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Altoona Proud

A Monthly Insight into all that is Altoona

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month has been observed in May in the United States since 1949. It is a month of activities and events to raise awareness about mental health and spark conversation to fight the stigma surrounding mental illness. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) states that nearly 60 million Americans experience a mental health condition every year.

Regardless of race, age, religion or economic status, mental illness impacts the lives of at least one in four adults and one in ten children across the United States. These are people needing help, hope and a community that will support them and their families. The Blair County Chapter of NAMI provides many resources, including both structured and casual support groups, school and community based presentations and courses for those experiencing mental health issues and their families.

Blair County NAMI also works with the H.O.P.E. Drop-In Center. This Center, located at 711 9th Avenue in Altoona, provides a safe place for promoting wellness, purpose and empowerment for those in recovery. They offer individual and group support, as well as activities such as yoga, craft and game nights and other activities to help make connections and teach coping techniques.



You can learn more about the Blair County NAMI by visiting www.namiblaircountypa.org

If you would like to know more about the H.O.P.E. Drop-In Center, visit www.hopedropin.org

Once again, this year, City Hall's lights will be green, the ribbon color for Mental Health Awareness, during the month of May in support of this initiative and we encourage other businesses, homes and agencies to join us in showing support for this critical health issue.

National Fentanyl Awareness Day

MAY 7
**NATIONAL
FENTANYL
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DAY**

On May 7th, 2024, the United States will recognize National Fentanyl Awareness Day, now in its third year. Last year, over 70,000 Americans fatally overdosed on illegally made Fentanyl. Fentanyl is now being used in fake pills and many street drugs, but users are often unaware that their drugs contain this potent opioid. This has become a public health crisis that puts all of us, and our loved ones, at risk.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports that the rising overdose rates are not being driven by commonly doctor-prescribed opioids, but instead by the use of illegally made fentanyl. Fentanyl is 50 times stronger than heroin and 200 times stronger than morphine. It is often added to other drugs because of its extreme potency, making the drugs more powerful and more deadly.

Naloxone, (brand name Narcan), is the only way to reverse a fentanyl overdose. It is a nasal spray medicine that can be given to anyone showing signs of an opioid overdose, such as unconsciousness, sleepiness, or shallow breathing. Naloxone is safe, only reversing overdoses in people with opioids in their system, with no effects on a person without opioids in their system. Any person or business can keep a dose on hand and administer it without fear of legal action through the Good Samaritan Statute.

Narcan is available free through agencies such as Families United for Change (Blair County Narcan Squad) and the Blair County Drug and Alcohol Program. To learn more, or to obtain Narcan for your home or business, go to www.familiesunitedforchange.org or www.fentanylawarenesday.org

Blair Senior Services, Inc. Volunteers

Blair Senior Services, Inc. is actively recruiting volunteers to serve a minimum of five (5) hours per week as a Classroom Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion Volunteer. The Classroom Foster Grandparent Volunteers spend one-on-one time with children in a school setting, providing a positive, lasting impact in the lives of those they serve in schools and daycares throughout Blair County.

Senior Companion Volunteers spend one-on-one time with individuals 60 years of age and older, in their homes and senior centers, helping to maintain independence and increase socialization. In addition to helping others, these volunteers also improve their own lives by staying active and healthy through volunteer service.

The Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs offer benefits that include a tax-free stipend (that does not affect any other income-based assistance), paid time off, paid holidays and mileage reimbursement, public transportation assistance and other benefits. Individuals age 55 and older are encouraged to apply.

For more information, or for an application, please call the Blair Senior Services, Inc. Volunteer Program Office at (814) 946-1235.



Altoona Salvation Army Hygiene for Humanity



DOING THE
MOST GOOD™

Citizens of our City may be aware of the many services that the Altoona Salvation Army provides, including Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners and gifts, weekly services, and their food pantry. But did you know that they also have a Hygiene for Humanity Program? They maintain a pantry of hygiene items to be distributed to community members in need throughout the year.

Currently, they are collecting items that are urgently needed, especially as the summer months are approaching. If you, your family, friends or co-workers would like to donate, items can be dropped off at the Altoona Salvation Army at 1813 6th Avenue, Altoona, Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 AM – 2 PM. Most needed items include:

Deodorant (Men's & Women's)	Soap (Liquid or bar)	
Shampoo	Disposable razors	Hair Brushes and Combs
Toothbrushes	Toothpaste	Lotion
Mouthwash	Floss	Lip balm
Feminine products	Hand cream	

THANK YOU for helping to support this immense need in our City through the Altoona Salvation Army.

Altoona Farmers' Market

On Thursday, May 16th, the Altoona Farmers' Market will open for the season. This is a great opportunity to support local farmers and small businesses and to purchase fresh produce, baked goods, jams, jellies and much more. Rispoli's Produce and Blue Barn Farms will be returning, along with vendors of flowers, eggs, soaps, microgreens and honey, among others.

The Market will be open from 11:00 AM until 2:00 PM and is again located in Heritage Plaza in downtown Altoona. The Market will be open every Thursday from May 16th through October 24th.

If you are a vendor who would like to secure a space in the market, or just need more information, please contact Cheryl Smearman at chersmear@gmail.com. Come visit the 2024 Farmers' Market in Heritage Plaza and pick up some fresh produce, coffee, lunch and much more.



Memorial Day Parade



The 2024 Memorial Day Parade in Altoona will be held on Monday, May 27th at 10:30 AM. The parade is sponsored by the Blair County War Veterans Council and will form at 8th Avenue and 17th Street and follow a route to 12th Street to 11th Avenue to 15th Street.

Immediately following the parade, there will be a service at the Robert E. Laws Veterans Mall on 11th Avenue and 14th Street. Please come out to honor the men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice to protect and defend our Country and its freedoms, and to show support and gratitude for those still serving and all surviving veterans.

Prior to Parade day, on Sunday evening, May 26th, Levery Brewing Co. will host a Memorial Day Eve Concert with Autumn Rising, at Heritage Plaza in downtown Altoona. The concert begins at 7:00 PM, ending at 10:00 PM.

Prospect Pool Opens for Memorial Day Weekend

Prospect Pool is getting ready to open for another fun Summer season! The pool will be open for Memorial Day weekend, May 25th through 27th and then will close from May 28th - 31st. Summer hours are 12 Noon to 7 PM, beginning June 1st when the pool will be open six days a week, through the middle of August (dates to be determined and information will be available on the website).

The pool will be staffed by licensed and certified lifeguards and will have concessions and security staff. The season promises to bring lots of fun, special activities and, hopefully, much sunshine.

2024 individual tickets and season passes are being sold by the Blair Regional YMCA. For prices and to purchase tickets, visit www.blairregionallymca.org



Mayor Matt Pacifico will deliver his 2023 State Of The City Address on May 6, 2024. The address will be available to view on our Public Access Channel on May 8th at 7 PM and again on May 10th at 12 noon. It will also be available to view on the City's You Tube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@cityofaltoonapa9148>

