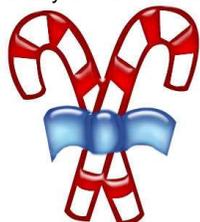


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Operation Our Town Reporter

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

Volume 2, Issue 12

December 2010

PUSH OUT THE PUSHER 814-693-3020



OperationOurTown.org

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Sheetz, Inc.
United Way of Blair County
Ward Trucking
Wolf Furniture

Committed Businesses:

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

Steering Committee Notes from November 16th

Law Enforcement Roundtable: Mitch Cooper reported that there were approximately 30 attendees at their roundtable meeting in October. He also reported that there was a drug raid on Oct. 19th that resulted in 40 arrests. They are also seeking nominations for law enforcement recognition awards for the Chamber breakfast in Feb.

Gang Roundtable: Bill Kotz & Brad Yingling distributed a proposal for a 3 day Gang, Drug & Crime Symposium to be held in August 2011 in Blair County.

K-12 Education Roundtable: Brian Toth reported that one of the roundtable's main focuses for this year was drop-out prevention. They are also planning on piloting the Make My Schools Safe program, where students can send anonymous tips to school officials through e-mail and text messaging.

Marketing Roundtable: JR DiAndrea reported that they have taped 4 OOT Cable Access shows and are planning on taping 4 more in 2011. He also reported that they are planning to create a new OOT billboard message for 2011.

Human Services Roundtable: Judy Rosser reported that there is a new treatment for opiate dependency called Vivitrol, which is a once-a-month injection. She also reported that there has been a drug test created for K2, and that she has created an advisory committee for the Blair County Drug & Alcohol program.

Pharmacy Roundtable: Judy Rosser reported that several individuals went and testified in front of the judicial committee regarding an electronic monitoring program for prescription drugs, and they expect legislation to be introduced in early 2011.

Faith-Based Roundtable: Pastor Evie Madison reported that they are working on registering faith-based community programs with the Blair County Child & Family Services directory as well as the PA 211 phone program.

Volunteer Roundtable: Betsy Hurst reported that toys will be available for law enforcement to provide children whose families have been involved with drug raids with a gift at the time of the arrest.

Judicial Roundtable/CJAB: Judge Jolene Kopriva reported that the 2011 goals for the roundtable included the development of a Crisis Intervention Team for Blair County, mapping the intersections between the criminal justice & mental health systems in Blair County, and continuing to address reentry issues such as housing & employment.

Retail Roundtable: JoAnn Nardelli reported that OOT materials were distributed at the Hollidaysburg Community Partnership meeting as well as the WINGS (Women in Networking Groups) meetings in the fall. She also reported that she was planning on having a special meeting with retailers in January to address issues with K2 and other legal synthetic drugs being sold in the Blair County area.

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

“The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.”

-Elie Wiesel

[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
12/16 CJAB Meeting	11:45 am	Blair County Courthouse
12/16 Faith-Based Roundtable	2:00 pm	Wehnwood Methodist Church
1/03 Booker T. Washington Meeting	4:00 pm	Community Action Agency
1/12 Northern Blair County Roundtable	7:00 am	Bull Pen Restaurant
1/13 Housing Roundtable Meeting	1:00 pm	Family Resource Ctr. Comm. Room
1/17 OOT Steering Committee Meeting	6:00 pm	OOT Office
1/19 Crime Solvers Meeting	8:00 am	TBA
1/19 Marketing Roundtable Meeting	4:00 pm	OOT Office
1/20 Pharmacy Roundtable	7:15 am	OOT Office
1/20 CJAB Meeting	11:45 am	Blair County Courthouse

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

Update from the K-12 Education Roundtable

By Dr. G. Brain Toth, Chair

The K-12 education Roundtable has met twice since the start of the school year on September 15th and November 16th. School Districts have had a much broader opportunity to share efforts to not only keep drugs out of our schools but also keep our students safe. The more opportunities that we have to share best practices the more opportunities we have to impact student lives in a positive manner.

During the meeting on November 16th, the roundtable had a presentation from the developers of Make My School Safe.com. Make My School Safe is a web based 1st alert system that allows students to communicate with school officials (Guidance / Administration) through the use of any computer (or cell phone) with an internet connection to alert these individuals to dangerous behaviors: bullying, drug use or sales, abuse, potential school violence (school shootings), etc... Safety is the number one priority that as a school district we have to provide to students so they can focus on what teachers are teaching and presenting. If students do not feel safe, you lose them. Kids are more open to express their feelings behind a computer in an environment where they feel safe from ridicule and persecution from their peers. We would be giving students an additional tool that says we care and we are serious about your safety and well-being. We would be giving our school district a form of protection also, saying to the public that we provide our students with many different options when it comes to safety and reporting violence and potential violence. As a District we give our students all the tools available, and this tool meets the needs of the 21st century student.

We need to continue to have support from our parents and communities to assist in the efforts to communicate to our youth that drugs and alcohol are not the answer. In order to attack the drug and alcohol issues we have today, we need to keep any and all resources in our quiver of arrows to stop the problem and Make My School Safe is another arrow.

Remember:

Refuse drugs... Explain why not to use drugs... Avoid situations with drugs... Leave situations with drugs...

Upcoming Events

Tune In!



To Operation Our Town's Cable Access show, "Treatment", running Fridays at 6pm and Saturdays at 11am, now until January!

Happy Holidays



From Operation Our Town!

Feb. 10th



Operation Our Town
Year In Review

At Blair County's Chamber of
Commerce Breakfast Club

The Casino at Lakemont Park
8:00 am

Feb. 26th

Community Classic Dinner &
Auction

Bavarian Hall
6:30 pm
Special Guest: Rocky Bleier!

Sponsored by the Booker T.
Washington Community
Revitalization Project

Call 814-949-2231 for tickets

New Deadly Drug Mix On The Rise

Officials as far apart as New York and Dallas are warning police, judges, and parents to be aware of a new drug mix known as "cheese". Cheese is a mix of heroin and crushed Tylenol PM and is meant to be snorted, which removes a lot of fear from people who would typically not use heroin because it's not meant to be injected.

Police say that dealers are stamping the packets of cheese with kid-friendly designs such as Mickey Mouse, Looney Tunes, and the Lion King. It sells for as little as \$2 a hit and users will have to snort it up to 15 times a day to keep the high.

Cheese has been responsible for more than 20 deaths across the country thus far, and officials say they expect to see a lot more as the drug gains popularity and becomes available in more places. In some cases, death has been caused by an overdose in acetaminophen from the Tylenol PM rather than heroin, because users don't know what amounts of each drug they are ingesting.

Pictured: "Cheese", a deadly drug combination of heroin and crushed Tylenol PM, has been responsible for at least 20 deaths so far.



PA Youth Survey Data Now Available

The Pennsylvania Youth Survey data for 2009 is now available online. The PA Youth Survey (PAYS) is conducted bi-annually in schools across the state to measure patterns of use and abuse of illicit substances in students from 6th through 12th grade. It also assesses risk factors related to these behaviors, such as school bullying and violence, and the protective factors that help to guard against them.

Some key findings of the 2009 survey are:

-Very few students reported using illicit drugs, other than marijuana or inhalants, in the last 30 days.

-Relatively few students reported the non-medical use of prescription drugs in the past 30 days (5% for pain relievers, 2.8% for stimulants, 1.9% for tranquilizers)

-49.3% of PA students report drinking alcohol on one or more occasions
-Nearly one out of ten students reported being drunk or high at school in the past year.

-18.1% of students reported being physically bullied in the past year; and 51.4% of students reported being verbally bullied.

For more information and the complete results of the survey, please visit:
http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pennsylvania_youth_survey/5396