

*From the desk of:*

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# *Altoona Proud*

A Monthly Insight into all that is Altoona

## National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. The goal of this month is to change public perception, spread hope and share vital information with families and people affected by suicide. It is equally important to recognize and address symptoms that indicate a potential for suicide, hopefully preventing the tragedy before it occurs. While suicide prevention is addressed year-round, National Suicide Prevention Month highlights the issue to encourage action from everyone. Whether you are in crisis, or know someone who is, the 988 Suicide and Crisis hotline provides a confidential connection to a trained counselor, available 24/7 by calling 988 or texting **HOME** to 741741. Their website contains resources and information about their services and their "BeThe1To" campaign. To learn more, visit [www.988lifeline.org/promote-national-suicide-prevention-month](http://www.988lifeline.org/promote-national-suicide-prevention-month)

The "Out Of The Darkness" Community Walk is a campaign begun in 2004 to allow people to share their own connections with the cause and to create a culture that is smarter about mental health. These community walks are held in hundreds of cities across the country. The Blair County Suicide Prevention Group will host their 2025 "Out Of The Darkness" Walk on Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, at Lakemont Park in Altoona. On-site registration begins at 10:00 AM, and the walk begins at 11:00 AM. There is no cost to register and the day includes information tables, a Loss and Healing tent with activities for those affected by suicide, honor beads, merchandise for purchase, kids' activities and more. To register in advance, visit [www.afspwalks.donordrive.com/Blair](http://www.afspwalks.donordrive.com/Blair)

### DID YOU KNOW?

- \* Suicide is often, but not always, the result of an undiagnosed or untreated mental health condition.
- \* Suicide is the 11<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death overall in the United States and the second leading cause of death for children ages 10-14.
- \* There are nearly two times as many suicide deaths in the United States as there are homicides.



## September is Underground Railroad Month

Beginning in 2020, several states, including Pennsylvania, have recognized September as Underground Railroad Month. While not yet formally adopted nationally, it is important to note the significance of our area and its role in the Underground Railroad.



The Allegheny Portage Railroad was part of the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal, which included routes used by those escaping slavery. It is now listed as a site on the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Altoona is documented as having been an Underground Railroad Station and The Baker Mansion History Museum has an exhibit dedicated to the Underground Railroad and the local area's role in it.

Take time this month to learn about, and celebrate, our area's history in connection with the Underground Railroad.

## WISE Women Grant & Scholarship Opportunities

Scholarship applications are now being accepted for both the WISE Women and Donna G. Gority Scholarships. Completed applications must be received by email ([info@wisewomanofblaircounty.org](mailto:info@wisewomanofblaircounty.org)) or by postal mail (PO Box 134, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648) no later than Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025.



Scholarships are available to Blair County female residents, age 21 years or older, who have overcome adversity or discrimination in their lives and are seeking post-secondary education. The Donna G. Gority Scholarship focuses specifically on women with education / career aspirations in the areas of domestic or substance abuse, child abuse, teen pregnancy and mental illness, among others. Application packets are available on the website at [www.wisewomenofblaircounty.org](http://www.wisewomenofblaircounty.org) or you can email [info@wisewomenofblaircounty.org](mailto:info@wisewomenofblaircounty.org) if you need additional information.

Grant opportunities are also available for nonprofit organizations. The grant, Empowering Women and Eliminating Racism, supports projects that address these issues through collaboration, service and education. Eligible applicants must be tax-exempt charitable organizations under Section 501 (c) (3), or a public charity with a 50% deductibility limitation. Applications are due by Friday, October 24, 2025 at 4:00 PM. The grant period runs from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026. Access to the Grant Application Guidelines and Forms can be found on the WISE Women website at [www.wisewomenofblaircounty.org](http://www.wisewomenofblaircounty.org) or by email at [info@wisewomenofblaircounty.org](mailto:info@wisewomenofblaircounty.org)

## 2025 Labor Day Parade



The 2025 Labor Day parade, sponsored by the Blair-Bedford Central Labor Council, will be on Saturday, August 30<sup>th</sup> beginning at 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM. The parade begins at Chestnut Avenue and 11<sup>th</sup> Street to 9<sup>th</sup> Street, onto Green Avenue then 12<sup>th</sup> Street, onto 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 15<sup>th</sup> Street. The weather is expected to cooperate, so come out and support this community event!

## Save a Life Day

The Blair County Drug and Alcohol Overdose Prevention Task Force will join organizations across the nation for Save A Life Day on September 25<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Individuals and businesses in our area will host stations to distribute Narcan, along with information and education on the overdose crisis. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/bdeckc83> for a map of the locations.



Narcan is a safe and easy-to-use medication that reverses opioid overdoses, including those caused by fentanyl. It has no potential for abuse and is harmless if given to someone who is not overdosing. By carrying Narcan, you can reduce the stigma surrounding overdose, protect your community and possibly save a life. Be part of this important community effort by visiting an area station.

## PA CareerLink® Community Resource Fair



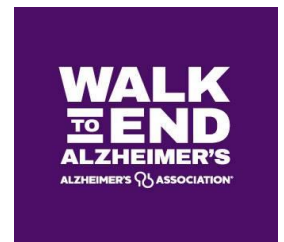
PA CareerLink® of Blair County will host a Community Resource Fair on Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM on the Ground Floor of the Altoona Area Public Library, located at 1600 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Here you will be able to connect with housing assistance, utility support, family services, mental health resources, veterans' services, re-entry services and much more.

Though our area is rich in resources, those who need them often do not know how to access them. This event brings together these resources to provide citizens direct access to the available services. The event is free and open to the public, and will include tours and giveaways, with Parlor Doughnuts on site from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

Advance registration is encouraged and can be done online at [www.forms.gle/t4CWUhgW4L2vvqM6](http://www.forms.gle/t4CWUhgW4L2vvqM6) or on the day of the event. For more information, contact PA CareerLink® at 814-569-1066 or visit [www.pacareerlink.pa.gov](http://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov)

## Walk To End Alzheimer's

The "Walk To End Alzheimer's" is a program of The Alzheimer's Association®, the leading volunteer health organization addressing the impact of Alzheimer's disease. The Association funds Alzheimer's research, and provides resources through their website, [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org). They also operate a free 24/7 hotline, staffed by clinicians and specialists, offering confidential support. (1-800-272-3900)



In the United States, nearly seven million people are living with Alzheimer's disease, with more than 12 million people providing their unpaid care. That number is expected to double by the year 2050. With the cost of care estimated at \$384 billion in 2025, there is a critical need for research and care assistance.

The 2025 Walk To End Alzheimer's is scheduled for Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at the Altoona Curve, located at 1000 Park Avenue, and registration is free. Same day registration begins at 9:00 AM, with opening ceremonies beginning at 10:00 AM. You can also register online in advance at [act.alz.org/site/TR?sid=23932&type=fr\\_informational&pg=informational](http://act.alz.org/site/TR?sid=23932&type=fr_informational&pg=informational).

## September Is...

Of course, September brings Labor Day, football season and back-to-school, but as we watch summer glide into fall, there are some other days to enjoy!

September 2 – National Blueberry Popsicle Day

September 4 – National Wildlife Day & National Macadamia Nut Day

September 5 – National Food Bank Day (Support our local food banks – they need our help!)

September 7 – National Grandparents Day

September 8 – Star Trek Day

September 9 – National Wienerschnitzel Day & National Teddy Bear Day

September 11 - Patriot Day / National Day of Service and Remembrance - #NEVERFORGET

September 12 – National Chocolate Milkshake Day

September 16 – National Play Doh Day

September 20 – National Pepperoni Pizza Day

September 22 – National Hobbit Day

September 25 – National Comic Book Day & National Quesadilla Day

September 26 – National Pancake Day

September 29 – National VFW Day – We THANK YOU ALL for your service!



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