

NETWORKS

DIGITAL NEWS

Blair Alliance CEO addresses State Transportation Committee

*Excerpted, in part, from the Altoona Mirror, by William Kibler
Read the full article [here](#)*

The State Transportation Committee convened recently at the Railroaders Memorial Museum, offering community leaders the opportunity to discuss concerns and share success stories that impact not only our region but the Commonwealth as well.

Steve McKnight, president and CEO of Blair County Alliance, addressed the committee, highlighting the history of Altoona and how the Horseshoe Curve led to industrial commerce and that in turn led to today's interstate system.

To carry not only the county's but the region's economy forward, McKnight said maintenance is important.

"We have to ensure our existing infrastructure is maintained," he said, noting the bridges and secondary roads are of great concern due to their age.

In addition, enhancing and creative corridors for "active transportation" is important, he said. Walking and biking are important, not only for recreation but for the health of the community.

McKnight noted what he called a "complete streets" plan and the need to make sure safety features and lighting can accommodate many types of active transportation.

When asked about the economic impact Blair County has on the state, McKnight said the county is a "critical player in the state's economy."

"We have a very resilient economy ... we don't have one concentrated sector, we try to attract and build upon that," he said.

In addition, Blair County "has a large number of family businesses ... which means all the corporate headquarters are here," McKnight said. "It's great to have homegrown businesses driving your local economy. ... It creates a lasting impact."

On a large scale, McKnight said Blair County is a regional economy, connected to Centre, Huntingdon and Bedford counties, and beyond, due to the area's extensive transportation network.

To watch the full Senate hearing, click [here](#).



Make your reservations!

PA Secretary of Agriculture to headline Chamber breakfast

Join us this Thursday, June 12, from 7:45 - 9:00 a.m. at The Casino at Lakemont Park for Breakfast Club with Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding.



Russell Redding

Hear more about a new strategic approach on how best Pennsylvania can leverage Agriculture through AI, international trade and supply chains for sustained economic growth in the years to come. Cost to attend is \$20 for Chamber Members and \$30 for non-members. Corporate sponsor is [Rural King](#). Register online at [blairchamber.com](#) or call the Chamber at 814-943-8151.

*Everything you need to know about
Social Security, Health Insurance
and 401K's to
PREPARE for RETIREMENT*

*Sponsored by
Eardley Financial Agency and The Health Insurance Place
814-201-5909 814-201-2829*



**JOIN US FOR
RETIREMENT 101
6:00 pm**

at the Hollidaysburg Area Public Library
1 Furnace Road, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648

Choose from the following dates in 2025

**March 26 • April 30 • May 28
June 18 • July 16**

*Kindly RSVP if possible to let us know on
which date you will be attending: 814-201-2829*

Ribbon Cutting



Big Brothers Big Sisters

The Chamber held a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the grand opening of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Blair County “Growing Together” Community Garden located at 891 23rd Street, Altoona. The newly created garden was made possible through local grants and business donations. Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of Blair County has been a cornerstone of youth mentoring since 1964. For more information go to www.bbbsblaircounty.org. Joining in the celebration are, from left: Emily Sollenberger, Chamber Ambassador; Megan Rossman, Blair County Chamber of Commerce; Jackie Lantzy, BBBS Board of Directors; Mayor Matt Pacifico, City of Altoona; Helen Schmitt, Sunrise Rotary; Jane Gable, BBBS; Amber Urish, BBBS; Billie Egan, Executive Director, BBBS; Brittany Halsall, BBBS; Amanda Johnston, Board President, BBBS; Jo Shaffer, BBBS; Geny Barthelmes, Hollidaysburg Area Women’s Club; Beth DeGol Bradley, Hollidaysburg Area Women’s Club; Rene Hrescak, The Blair Garden Club; Amanda Walker, the office of State Senator Judy Ward; Emily Martin, Chamber Ambassador; and Loco, Altoona Curve.

We’ll meet you under the tent!

Get ready for a fun evening when you hang out with the Chamber at the next HD500 (*Hump Day at 5:00*) networking event. Your host, [Steinbacher, Goodall & Yurchak](#), invites you to a party under the tent on Tuesday, June 17, from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m., at their Greenwood location, 1913 East Pleasant Valley Boulevard, Altoona. A Tuesday may not be ‘Hump Day’ but why wait for fantastic networking opportunities? Just like estate planning, the outcome is always better when you plan early.

Steinbacher, Goodall & Yurchak is an elder care and special needs law firm offering quality representation in litigation. Many times people wait to take action



until an emergency or crisis arises. The Firm offers expert counseling on how to preserve most of your assets. Begin your estate planning — sooner rather than later.

Be sure to make your reservations for the tent party with great food, beverages, conversation and fun! Register [here](#).



Clock is ticking—apply now!

The deadline is fast approaching to submit applications for the Leadership Blair County Adult class of 2026. This dynamic program focuses on exploring Blair County and learning how to be a servant leader.

“Joining Leadership Blair County reveals just how much our community has to offer – far beyond what you’d expect. From local manufacturing and volunteerism to great networking opportunities, the experience is well worth the time and commitment,” said Geoff Barton of Reliance Bank, LBC class of 2024.

The deadline to submit applications is June 30th. The adult class is limited to 24 students. Applications can be found at blairchamber.com on the [Programs page](#).

Everyone is encouraged to apply. Past graduates often talk about the lifelong connections they have made.

“Leadership Blair County has been a career-defining experience. It helped me build strong community connections, form lasting friendships, and discover the many opportunities within Blair County. If you’re considering applying—do it. You won’t regret the growth and connections you’ll gain,” said Katerina Fischer of Penn State Altoona, LBC class of 2025.

For more information, contact Megan Rossman at mrossman@blairchamber.com.



**Don't miss this amazing event!
Make your reservations now.**

*Scan QR code
for reservations!*

