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June, 2024



Altoona Proud

A Monthly Insight into all that is Altoona

June is National Children's Awareness Month



Children's Awareness Month was initially founded in loving memory of all children who have died violent deaths in America, but has evolved into something much bigger. It is a month that focuses on our next generation of leaders who will pave the way for our future. Children reflect our greatest hope as a City, State and Nation, and childhood is a critical stage for development of social, emotional and physical health. Every child deserves a chance to succeed. High-quality education, instilling a spirit of confidence, pride and self-esteem, and a focus on the health and well being of children will foster tremendous dividends for the rest of their lives.

Here in Altoona, we are proud of the MANY services and programs available for the children of our City, from academic and sports programs to better nutrition, safety and childcare. The welfare of our children is a priority. One example of this is the Nehemiah Project's Wright Place for Kids.

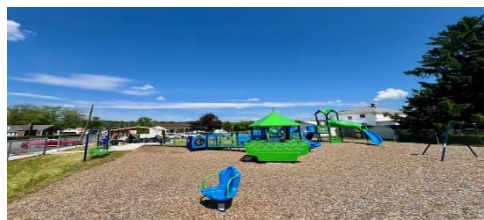
Located on 11th Street, The Wright Place for Kids offers Elite Per4mance, a 10,700 square foot baseball and softball training facility, with a batting area and a turfed fielding area. They work with the Mountain Lion Backpack Program, which provides elementary school children in the Altoona Area School District with food for the weekends, when they face food insecurity in their homes. Families are also helped through free meals provided at four locations throughout the City.

The facility houses Reny's Room, a sensory space with swings, a jungle gym and zipline, tactical toys and tumble mats for children with autism. Throughout the year, The Wright Place for Kids offers movies, family game nights, curbside cookouts and inside campfires, along with holiday events and other activities. For more information on The Wright Place for Kids, call 814-201-2096 or visit tnnpa.org/home/what-we-do/the_wright_place or on Facebook @Nehemiah Project.

Garden Heights Park

May 22nd was a special day for the Garden Heights Community and its children with the ribbon-cutting and opening of the Garden Heights Park. The Park is a collaborative effort of the City of Altoona, Booker T. Washington Revitalization Corporation, Leadership Blair County Class of 2023, Operation Our Town, the Central PA Community Foundation, CBRC and individuals and neighbors in the Garden Heights Community. It is the first park of its kind in the City of Altoona, being an all-abilities park with not only slides, swings and climbing equipment, but interactive sensory stations with light, sound and touch. Students from Harbor House waited patiently as speakers welcomed everyone. Mayor Pacifico attended and spoke before the ribbon cutting.

Children of all abilities enjoyed time on the equipment during the beautiful sunny day. The Park was built in an amazingly short time by the City of Altoona Engineering staff, incorporating colorful state-of-the-art equipment. This is an initiative that will continue throughout the City as we work to update and improve our City's recreation facilities.



Altoona Block Parties

The Booker T. Washington Revitalization Corporation is hosting Block Parties throughout the Summer in different parks throughout the City. All events are from 5 PM – 7 PM and are FREE to the public. This is a great chance to come out and enjoy the recreational facilities that Altoona has to offer, and a perfect time for neighbors and friends to meet and have fun.

Pets are not permitted at the events, with the exception of credentialed service animals. The schedule of block parties is listed below. For more information, visit www.altoonablockparties.com

- June 5th – Jefferson Park, 118 4th Avenue
- June 20th – Grove Memorial Park, 2300 6th Avenue
- June 27th – Garden Heights Park, 205 Lowell Avenue
- July 15th – Iuzzolino Park, 2516 Maple Avenue
- August 8th – Prospect Park, 112 S. 15th Street
- August 20th – Booker T. Washington Park, 1304 19th Street



National Flag Week

The week of June 9th is National Flag Week in 2024, with Flag Day falling on June 14th. It is interesting to note that "Father of Flag Day" honors have been bestowed on William T. Kerr, who was credited with founding the American Flag Day Association in 1888, while a schoolboy in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Both President Woodrow Wilson, in 1916, and Calvin Coolidge, in 1927, issued proclamations asking for June 14th to be observed as National Flag Day. But Congress did not approve the national observance until 1949, when President Harry Truman signed it into law.



All are welcome to attend Altoona's Annual Gospel Hill Flag Day Celebration. It will be held on June 14th at 12 noon in Heritage Plaza, hosted by the City of Altoona and the Central Pennsylvania Community Foundation (CPCF). The celebration will include a proclamation by Mayor Matt Pacifico, music by the Altoona Community Band and a hot dog lunch. CPCF administers the Gospel Hill Flag Fund, which pays for repairs and replacements of the flag, as well as repairs to the flagpole. These duties are faithfully carried out by our Altoona Fire Department. To learn more about the Central Pennsylvania Community Foundation, or if you wish to donate, visit www.centralpagives.org

St. Pölten, Austria – Altoona's Sister City

Recently the Legislative Aide to the Mayor, Bonnie DeLozier, had the opportunity to visit Altoona's Sister City of St. Pölten, Austria. Along with delegations from St. Pölten's other Sister Cities in France, Germany and the Czech Republic, the group visited some of the City's sites. Among them were the Benedictine Abbey, a local vineyard, Old Town St. Pölten, and Altoona Square, on which is being built an education and art center for children. The City even has a replica of our own Altoona Mountain Lion! This Sister City partnership, which celebrates 25 years in 2025, is an opportunity to share successes, challenges and ideas, as well as cultural information.



Let's Move Blair County Day



Let's Move Blair County Day
Saturday, June 11
11 AM- 1:30 PM
Lakemont Park

The Healthy Blair County Coalition is hosting a Let's Move Blair County Day. The goal of the coalition is to promote a healthy Blair County by encouraging residents to make healthier lifestyle choices, including nutrition, physical activity and mental wellness, as well as share available local resources.

The day will include a Health Fair with free screenings available, family wellness activities, games and prizes, access to community resources and sharing the "Let's Move Into Kindness" campaign. Participation is open to all residents of the City and surrounding communities. There is no charge for the activities and, after the event, you can stay and enjoy the many attractions at Lakemont Park.



Women Veterans Day is June 12

June 12, 2024 marks the second year celebrating Women Veterans' Day in the State of Pennsylvania. The date is significant in that, while women have served in the military since the beginning of our Country's history, they were not recognized as military members or veterans until President Truman signed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act on June 12, 1948.

Not yet recognized as a national holiday, each State determines whether or not they will celebrate that day, with New York being the first to do so in 2008. Congressional legislation was introduced in 2020 to make it a federal holiday, and that legislation is currently gaining support. Beginning in 2023, the State of Pennsylvania became the 23rd State to recognize and celebrate Women Veterans' Day.

This year's celebration will include a display in the East Wing of the Capitol Building in Harrisburg, PA. The display will feature women veterans from across the State and will be able to be viewed virtually, beginning June 10th by clicking on the link, www.senatorpennycuick.com

The VA is hosting a Women Veterans' Day on Tuesday, June 11th at the James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center, at 2907 Pleasant Valley Boulevard. The event, from 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM, will be on the front lawn of the Medical Center near "The Wall That Heals" and will include guest speakers, light refreshments and information on both VA and non-VA programs. If you would like to attend, please contact VAMC Women's Health at 814-943-8164, ext. 17186.



The City of Altoona extends its thanks and best wishes to all of our women veterans, on this day and every day of the year, for all that they have done in service to our City, State and Nation.

Altoona's Heritage

Over the past several months, we have been highlighting the heritage of many different lands and the contributions of immigrants to our City's growth and development. This month, we highlight a project to preserve the history and heritage of our local PSU campus,

The Penn State Altoona Heritage Project

Spearheaded by various professors, administrators, and volunteers, the Penn State Altoona Heritage Project works to catalogue and document episodes of the Penn State Altoona campus history. The long term mission of the project is to collect vintage items, hold them in a climate controlled environment, and display them to the community.

Some of the artifacts and memorabilia that the project seeks to collect include:

- Program booklets from commencements, sporting activities, or special events.
- Jerseys, hats, pins, and classic collegiate apparel.
- Trophies, medals, plaques, and other awards of recognition.
- Hard copy photographs, art, or posters of campus events, people, and landmarks.
- Old classroom slides, books, furnishings, or educational materials.
- Yearbooks, campus newspapers, or related Penn State Altoona publications.



You may possess a piece of Penn State Altoona's past! Do you have a unique relic related to the days of the Altoona Undergraduate Center? If so, and you would like to see it preserved as part of the Penn State Altoona Campus history, please contact Jared Frederick, Class of 2010, at 814-949-5531 or by email at jtf5039@psu.edu



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