



# Operation Our Town Reporter

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

Volume 3, Issue 7

July 2011

**PUSH OUT THE PUSHER 814-693-3020**



[OperationOurTown.org](http://OperationOurTown.org)

**Board Members:**

Michael A. Fiore      Joe Sheetz  
Phil Devorris      Ron McConnell

**Administration:**

Shawna Hoover, Exec. Coordinator  
Courtney Remacle, AmeriCorps

**Steering Committee:**

Dr. Lori J. Bechtel-Wherry  
Robin Beck  
Jackie Bernard, Esq.  
Richard Consiglio, Esq.  
JR DiAndrea  
William Earnest, R.Ph.  
Randy Feathers  
Zane Gates, M.D.  
Donna Gority  
Betsy Hurst  
Cheryl Johns  
Honorable Jolene Kopriva  
Reverend Evelyn Madison  
Jo Ann Nardelli  
Dr. Todd Negola  
Judy Rosser  
Dr. G. Brian Toth

**Founding Members:**

Altoona Regional Health System  
Blair Candy Company  
Blair Companies  
D.C. Goodman & Sons, Inc.  
Delta Health Technologies  
Fiore Buick/Toyota  
Grappone Law Offices  
Harry Sickler & Associates  
The Hite Company  
Holiday Inn Express  
Lawruk Realty  
Lee Industries, Inc.  
Leonard S. Fiore, Inc.  
M&T Bank  
McLanahan Corporation  
New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co.  
New Pig  
NPC, Inc.  
Reliance Bank  
Sheetz, Inc.  
United Way of Blair County  
Ward Trucking  
Wolf Furniture

**Committed Businesses:**

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

## News from the Gang Roundtable

By Todd Negola, Chair

On May 14, 2011 over 100 members of the Blair County community collected together through the combined efforts of the Operation Our Town Gang Roundtable, the Pennsylvania Gang Investigator's Association and concerned citizens in order to support the Crime Clean-Up Day. This effort was aimed at supporting law enforcement efforts to eliminate crime from our community, specifically gang crime and graffiti.

An informal meeting and training was held at the PSU Downtown Devorris Conference Center with many respected members of the community including law enforcement, community leaders and concerned citizens. The Mayor, Altoona Police Department, the Blair County Sheriff's Office, leaders from community organizations and committed citizens of our community met, shared ideas and began efforts towards a Gang Prevention Plan.

We were thrilled to have the support of many community and business partners including Home Depot, who supplied materials used in our clean-up; Altoona Police Department, who provided increased law enforcement presence in the areas that we cleaned up; Altoona Fire Department, AMED, Central Blair Recreation & Park Commission, Forever Broadcasting, LeBistro Restaurant, Penn State Downtown Conference Center, and Pepsi Bottling Group.

After the training we departed for various parks, to take back our neighborhoods. In total, 8 parks were identified and groups tackled problems including sticker removal, graffiti clean-up and refreshing paint jobs and even spreading some mulch! Each site was left with a Push Out the Pusher yard sign to let criminals know that we won't stand for their destruction.

Messages for the day included the 4 "R's" of graffiti – so that citizens will know what to do with graffiti, what it means, how to deal with it and what graffiti indicates. We discussed Reading (the graffiti and signs of social problems), Recording (taking pictures), Reporting (providing the information to the appropriate authorities) and Removing (properly removing and cleaning up graffiti) to let those involved know that we will not be intimidated by this form of harassment. Lastly, we talked about the 5th "R" which stands for Remembering that graffiti is a crime and tells us about social problems that we need to address before larger problems develop. Also, citizens learned that criminals and gang members hope that we will remain silent and scared – and that doing nothing will only let them win. We are showing gangs and criminals that this is "our town" and we are "taking back our neighborhoods!"

Afterwards, all participants were given an Operation Our Town T-shirt and were treated to lunch at LeBistro Restaurant, courtesy of the Focht family, where we all ate, laughed and shared stories about the event and made future plans to show our pride in our town, our community, our home. We are very appreciative of so many members of our community, our business partners and most especially, Operation Our Town and the Pennsylvania Gang Investigator's Association for sponsoring this event. Hope to see you next time!

## 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](#)

## Upcoming Operation Our Town & Partner Meetings and Events

Wed.	HOPE Support Group Meeting (weekly meeting)	7:00pm	Crossroads in Altoona
7/18	Steering Committee Meeting	6:00pm	OOT Office
7/20	Crime Solvers Meeting	8:00am	WTAJ
7/21	Pharmacy RT	7:15am	OOT Office
7/21	CJAB	11:45am	Blair County Courthouse
8/2	Duncansville National Night Out Against Crime	6:00pm	Antique Depot

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

## Gang Roundtable To Host Drugs, Crime Symposium

Operation Our Town's Gang Roundtable, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Gang Investigators Association, will be hosting a gangs, drugs, and crime symposium at the Blair County Convention Center on August 17th, 18th, and 19th. The symposium will feature speakers from all over the country addressing gang trends, prevention and intervention techniques, and drug trends. Part of the symposium will feature a local piece with speakers from Blair County addressing issues specific to central Pennsylvania. The local portion of the conference will take place on Friday the 19th from 1:00pm-5:00pm. Edwin Santana will also be giving a talk entitled "Gangs, Drugs and Crime Trends on the East Coast" on Thursday the 18th from 5:00pm-7:00pm that will be free & open to the public. Anyone interested in registering for the conference should go to [www.pagia.org](http://www.pagia.org) and click on the "More Info/Register" link underneath the conference announcement on the right-hand side.

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

-Gandhi

[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.

## 2011 Second Quarter Crime Statistics

	April	May	June
Drug Sale/Mfg-Opium/Cocaine	5	15	7
Drug Sale/Mfg-Marijuana	2	10	0
Drug Sale/Mfg-Synthetic	0	2	0
Drug Sale/Mfg-Other	4	20	1
Drug Possession-Opium/Cocaine	2	2	2
Drug Possession-Marijuana	17	19	10
Drug Possession-Synthetic	0	1	0
Drug Possession-Other	13	10	4
DUI	53	47	28

## Upcoming Events

**July 23rd**  
African-American Heritage Festival

PSU Altoona Campus

12:00pm-8:00pm

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

**July 30th**

Spring Dam Days

11:00am-3:00pm

Roaring Spring

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

**August 2nd**

Duncansville Night Out Against Crime

6:00pm-9:00pm

Antique Depot

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

**August 6th**

Target Child's Fingerprinting Event

Target Parking Lot-Altoona

10:00am-2:00pm

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

**August 13th**

Tyrone Dog Days of Summer

10:00am-3:00pm

Tyrone

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

## Push Out The Pusher 2nd Quarter Statistics

	April	May	June	Total 2nd Quarter Calls:
<b>Voicemail</b>	91	96	87	393
<b>Live</b>	36	44	39	
<b>Total</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>126</b>	

## Operation Our Town Announces Spring 2011 Grant Recipients

Operation Our Town recently awarded grants to 12 local programs, totaling approximately \$70,000 for the first OOT grant cycle of 2011. Programs that received funding are:

- Altoona Area School District: Red Ribbon Week & Anabolic Steroid Education Program
- Bellwood-Antis Middle School: Outdoor Classroom/Community Garden
- Blair Co. Juvenile Probation: Juvenile Drug Court
- Calvary United Methodist Church: FEED (Food, Encouragement, Exhortation, Discipleship)
- Family Resource Center: Urban Garden (Booker T. Washington Project)
- Garver Memorial YMCA: YMCA Summer Tutoring Program
- Gloria Gates Memorial Foundation: After School Program
- Hollidaysburg Area YMCA: Y Nites
- Home Nursing Agency Community Services: Nurse-Family Partnership
- The Door/Hillside Community Church: The Door
- The Second Mile: Blair Friend
- Williamsburg Public Library: After School Homework Help

Congratulations to all our Spring 2011 grant recipients! The fall grant cycle will start accepting applications on October 1st with a deadline of November 15th.

## OOT On Facebook!



Operation Our Town is now on Facebook! Please like our page to stay updated on news, events, and volunteer opportunities. You can find us at [www.facebook.com/operation-our-town](http://www.facebook.com/operation-our-town). Thank you!