

# NETWORKS

DIGITAL NEWS



August 28, 2023

## Best Practices Forum to Focus on Finding, Keeping Volunteers

Volunteers play key roles in the business community, especially at non-profit businesses. So the next “Best Practices Forum” being hosted by the Blair County Chamber’s Committee of Non-profit Businesses will focus on ways to find and keep valuable volunteers. That Forum will be held on Friday, September 8th from 8:15 to 9:45 a.m. at the Devorris Center for Business Development. The panel discussion format includes panelists Phyllis Baker from [Blair Regional YMCA](#), Angel Dandrea from [Blair Senior Services](#) and Michelle Walters from [UPMC Altoona](#). The cost to attend the Forum is \$10 for Chamber members and \$20 for non-members. Corporate sponsor is [Amtran](#). To register to attend, call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or register online at [www.blairchamber.com](http://www.blairchamber.com). Space is limited so register today!



## “Home Run For Safety” Now a Full-Day Event

The Chamber’s Home Run for Safety will have some new speakers, vendors and attractions but two attention-getters from the past will be back “by popular demand” again this year. Bubba Fatula, president of [Fatula Group](#) will return as keynote speaker and the [FirstEnergy](#) Electrical Safety Trailer will also be returning. Home Run For Safety will be held on Wednesday, September 13th from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Peoples Natural Gas Field. Cost to be a vendor is just \$75



and includes one registration (including breakfast and lunch). For information on sponsorships and vendor opportunities or to register as an attendee, contact the Chamber at (814) 943-8151.



## Only a Couple Spots Remain for Speechcraft Workshop

One of the greatest challenges that many people in business have as they move up the corporate ladder is the ability to speak effectively in front of large groups or small. To help address that, the Blair County Chamber and [Toastmasters International](#) will partner on “Speechcraft,” a hands-on workshop delivered in four two-hour sessions created to help people hone their speaking skills. The sessions will be held from 3-5 p.m. every Tuesday from September 12th to October 3rd at the Devorris Center for Business Development. The cost is just \$50 for Chamber members for all four sessions and \$75 for non-Chamber members. Class size is limited to ten people. Call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 to secure your spot!



**Let’s Celebrate!**  
Commemorate your milestones with a ribbon cutting  
- available at no cost to Chamber members -  
email Linda at [Lstotler@blairchamber.com](mailto:Lstotler@blairchamber.com)



**Blair County’s future needs a strong foundation.**

Support the Chamber Foundation and its youth programs.

**Please give.**  
[blairchamber.com](http://blairchamber.com)

# Ribbon Cutting



## Central Blair Recreation Commission Don Witherspoon Memorial Basketball Court

The Blair County Chamber held a ribbon-cutting ceremony with the [Central Blair Recreation Commission](#) to celebrate renovations of the Don Witherspoon Memorial Basketball Court located at 1214 19th Street, Altoona. The court was initially renovated in 2010 and re-named in 2022 in honor of Don Witherspoon. Recent renovations include new standards, goals and surfacing. Joining in the celebration are, from left: Carter Cerully, Chamber Ambassador; Alex Seltzer, Blair County Chamber Board of Directors; Charles Dupree, cousin; State Representative Lou Schmitt; Theresa Mosley, daughter; Linda Witherspoon, wife; Lisa Addison, daughter; Patricia Curry, sister; David Cunningham, President, BTW Corporation; Amanda Walker, the office of State Senator Judy Ward; Dave Francis, Altoona Area School District Board; K. Michael Hofer, Executive Director, CBRC; and Jessica Sheets, Chamber Ambassador.

**Be a part of the moment. Watch the video [here!](#)**

## Chamber to Offer Alpine Swiss Villages & Rails Trip

The Chamber and [Ketrow KURTZ Travel](#) will head to Switzerland next summer for a trip that will involve trains, cogs, cable cars, boats and buses. The Alpine Swiss Villages & Rails trip features a host of great locations including Zurich, Wengen, Bern, Interlaken, Grindelwald, Murren and Lucerne. The trip begins June 18th and concludes on the 26th. An informational meeting will be held on September 13th at 6:00 p.m. at the Devorris Center for Business Development. There is no cost or obligation



associated with the meeting but people interested in attending should call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 so we can save you a seat.



## WE-LEaD Schedules Axe-Throwing Event

The next WE-LEaD event will take place on September 20th from 5:30 to 7:30 at [Slings Throw House](#) in Altoona. The cost to participate is \$30 for Chamber members and \$40 for non-members. Food is included. To register, contact the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or register online at [www.blairchamber.com](http://www.blairchamber.com). Corporate sponsor is [Leonard S. Fiore, Inc.](#) WE-LEaD is an acronym for Women Encouraging: Leadership, Education and Development.

## Congratulations...

... to [Child Advocates of Blair County](#) which opened a new Head Start Office last Friday at 601 West Third Street in Williamsburg.

... to [UPMC Altoona](#) which is celebrating the 10-year anniversary of becoming a UPMC hospital.

... to the Blair County Chamber members who were recently named to [Pennsylvania Business Central's](#) "Signature Leaders Under 30" list. They are: Dante DiAndrea of [Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art](#), Colton Kensinger of [Reliance Bank](#), Paige Lightner of [Blair County NAACP](#), Heather Riggelman of [Wessel & Company](#), Marcus Edwards of [Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation](#), Briana Shriver of [Blair Image Elements](#), Timothy Henry of [Reclamere](#), Destinee Pfirsching of [Doing Better Business](#) and Carter Cerully at [PA CareerLink Blair County](#).

## “Breakfast Club” to Mark 20th Anniversary of American Eagle

As success stories go, this one was tough to beat. Twenty-years ago, a group of business leaders and investors came together to revive a paper mill that had been closed in 2001, putting 265 employees out of work. The presentation at the next Chamber Breakfast Club, set for September 14th at 7:45 a.m. at The Casino at Lakemont Park, will be entitled, “Working Together: Twenty Years of Progress at [American Eagle Paper Mills](#).” The speakers will be Philip Devorris, whose father Don helped spearhead the mill’s resurgence, and current V.P of Finance & Administration Clark Adelman. The cost to attend Breakfast



Club is \$20 for Chamber members and \$30 for non-members. To register, contact the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or register online at [www.blairchamber.com](http://www.blairchamber.com). Corporate sponsor of the September Breakfast Club is [Sickler Tarpey & Associates](#).

## Chamber Members Can Save on Residential Electricity!!

If you’re a member of the Blair County Chamber and also a Penelec customer, you are eligible for an opportunity that will save you money on your residential electric bill. The Chamber participates in the ChamberChoice program through World Kinect Energy Services. From now until September 14th, employees of Chamber businesses can lock-in a special residential fixed price rate that is 10% lower than the Penelec rate



(8.73/kWh to 9.70/kWh). To access the offer, go to [wglenergy.com/Kinect](http://wglenergy.com/Kinect) and scroll to Blair County Chamber.

## “Down on the Farm” Event Now Taking Reservations

The ultra-traditional After Hours “Down on the Farm” will be held on October 11th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at [Piney Creek Greenhouse](#) in Martinsburg. A number of activities for kids are planned as well as demonstrations on planting and a whole lot of other stuff! The cost is \$10/person and includes great picnic food. Attendees under ten and under are free! Event sponsors are [Blair County Conservation District](#), [Farm Credit](#), [Leavitt Group Webber Advisors](#),



and [Reliance Bank](#). To register, call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or online at [www.blairchamber.com](http://www.blairchamber.com).

## Chamber welcomes new team members



Jennifer Fleck (left) and Megan Rossman are the two “new kids” at the Blair County Chamber.

As the Blair County Chamber and Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation continue to discuss the details of an impending merger, the staffing responsibilities associated with that merger are coming into focus.

The Chamber recently filled two key positions that will encourage greater member participation. Jennifer Fleck is the new Events Coordinator; Megan Rossman steps into the role of Member Engagement Manager, a newly-created position that assists Chamber committees in becoming more attuned to member needs. Both bring experience and enthusiasm.

Fleck has most recently been Sales and Admissions Director at Westminster Woods, a retirement community in Huntingdon County. She was previously Marketing and Membership Director at Explore Altoona and a reporter and weekend anchor at WTAJ-TV.

Rossman was Public Relations Coordinator for ARROW Land Solutions, LLC where she planned and executed company events, managed the company’s website and social media accounts and coordinated community outreach endeavors and sponsorships.

“They bring a lot to the table,” acknowledged Chamber President Joe Hurd. “As we look at ways that a merged organization can better serve its membership base, it starts with great people.”