

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 2009

PUSH OUT THE PUSHER 693-3020



OperationOurTown.org

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News from the Education Roundtable *by Dr. G. Brian Toth, Chair*

The Education Roundtable is hosted by the Bellwood-Antis School District and currently includes representatives from Bellwood-Antis, Claysburg, Hollidaysburg, Spring Cove, Tyrone, Williamsburg, the GACTC and the Altoona-Johnstown Diocesan Schools. The Roundtable meets quarterly to discuss and plan a variety of informational sessions.

Most recently, school districts from our roundtable participated in OOT's Red Ribbon Week celebration in conjunction with our Student Assistance Teams. Red Ribbon Week highlights to students the perils of using drugs and alcohol, and gives students an opportunity to make a pledge against using drugs. Pencils and red ribbons were supplied by Operation Our Town and the Elks.

In addition, the school districts of Bellwood-Antis, Claysburg, Hollidaysburg, Williamsburg, Tyrone and Spring Cove received and distributed Push Out the Pusher materials for use in the schools and communities. Several school districts have also taken advantage of the Gang information training offered by Dr. Todd Negola. Additionally, the drug dog provided to the Tyrone police by OOT has been used in the schools. The Bellwood-Antis School District held a drug dog "lock down" on October 30. These activities would not have been possible without the funding and cooperation of Operation Our Town.

Lastly, high school students from Bellwood-Antis and Tyrone Area School Districts worked with Penn State University to produce anti-drug videos to be used in conjunction with PSU's **Keepin' it REAL** curriculum.

This Drug Resistance Strategies project is devoted to understanding and preventing adolescent substance abuse. DRS was initiated over 20 years ago to explain the social pressures youth feel when substances are offered, and to develop new ways to prevent use. This research was among the first to describe the social processes of substance use offers and the role of race, ethnicity and gender. A new approach to prevention curriculum development, cultural grounding, helps youth identify with the messages.

The curriculum promotes **REAL** resistance strategies—**Refuse, Explain, Avoid, Leave**—that teens can use to negotiate out of drug offers. These strategies are based on narrative stories collected from thousands of adolescents describing the teen world in their own words, especially their experiences with offers of alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, and other drugs.

Keepin' it REAL is an effective, multicultural middle school drug prevention program that is proven to reduce alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco use. It teaches youth to think critically and communicate effectively. The lessons cover risk assessment, decision making, where to go for support, and communication skills such as conflict resolution and drug refusal.

The Keepin' it REAL Rural Project identifies the social pressures rural youth experience when substances are offered and works to develop intervention strategies for them.

For more information about the K-12 Education Roundtable, or to become a member, contact Dr. Toth at 742-2271 or Shawna Hoover at 296-8370.

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](#)

VOLUNTEERS. . .

- play a very important role
- participate in community events to help us reach more people
- serve on Roundtables, the Steering Committee & the Board
- donate valuable services such as artwork, design & software development

VOLUNTEER STATS 2009. . .

Number of registered OOT volunteers:	185
Number of events & activities attended:	34
Number of volunteers attending events:	116
Total volunteer hours served:	376

[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 Blair Co Courthouse Jury Room
11/17 K-12 Education Roundtable	11:30am Bellwood-Antis District Office
11/18 Crime Solvers Meeting	8:00am Park Hills Country Club
11/18 Marketing Roundtable	4:00pm OOT Office
11/19 CJAB Meeting	11:45am Blair County Courthouse
11/19 Neighborhood Watch-County wide	6:00pm Blair Senior Services Bldg
11/20 Health & Welfare Council Meeting	8:00am ARC of Blair County
11/23 OOT Steering Committee Meeting	6:00pm The Nehemiah Project
11/25 Blair Countians for Drug-Free Comm	8:30am United Way Resource Room
11/26 HAPPY THANKSGIVING	HAPPY THANKSGIVING
11/27 Winterfest Light-up & Soup Sampling	5:00pm Hollidaysburg, on the Diamond
12/08 BTW Revitalization Meeting	4:00pm Community Action Agency
12/10 Pharmacy Roundtable	7:15am OOT Office
12/16 Crime Solvers Meeting	8:00am Park Hills Country Club

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

Everything you really didn't want to know about...HEROIN

aka Smack, Horse, Mud, Brown Sugar, Junk, Black Tar, Big H, Dope, Skag

Heroin is highly addictive. It is a depressant that affects the brain's pleasure systems and interferes with the brain's ability to perceive pain.



Heroin is processed from morphine, a naturally occurring substance extracted from the seedpod of the Asian poppy plant. Heroin usually appears as a white or brown powder, or a tar-like substance.



Street names for heroin include "smack," "H," "skag," and "junk." Other names may refer to types of heroin produced in a specific geographical area, such as "Mexican black tar."

Recent studies suggest a shift from injecting heroin to snorting or smoking because of increased purity and the **misconception** that these forms of use will not lead to addiction.

Heroin affects your brain. Heroin enters the brain quickly. It slows down the way you think, slows down reaction time, and slows down memory. This affects the way you act and make decisions.

Heroin is super-addictive. Heroin is highly addictive because it enters the brain so rapidly. It particularly affects those regions of the brain responsible for producing physical dependence.



Any method of heroin use--snorting, smoking, swallowing, or injecting the drug--can cause immediate harm and lead to addiction.

Heroin can kill you. With regular heroin use, tolerance develops. This means the abuser must use more heroin to achieve the same intensity or effect. Heroin is one of the top two drugs frequently reported by medical examiners in drug abuse deaths.¹

Where can you turn for help and information? Seek professional help to overcome heroin addiction. For information, call the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 800-729-6686.

¹ *Mortality Data From the Drug Abuse Warning Network, 2002.* Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2002.

Other Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, <http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/govpubs/phd860/#NAME> Partnership for a Drug-Free America. Retrieved November 6, 2009 from: www.drugfree.org/portal/drug_guide/heroin

Upcoming Events
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**Cove Counseling Center's
 Christmas Assistance
 Toy Drive**

- Collecting new gifts and toys to distribute to families participating in the Claysburg Food Bank, which provides food to approx. 150 households each month.
- Each donated toy or gift should not exceed \$20 in value.
- Drop-off new toys & gifts at:
Cove Counseling Center
601 Wilson Street
Roaring Spring, PA
- Donations accepted through
Friday, December 11, 2009.
 Contact Millie Baker at 793-0010
 or CoveCounselingCenter@yahoo.com

Happy Thanksgiving!
Thursday, November 26



**Central Blair Recreation
 & Park Commission's
 Community Classic Dinner**
Sat., February 6, 2010 at 6 p.m.
 The Bavarian Hall, Altoona PA

CBRC will present their 2010

Respected Citizen Award
 to

JOHN ROBERTSON

in recognition of his efforts to provide area youth with guidance, compassion and fitness through the sport of boxing.

proceeds benefit the Booker T. Washington Revitalization Project and the CBRC Scholarship Fund

Sponsored by U.S. Foodservice™

Contact Info

Operation Our Town - PO Box 2486 - Altoona PA 16603 - 814.296.8730 - info@OperationOurTown.org - OperationOurTown.org
 You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

Welcome, new AmeriCorps VISTA! *by Lynne Mondock, VISTA*

It's hard to believe that I have served a full year with Operation Our Town as an AmeriCorps VISTA, but it's true. My last day of service is this Friday. Though I'm looking forward to moving on to new challenges and opportunities, I'll miss working daily with Shawna and interacting with the many wonderful volunteers.

This year has given me the opportunity to meet literally hundreds of people, and to further the mission of a non-profit that continues to make Blair County a better place to live. I've learned about some of the needs and challenges people in our community face, especially as it relates to drug use and crime.

It's been my pleasure to work with OOT volunteers as well as many volunteers and employees from other organizations, such as United Way of Blair County, Central Blair Recreation & Park Commission, Blair Countians for Drug Free Communities, NAACP, Blair County Crime Solvers, law enforcement agencies, faith-based organizations and more. It touches my heart to see so many people give unselfishly of their time, money and skills to make life better for all of us.

Please join Operation Our Town in welcoming **Kathy Salyards**, who begins her one-year VISTA term on Monday, November 23. In addition to producing the monthly newsletter and coordinating outreach events, Kathy will manage a variety of Operation Our Town projects. Kathy can be reached via email at oort2@lsfiore.com, or by calling the Operation Our Town office at 296-8730.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve with you and for you.

Best regards, Lynne

Check Presentations to Operation Our Town

Recognizing some of our 2009 supporters...for a list of donors, partners and friends, see OperationOurTown.org/founding_members.htm



Burgi's Low-Life Riders
 6th Annual Charity Ride, Sept. 2009
(check presentation Oct. 2009)



Sheetz Juniata Store Opening
 June 2009



Norfolk Southern Foundation
 June 2009



The Grainger Foundation
 June 2009



YTI Technical Institute
 July 2009