



# OUR TOWN TIMES

2015 ANNUAL REPORT | VOL. IV

DRUG USE ▲ NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ▼ COMMUNITY SUPPORT ▼ EDUCATION ▼ LAW ENFORCEMENT ▲ VOLUNTEERISM ▼

# COPS IN SHOPS

## OPERATION OUR TOWN RE-LAUNCHES PROGRAM AT LOCAL PHARMACIES

SHAWNA HOOVER, OOT EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR

Operation Our Town's Pharmacy Roundtable, comprised of representatives from pharmacies around Blair County as well as representatives from Value Drug Company, Blair County District Attorney's office, PA Attorney General's office, local law enforcement, and others, have announced the re-launch of the Cops in

Shops program at local pharmacies. This Cops in Shops program, a cooperative effort between law enforcement and area pharmacies, places undercover and uniformed police officers inside pharmacies as a deterrent to criminal activity.

"The Pharmacy Roundtable re-launched this program in light of the increased targeting of pharmacies for illegal access to controlled substances. These undercover operations

have allowed law enforcement to see first-hand the security and safety challenges pharmacies face every day," says Jackie Atherton Bernard, Blair County First Assistant District Attorney. "While officers work hard to blend in, they also take the time to review security procedures and make suggestions to management for improvement. We feel the Cops in Shops effort will discourage the presentation of forged prescription

forms and deter those individuals that might otherwise target a pharmacy for robbery or burglary."

A proven law enforcement technique, this undercover program is funded through a grant from Operation Our Town. To help efforts, Operation Our Town has produced signs to be posted at the front doors of participating pharmacies, advising customers that an undercover operation

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## OOT 2014 GOLF TOURNAMENT

RANDY FEATHERS, GOLF TOURNAMENT CHAIRPERSON

Operation Our Town held its 2nd Annual Golf Tournament on September 16, 2014 at Park Hills Country Club. The golf tournament yielded a net profit of over \$67,000 thanks to our 41 teams and numerous sponsors! The money raised from this tournament goes towards funding law enforcement and prevention programs aimed at reducing drugs and crime in Blair County.

Operation Our Town held a Neighborhood BBQ on Monday evening in conjunction with the golf tournament. Food was provided by Hoss's and prepared by Park Hills. Golfers, sponsors, and their guests enjoyed entertainment and an opportunity to meet and greet with Operation Our Town grant recipients. The golf tournament was held on Tuesday and gave golfers the opportunity to choose from an 8:00 am or 1:00 pm tee time. Sheetz did a great job of feeding the golfers by providing a cooked breakfast and lunch and snacks on the golf course.

The golf tournament included an exciting contest for golfers. Ten golfers in the morning session and ten golfers in the afternoon session that found a "golden ticket" in their chocolate bar were given the opportunity to putt for a \$5,000 cash prize donation from Park Hills Country Club. The winner of each session was the golfer that had their putt closest to the hole. The \$5,000 winner of the morning session was Pat Leonard and the \$5,000 winner of the afternoon session was Jay Bakale.

Operation Our Town's 3rd Annual Golf Tournament will be held on Tuesday, September 15, 2015 at Park Hills Country Club and promises to be bigger and

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OOT Board Member Randy Feathers and President Michael Fiore present the "Golden Ticket" \$5,000 prize check to winner of the afternoon session, Jay Bakale.

"Taking back our neighborhoods"... what empowering words. These four words summarize why Operation Our Town was formed, and why it's still an extremely valuable organization eight years later.

To ensure the partnerships that have been formed through the efforts of Operation Our Town continue to move forward and grow, we must remain vigilant and continuously educate the community about ways in which to support one another.

One method in which Operation Our Town's Marketing Committee contributes to this endeavor is through the Taking Back Our Neighborhoods Cable Access TV

## TAKING BACK OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

DIANA MCCLURE, MARKETING ROUNDTABLE

show; an educational tool with a far-reaching impact. The show's host, Dean McKnight, entertains and educates viewers by having interesting conversations with his guests about topics such as "How does eliminating drugs reduce the County's crime rate?" And "How to talk to your child about the dangers of drugs?" Dean graciously volunteers his time and talents because he truly believes in Operation Our Town and the

positive effect that it has on Blair County. In 2014, he hosted five shows...

The year's first show, entitled "Public Danger of Drugs," featured PA State Police Trooper Jeff Petucci; Greg Drew of Value Drug; and Jim Walstrom from the PA Attorney General's Office. These guests answered questions and discussed topics such as what to look for if you discover a meth lab, the availability of prescrip-

tion drugs, and the dangers of synthetic drugs.

Show two focused on "Recovery," another important component of Operation Our Town's mission. This show brought together guests from the recovery community and Judy Rosser, Executive Director of Blair Drug and Alcohol Partnerships. Discussions centered on the guest's personal addiction stories and how they overcame them, how to identify signs of drug use, and how and where to get help.

Episode number three presented information about "Summer Activities for Kids." Guests included Mike Hofer from Central

(Continued on A11)

## MEDICATION COLLECTION BOXES: DETERRENT TO DRUG DIVERSION

GREG DREW, R.PH., PRESIDENT, VALUE DRUG COMPANY

When the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) decided to discontinue their Prescription Drug Take Back Days, the Operation Our Town Pharmacy Roundtable recognized that if we could create an alternative disposal method, it would continue the goodness that this program brings. When folks that have legitimately acquired Prescription Controlled Drugs for pain management for a myriad of diseases and injuries no longer require them, either through therapy discontinuance or even death, there is a need to remove them from availability to the public for potentially illicit uses. We applaud the assistance from the Blair County District Attorney's Office for obtaining grants for the disposal locations, the Blair County Drug and Alcohol Program for funding disposal assistance, and Value Drug Company for providing publication and graphic design assistance as they have created a solution to the void created when the DEA elected to discontinue their Take Back program. In addition to creating three Blair County disposal locations, we have also created awareness in the pharmacies, physician offices and funeral homes that these locations

(Continued on A7)



## 2014 GRANT RECIPIENTS

Operation Our Town holds a grant cycle once a year to support proven prevention and treatment programs in Blair County. All nonprofit organizations, schools, and government agencies are eligible for grant consideration.

The 2015 Grant Cycle will open on May 1, 2015 with a deadline for grant applications on June 12, 2015. Applicants have the option of using the "\$2,999 & Under" or "\$3,000 & Above" grant applications to apply for funding. For more information, please visit OperationOurTown.org and click on the Grants tab on the homepage.

A total of \$50,000 in grants were awarded by Operation Our Town during the 2014 grant cycle for the following proven prevention and treatment programs:

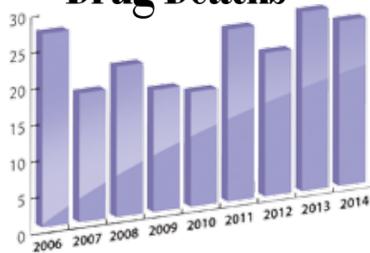
- Altoona Area School District Foundation: SOAR (Study, Overcome, Achieve, Reward)
- Altoona Parochial Catholic Youth Organization: APYO-Operation Our Town #ONE Athletic Programs
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Blair County: One-to-One Youth Mentoring

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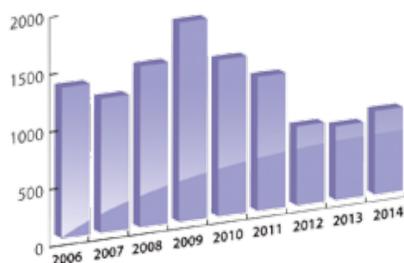
Police Report	A2
Community	A2
Opinion	A4
Business	A5
Local	A7

# POLICE REPORT

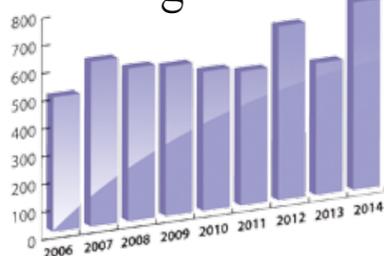
## Drug Deaths



## Push Out the Pusher Hotline Calls



## Drug Arrests



Source: Operation Our Town 2014

## Drug Prosecutor Summary

PETER J. WEEKS, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

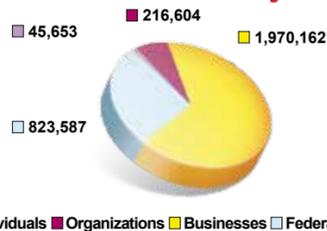
Through 2014, 259 cases were assigned to the drug prosecutor position. Those 259 cases involved 142 defendants. There are currently 292 active felony cases pending. The District Attorney's Office continues to attempt to incarcerate individuals who violate their bail conditions. A Pennsylvania Supreme Court case from December 2013 has allowed us to successfully forfeit bail money posted by some of these individuals. Additionally, there

were 4 defendants successfully tried before a jury including: Tony Barnes (heroin sale), Allen Nowlin (felon not to possess a firearm and heroin sales), Janelle Smith (operating a meth lab) and Hugo Baez (homicide). The District Attorney's Office continues to file asset forfeiture petitions where property is utilized by drug dealers to facilitate drug dealing, or drug dealers acquire property because of their drug trafficking. Proceeds from asset forfeiture are

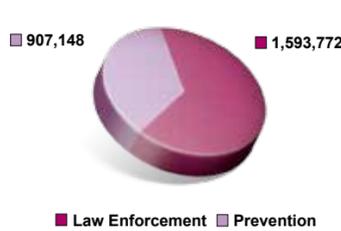
utilized to purchase equipment and provide training that would otherwise not be possible. Additionally, the forfeiture proceeds also enable the District Attorney's Office to provide staffing that would otherwise not be available. In 2014, \$34,882.50 was forfeited to the District Attorney's drug fund and we forfeited \$5,876.50 to PA Office of Attorney General. In 2014, there were 43 forfeiture cases finalized and 45 new cases were filed.

# COMMUNITY

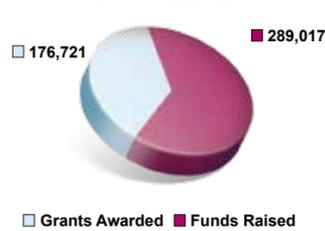
### 2007 - 2014 OOT Money Raised



### 2007 - 2014 OOT Grants Awarded



### 2014 Results



## OOT Student Golf Tournament

SHAWNA HOOVER, OOT EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR

In addition to the main golf tournament, Operation Our Town held its First Annual Student Golf Tournament on September 15, 2014 at Park Hills Country Club for golf teams from area school districts. Participants included students from Altoona Area School District, Bishop Guilfoyle High School, and Central High School golf teams.

The winning team from the student golf tournament included Nate Lawhead, Derek Fink, Trentin Martin, and J.P. Duffy from the Altoona Area School District. Erick Kozak, head golf coach for the Altoona Area School District, said "Our players had an awesome time playing in the OOT Golf Tournament. It was a great opportunity for them to come together as a team and have fun playing the game they love. We were treated ex-

tremely well by the staff and committee and our players are really looking forward to this year's tournament."

The 2nd Annual Operation Our Town Student Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, September 14, 2015 at Park Hills Country Club. This year's tournament will include an exciting prize for the winning golf team. A \$2,500 grant will be awarded to the winning team's school district to be used for a current or new school program that is aimed at the education and prevention of drug use.

We are also looking for sponsors to support the student golf tournament, please contact Shawna Hoover at (814) 296-8730 or shawna@operationourtown.org for more details on how you can support this year's tournament!



## 2014 GRANT RECIPIENTS | (Continued from A1)



- Blair County Drug & Alcohol Program, Inc.: Youth League
- Blair County Juvenile Probation Office: Blair County Juvenile Drug Court Program
- Booker T. Washington Revitalization Corporation: Prospect Park Revitalization
- Evergreen Manors Supportive Services: Evergreen Manors Community Garden
- Gloria Gates Memorial Foundation: After School Program
- Hollidaysburg Area YMCA: Family Y-Nite

- Home Nursing Agency: Blair County Nurse-Family Partnership
- Joshua House, Inc.: Cross-Town Basketball League
- Northern Blair County Recreation Association: Northern Blair Rec Center Family Nights
- Ski Gap Community Action Council: Outdoor Movie Night Against Crime & Drugs
- The ROCK: After School Program
- United Way of Blair County: Family Resource Center – Parents as Teachers Program and Make Parenting a Pleasure Parenting Class

## Message from the DA's Office

JACKIE ATHERTON BERNARD, FIRST ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
PETER J. WEEKS, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Blair County has a history of innovative and aggressive law enforcement. As a part of this legacy, the positive impact of Operation Our Town on fighting drugs and violent crime cannot be overstated. Since its inception in 2007, Operation Our Town has partnered with law enforcement to improve equipment and to support various special operations used to combat crime. Offenders committing drug or drug-related violations, as well as violent offenses, are afforded due process of law and successfully prosecuted with the assistance of a grant-funded Prosecutor, Peter Weeks.

Operation Our Town and the District Attorney's Office believe in prevention just as much as enforcement. Operation Our Town embodies collaboration and team work. This team approach to protecting our community is evident in cooperation and communication between various Operation Our Town Roundtables. To this end, in 2014, the Pharmacy Roundtable identified drug

diversion as a major concern with their customers. The District Attorney's office sought and obtained a grant for the location of drug collection boxes at three sites in our County. Three Chiefs active on our Law Enforcement Roundtable, namely, Hollidaysburg Borough, Tyrone Borough, and the City of Altoona, placed permanent collection boxes in their stations for public use. Thanks to the support of the municipal leaders in those communities and the support of businesses like Value Drug Company and Blair County Drug and Alcohol Partnerships, the District Attorney's Office was able to collaborate with the Pharmacy Roundtable to address the diversion of drugs. Since starting the drug collection in June 2014, over 500 pounds of drugs have been removed from the street for illegal use or sale (See the Statistics included in this newsletter). There can be no doubt that every person who uses a drop box is helping

(Continued on A3)

**DA'S MESSAGE |** *(Continued from A2)*

to make our community safer. Blair County is truly blessed to have the level of collaboration that exists among law enforcement, drug and alcohol prevention, and community partners, like Operation Our Town. In 2015, Operation Our Town will be providing funds through the Law Enforcement Roundtable and with the support of the Pharmacy Roundtable to a program entitled "Cops in Shops," which will allow police officers, undercover and in uniform, to see and be seen in local pharmacies. The goal of the program is to proactively end pharmacy robberies and/or the passing of forged prescriptions.

Each year brings new challenges to combating drugs and related crime

in Blair County. We have seen many fundamental principles like mandatory minimum sentences and drug forfeiture statutes utilized by law enforcement come under legal attack. Nonetheless, our Prosecutors adapt with the police in order to outmaneuver and outwit the criminals. We continue to identify prosecutable cases of drug deliveries resulting in death. We also work to dismantle the organizations profiting from drug dealing and resultant crimes. Now, more than ever, the unity between community and law enforcement is essential to protect our neighborhoods. Stand up for justice. Support Operation Our Town.

# Have a Little Faith

LISA HANN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

Never underestimate the power of a group of individuals willing to pray and work for their community.

The OOT Faith Based Roundtable is just such a group. Working together since 2008, the faces around the table may change, but the intent does not. The roundtable is made up of pastors, rabbis, lay persons and volunteers, who meet once a month to plan, educate and pray. The group is open to all who feel a call to help build a healthier community. The roundtable is focused on promoting partnerships within the faith based community that bring about positive change, hope and spiritual

health in Blair County.

Their efforts have paid off, resulting in educational presentations to religious leaders about alcohol and other drug addictions, strengthening of groups that act as resources to those in recovery, and collaboration and support for neighborhood faith-based children and youth outreach programs in Blair County.

Our most recent efforts have produced a resource list of faith-based youth programs offered in all of the communities throughout the county. The resource guide can be used to help connect youth with fun, mentoring and support. It is a growing document and we are always seeking out new information to assure that it is up-to-date and includes any new programs offered by a faith-based group.

The roundtable has also been involved in the development of the Blair County Needs Net, a secure online database that will be used by agencies and churches to track financial support provided to our citizens in order to be good stewards of our resources, while assuring that those truly in need are able to get assistance. Items tracked will include fuel assistance, rental assistance, help with utility bills, Christmas programs and any

other support that churches and agencies provide. The system will allow groups to cross-check names to determine who has accessed a particular resource. The Needs Net information will only be shared with groups who have been vetted and agree to share information about what assistance was provided to an individual. The website will offer a cover page that can be seen without a secure log-in, that will show lists of resources that are available and deadlines for making application. It is hoped that groups will take advantage of this resource and enter their data in order to make the most of the funds that are available.

Most recently, the group has committed to praying for Blair County and very specifically, Altoona, with the intention that drug abuse would be eradicated and that the community would once again, offer employment to sustain families and be a place where all members of the community feel safe.

The group meets monthly and this year, will be meeting at Second Avenue United Methodist Church. If God is calling you to be a part of this team and for more information, contact Shawna Hoover at (814) 296-8730 or Shawna@OperationOurTown.org. Your prayers are always appreciated as well!

**Thanks to Operation Our Town for their assistance in the fight against drugs.**

**BLAIR COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY RICHARD A. CONSIGLIO**

## APD ON FACEBOOK

BY ALTOONA POLICE SGT. BRIAN R. FREIWALD

There is no question that social media has taken our world by storm. That being said, it was a simple meeting with Altoona Police Chief Janice Freehling that fostered today's Altoona Police Department Facebook page. That was September 2012. My desire to engage social media was an effort to embrace this emerging technology and its crime-fighting potential, which I felt was so strong. That potential exploded with more than 35,000 followers as of February 2015.

It began with a mere 200 people from an earlier attempt before I took control. The page simply lacked the engagement of social media followers. The question at hand was how to expand and maximize the opportunity. It began with a post on October 9, 2012, with an appeal to attempt to locate a missing endangered adult male, with both medical and psychiatric history. The post reached only 1,345 people and was

shared 25 times. That post resulted in a successful locate on October 11. The followers, who embraced the Facebook message, had just helped APD officers save their first life.

It was on October 25, 2012 that the APD Facebook Page could be successfully linked to its first arrest. In less than a month's time, the audience grew to over 2,800 people. Those people, combined with diligent officers' acting on nearly every tip, lead to the arrest of William Byrd, who had been on the run since July 2012 and was wanted for various drug-related offenses.

It was then, that the benefit to fight crime, using social media, became a reality and took off across Blair County. Since that time, the APD Facebook page has put up some impressive numbers and has seen nothing but growth and success. The top five statistics include, at number one, the notification of the arrest of Benjamin Richards, an alleged child predator.

That post alone was viewed by almost two million people. The number two spot was a DUI prevention message featuring "Blitzen" the reindeer, which was viewed by 1.9 million and received an impressive 93,277 likes. Number three was a display of mutual aid to Pennsylvania State Police Huntingdon, for two missing teenagers that were eventually recovered safely in California. The fourth was a video taken at the 2014 train derailment in Altoona, which was viewed over 602,000 times. And rounding out the top five; a post voluntarily developed to help locate alleged cop killer Eric Frein. It was viewed 339,712 times.

The key to the success of the APD Facebook page is a combination of solid and consistent page administration, engagement by the viewing public, and the willingness of officers across our region to embrace the tips and seek out the criminal element. While it began as an idea to help Altoona fight crime, it has transgressed municipal, state and international boundaries. This has allowed the department to expand its reach and

use the amazing following to help locate people who are in danger or who choose to break the law.

From the trust and professionalism between a Chief and her sergeant, we were able to achieve four primary goals. First, we built trustworthy relations and a sense of community by engaging others. Secondly, we gained control over the departments' reputation within the community. Third, we were able to provide a forum for people to ask questions and to share tips that may have otherwise

never been communicated. Finally, we spread knowledge quickly, with minimal effort, that could ultimately help protect the community. These goals have helped officers make a major difference.

I have continually been amazed at the good that people display, at their willingness to help, and their courage to cause a change. The power of a share and a like are the solid foundation which allows us to accomplish our mission. The APD Facebook page can be summed up by a single word: IMPACT.



## LAW ENFORCEMENT ROUNDTABLE REPORT

ANTHONY L. SASSANO, REGIONAL AGENT-IN-CHARGE, PA OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

In 2014, Blair County Law Enforcement has continued to see an interest in heroin and opioid distribution and use. This trend is similar throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and nationwide. A number of factors can be viewed as attributing to this trend which has made heroin the drug of choice in Pennsylvania. As pharmacists, doctors and law enforcement officials have restricted access to prescription opioids which are chemically similar to heroin, users have switched to a cheaper alternative. Heroin use has a direct correlation to prescription medication addiction. Additionally, the recent passage of legislation aimed at curbing the misuse of prescription medication will add to enforcement efforts.

Due to the increase in demand for heroin, law enforcement has seen an increase in supply which has lowered the price of heroin. Several years ago, heroin

routinely sold for \$20.00 per bag in Blair County. Prices have dropped to \$10.00 per bag or even less if enough bags are purchased.

Where does Blair County heroin come from? Heroin distributed in Blair County comes from many larger source cities generally within a 300 mile radius. These cities would include New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh. Whenever possible, we arrest the upper



level dealers as quickly as possible.

Funding provided by Operation Our Town supplements drug enforcement funding provided by local and state law enforcement agencies. In this past year, the funding provided by Operation Our Town has enabled Blair County Law Enforcement to conduct an additional 43 narcotics enforcement operations which consisted of 17 search warrants, 2 raids and 24 narcotics distributor investigations.

With continued support from Operation Our Town, Blair County Law Enforcement plans to continue with our efforts to make Blair County a safer place to live. We will continue to enforce the Pennsylvania Drug Act and additionally, we will continue to provide drug educational programs to any group or organization which requests our participation.

## 2014 GOLF TOURNAMENT |

*(Continued from A1)*

better than last year. We will again provide an 8:00 am and 1:00 pm tee time for golfers to choose from. Sheetz will also be providing a delicious cooked breakfast and lunch for morning and afternoon golfers to enjoy before they tee off, so come hungry! We also plan to do our exciting "golden ticket" contest for golfers again. Please consider supporting Op-

eration Our Town through our annual golf tournament, as this has become one of our major fundraisers since state and federal funding is becoming limited or no longer available. Call or email Shawna Hoover at (814) 296-8730 or Shawna@OperationOurTown.org for more details on how you can support this year's tournament!



# Kids Need Face to Face Connections

TIM O'BRIEN, REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF YOUNG LIFE

Adolescence is a turbulent time filled with the same uncertainty and challenges as past generations; however the obstacles and trials are appearing at hyper speed. Our kids today live in a cyber world – where the idea of waiting for anything is beyond frustrating. Waiting seconds for a phone app to load is unheard of – and to be without their phones or service is a nightmare few students would even want to consider. It is in the midst of this hyper-speed world of virtual connections that students need even more relational connection with caring and trained adults who enter their world and walk with them on their journey.

Organizations like Young Life, an interdenominational Christian ministry that has been in Central PA for over 40 years seeks to connect with students through real face-to-face relationships; one of the things most missing in the adolescent

world today. When adults enter into the world of teenagers they bring with them experience and an insight that is crucial if we desire our kids to be the leaders the next generation will need. In Young Life we train our staff and volunteers that we must “earn the right to be heard” in the lives of teenagers. That is more than just a weekly program or text – it is going into the world of kids and spending time with them. Talking with them about life, not judging, not offering “wise” solutions – but building trusting relationships that when the need is apparent, options are offered to solve a situation, that they come from a trusted friend and not an “authority”.

This kind of vision of walking

alongside students can be done by all adults but especially teachers, coaches, youth leaders, school authorities, police officers, and many others who can invest in the lives of students – by just being there and sharing life. Organizations like Young Life make a difference in students' lives because their focus is to reach into the world of adolescents and help them slow down enough to hear the voice of reason and truth. The support of organizations like Operation Our Town make it possible for funding that gives non-

profit student focused community organizations additional funds that can be used to hire additional staff or offer positive, fun programs that introduce students to caring adults who can change their lives.

The stumbling block that we must get beyond in our assessment of community outreach organizations is that they are not just for the “troubled kids”, but every student with the need for positive adult input into their worlds. All kids; especially the ones from good homes are one “dumb” mistake away from

spiraling into a world of drugs, alcohol and other destructive patterns. If we can lift up the good in this area by modeling what healthy connection, community, and relationships can achieve, we will have gone a great distance in showing our young friends what can happen in our town. Organizing and encouraging people to slow down, listen, and invest in our community will make the difference in the quality of life we all experience here in Central Pennsylvania.



**Blair County**  
**CRIME SOLVERS**  
**800-422-8802**

## OOT Early Childhood Education Roundtable

RODNEY GREEN, LEADERSHIP & SPECIAL EDUCATION CONSULTANT

The past year has been a busy one for the Operation Our Town Early Childhood Education Roundtable.

A number of accomplishments for 2014 included:

- The coordination and scheduling of selected business leaders to visit to “STAR 4” early learning centers in Blair County throughout the year.

- A follow-up meeting of those business leaders for a “mini-summit” in November of 2014.

- Producing an Early Childhood Roundtable Public Access program in August 2014. Without a doubt, the visita-

tion by a number of business leaders to high quality learning centers was a highlight for the Roundtable. By encouraging our business community to engage with the providers of high quality early learning, our roundtable was able to educate these leaders on the benefits of quality early childhood care. Centers visited by these leaders included: Begin With Us of Altoona, Hollidaysburg YMCA Children's Center, Lily Pond of Altoona, and TLC of Altoona. Each of these programs is a STAR 4 center, as designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

As a follow-up to the visits, the same leaders took the time to meet for a “mini-summit” in November to share their thoughts and learn more about the value of high quality programming. Because of their interest, our leaders now understand that children who are exposed to high quality early learning programs are much less likely to be involved in criminal behaviors. Investing in such programs, just like the investments in Operation Our Town, benefits everyone in our community. For more information on the how investing in early childhood can help to fight crime,

you are encouraged to check out the following web link: [FightCrime.org/state/pennsylvania](http://FightCrime.org/state/pennsylvania)

Another great activity by the Roundtable was the filming and broadcast of a public access channel program in August of 2014. The program moderator was Mr. Dean McKnight, a long-time Operation Our Town supporter. The program included three segments:

1. Martinsburg Chief of Police Kerry Hoover discussing his long history of working with school-age students in the Spring Cove School District.

2. Mrs. Sue Barton and

selected parents from the Altoona Area School District Pre-K programs. The parents and Mrs. Barton shared success stories of children who have benefited from the early learning program.

3. Mr. Joe Hurd and Mr. Dennis Doll discussing the business community's interest in learning more about the benefits of investing in early childhood education. The following link on the Operation Our Town web page: [OperationOurTown.org/oot-tv-show](http://OperationOurTown.org/oot-tv-show) is available to view the August 2014 EC Roundtable Show.

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# OPINION

## We Need You!

DEAN MCKNIGHT, OPERATION OUR TOWN TV SHOW

“Elsie, you’ll never guess who that was on the phone. It was Shawna Hoover from Operation Our Town and she asked if I would be willing to moderate a TV show about drugs.” “Do you think the Pharmacy turned you in?” my wife asked, only half joking. “No, this is that group that’s trying to make our neighborhoods safer that we have been following in the news. I’m not sure who they are, but I recognize some of the names behind it and they’re all good people.

I’m not sure what I can do to help, but I’m going to say yes.”

What a simple beginning to what has become such an awesome experience. I was so naive; this program “Taking Back Our Neighborhoods” has been one of the most educational, thought provoking, and rewarding things I’ve ever done. I’ve had the privilege of talking to a parent who lost their child to drugs. A mother telling of her emotions, when her child who was not speak-

ing came home from pre-school and sang for her. Tears, you bet, but what a sense of pride that I could be a small part of this magnificent team called “Operation Our Town.” On the show I’ve talked to school administrators, law and drug enforcement people, program volunteers, and people in programs fighting addiction. I’ve learned that drugs, illegal and prescription, touch all of our lives in some way. They destroy families, encourage crime, and bring

tears to our loved ones, our neighbors and our neighborhoods. I’m not sure what my involvement has meant to the many viewers of the show, but I know what it’s done for me. It’s made me want to tell the world, “We need you”! We need you to volunteer with one of the many groups that Operation Our Town partners with. Groups that help make our neighborhoods safer and more family friendly. Neighborhoods where children can play, free from the fear of

crime related to drugs. We need your financial support at whatever level you can share. A few dollars to you means an awful lot to a family in need. We need you to share the pride in an organization totally local in its origination and administration. An entire organization totally dedicated to you, your family, and your neighborhood. I’ve also learned after reviewing the shows, that I will not be entering any beauty or talent shows in the near future.

# Letter from the Editor

MICHAEL A. FIORE, CO-FOUNDER/PRESIDENT - OPERATION OUR TOWN

Operation Our Town has made significant progress over the past eight years to reduce drug activity and associated crime in Blair County. But, the battle is not over. Drugs are still continuing to enter our community. Blair County law enforcement are doing their part to address the

supply problem by arresting those bringing drugs in, and schools and local community organizations are helping to address the demand for drugs in our community through education, prevention, and after-school programs for our children.

With the success of our golf tournament, and dona-

tions from businesses, organizations, and individuals in our community in 2014, we were able to grant \$50,000 to 15 community organizations aimed at the prevention of drug abuse. We were also able to grant a total of over \$120,000 to Blair County law enforcement to fund special operations and the drug pros-

ecutor, Peter Weeks. 2014 results from special operations include 24 drug investigations conducted, 17 search warrants served, and two drug raids conducted. 2014 results from the drug prosecutor position include 259 cases assigned, 142 defendants involved, and four jury trials.

As a community, we need to remain diligent and not let

our guard down. As business leaders, we must continue to provide the leadership and resources necessary to continue to protect our children, our neighborhoods, and our quality of life. Our communities' future depends on it. We will continue to send the message to drug dealers that if they sell drugs in Blair County, they will get caught and they will be prosecuted.

# BUSINESS

## Central PA Landlord Association

BILL KITT, PRESIDENT, CPLA

The Central Pennsylvania Landlord Association (CPLA) is a non-profit group of independent property investors, owners, and managers. Our organization educates and assists landlords with issues such as compliance, tenant relations, and regulations on local, state, and federal levels. We provide an array of tools to assist landlords in being prepared to handle day-to-day tasks and duties. In addition, we are active in the Pennsylvania Residential Owners Association in making sure our interests are being served in Harrisburg.

The CPLA is changing the image of today's landlord. We care about safe affordable housing, while maintaining housing for our neighborhoods and our tenants. Our goal is to provide landlords with the knowledge, resources and tools they need to succeed. We offer our landlords a library of documents that cover policies, regulations, and compliance. Our landlords meet once a month to hear guest speakers such as attorneys, magistrates, fair housing representatives, etc. The CPLA also has an active Pennsylvania Realty Owners Association (PROA) representative who provides updates on pending legislation that affect our landlords locally and state-wide.

We believe better landlords help build and maintain better communities. Therefore, we are proactive in our efforts in working with local municipalities and interest groups to provide our support in their efforts. Our relationship with Operation Our Town has been beneficial in coordinating landlord workshops, round tables, and reaching all segments of the community. The Opera-

tion Our Town Steering Committee is a positive force in our area. Operation Our Town has helped make our community a safer environment for everyone, which includes tenants and landlords. Operation Our Town is a benchmark which other communities are looking to emulate.

Check out our website at CentralPaLandlords.com. The CPLA residential listings website allows landlords to post residential and/or commercial property for sale or rent. The student housing website connects student housing landlords with students looking for off-campus housing.

Benefits of becoming a CPLA member include:

- Online rental listings
- Online business directory
- Extensive online library of landlord documents
- Membership to Johnstown Credit Bureau
- Credit checks
- Background checks
- Collection services
- Tenant database
- Membership in PROA
- Representation in statewide legislation
- Residential & student housing issues addressed with local government
- Monthly meetings
- Address current issues
- Informative & educational speakers

The CPLA has made great strides in the last few years. I would highly encourage all landlords to join. You can contact me at (814) 695-2138 with any questions you might have. You can join by going to our website CentralPaLandlords.com and downloading the application form.



**DISCOVERYHOUSE**  
The Center for Recovery & Hope



Recovery  
Can Begin  
Today

Affordable & Confidential  
Outpatient Treatment Services

- Easy Intake Process
- Caring & Compassionate Staff
- Dedicated to Patient Delight

814.944.7000  
3438 Route 764  
Duncansville, PA 16635

www.DiscoveryHouse.com

## YTI - Community Connections Program

NATALIE LOMBARDO-BEAVER, PRESIDENT, YTI CAREER INSTITUTE-ALTOONA CAMPUS

Over the past several years, YTI Career Institute — Altoona has been active with Operation Our Town (OOT). Each year, we select OOT as a recipient of our Community Connections program, which allows YTI to partner with non-profit organizations to provide both financial and volunteer support. Based on the benefits we've seen with our students, staff and faculty, we strongly encourage other educational institutions to participate in this organization. Even if monetary contributions are not an option, volunteering with OOT is equally as important to their successes in our community.

I have created a list of the top five reasons why educational facilities — of all levels — should be active with OOT. We hope that you consider these and join us in our fight to eliminate drugs in our community.

1. At YTI, we set high standards not only in academics and attendance, but also in community service initiatives. These

activities give students a sense of teamwork, pride and accomplishment. By working with OOT, your organization, like us, will have an opportunity to participate in several events, from working a booth at Duncansville's Night Out Against Crime, to volunteering at community festivals and expos. You may even have a chance to wear the McGruff the Crime Dog costume! These types of activities have allowed our students to step out of their comfort zones and give back to their community.

2. As a post-secondary career school, our focus is to help committed students attain rewarding careers. In addition to students' hands-on, industry-modeled training, we stress the importance of networking. OOT has provided this opportunity for our students, especially those in the Criminal Justice and First Response program. This is mainly because OOT plays a major role in supporting and funding several services within the Criminal

Justice and First Response field here in Blair County, and many law enforcement personnel also heavily support OOT. But OOT has given staff an opportunity to network, as well. Employees have been asked to participate on roundtables and the OOT Public Access show, where they've been able to connect with other prominent community members and business leaders. We have also secured commencement speakers and potential employers through these networking efforts.

3. Providing students the opportunity to interact with local professionals has been invaluable. During these interactions, students enhance their social skills and observe many well-respected individuals in Blair County. The individuals associated with Operation Our Town are viewed as role models and can greatly impact your student population. In addition, students' participation can certainly be very attractive on their resumes,

given OOT's stellar reputation in the community. OOT also offers several educational seminars, workshops and Neighborhood Crime Watch meetings throughout the year, providing educational opportunities on community issues and initiatives as they relate to drugs and drug abuse prevention.

4. In addition to supporting our students academically, YTI is also committed to connecting them with resources as they address outside issues. OOT has many programs in place that support law enforcement, treatment and prevention, all of which can benefit students. When students are supported in these ways, they gain a much better chance of succeeding academically and positively contributing to the community. Lastly, OOT sponsors many family-friendly events in the community. Whether you want to participate in Duncansville's Night Out Against Crime or the Hollidaysburg YMCA Family Nights, each opportunity

provides fun for all involved. Activities like these keep kids off the streets and decrease their chances of being involved in drug activity.

5. With your support, OOT can continue with programs like Push Out the Pusher, and provide funding to special initiatives that fight against drug use and sale. In turn, this helps the community become a safer place that attracts families, students and employers to the area.

YTI Career Institute, with campuses in Altoona, Emigsville, Lancaster and York, PA, helps committed students attain rewarding careers through industry-modeled, student centered, training and support of the highest caliber. YTI Career Institute offers career education in the business, trades, culinary, medical, motor sports and technology fields. For more information about YTI, please call 800-227-9675 or visit YTI.edu.



**PROUD**  
**TO SUPPORT**  
**OPERATION**  
**OUR TOWN**



# LOCAL

## Altoona Housing Authority

CHERYL A. JOHNS,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Altoona Housing Authority is a Municipal Authority that was formed in 1949 to administer and develop safe, affordable housing for low and moderate income families within the City limits of Altoona. The first development created was Pleasant Village to address the housing shortage following WWII.

The housing inventory for the Authority consists of 170 family units, 366 senior units, 985 Section 8 Voucher units and 126 non-subsidized units at Pleasant Village with a staff of 30 employees.

The Altoona Housing Authority is committed to providing safe and affordable housing to persons who meet the eligibility requirements. Strict screening criteria are in place for those on the waiting list in need of housing assistance. Those applicants who engage in illegal drug use or other criminal activities that endanger the well-being of residents are not permitted to reside in our developments. Through the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, residents are encouraged to participate in programs that promote self-sufficiency through an escrow account, enabling them to graduate from the program after a five-year period with the ultimate goal of moving out of Public Housing and the Section 8 Voucher Program and

becoming a first-time home buyer.

The Authority is an equal housing opportunity provider and does not discriminate against applicants/residents on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or disability. Five percent of the public housing units are modified to meet accessibility standards for those in need of accessible housing. In addition, the Authority has a Reasonable Accommodation Policy which includes structural modifications for our residents who are disabled and because of that disability, need a change or exception to our rules or policies in order to fully use and enjoy their surroundings.

Providing a safe and secure living environment for residents in any of our developments is a very high priority. The Authority contracts with the City of Altoona to provide a full-time Altoona Police Department officer on-site at our family development, Fairview Hills. In addition, the Towers are patrolled by two full-time security officers after business hours, ensuring the safety of the residents living at the Green Avenue & Eleventh Street Towers. Both buildings have entry systems that restrict access to those who do not live at the Towers.

In accordance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations and guidelines, the Authority adopted and implements a "One Strike and You're Out" Policy in order to have an effective crime prevention program eliminating drugs and crime within our develop-

ments.

As Chairperson of the Operation Our Town Housing Roundtable, it is extremely important for agencies and landlords to get involved in their community with knowing who you are renting to with establishing consistent criteria for screening and lease enforcement. Through various workshops throughout the year, the Authority, in collaboration with Operation Our Town, conduct workshops to educate on the rules and regulations associated with being a responsible landlord with strict emphasis on a zero tolerance for drug activity.

With reductions in Federal subsidy, the Authority closed its waiting list for the Section 8 Voucher Program in April 2014. After ten (10) months, the Authority will re-open its waiting list for a three-week period beginning February 23, 2015.

There are numerous advantages at our developments for residents to become involved in.

Through a partnership with the Gloria Gates Memorial Foundation (GGMF), the Fairview Hills Development has an on-site after school program five (5) days per week. The Foundation works towards long-term results through intervention in children's lives. Without the support of the GGMF, children would not be able to have a safe environment after school.

It is a goal of the Authority to make each resident feel safe and welcome in their community. If you have any further questions regarding the Authority's operations, you are welcome to contact Mrs. Cheryl A. Johns, Executive Director of the Altoona Housing Authority at (814) 949-2000.

**Jackie Atherton Bernard**  
First Assistant  
District Attorney

BLAIR COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

**KEEP IT SAFE.  
KEEP IT GOING.**

## MEDICATION COLLECTION BOXES I (Continued from A1)

exist. There are now locations available for public disposal of prescription drugs at:

**Hollidaysburg Borough  
Police Department  
401 Blair Street  
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648**

**Altoona Police Department  
1106 16th Street  
Altoona, PA 16601**

**Tyrone Borough  
Police Department  
1100 Logan Avenue  
Tyrone, PA 16686**

Thank you to these departments for agreeing to provide the service for this important initiative.

Our results to-date? Since June 5, 2014, these three prescription drug disposal locations have collected over 511 pounds of prescription drug medications. While not all

of these are controlled substances, we are confident that the program is delivering significantly on our objective to remove prescription drug controlled substances from the community, and as such, from the potential for diversion. We will continue to work to ensure that the public

has an option to easily dispose of unneeded prescription drugs. This program, combined with mail-in and other disposal programs go a long way in helping Operation Our Town's fundamental objective of eliminating drug abuse in Blair County.

## OOT Pharmacy Roundtable

GREG DREW, R.PH., PRESIDENT,  
VALUE DRUG COMPANY

2014 was a busy year for Operation Our Town's Pharmacy Roundtable. As a reminder, the Pharmacy Roundtable focuses on opportunities for the pharmacy community to help with drug abuse prevention in Blair County. The Drug Enforcement Administration in its 2014 National Threat Assessment concluded that the threat from controlled prescription drug abuse is persistent and deaths involving controlled prescription drugs outnumber those involving heroin and cocaine combined. Pharmacists in the community are on the front lines in the battle with drug abuse by reducing diversion, educating the public on the proper use and disposal of controlled prescription drugs, and preventing crimes associated with drug abuse that threaten the pharmacy industry.

To this end, the Pharmacy Roundtable educates pharmacists on ways to assist in this important venture and works on projects to assist the community. It is important to note that the Drug Enforcement Administration holds pharmacists accountable for ensuring that controlled substances are used for a legitimate medical purpose, not simply to verify that a licensed physician has written the prescription. The pharmacist must use reasonable due diligence to verify that the prescriptions they fill fit this requirement. This means research into both patients and prescribers to the extent possible and refusal to fill prescriptions which don't meet the legal standards. One initiative this past year was to develop a proactive pharmacy alert message system that allows pharmacists to report suspected prescription forgeries and have that information immediately distributed to all pharmacies in Blair County and surrounding towns. We also have publicized that this reporting and alert pro-

gram can be used by pharmacists to warn others that a robbery was attempted or accomplished in a pharmacy so others may be on guard. With focused efforts by pharmacy and law enforcement to reduce diversion through prescription channels, pharmacy robberies have escalated as abusers and dealers seek alternate methods to obtain prescription controlled drugs.

Another major accomplishment in 2014, although certainly not attributed solely to the Pharmacy Roundtable, was the passage of a law that established the "Achieving Better Care by Monitoring All Prescriptions Program" which should be implemented soon throughout Pennsylvania. This program will establish a reporting network of all controlled prescriptions filled in the Commonwealth, allowing prescribers and pharmacists to review both patients and prescribers and their activity. This has been very successful in other states in reducing prescriptions being written or filled that don't meet the threshold of a legitimate medical purpose. This was an effort supported by many law enforcement, pharmacy, medical and drug treatment organizations. I was fortunate to be on-hand for the Governor's signing into law of this legislation and was pleased to hear him say "I think it was you folks in Blair County that got this thing started, weren't you?" This program, once implemented, will be a major tool to prevent the diversion of prescription controlled drugs.

Along with the well understood problem of prescription

## CENTRAL PA LANDLORD'S ASSOCIATION

**625 HAWTHORNE DRIVE  
HOLLIDAYSBURG, PA 16648**

**WILLIAM KITT, PRESIDENT  
814-695-2138**

The Central PA Landlord's Association (CPLA) is growing and making a difference in our community. We encourage all landlords to join to help continue our success in supporting and educating landlords. There are many benefits to joining the Landlord Association, but the biggest benefit is landlords helping landlords.

**CENTRALPALANDLORDS.COM**

drugs being obtained fraudulently through prescribers and pharmacies, a major source of prescription drug diversion is inadvertent diversion by legitimate patients and their families. One study showed that over 37% of drug abusers obtained their prescription controlled drugs from friends and family either through deception or theft. Compounding the issue is the need for disposal of prescription drugs upon death of a patient or a decision to discontinue therapy. I have described our efforts in establishing prescription drug disposal opportunities in our community in more detail in another article in this Annual Report, but by working collaboratively with law enforcement, the Blair County District Attorney's Office and the Blair County Drug and Alcohol Program, we have established convenient drug disposal

sites in the county. We also supported and publicized the last DEA Prescription Drug Take-Back Day in September 2014.

Another collaboration with the Law Enforcement Roundtable and Blair County District Attorney's Office results in a relaunch of the Cops in Shops program. This program increases police presence and visibility in and around pharmacies to deter pharmacy robberies. The efforts resulted in a press conference on January 19, 2015 announcing the program. In addition to law enforcement assistance, Operation Our Town and Value Drug Company made available window clings for pharmacies, increasing visibility of the program, as well as "no hats, no hoods, no sunglasses" signs. Following the press conference, Value Drug sponsored an educational session with the Pennsylvania State Police to educate

pharmacists on ways to prevent robberies, reduce the risk of injury, and how to obtain information useful to law enforcement in the event of a robbery.

As you can see, we've had our hands full this past year, and I would like to thank not only the members of the Pharmacy Roundtable, who get their Friday morning started once a month with our 7:15 a.m. Roundtable meetings, but also the Blair County District Attorney's Office, the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General, law enforcement representatives from throughout the county, Value Drug Company, the Blair County Drug and Alcohol Program and Representative John McGinnis' staff support. Thanks to all for helping us minimize the opportunity for prescription drug diversion in Blair County.

# Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB)/OOT Judicial Roundtable

HONORABLE JOLENE KOPRIVA, BLAIR COUNTY PRESIDENT JUDGE

The Blair County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) continues to serve in a dual capacity as the Operation Our Town Criminal Justice Roundtable.

In 2014, the CJAB/OOT Criminal Justice Roundtable approved and supported the following grants:

1. Child Advocacy Center for victims of sexual abuse.
  2. SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral for Treatment) designed to give the medical community a protocol for screening of patients during medical visits in an effective manner to encourage treatment through referral.
  3. The establishment of another Prescription Pick-Up box now placed at the Hollidaysburg Borough Building.
- The Crisis Intervention Training

(CIT) grant received approval and resulted in 17 folks taking the first training on September 8-12. Training will continue in March of 2015 with the second cohort and more cohorts to follow.

CJAB/OOT Criminal Justice Roundtable also participated in the Suicide Prevention Walk at Mansion Park in September and raised \$350 of the total \$9,000 donated to the event.

The Mental Health Committee worked diligently to create a flow chart to identify Mental Health records/assessment at jail entry and to create systems to ensure mental health medications can be bridged upon reentry for defendants to keep the community safer.

We also approved the creation of a Magisterial District Judge Vet-

erans Court which began early in 2014 with the approval of the Police Chiefs Association and the District Attorney.

As a part of the monthly meetings convened, the Communications Committee schedules presentations for educating the members of CJAB/OOT Criminal Justice Roundtable. The presentations this year included:

Suicide Prevention, Update from Blair County Children Youth and Families on the changes in the law regarding child physical and sexual abuse including reporting requirements, Child Advocacy Centers and the progress of the committee moving on that concept led by First Assistant District Attorney Jackie Bernard, Elder Abuse and Pastor Ed Jelliffe who has a vision of creating a construction company to give opportunity to convicted felons to learn a different way to live, spiritually, physically and in a responsible fashion.

We continue the ongoing efforts

regarding Housing, Reentry, and Mental Health needs and resources. The Sheriff has instituted 3 bench warrant teams who operate on all shifts and Blair County Costs and Fines continue to increase their payments each year under the latest technology of EPay for defendants which allows them or others to make credit card payments on costs and fines accounts.

The Blair County Dashboard now has a State counterpart so we can compare our data with other 5th class counties and have a broader view of effective practices and outcomes from which we can learn.

We thank all the board members for their willingness to come together monthly and participate in an ongoing forum for communication and collaboration among key decision-makers for the purposes of evaluating, analyzing, planning, information sharing and integrating and recommending action to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the criminal justice system.



## Blair County Agencies Who are Partnered with OOT

Allegheny Township Police - 814-695-333  
Contact Person: Chief Leo Berg

Altoona Police - 814-949-2489  
Contact Person: Chief Janice Freehling

Bellwood Borough - 814-742-7800  
Contact Person: Chief Joesph Schlecht

Blair Township Police - 814-696-3846  
Contact Person: Chief Rodger White

Duncansville Police - 814-695-1930  
Contact Person: Chief James Ott

Freedom Township Police - 814-695-8545  
Contact Person: Chief Terry Dellinger

Greenfield Township Police - 814-239-5313  
Contact Person: Corporal Andrew Campbell

Hollidaysburg Borough Police - 814-695-3711  
Contact Person: Chief David Gehret

Logan Township Police - 814-949-3364  
Contact Person: Interim Chief John Flinn

Martinsburg Borough - 814-793-2838  
Contact Person: Chief Kerry Hoover

N. Woodbury Township - 814-7934897  
Contact Person: Sergeant Jeff Ketner

Roaring Spring Borough Police - 814-224-5382  
Contact Person: Chief Milton Fields

Tyrone Borough Police - 814-684-1364  
Contact Person: Chief John Romeo

Williamsburg Borough - 814-832-2022  
Contact Person: Chief Rowdy Kagarise

UPMC Police - 814-889-2121  
Contact Person: Chief John Hawksworth

Pa State Police - 814-696-6100  
Contact Person: Sergeant David Montresor

Central PA Humane Society - 814-942-5402  
Contact Person: Officer Paul Gottshall

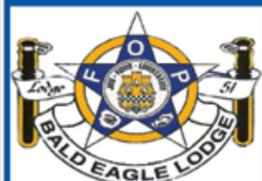
Penn State Altoona - 814-949-5222  
Contact Person: Chief Michael Lowery

Altoona VA Medical Center Police - 814-943-8164, ext 7059  
Contact Person: Chief Paul Blanchard

PA Game Commission - 814-643-1831  
Contacts: WCO Zellner & WCO Brehun

Blair County Sheriff - 814-693-3100  
Contact Person: Sheriff Mitch Cooper

## FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE



## BALD EAGLE LODGE #51

1979 REESE  
HOLLOW ROAD  
P.O. BOX 99,  
PORT MATILDA, PA.  
16870

SERVING OFFICERS  
OF BLAIR, CENTRE,  
AND CLEARFIELD  
COUNTIES

## Save The Date! OOT 3rd Annual Golf Tournament

September 14 & 15,  
2015

Park Hills Country Club, Altoona

Sponsorship opportunities to follow at a later date. Check our website for updates!

### Tentative schedule of events

#### September 14, 2015

1:00pm - OOT Student Golf Tournament

5:00pm - OOT Neighborhood BBQ

#### September 15, 2015

7:00am - Morning registration & breakfast provided by Sheetz

8:00am - AM Shotgun start

11:00am - Afternoon registration & lunch provided by Sheetz

12:45pm - AM putting contest (opportunity to win \$5,000)

1:00pm - PM Shotgun start

5:45pm - PM putting contest (opportunity to win \$5,000)

Cocktail reception following afternoon golf



## ALTOONA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT FOUNDATION

Helping Altoona Area School District students achieve excellence through promoting innovation and excellence in the classroom.

AND



## Project SOAR

(Study, Overcome, Achieve, Reward)

Providing a structured orientation and mentoring program to assist students in achieving post-secondary education.

Together building the future of our community and making an impact on our future leaders.

For information about the AASD Foundation or Project SOAR, contact AASD Foundation Executive Director Paula Foreman at 946-8424 or visit our website at [www.aasdfoundation.org](http://www.aasdfoundation.org).



# OOT Roundtable Descriptions

**Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB):** To provide an ongoing forum for communication and collaboration among key decision makers for the purposes of evaluating, analyzing, planning, information sharing, and integrating and recommending action to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the criminal justice system.

**Early Childhood Education Roundtable:** To prevent involvement in drug abuse and criminal activities by providing pre-k age children with enriched early childhood learning experiences.

**Faith-based Roundtable:** From a faith perspective, respond to and contribute to the work of the Operation Our Town Partnerships. Promote, facilitate, and encourage faith-based community partnerships in using God's gracious gifts to bring about positive change, hope, and spiritual health in the community.

**Gang Roundtable:** To gather, coordinate and disseminate gang related activities for the purpose of communicating information directly to the steering committee in order to assist in the development of strategic plans to deal with gang, drug and crime prevention as a result of gang related activities.

**Housing Roundtable:** Identify solutions to address the problems created by transient tenants. To discuss and implement educational techniques for renting properties to responsible tenants.

**K-12 Education Roundtable:** Elimination of drug abuse in K-12 students in Blair County through education, programming, and awareness of the dangers of drug abuse.

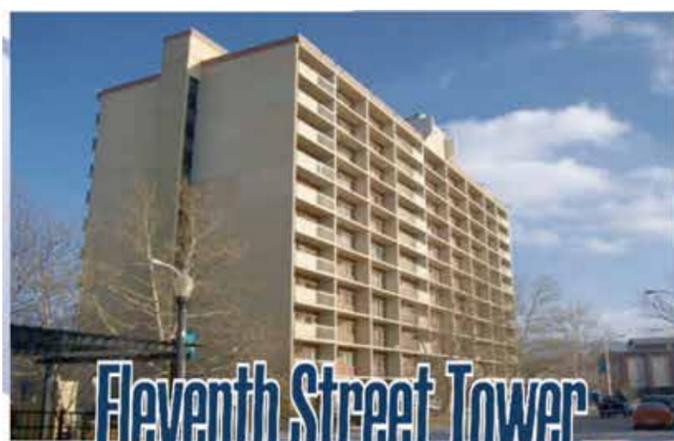
**Law Enforcement Roundtable:** Facilitate partnerships between the community and business to fight both drug use and crime through proven law enforcement techniques.

**Marketing Roundtable:** To communicate and promote the objectives of the organization to effectively engage the citizenry of our community to become involved in taking back our neighborhoods.

**Northern Blair Roundtable:** To facilitate partnerships between community and business in Northern Blair County to fight drug use and crime through proven law enforcement, treatment, and prevention techniques.

**Pharmacy Roundtable:** To assure the safety of pharmacy employees and patrons, and to improve relationships with local and state law enforcement.

**Volunteer Roundtable:** To support the mission of OOT with as many volunteers as possible.



## Eleventh Street Tower

1100 11th Street  
Altoona, PA 16601  
(814) 949-2011



## Green Avenue Tower

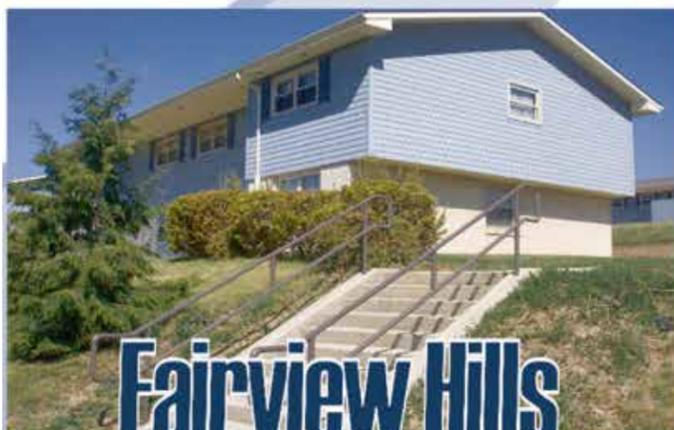
911 Green Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16601  
(814) 949-2009



# Altoona Housing Authority

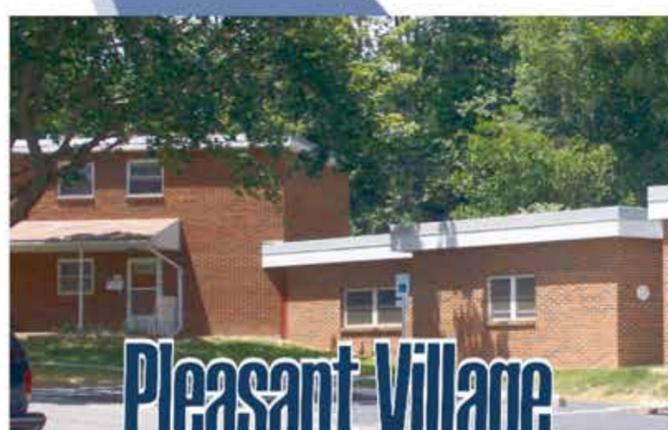
Providing safe and affordable housing for the City of Altoona, Pennsylvania  
Welcoming you to move towards a brighter future with the AHA

2700 Pleasant Valley Boulevard, Altoona, PA 16602  
(814) 949-2000



## Fairview Hills

1614 1st Street  
Altoona, PA 16601  
(814) 949-2016



## Pleasant Village

2700 Pleasant Valley Boulevard  
Altoona, PA 16602  
(814) 949-2010



Equal Opportunity Housing Provider

We are an Equal Opportunity Housing Provider. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or disability.



Building Healthier Relationships  
814-944-3583  
2022 Broad Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16601  
FamilyServicesInc.net  
"Like" us on Facebook!



RelianceBank.com

ALTOONA  
TYRONE  
DUNCANSVILLE  
LAKEMONT  
STATE COLLEGE

800-570-0876

### COPS IN SHOPS I (Continued from A1)

may be in progress. Pharmacies are also encouraging customers to assist with the program by removing hats and sunglasses prior to entering the store.

Greg Drew, Value Drug Company president and pharmacist, as well as Operation Our Town Pharmacy Roundtable Chairperson, is an enthusiastic advocate of this collaborative effort. "Value Drug Company is pleased to take an active role in deterring illegal activities at pharmacies in our area," informs Greg. "Pharmacists are an important line of defense in the fight to end drug abuse. We've long been trained to identify forged and altered scripts, as well as prescriptions likely to re-

sult in prescription drug diversion. With the in-store support of undercover and uniformed officers, we can help to ensure the safety of our customers and employees."

The Operation Our Town Pharmacy Roundtable is open to pharmacists and pharmacy owners throughout Blair County. To become a member or to request free Cops in Shops window clings, contact Operation Our Town at 814.296.8730. Operation Our Town also provides "No hats, hoods or sunglasses" window clings to Blair County pharmacies, banks and retailers in addition to Push Out the Pusher yard signs, window clings, magnets and other materials. Materials are available from Operation Our Town at no cost.



## 2nd Avenue United Methodist Church

We are pleased to partner with Operation Our Town in making our neighborhoods great places to live!

With the gracious help of OOT grants, we provide

### The R.O.C.K. Program (Reaching Out to Community Kids)

Wednesdays, 4:30-7:00pm during the school year

The program provides a hot meal, structured game time, physical recreation period in our gym, craft time, as well as an environment of teaching and reinforcing positive life choices.

We are also pleased to host the  
**Operation Our Town Faith-based Roundtable**  
every third Thursday at 2pm  
(take the elevator entrance to the 2nd floor)

2nd Avenue UMC is a vibrant faith community, sharing God's love in practical ways. Come worship with us on Sundays at 8:15am (traditional worship) and at 10:45am (contemporary worship and praise band). Plenty of parking and easy elevator access



130 2nd Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16602  
814-943-2072  
[www.2ndaveumc.org](http://www.2ndaveumc.org)



# Making our community healthier together.

## Quality. Expertise. Commitment.



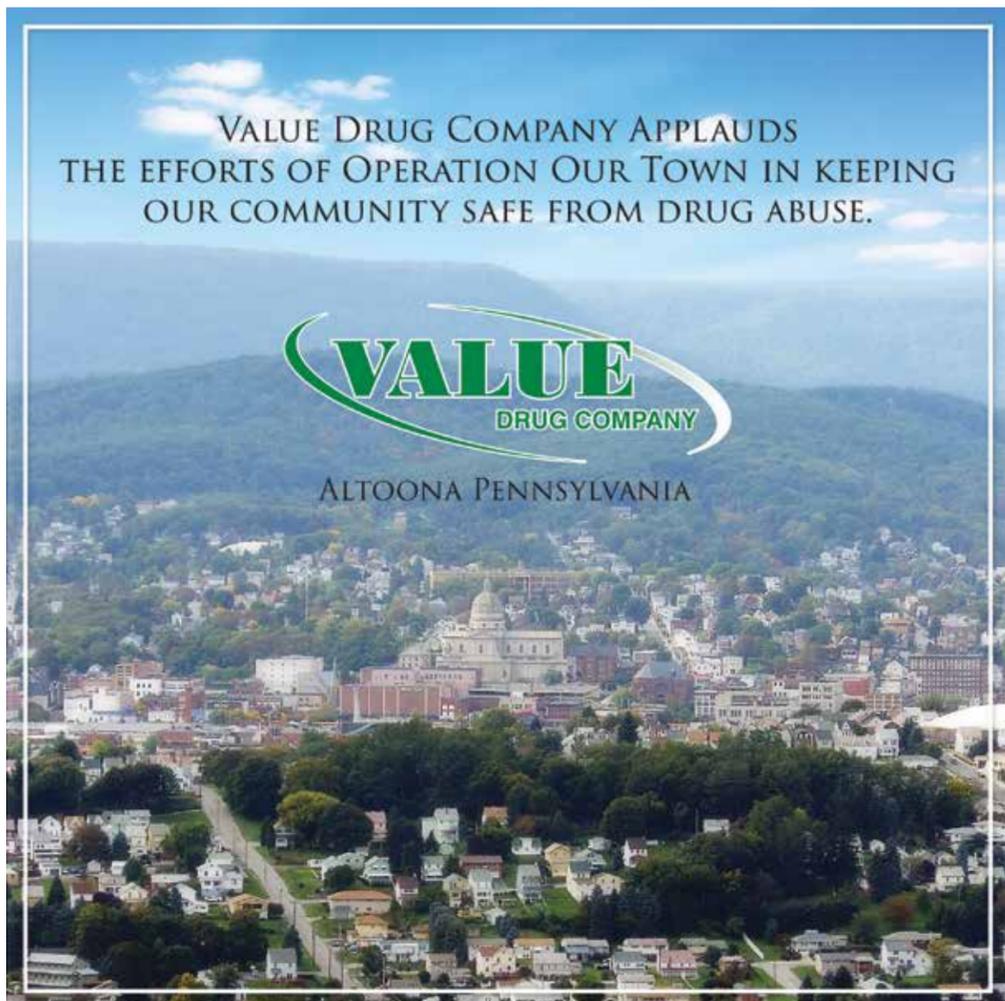
**PUBLIC ACCESS SHOW | (Continued from A1)**

Blair Recreation Commission and Booker T. Washington Revitalization Corp.; Shanda Keith from the 2nd Ave. United Methodist Church; Rod Feather of the Garver YMCA; Laurie Smith from the Hollidaysburg YMCA; Jim Kilmartin, Executive Director of Joshua House; and Georgette Selecky from Stepping Stones for Life. This show was coordinated in order to educate families and provide information about summer programs available throughout the County.

Program four titled "Early Childhood Education" provided a discussion on the effectiveness of having law enforcement officers interact with young children. Two former Pre-K parents talked about their children's success in school due to their Pre-K learning experience, and several business leaders provided their understanding of the importance of early education after visiting several local Pre-K centers. Guests were Chief Kerry Hoover from the Martinsburg Police Department; Sue Barton from Learning Express; Denny Doll of Reliance Bank; and Joe Hurd from the Blair County Chamber of Commerce.

The final episode of 2014 focused on "Business Involvement in Operation Our Town." Local leaders from varying types of businesses came together to discuss the benefits of businesses supporting Operation Our Town, including why they chose to make a financial commitment and volunteer, why it's important to continue supporting the efforts of the organization (Keep It Safe - Keep It Going), and why they encourage others to do the same. Guests on this show include founding members Reliance Bank's Lisa Michelone and Bill Thompson, Sr., from Thompson Pharmacy; a more recent contributor Matt Stuckey from Stuckey Ford/Stuckey Subaru; and Natalie Lombardo of YTI Career Institute, a post-secondary school that supports OOT.

Taking Back Our Neighborhoods shows are aired on Atlantic Broadband Cable Access Channel 14 every Tuesday at 9:00pm and Saturday at 11:00am. They can also be viewed anytime on Operation Our Town's website at [OperationOurTown.org/oot-tv-show](http://OperationOurTown.org/oot-tv-show). Archived shows dating back through 2010 are also available to view.



**OOT Northern Blair County Roundtable**

JIM KILMARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOSHUA HOUSE

Operation Our Town's Northern Blair County Round Table hosts a monthly meeting that involves community members, business leaders and social organizations. These meetings highlight ongoing programs and projects and discuss upcoming plans. The round table has become very involved in the Tyrone Community with several great projects over the past few years.

A Community Garden was created in a lot near the Tyrone Borough Building. The garden hosts 10-12 raised beds with the food being harvested for the Tyrone Food Bank. It is an asset to be able to provide local fresh vegetables for the people in our community.

Each spring, the roundtable organizes a Tyrone Clean-up Day. The event is well attended and provides a valuable service of cleaning up after the winter.

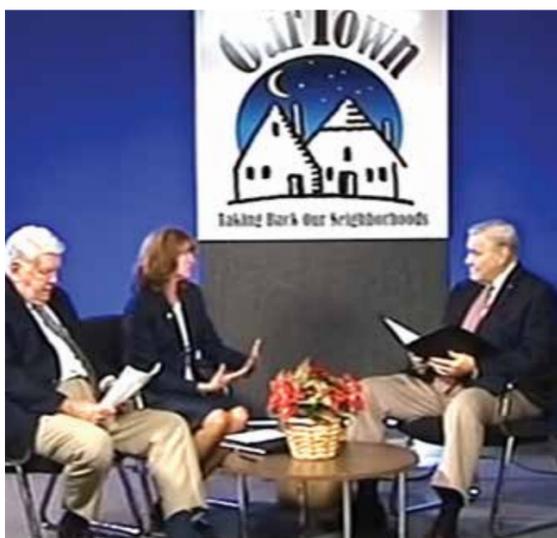
Over 100 participants pick up trash, sweep sidewalks clean of debris, and clean up parks and downtown sections before convening at Reservoir Park for a cook-out. Those involved include scouts, church groups, various individuals from the community, and Tyrone Borough staff.

This past year, the roundtable discussed the value of the Mt. Lion Backpack program and envisioned how it could be developed in the Northern Blair County

communities. Spearheaded Amy Marten-Shanafelt and others, it became a reality in 2014, as Bellwood started a backpack program. They enlisted the help of The Hope Center and Bellwood-Antis School District. Tyrone also will be starting a similar program through Joshua House with the help of the Tyrone Area School District and Tyrone Food Bank.

Through Operation Our Town grants, Joshua House is able to provide a number of after-school programs to serve children, youth and young adults in Tyrone and neighboring communities. Joshua House's Cross-Town Basketball League is played Saturday nights January through March for youth not playing on school varsity teams at the Tyrone Elementary Gym. The goal is to provide an opportunity to play basketball with peers in a fun and positive environment. In 2014, over 50 players participated from Tyrone, Bellwood, Altoona and Mo Valley schools. Throughout the season, Joshua House leaders hold several dinners for players with the focus on leadership development. Along with the Cross-Town League, Joshua House provides many other programs for youth, including after-school programs such as Homework Club, Kids in Motion and the JH Running Club; summer camps, sports leagues and HoopsFest.

If you would like more information about the Northern Blair County Roundtable or Joshua House programs, please contact Jim Kilmartin at [Jim@JoshuaHouse.com](mailto:Jim@JoshuaHouse.com).



**Taking Back Our Neighborhoods**  
Moderator  
**Dean McKnight**

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## Operation Our Town Donors

Operation Our Town was founded in 2007 with the support of many local businesses. The following founding businesses with an asterisk (\*) committed at least \$10,000 per year for three years to fund local efforts to take back our neighborhoods from drugs and violent crime.

The success of Operation Our Town combined with the desire to improve our community has led additional local businesses to continue the work begun by our founding members by also pledging at least \$10,000 per year for three years to support local programs proven to reduce drug use and crime.

### \$10,000 and up:

Altoona Area School District  
Altoona First Savings Bank  
American Eagle Paper Mills  
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Anonymous donor  
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### Under \$1,000:

1st Summit Bank  
AFSCME Local 906 – Hollidaysburg  
Vater's Home

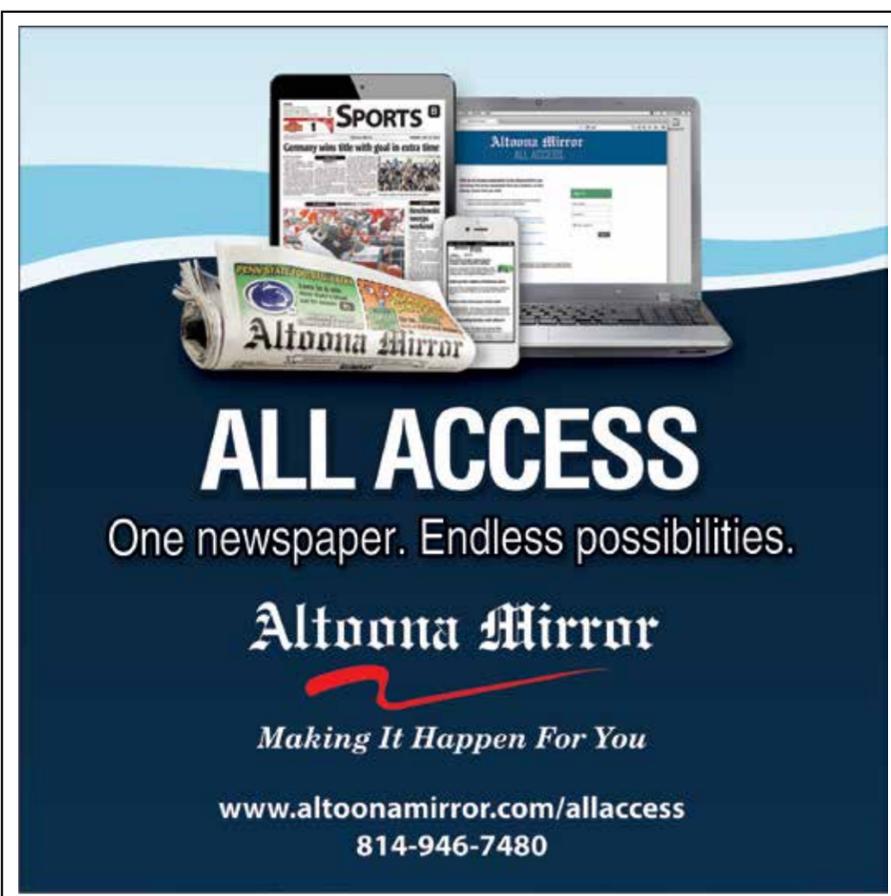
Allegheny Club of Hollidaysburg  
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Allegheny Supply & Maintenance Co., Inc.  
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Altoona Catholic Nurses  
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