

ACTIVE ALTOONA

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

I've always felt that Altoona, Pennsylvania didn't blow its own horn enough. The people of nearby Johnstown are real down-shouters about their city, but the citizens of Altoona, a favorite city of mine, are kind of reticent. It's the difference between the coal and steel-men and railroaders, who are a quiet sort of breed. Only in their love of sport, which dominates the interest of Altoona men, have they been loud in praise. Altoona is a sports town-- a man's town--as Henry Van Dyke wrote about London. Not only a sports town of the high school variety in the heart of football, wrestling and basketball areas, but a sports place in the heart of the hunting and fishing areas of Pennsylvania. Some of the best of both lie a few miles out of the city limits. Agriculture surrounds Altoona--the second largest industry of its county; dairy farming is foremost and fruit farming next. But its main industry is railroading, still as it was before-- Altoona is the gateway to the Horseshoe Curve, known throughout the world as one of the engineering seven wonders. Altoona is the home of the car shops of the Penn Central, including the Samuel Rea shops, the largest of the kind in the world, providing the major employment of the area. Altoona is not, however, in this day and age a one-industry town as it was before; for the production of garments and other light manufacture has transformed Altoona from that archaic atmosphere. Altoona Enterprises--the

fourth finest industrial and urban renewal group in Pennsylvania has literally changed the face of Altoona--scores of new industries have come to provide employment to Blair County's people. And a Penn State campus will provide technology and theory that these industries will need for years to come. I've always liked Altoona center city--particularly for the welcome the old Penn Alton has provided for many years--but tourists and travellers can find other accommodations along Route 22 and 220 by-ways and along 36--the Colonel Drake Highway which begins nearby. Lakemont Park, the Memorial Pool, the Baker Mansion (famous landmark of the iron foundry age) can provide historical and recreational enjoyment--and nearby are Prince Gallitzin State Park, the views of the Wopsonnock Look-out, Blue Knob Ski Area, Horseshoe Curve and other points of interest. Indeed, if there is a gateway to all of Pennsylvania--in all directions of the compass--it could well be Altoona--central city of the Pennsylvania lowlands and highlands both. Hospitality is its name--and activity of all sorts--its game. That's Altoona, Pennsylvania.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.