

From the desk of:

*MAYOR MATT PACIFICO
CITY OF ALTOONA
1301 TWELFTH STREET, SUITE 101
ALTOONA, PA 16601
814-949-2476*

April, 2024



Altoona Proud

A Monthly Insight into all that is Altoona

April is Autism Awareness Month

Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication. According to the Centers for Disease Control, autism affects an estimated 1 in 36 children in the United States today.

According to the World Health Organization, about one out of every 270 people in the world has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). But research has shown that high quality early intervention can improve learning, communication and social skills, as well as underlying brain development.

The month of April is recognized worldwide as Autism Awareness Month. Activities throughout this month are designed to increase awareness and understanding of autism and provide information about the importance of early diagnosis and early intervention. Autism is a lifelong condition with varying degrees of severity. So, it is important to continue to support research for treatment and therapies that will improve the lives of those with autism.



The Central PA Autism Society sponsors 4-5 sensory events a month for children with autism and all disabilities. On Sunday, April 14th at 1:00 PM, the Central PA Autism Society will sponsor a Sensory Day at the Curve, where attendees can enjoy a game with lower volumes, a sensory suite or even a quiet suite. The Central PA Autism Society also conducts the Sensory Library Program, where children receive a special library card, valid at all 5 area libraries (Altoona, Bellwood, Hollidaysburg, Huntingdon and Tyrone). To learn more about events and how you can support the cause, visit:

<https://centralpaautism.weebly.com>

April is Safe Digging Month

April is recognized nationwide as Safe Digging Month. 811 is the national call-before-you-dig phone number that homeowners and businesses can use when planning a project that involves digging. Anyone who plans to dig should call 811, or go to the State's 811 website, at least a few business days before digging to request that the approximate location of buried utilities be marked with paint or flags so that you don't unintentionally dig into an underground utility line.

811 protects you and those in our community. Hitting a buried line while digging can disrupt utility service, cost money to repair, or cause serious injury or death. Always contact the 811 center, wait the required time for utilities to respond to your request, and ensure that all utilities have responded to your request before putting a shovel in the ground. The PA website for 811 safe digging is www.pa1call.org



Pennsylvania 811
A Privately funded non-profit Pennsylvania Corporation

Solar Eclipse Viewing Party and Planet Walk

On Monday, April 8, we will experience a once-in-a-generation total solar eclipse. As the moon passes in front of the sun, it will cast a shadow over Earth's surface, and Pennsylvania is in the direct path of this celestial event.

Penn State Altoona is hosting a community viewing event. Viewers are invited to gather outside the Slep Student Center beginning at 1:30 PM on April 8th. Eclipse glasses, used to help view the eclipse safely, will be available to the first 300 people on a first come-first serve basis. The eclipse is expected to begin around 2 PM with totality of the eclipse occurring between 3:12 and 3:27 PM.

There will also be hands-on science activities and a Planet Walk, a scale model of the solar system through which you can take a stroll. The event is free and open to the public and is sponsored by Penn State Altoona's Physics Department and the Student-Initiated Fee for Activities. Take advantage of the opportunity to see this rare wonder of our solar system.



Altoona Curve Opens 2024 Season

Baseball season is here! The 2024 Altoona Curve Season will kick off its opening night at Peoples Natural Gas Field on Tuesday, April 9th at 6 PM., in the first of a six-game series with the Harrisburg Senators. The first 1,000 fans will go home that night with a magnetic 2024 Curve schedule. This season promises to be another fun one for fans of all ages, and will include four bobblehead giveaways, two celebrity guest appearances, theme nights, giveaways and, of course, 19 fabulous fireworks shows.



For the full schedule, to purchase tickets, or for more information, go to www.milb.com/altoona and GO CURVE!

Child Abuse Prevention Month in April

Child abuse is a pervasive issue that affects children worldwide. April is Child Abuse Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness about this issue and the resources available to help these children. Blair County's Children's Advocacy Center (CAC), a program of Family Services, Inc. since 2017, is an area agency addressing this need. The CAC has served hundreds of children and families, not only in Blair County, but in surrounding counties as well, by providing a child-friendly, neutral place for the forensic interview and forensic medical evaluation of child victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

As part of their fundraising and awareness efforts, the CAC will conduct its "Toss Out Child Abuse" Cornhole Tournament on Saturday, April 13th at the Bavarian Aid Society in Altoona. Doors open at 3 PM. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three teams. You can participate in several ways:

- 1) Form a team by registering on the Score Holio App (available on the App store or Google Play)
- 2) Become a sponsor as a business or organization, by contacting Richard Servello at (814-201-2057) or rservello@familyservicesinc.net
- 3) Come out to cheer on the participants. Admission is \$5 and includes free activities for kids, raffles, music, cash bar and food by Herman's.

"We owe our children – the most vulnerable citizens in any society – a life free from violence and fear." – Nelson Mandela

CareerLink Job Fair at the Jaffa Shrine

PA CareerLink® Blair County will host their next Job Fair on Wednesday, April 17th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Jaffa Shrine, located at 2200 Broad Avenue, Altoona.

There will be a 30-minute time slot before general admission, from 9:30 AM to 10:00 AM, reserved for veterans who are seeking employment.

The day will include on-site interviews, workshops and over 100 employers who are currently hiring. There is no cost to attend this event and pre-registration is suggested, but not required. This is a great opportunity for those looking to join Altoona's workforce!

For any questions, or to receive further information about registration, call 814-940-6201 or visit the website at www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline

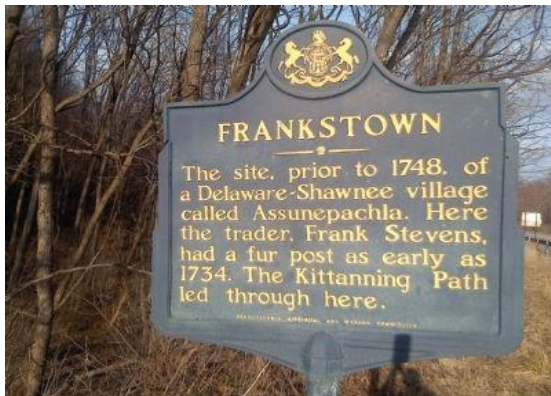
Altoona's Heritage

Even though many European settlers contributed to the fabric of our City and State, the area occupied by Pennsylvania was home to Native American tribes from as far back as 16,000 years ago. This month we highlight:

Native American Heritage

Long before Willam Penn's charter for colonial Pennsylvania in 1680, many Native American tribes occupied this area, including Iroquois, Delaware, Erie and Shawnee. The Shawnee, who made up the bulk of the area now known as central and western PA, spoke the Algonquin language and depended upon hunting, fishing and crops that consisted of mostly maize (corn), beans and squash. This tribe was known for the remarkable construction of burial mounds, including the McKees Rocks Mound, south of Pittsburgh and still standing today. Eventually, they were infiltrated by Iroquois Tribes from Northern PA.

After 1675, a group of Native American tribes known as the Iroquois Confederacy controlled the wilderness west of the Susquehanna River for use as a trade route and as a buffer zone against encroaching white settlers. The Iroquois Tribe occasionally allowed other tribes that had been driven out of their homelands to settle in this area. One of the leaders was a tribal chief named Shickalemy, who befriended the then Province Secretary of Pennsylvania, James Logan. So much so, that the Chief named his son Logan. After an accident that disfigured the son, he was no longer able to be Chief and moved to the Tuckahoe Valley (the area in what is now Altoona north to Tyrone), an area that came to be known as Logan's Valley.



Colonial expansion in the late 1730's produced conflicts, not only between settlers and the Native American tribes, but among the tribes themselves. Impacted by the increasing fur trade, in 1745 some 400 Shawnee people migrated to Ohio to escape the traders' influence. One of those fur traders was Frank Stevens, who had a fur trading post as early as 1734, in a Shawnee village called Assunepachla, today known as Frankstown, where a commemorative marker now stands.



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