Dinner

Nov. 16th 6:00 PM
Heritage Discovery
Center-Downtown Altoona

Tickets \$25

For tickets or more info, call
943-2072

Save The Date!

The Bellwood-Antis Library
Family Health & Safety Fair
will be held on March 5, 2011
from 10am-1pm. Look for
more info in the new year!

Operation Our Town
**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!**
Call 296-8730

Welcome to our new Americorps Worker!

by Kathy Salyards

My time as an Americorps VISTA has come to an end. It hardly seems possible that a year has gone by so quickly. My last day of service will be November 19. Although I'm moving on, I will miss working with all of the volunteers who have given so freely of their time during my term. Working with Shawna has also been a wonderful growing time for me.

I would like to take this time to thank everyone for making me feel so welcome this past year. Many wonderful people have crossed my path and have made a lasting impression on my life.

My position has been filled by Courtney Remacle who started her term on October 4th. She is with the Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps division of Americorps. Courtney will continue to do the monthly newsletter and organize all the outreach events. She can be reached via e-mail at: oot2@lsfiore.com or by phone at 296-8730.

Thank you, again, for this opportunity to work with all of you!
Kathy Salyards

Red Ribbon Week A Huge Success!

October 31st marked the end of the 25th annual Red Ribbon Week. Every year from October 23rd to October 31st, Red Ribbon week is celebrated in schools and communities across the country. U.S. Congressman Duncan Hunter founded Red Ribbon Week after DEA agent Enrique Camarena was kidnapped and killed by drug traffickers. After his death, schools and Elks clubs across the country began wearing red ribbons to commemorate his death and as a pledge to live a drug-free lifestyle.

Blair County held it's very own Red Ribbon Week celebration that was kicked off by the Blair County commissioners signing a proclamation to recognize Red Ribbon Week in Blair County. School districts all over Blair County received Red Ribbons for their students, donated by the Tyrone Elks Club and Operation Our Town. Local businesses held promotions for students wearing their red ribbons throughout the week. Red Ribbon Week in Blair County ended with the Hollidaysburg Halloween parade on October 30th, where the Tyrone Elks featured their Drug Prevention Trailer and an Operation Our Town volunteer made an appearance as McGruff. Operation Our Town would like to thank everyone who participated in Red Ribbon Week to make it such a success!

Pictured: A number of the Tigers Against Alcohol & other Drugs (TADD) students attended the commissioner's signing of the Red Ribbon Week proclamation.

