



3 days until Christmas



SPORTS / B1

Steelers outlast Lions with late-game penalty

# Altoona Mirror

\$1.50

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MONDAY

December 22, 2025

## Alleged gang members arrested

Florida-based group known to steal IDs, commit bank fraud

From Mirror staff reports

Two alleged members of what police call the Florida Felony Lane Gang are in custody in Blair County, while three others remain persons of interest in a series of smash-and-grab thefts and bank fraud cases that have been reported across at least 15 counties and five states.

Florida resident Shaquille Davonte Lewis, 29, and Philadelphia resident Tiffany John, 31, are being held at the Blair County Prison in lieu of bail, set at \$2 million for Lewis and \$200,000 for John.

Lewis and John both face dozens of felony charges related to their alleged participation in the organized crime ring, including counts of conspiracy to commit forgery, conspiracy to commit identity theft and corrupt organizations – employee.

According to the 74-page affidavit of probable cause, the crime ring has been under investigation since at least December 2024, with incidents reported in Pennsylvania, Delaware, West Virginia, New Jersey and New York.

The gang is centered in Fort Lauderdale and is known to steal victims' identities, create fraudulent identifications and commit bank fraud, according to the affidavit of probable cause.

Known as the "Felony Lane Gang" for their use of the drive-thru bank lane farthest from surveillance cameras to cash fraudulent checks while avoiding detection, the group is responsible for widespread smash and grab thefts, the affidavit states.

In Pennsylvania, incidents were reported not only in Blair County, but in Cambria, Centre, Bedford, Somerset and at least 10 other counties.

The cases are similar in style, in that the gang steals the identity of a person through theft, creates a fraudulent identification and then commits bank fraud to maximize profit, the affidavit states.

See **Gang**/Page **A6**



## Penn State proud

Hollidaysburg grad achieves childhood dream of becoming Blue Band drum major

By CONNER GOETZ

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When Ellie Sheehan runs onto the manicured expanse of Kentucky bluegrass inside Beaver Stadium, the whole world fades away. She's no longer under the spotlight of 106,000 enraptured fans, but back in Hollidaysburg with her dad, practicing the flip to an empty Tiger Stadium.

For the past 54 years, Blue Band drum majors have kicked off Nittany Lions' home games with the signature front flip, with their success or failure taken as an omen for the four quarters to come.

Now, the 21-year-old Sheehan has made the role her own — leading the 300-member band, taking the pressure in stride and leaving her mark as the first woman to hold the position.

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### MONDAY

#### Spotlight

PERSONALITY PROFILE

Q&A

OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

SLICE OF LIFE

ON THE JOB

COMMUNITY TREASURE

Suggestions for Monday Spotlight subjects can be sent to Mirror Managing Editor Holly Claycomb at 814-946-7451 or hclaycomb@altoonamirror.com



Courtesy photos

Ellie Sheehan has aspired to be the Penn State Blue Band drum major since she was a child. This year, she achieved that dream and led the more than 300-member band as the first woman to hold the position.

## Officers spread holiday cheer

Shop with a Cop promotes positivity as police shop for kids' wishlist items

By COLETTE COSTLOW

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Blair County Sheriff James E. Ott described the county's second Shop with a Cop event as a "win" for both children and law enforcement officers, as children get the chance to connect with officers while pro-

moting positivity within the community.

"We're still there usually during the bad times, but this is something we can do during the good times," he said.

More than 30 law enforcement officers paired up with about 200 local children last week, shopping for wishlist items at the Altoona Walmart Supercenter.

Kids could "choose whatever they want" within a \$150 price range donated by various community organizations, Shop with a Cop director Allyson Lonas said.

This year, Ott said the com-

munity raised more than \$30,000 in support of the event.

"We're so blessed to have a community that supports local law enforcement," he added.

Meanwhile, participating kids can learn about law enforcement while walking through Walmart and see that "they're good people, and they're here to help."

As a result, children can develop a relationship with an officer, giving that kid "someone they can turn to" in the future, she said.

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Mirror photo by Colette Costlow

Altoona Police Officer Matthew Angermeier helps choose X-Shot blaster accessories for an 8-year-old boy during Blair County's second annual Shop with a Cop event at the Altoona Walmart Supercenter.

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