

*From the desk of:*

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**November  
2025**

# *Altoona Proud*

A Monthly Insight into all that is Altoona

## City of Altoona Veterans Day Parade

The City of Altoona's 2025 Veterans Day Parade will be held on Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 AM in Downtown Altoona. The parade will form at 8th Avenue & 17th Street at 10:00 AM. Beginning there at 10:30 AM, the parade will move to 12th Avenue, down to 12th Street, to 11th Avenue and will end at 16th Street. Following the parade, a service will be held at the Robert E. Laws Veterans Mall on 11th Avenue and 14th Street. Command Sergeant Major Joseph Keirn will be the keynote speaker and the Altoona Area High School Ensemble will be performing. There will also be a Proclamation from Mayor Pacifico.

This is a brief, but very meaningful service and it is especially meaningful to the veterans who attend. For this reason, everyone is encouraged to stay just a little longer after the parade to be part of this special event and show the men and women of our Armed Forces how much they are truly respected and appreciated!

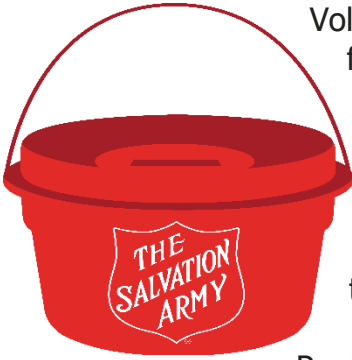
A promotional poster for the Veterans Day Parade. On the left, a large American flag is shown waving. The background is dark blue. The text is white and yellow. At the top, five stars are arranged in an arc above the words "VETERANS DAY". Below that, in smaller text, is "HONORING ALL WHO SERVED". The word "PARADE" is in large, bold, white letters. Below that, a yellow star is followed by "TUESDAY- NOVEMBER 11<sup>th</sup>". Then, "10:30 A.M. - DOWNTOWN ALTOONA" is written. Below that, the route is described: "8<sup>th</sup> Ave & 17<sup>th</sup> St to 12<sup>th</sup> Ave to 12<sup>th</sup> St to 11<sup>th</sup> Ave & 16<sup>th</sup> St". Then, "SERVICE TO FOLLOW AT" is written. Finally, "VETERANS MALL - 11<sup>TH</sup> AVE & 14<sup>TH</sup> ST" is written. In the bottom left corner, there is a white box with blue text: "CONTACT MIKE MCDONOUGH", "MICMAC42649@AOL.COM", and "814-329-8472".

**VETERANS DAY**  
HONORING ALL WHO SERVED  
**PARADE**

★ **TUESDAY- NOVEMBER 11<sup>th</sup>**  
**10:30 A.M. - DOWNTOWN ALTOONA**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Ave & 17<sup>th</sup> St to 12<sup>th</sup> Ave to**  
**12<sup>th</sup> St to 11<sup>th</sup> Ave & 16<sup>th</sup> St**  
**SERVICE TO FOLLOW AT**  
**VETERANS MALL - 11<sup>TH</sup> AVE & 14<sup>TH</sup> ST**

**CONTACT MIKE MCDONOUGH**  
**[MICMAC42649@AOL.COM](mailto:MICMAC42649@AOL.COM)**  
**814-329-8472**

# Salvation Army Kettle Volunteers



Volunteer bell ringers are critical to the success of the Salvation Army's holiday fundraising efforts. When you ring bells alongside the iconic Red Kettles, you are helping to provide food, shelter and other essentials to neighbors in need. Last year, the Salvation Army assisted 2,400 individuals over the holidays, providing both Thanksgiving and Christmas aid to needy families in this area, along with year round services to the community, including a winter warming center and a summer cooling center. They also take their services to local fire scenes to offer assistance to both the victims and firefighters.

[Register to Ring](#) is an online site that helps you find the times and places where bell ringers are needed in the Altoona area. You can register as an individual or as a group of friends, coworkers, church members or neighbors! Whether you can volunteer a lot or a little, all help is so appreciated!

Simply visit [www.RegisterToRing.com](http://www.RegisterToRing.com) and select "ringing as an individual" or "ringing as a group" and follow the prompts to find the locations and times available in the Altoona area, to find one most convenient for you. Once you confirm your shifts, you will receive further details by email. Spread the word to family and friends that bell-ringing shifts are available and make it part of your holiday activity!

## ArtsAltoona Christkindl Market

ArtsAltoona will hold their third annual Christkindl Market on Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM at the Unter Uns Musical and Entertainment Society, 1401 Van Buren Avenue, Altoona. This festive, German-style holiday market features live music and dance, unique local artisan vendors, family fun for all ages and delicious food, including traditional German fare like bratwurst and sauerkraut, potato pancakes, pretzels with beer cheese, and glühwein (a heated, spiced red wine that is a staple at German Christmas markets!)

Admission is \$5 for anyone age 12 and over. This is an outdoor event, rain or shine, with pavilion coverage if needed. Alcoholic beverages will be available. Come prepared for some Christmas gift shopping, a festive day to begin your holiday season and experience a taste of the time-honored German Christmas Market!



## Greater Altoona Career & Technology Open House

The Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center (GACTC) will be holding an Open House on Tuesday, November 18<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM at the Center, located at 1500 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This is a great opportunity to see the classrooms and hear about the many programs offered at GACTC, including 25 different certification fields, secondary, post-secondary and non-traditional enrollments and their early exposure program, allowing younger students to learn about fields of interest through engaging hands-on experiences.

See classrooms and equipment and all that the GACTC has to offer. This is a great training resource right here in Altoona, so join the open house to learn more.

## Small Business Saturday-November 29th

Saturday, November 29<sup>th</sup> is Small Business Saturday. This is a day to shop small, local independently owned retailers and restaurants. The City of Altoona is proud to have many small businesses. One look at a list of these small businesses in Altoona shows a wide range of products and services from coffee shops to local breweries, office supply and accounting services, clothing stores and craft stores, gift shops and home services, to name a few.



According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, there are 32 million small businesses in the United States, making up 99% of firms with paid employees, employing over 46% of the private-sector workforce. Last year, 91% of consumers shopped at small and local stores in a one-week period over the holidays and 78% of Americans regularly shop at small businesses.

In 2024, an estimated 64.4 million consumers shopped at independent retailers and restaurants on Small Business Saturday. These small businesses depend on the community to survive and thrive. Help the small businesses of Altoona thrive during this holiday season and throughout the year. You can find a list of them by visiting [www.blairchamber.com](http://www.blairchamber.com). Happy Small Business Saturday Shopping!

## 2025 Ugly Sweater 5K Run and 2 Mile Walk



Registration is now OPEN for the 2025 Blair County Emergency Chaplain Platoon (BSECP) Ugly Sweater 5K Race, to be held on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. The 5K begins at 9:00 AM and the 2-mile Walk begins at 9:10 am. **Registration for the 5K Run or the 2 Mile Walk is \$26 until Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM.**

This timed 5 K Run, 2 Mile Fun Walk and free Reindeer Run for kids begins and ends at Heritage Plaza in downtown Altoona, with lots of fun along the routes. Stay downtown after the Race for the Spirit of Christmas Parade and Party in the Plaza!

Proceeds from the Race benefit the Peer 2 Peer Program of the BCESP, which provides support for the Emergency Services Community of Blair County and their families. The Altoona and Blair County Police, Fire Department, EMS, 911 Dispatchers, Parole and Probation Officers and their families see so much tragedy every day and the support provided by this program is invaluable.

Visit [www.runsignup.com/Race/PA/Altoona/UglyChristmasSweaterFunRun5K](http://www.runsignup.com/Race/PA/Altoona/UglyChristmasSweaterFunRun5K) to register. Come out to run, walk or just show support for the participants. You'll never run better than in an ugly Christmas Sweater...but sweaters are optional!

Congratulations to PA CareerLink® Blair County and partners on the success of their job fair, held on October 14<sup>th</sup>! There were 447 attendees, including 24 veterans, with 92 employers and a total of 1,192 jobs to be filled. The day was comprised of over 1,300 prospect conversations, 37 on-site interviews, 405 scheduled follow-up interviews and 26 job offers made on the spot. We commend PA CareerLink® Blair County and partners for helping to grow the City's workforce!



# Spirit of Christmas Parade and Party in the Plaza



Seven Mountains Media and the City of Altoona invite you to start off your holiday season with the Spirit of Christmas Parade, to be held on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 1:00 PM. The parade begins at 17<sup>th</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The grandstand, with Seven Mountains Media emcees, City of Altoona staff and parade judges, will be located near Heritage Plaza.

Cash prizes of \$500 will be awarded to the Best Performance Group (marching band, dance group or drum corps) and to the best overall float. Second

place in each of these categories will be awarded \$250. The judges will be looking for creativity, craftsmanship and what sets your group or float apart from the others. Winners will be announced on air after the parade. To register for parade participation, go to [www.spiritofchristmasparade.com/#register](http://www.spiritofchristmasparade.com/#register)

Stick around after the parade for Party in the Plaza at Heritage Plaza. Featured will be the petting zoo, a popular attraction from last year's holiday festivities, photos with Santa and, of course, a tree lighting ceremony. Food vendors will be located at the Plaza throughout the event. Come join family, friends and neighbors in this fun, festive day.



## Blair Markets Online Shopping

The weekly Altoona Farmers Market in Heritage Plaza may be over for the year, but you can continue to buy products purchased at the market this past summer at Blair Market's online shop. The online market is now in its second year, and is a convenient and easy way to continue to purchase some of your favorite items through the winter and spring months!

Shopping is simple – visit the website at [www.blairmarkets.com](http://www.blairmarkets.com) where you can place your order, by the end of the day each Monday, and pick up your order each Wednesday from 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM at one of the many pickup locations. Depending on your location, delivery may be available right to your door. Last year's online market was a great success, and it is expected to grow even bigger this year.



This is a convenient and easy way to continue your support of local small businesses and farms, and is available to individuals, stores and markets. The website listed above is where you can register to purchase items, see a list of products available, find your nearest pickup location and even purchase gift certificates! We encourage everyone to visit the website and help these small businesses continue to thrive even after the "market" season is over. Watch for the return of the Altoona Farmers Market at Heritage Plaza in the spring of 2026!

# Learn About Your City

Last month, we heard about the Office of the Mayor and the Office of the City Manager.

This month we highlight:

## **The Codes & Inspections Department**

The Codes and Inspections Department is one that many citizens interact with at some time. This Department administers Pennsylvania's Uniform Construction Code in the City of Altoona, which defines the codes and standards required for construction and building improvements. The International Property Maintenance Code is utilized for commercial and residential property maintenance and housing inspections for both privately-owned property and rental structures throughout the City. A staff of 11, including 9 certified employees, interacts daily with City residents, property owners, contractors, design professionals, and public service agencies.

All work that requires a permit begins with the Department through an application process. All residential building, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing permits, inspections and plan reviews are conducted by the City's Building Inspector. Commercial permits, inspections, and plan reviews are conducted by one of two contracted inspection agencies.

Code Enforcement Officers are tasked with identifying issues relating to any property maintenance violation. This could include structural issues, lot conditions with overgrowth or trash on a property. The City's residential rental program requires registration and inspection of rentals within the City, which benefits property owners and tenants by ensuring their units meet safety codes and minimum standards of habitability. The goal of Code Enforcement is to not only assist residents and property owners in identifying and correcting property maintenance issues, but to relay the importance of maintaining properties to improve the quality of our neighborhoods and the City as a whole.

As you can see, the duties of the Codes and Inspections Department keep staff tremendously busy; however, the Department is always available to discuss concerns, answer questions, and assist our residents. Because of the work of the Codes and Inspections Department, our neighborhoods continue to improve in appearance, safety, and livability.



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