



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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PUSH OUT THE PUSHER 814-693-3020



OperationOurTown.org

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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

Steering Committee Notes from July 16th

Grant Committee: A press conference was held to announce the Spring 2011 grant recipients. 12 organizations were awarded a total of approximately \$70,000.

Law Enforcement Roundtable: Mitch Cooper reported that legislation passed in Harrisburg banning Blizzard. Blair County also passed an injunction against the sale of Blizzard until the legislation goes into effect. He said there's been a dent in the use of Blizzard, but prescription drug abuse is still high. He also reported that the Cops in Shops program should be running within the next week.

Human Services Roundtable: Judy Rosser reported that September is Recovery Month and they will have activities and events planned that month. She also reported that recovery-oriented methadone maintenance is starting to be implemented to hold methadone clinics to a higher standard and to help those on methadone through the recovery process.

Retail Roundtable: Jo Ann Nardelli reported that July & August are busy times for retailers because of back-to-school shopping, but they will start meeting again in the fall. She also reported that she will be attending the Mirror Mom's event August 19th at the Logan Valley Mall with fingerprinting, OOT handouts, and McGruff. Jo Ann also said that Tony Sassano will be doing an educational program in September about methadone for retailers.

Gang Roundtable: Todd Negola reported that this year's Crime-Clean Up Day was not as well attended as last years, possibly because of the weather. It was suggested to possibly move it to September next year since May is such a busy month. He also reported that he confirmed participation from the National Guard & PSP helicopters for the Gangs, Drugs & Crime Prevention Symposium (held Aug. 17th-19th). There will also be ABLE demonstrations at the event and a local piece to the conference on Friday, featuring Judy Rosser, Randy Feathers, Patty Ross, & SWOOP. It was decided that Operation Our Town would provide 7 law enforcement and 8 school district scholarships for the conference.

New OOT Cable Access Show To Air

A new episode of "Taking Back Our Neighborhoods", Operation Our Town's cable access show, will air beginning in August and through September every Friday at 6:00pm and every Saturday at 11:00am. Just in time for back-to-school, this show highlights after-school programs available in Blair County. If you are looking for an after-school program for your child, this show is a great resource! From mentoring to homework help and recreation, there is an after-school program available to fit any child's needs. Be sure to tune in!



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](#)

"We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say 'It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes."

-Fred Rogers

[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
8/17	Crime Solvers	8:00am	WTAJ
8/17-8/19	Gangs, Drugs & Crime Prevention Symposium	8:00am-5:00pm daily (Registration Required!)	The Casino @ Lakemont Park
8/18	Pharmacy Roundtable	7:15am	OOT Office
8/18	CJAB	11:45am	Blair Co. Courthouse
8/22	Altoona Curve Charity Monday	7:00pm	Blair Co. Ballpark
9/5	Altoona Curve Charity Monday	12:00pm	Blair Co. Ballpark
9/6	Booker T. Washington Meeting	4:00pm	Community Action Agency
9/14	Northern Blair County RT	7:00am	Bull Pen Restaurant
9/15	CJAB	11:45am	Blair Co. Courthouse
9/15	Faith-Based RT	2:00pm	Hope Church

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

Welcome To Our Newest AmeriCorps Member!

by Courtney Remacle

Well, my time with Operation Our Town is quickly coming to an end. My last day will be August 19th, and I'm very glad to be able to welcome Megan Horell, the newest AmeriCorps member at Operation Our Town. Megan has a background in recreation and will start her second year with Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps on August 22nd, where she will take over the position of Community Outreach Coordinator here at Operation Our Town. She served last year at the Juniata Clean Water Partnership and Blair County Conservation District. We are very pleased to have her here and I wish her the best of luck! She will be organizing all future outreach events and publishing the monthly newsletter. She can be reached at 814-296-8730 or at OOT2@lsfiore.com

I'd like to thank everyone that I've had the opportunity to work with during the past year. It was a wonderful learning experience for me and I was privileged to be able to meet so many incredible people this year! Thank you all!

Altoona Curve Charity Mondays!

There are only two more Charity Mondays left! On August 22nd or September 5th, use the voucher below at the box office or follow the directions for online ordering to help a portion of your ticket purchase go to Operation Our Town!



Altoona Curve Charity Monday's Fundraiser

Altoona Curve will donate \$2 of every ticket sold for each game that this coupon is used to purchase the tickets online, or at the box office.

To Benefit: **Operation Our Town**

Fundraiser Dates:

April 18, 2011 vs Harrisburg Senators at 6:30 PM
May 2, 2011 vs Akron Aeros at 6:30 PM
May 23, 2011 vs Bowie Baysox at 6:30 PM
June 27, 2011 vs Reading Phillies at 7:00 PM
August 22, 2011 vs Richmond Flying Squirrels at 7:00 PM
September 5, 2011 vs Richmond Flying Squirrels at 12:00 PM

Ticket can be purchased:

Online at www.altoonacurve.com
or present this coupon at the Blair County Ballpark Box Office

Directions for online sales: Go to www.altoonacurve.com, then click the TICKETS button on the top left tool bar. Once in tickets the lower right corner would be a box for Charity Tickets. Then click on the Charity Link and the date you would like to purchase the tickets. Make sure to select the tickets with the charity name in the tickets you select to purchase.

Please present this certificate at the time of payment to have \$2 of each ticket to be donated to the organization above. Not to be used with other coupons or discounts. Tickets are not to be distributed in or around the ballpark or within the perimeter of the parking areas.

Valid for dates listed above.



Upcoming Events

August 13th

Tyrone Dog Days of Summer

10:00am-3:00pm

Tyrone

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

August 19th

Mirror Mom's Event

Logan Valley Mall

11:00am-4:00pm

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August 27th

Back-To-School Blast

Booker T. Washington
Complex

12:00pm-3:00pm

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

September 11th

Patriot Day

Blair County Community
Action Agency

Time TBA

News From The Justice Roundtable

by Judge Jolene Kopriva, chair

Over the last few years the criminal justice system has seen a significant increase in mentally ill people in the criminal justice system. In the Blair County jail alone, over 30% of all inmates have prescriptions for mental illness when they arrive at the jail.

In many instances, the criminal justice system can compound the mental illness and presents a costly and largely ineffective manner in bringing about the services needed to effectuate change and make the community a safer place.

In response to this issue, on June 8 and 9 the Justice Roundtable and Blair County Mental Health conducted a Mapping Workshop through the Pennsylvania Mental Health and Justice Center of Excellence, an enterprise of Drexel University and University of Pittsburgh. Over 50 members of the mental/behavioral health and criminal justice communities met to review the criminal justice system in Blair County and develop points of intercepting mentally ill persons who come in contact with that system. We had 5 objectives:

1. Create a cross-systems map indicating points of interface among all relevant local systems
2. Identify gaps, opportunities, and barriers in the existing systems
3. Optimize use of local resources
4. Identify and prioritize necessary actions for change
5. Develop an action plan to facilitate this change

Prior to the workshop, the MH/MR Administrator for Blair County, Jim Hudack, spent many hours completing a data heavy Community Collaboration Questionnaire, which helped the facilitators to have a foundation of knowledge and focus on the workshop, input.

As a result of the workshop Blair County developed 8 priorities for the Justice Roundtable/Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) to pursue:

1. Develop a Mental Health Court
2. Housing
3. Mental Health First Aid
4. Access to Medication and Psychiatric Appointments upon Re-Entry
5. Sobering Stations
6. Level of Care Behavioral Assessments as early as possible in the criminal justice system
7. Develop a Crisis Intervention Team
8. Expediting Access to Medical Assistance Benefits

Over the next year, committees will begin to tackle these priorities with help from not just the committee members, but other folks in the community who may seek to join our efforts. If you have an interest in participating in any of these priorities feel free to contact Jim Hudack or Judge Kopriva for information on how you can help.

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. Thank you!