

# Operation Our Town Reporter

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

Volume 1, Issue 3

March 2009

## PUSH OUT THE PUSHER 693-3020



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

### Board Members:

Michael A. Fiore | Joe Sheetz  
Phil Devorris | Ron McConnell

### Administration:

Shawna Hoover, Exec. Coordinator  
Lynne Mondock, Volunteer

### Steering Committee:

Dr. Lori J. Bechtel-Wherry  
Robin Beck  
Jackie Bernard  
Richard Consiglio  
JR DiAndrea  
William Earnest  
Randy Feathers  
Dr. Zane Gates  
Donna Gority  
Betsy Hurst  
Cheryl Johns  
Honorable Jolene Kopriva  
Pastor Betty Landis  
Dr. Todd Negola  
Judy Rosser  
Dr. G. Brian Toth

### Founding Members:

Altoona Regional Health System  
Blair Candy Company  
Blair Companies  
DC Goodman  
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

### News from the Marketing Roundtable

Great things are happening at the Marketing Roundtable meetings, reports JR DiAndrea of DiAndrea Media. JR recently accepted the role of chairperson for this newly re-launched group, and is already working closely with some roundtable members including Monica Jones, Shari Rutch, Lisa Michelone, Greg Sheehan and Rudy Husband. "This is a talented bunch of people; some of the area's most experienced marketing professionals. Each member brings to the group a unique perspective creating a synergy that is truly 'Hi-Octane.' I'm really honored to be working with them," says JR. All members are encouraged to attend the next meeting—March 26 at 4:15 pm at the Operation Our Town office.

The first project the team will work on is to create new in-town billboards to promote the Push Out The Pusher hotline number: 693-3020. The creative concept chosen will also be used to create yard signs, window clings and business cards. "The main message is 'Report Drug Activity' and the phone number," says board member Joe Sheetz. But the right graphics will also be used to create a polished, high-quality campaign. "We need to change it up each year so [the message] does not get stale," he continued, referring to the highly visible yellow and blue artwork used in last year's campaign.

The target date for launching the new campaign is May 2009. This timing coordinates nicely with high-attendance home games at [The Altoona Curve](#). "The Curve is a valuable partner as they provide Operation Our Town an opportunity to easily distribute yard signs and window clings to a large portion of the Blair County community," explains Shawna Hoover.

Elsie Zengel, Director of Community Relations for the Altoona Curve, is also a member of the Marketing Roundtable. "Not only is this a great opportunity for Operation Our Town," says Elsie, "but it also provides a valuable service to our customers by giving them tools to keep their neighborhoods safe."

Look for more information about this exciting campaign and other marketing projects in the upcoming months. To become a member of a current roundtable or to start a new one, contact Shawna Hoover at [oot@lsfiore.com](mailto:oot@lsfiore.com) or 296-8730.

### History of the Blair County Push Out The Pusher Campaign

Did you know that the Push Out The Pusher hotline was created more than 20 years ago by the [Blair Countians for Drug Free Communities](#)? Their mission is to prevent substance use among youth by providing an environment that teaches life skills, opportunities for meaningful involvement and recognition of achievement.

Public Meeting Schedule:

- Last Wed. of Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep & Nov at 8:30 am
- In the United Way of Blair County's Community Room
- Meetings are open to the public

Other services offered by Blair Countians for Drug Free Communities:

- Public education, speaking engagements, family / youth activities and data.
- *HOPE Support Group*: for families impacted by addiction. Meets every Wednesday at 7:00 pm; Blair County Courthouse, Jury Assembly Room.

For more information or to join Blair Countians for Drug Free Communities, contact Becky Mingle at [bmingle@blairco.info](mailto:bmingle@blairco.info) or call 693-3112.

Or visit their web-site at: [www.drugfreeblaircounty.com](http://www.drugfreeblaircounty.com).



## 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](#)

## Operation Our Town Seeking Grant Applicants!



### WHAT:

Operation Our Town will distribute a total of \$100,000 to eligible organizations for local programs that reduce drugs and/or crime through proven treatment and prevention techniques.

### WHO:

All nonprofit organizations, schools and government agencies are eligible for grant consideration.

### WHEN:

Completed applications must be received or post-marked by April 15, 2009.

### HOW:

Applications and complete directions are available on-line at: [www.operationourtown.org/funding\\_partnership.htm](http://www.operationourtown.org/funding_partnership.htm)

## Upcoming Operation Our Town & Partner Meetings and Events

### RECURRING WEEKLY MEETINGS:

Wed. [HOPE Support Group Meeting](#)

7:00PM Blair Co Courthouse Jury Room

03/19 CJAB Meeting

11:45AM Blair County Courthouse

03/19 Neighborhood Watch Mtg (City-wide)

6:00PM Blair Senior Services Building

03/25 Blair Countians for Drug-Free Communities

8:30AM United Way Community Room

03/26 \*OOT Marketing Roundtable

4:15PM OOT office

03/27 Health & Welfare Council Meeting

8:00AM Becky Sheetz Rec. Building

03/28 Sunrise Rotary Spaghetti Dinner to benefit Blair County Youth League

3:00PM B-G High School Cafeteria

03/31 \*OOT K-12 Education Roundtable

9:30AM Bellwood-Antis District Off.

04/02 \*OOT Pharmacy Roundtable

7:15AM OOT office

04/02 \*OOT Faith-based Roundtable

1:30PM Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist

04/04 Kids' Fair

10:00AM Logan Valley Mall

04/16 Neighborhood Watch Mtg (City-wide)

6:00PM Jaffa Mosque

04/18 Healthy Kids Fair

10:00AM Garver YMCA, Roaring Spring

04/18 United Way Formal Wear Give-A-Way

10:00AM United Way of Blair County

04/23 \*OOT Marketing Roundtable

4:15PM OOT office

04/23 Myth Busters: Treatment Public Forum

7:00PM Bellwood Calvary UMC

04/25 Week of the Young Child Celebration

10:00AM Penn State Altoona

\*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.

## Message From A Recovering Addict, Part 2

Weddings. Reunions. Funerals. All opportunities for the extended family to gather in happiness or sorrow. Those unable to attend such gatherings often experience feelings of guilt, anger and helplessness. Being unable to attend a funeral, especially one for a close relative, can be particularly distressing. Just ask Tim. The deaths of his father, grandmother and grandfather while he was in prison profoundly affected Tim D. Not only was he unable to attend the funerals, he knew he would face a large void in his life when released. And studies show that "young offenders who reported coping poorly with bereavement were more likely to have used drugs to cope with their emotions."<sup>1</sup>

In 2007, an est. 22.3 million (MM) persons aged 12 or older—9.0% US pop.—were classified with substance dependence/abuse in the past year:

- 3.2MM abusing alcohol & drugs
- 3.7MM abusing drugs only
- 15.5MM abusing alcohol only

2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. US Dept. of Health and Human Services.

Tim started abusing alcohol when he was about twelve years old. This abuse quickly escalated to include marijuana, and then prescription pills, heroin and crack cocaine. As he became more addicted his judgment became even more impaired. He was sent to prison time and again—one prison after another. It took him years to realize one simple truth that eludes so many offenders—to change the cycle a person must accept responsibility and stop blaming others for his/her situation. It wasn't a



truth that came easily.

In prison, Tim learned to follow the rules in order to reduce or ease the time he had to serve. This was easier than making a personal choice to change. After being released, he'd quickly fall back into old habits resulting in a new jail term—usually at a different county jail. It wasn't until he did state time that he realized self-help was the only way to break this self-defeating cycle.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) taught him to be accountable, and he found mentors in some of the older prisoners. "Without a strong support group, I wouldn't have been able to break the cycle I was in," explains Tim, drug-free since his last incarceration in October 2000. During that last jail term, he served as a peer advocate for 19 out of the 25 months served. Now he makes a difference by volunteering his time presenting 'lessons learned' to at-risk youths and young adults, as well as to young offenders struggling with drug addiction. Contact Tim [by email](#) or call 941-7039 to schedule a presentation to your group or organization.

<sup>1</sup> I G Finlay and N K Jones. *Unresolved grief in young offenders in prison*. University of Wales College of Medicine. 2000 July; 50(456): 569-570.



## Upcoming Events

### Upcoming Events

### Upcoming Events



### Kids' Fair

A day of fun, interactive activities for kids, plus a meet & greet with Curious George!

**Saturday, April 4, 2009**

10 am—4 pm

Logan Valley Mall  
call 944-6127 for more information



### Healthy Kids Day

Provide families resources for healthy living

**Saturday, April 18, 2009**

10 am—1 pm

Garver YMCA  
820 Grove Street  
Roaring Spring, PA  
call 224-5101 for more information



### Myth Busters:

A Public Forum on Treatment for Substance Abuse/Addiction

**Thursday, April 23, 2009**

7:00 - 9:00 pm

Bellwood Calvary United Methodist Church  
601 N. Fourth St., Bellwood, PA  
call 296-8730 for more details



### Week of

### the Young Child Celebration

A celebration to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families.

**Saturday, April 25, 2009**

10:00 am—2 pm

Penn State Altoona

call Autumn at the United Way at 944-0884 for more details



### Wowing Rotary

In February, Randy Feathers presented Operation Our Town to the Rotary Club of Hollidaysburg. Feathers, a regional director from the PA Attorney General's Office, reviewed Operation Our Town's 2008 accomplishments and also spoke about future law enforcement activities that will be made possible by Operation Our Town's support.



"It was a great opportunity to recognize two of Operation Our Town's founding members, McLanahan Corporation and New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co., who are also members of Rotary, as well as so many of our other supporters," said Randy.

The Rotary Club of Hollidaysburg meets at 7:15 am every Tuesday at the US Hotel. For more information about Hollidaysburg Rotary or to join, contact President Pete Williams at [by email](mailto:by_email).

Contact Shawna Hoover at [oot@lsfiore.com](mailto:oot@lsfiore.com) or call 296-8730 to request a representative from Operation Our Town to speak with your organization.

### Myth Busters:

### A Public Forum on Treatment for Substance Abuse/Addiction

Sponsored by the Bellwood-Antis Ministerium and Operation Our Town's Faith-based Communities & Human Services Roundtables

## EVERYONE IS INVITED!

Operation Our Town's **Faith-based Communities** and **Human Services Roundtables** invite you to attend the second **Myth Busters** public forum on the treatment for substance abuse and addiction.

Judy Rosser, Program Administrator for Blair County Drug & Alcohol, will be the moderator. Panelists will include community leaders and specialists in the field of treatment of substance abuse.

**Where:** Bellwood Calvary United Methodist Church  
601 N. Fourth St., Bellwood, PA

**When:** Thursday, April 23rd, 2009  
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

**Who:** Anyone who wants to learn about licensed drug & alcohol treatment levels of care. (i.e. goals, a typical day, services, therapy approaches & licensing requirements)



**Why:** Because we need to remove the fear & stigma surrounding treatment for alcohol and drug abuse/addiction, as well as support & encourage ALL persons to get appropriate treatment.

- ◆ Panel presenters will speak on Outpatient, Partial Hospital, Methadone Maintenance, Detoxification, Short/Long Term Residential, Halfway House, and Emergency Care.
- ◆ Sufficient time will be left for an open forum. Questions from attendees will be encouraged.
- ◆ Refreshments will be provided.
- ◆ Program is open to the public. There is no cost to attend.

Questions: Contact Shawna Hoover at [oot@lsfiore.com](mailto:oot@lsfiore.com) or call 296-8730.

### Contact Info

Operation Our Town - PO Box 2486 - Altoona PA 16603 - 814.296.8730 - [info@OperationOurTown.org](mailto:info@OperationOurTown.org) - [www.OperationOurTown.org](http://www.OperationOurTown.org)

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.