

COUNTY OF ERIE,  
NEW YORK

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- Wehrle Drive will be completed in the spring.
- Silver Alert system helps protect the most vulnerable residents.
- Touring Williamsville and Amherst.

INSIDE  
THIS ISSUE:

- Wehrle Drive 2  
reopened
- Library Grant 2
- Community 2  
Events
- Road repair 3
- Photo 3  
Gallery
- Contact 4
- Tourism 4

# News from Legislator

## Edward A. Rath III



VOLUME I, ISSUE I

DECEMBER 2010

## “Promises made; Promises kept!”

Legislator Rath has been a leader in fighting for reform in the Erie County Legislature. In February, Legislator Rath closed his district office and moved into the Legislature’s downtown office, saving thousands of dollars annually.

“This past year, many of us campaigned on bringing real reforms to the Erie County Legislature, and we are keeping our prom-

ise,” Legislator Rath said in February 2010.

But a greater victory came in the fall when Legislator Rath and his colleagues in the Republican Caucus were successful in securing the downsizing referendum’s place on the Nov. 2 ballot. 83% of voters supported the referendum and the Legislature will be reduced from 15 to 11 members

in January 2012.

“As an early proponent of a smaller Legislature, I am pleased that taxpayers voted favorably on this measure that will save them money and reduce bureaucracy,” Legislator Rath said in The Amherst Bee Newspaper.

Legislator Rath will continue to advocate for cost-saving changes and government reform.

## Erie County Silver Alert Law Passed

The creation of a new local law, entitled, “Erie County Silver Alert System” was unanimously approved by the Erie County Legislature during its Nov. 4 session.



**Legislator Rath sponsored the Silver Alert**

Sponsored by Legislator Rath, the law creates a plan to expedite search efforts for missing Alzheimer’s patients or individuals with other dementia related illnesses.

“The approval of the Erie County Silver Alert System is extremely important to our region which has a high rate of residents with Alz-

heimer’s or other forms of dementia. Furthermore, more than 70 percent of Alzheimer’s disease patients are cared for by a family member and there is always the fear that they will wander,” said Legislator Rath.

He added, “By creating this law we organize the efforts of law enforcement and media outlets to ensure rapid response in the event that a person with dementia is reported missing.”

In the event a Silver Alert is sounded, the Sheriff’s Office and local police departments will rapidly disseminate information regarding the missing person to all media outlets.

The Alert will include the missing person’s name, age, a physical description of the individual, what they might be wearing, and the last location where the person was seen.

For information, please contact the Alzheimer’s Association at 1-800-272-3900.

**Legislator Rath announced that copies of the “The RathReport” are available. “The RathReport” explains exactly how County’s tax dollars are utilized. To request a copy, please call the office at (716) 633-0617 or e-mail [edward.rath@erie.gov](mailto:edward.rath@erie.gov)**

# Wehrle Drive reopened



All lanes are Wehrle Drive are open.

Wehrle Drive between Aero Drive and Garrison Road has reopened after being closed for repairs. The Erie County Department of Public Works announced on Nov. 23 that the heavily traveled roadway is open in all directions and work on the pavement has finished for the year.

“This has been a long anticipated roadwork project for Amherst and Williamsville and I appreciate the residents’ and motorists’ patience while work was ongoing,” Legislator Rath said. “It is

never convenient when a roadway is closed but this was a necessary action. The roadway will remain open through the winter and final cosmetic construction will be completed in the spring.”

The construction on Wehrle Drive began in 2008 and completion is expected in the spring of 2011. The majority of the \$16.5 million project is paid for with federal and state funds. The County’s share is 5 percent.

Most of the work is complete and the final stages of the project

include paving the final top course and landscaping. Since beginning in 2008, Wehrle Drive has undergone major improvements. Additional lanes were added to address the congestion issues. Between Aero Drive and Youngs, Wehrle was widened from a 2-lane road to a 3-lane road. Farther east, toward Transit Road, the roadway was widened to 5-lanes from 2-lanes.

Traffic signals will be installed at Wehrle Drive and Garrison Road.

*“Many families and residents use the library weekly and will see improved customer service through this system.”*

## Self-check out system planned at libraries

Legislator Rath voted on Oct. 14, 2010 to accept a grant totaling more than \$1 million that will be used to complete the installation of a self checkout system that improves efficiency in the Buffalo and Erie County Public Libraries. The implementation of this system will save \$500,000 annually.

The grant will be used to complete the implementation

of a Radio Frequency Identification System, which allows patrons to check out materials without the assistance of a library employee. ID chips will be placed on all loaned materials, including books, DVDs and music CDs.

“The RFID system will soon be operational in all four Amherst libraries, which are some of the busiest branches in the County. Many families and

residents use the library weekly and will see improved customer service through this system,” said Legislator Rath.

The Republican Caucus, which has been working diligently to implement proficient operational practices, supports the use of this grant to greatly improve customer service and efficiency.

All 37 branches will have the system by the end of 2012.

An Amherst has their car seat installed. Their child was due in 3 weeks!



## Community Outreach Events

Legislator Rath is continuously planning Community Outreach Events to assist District residents.

In October he held a free Car Seat Safety Check at the new EduKids center on Niagara Falls Boulevard. In all,

30 seats were inspected and properly installed and five seats were replaced.

“This was a great event. Many families took the time to have their seats inspected and learned how to properly install them. That small action could spare their child serious injury in the event of an accident,”

Legislator Rath said.

Legislator Rath also co-hosted a UNYTS blood drive; Passports on the Move event; HEAP application seminar; and each month he holds District Outreach Meetings throughout Amherst and Williamsville.

# Hopkins Road repairs are made



**Legislator Rath speaks at a press conference on Hopkins Road.**

Legislator Rath had good news for residents living on or near Hopkins Road in North Amherst: both lanes south of Smith Road reopened this past summer. The road has suffered damage due to Ransom Creek.

“I am proud to share with the affected residents that significant improvements are occurring this summer on Hopkins Road. The residents of this area have patiently waited for decades for improvements and now Erie County can bring a portion of this road back to its intended purposes,” Legislator Rath said during a press conference in June.

Legislator Rath held several meet-

ings with residents, including a session at the North Amherst Fire Department, to explain that the issue on Hopkins Road is extreme but he will do everything he can to address the problems.

It will cost several million dollars to repair the roadway and Legislator Rath is committed to keeping residents informed about the process.

“My greatest concern on the deterioration of Hopkins Road is public safety and the welfare of the residents of North Amherst,” said Legislator Rath.

## Photo Gallery



Legislator Rath watches as a child ID card is created for his daughter. The program was offered at his Car Seat Safety Check.



Legislator Rath, left, arranged for the donation of two treadmills to the Williamsville Fire Department to be used in the fitness center. He is pictured with Fire Chief Christopher Petrie, center, and Ist Assistant Chief Dave Kubiak.



Legislator Rath attended the Taste of Williamsville held on Island Park this past summer with his wife Amy and three daughters.

## Rath named NERC Chairman

Legislator Rath was named a co-chairman of the Niagara Erie Regional Coalition. NERC is a partnership among government, private, and non-profit agencies committed to thinking and acting regionally for the betterment of Erie and Niagara counties.

In July 2010, Legislator Rath hosted a meeting with Niagara County Legislator Clyde Burmaster, co-chairman of NERC, to unveil their vision for NERC in 2010 and beyond. This is the only coalition of its kind in New York State.

For information, please visit NERC’s Facebook page or [www.erie.gov/regionalcoalition](http://www.erie.gov/regionalcoalition).



In recognition of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Williamsville Branch Library, Legislator Rath (right) presented a proclamation to Judge Jeffrey F. Voelkl, president of the board of trustees of the Amherst Public Library, during a celebration held Aug. 31.



### Contact Erie County Legislator Edward Rath III

Old County Hall  
92 Franklin Street  
Fourth Floor  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
Phone: 716-633-0617  
E-mail: [edward.rath@erie.gov](mailto:edward.rath@erie.gov)



**Erie County's vision: Erie County will be a world-class community where People want to live, Businesses want to locate and Tourists want to visit.**

It has been an honor serving the residents of Amherst and Williamsville for the past three years. During my tenure I have set several goals for myself as your representative and am proud to report many of these accomplishments in this newsletter.

I will continue to make my constituents' interests my number one priority and advocate for reform that best serves the taxpayers.

If you have a question or concern about a County issue, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,



## Promoting Tourism in Amherst, Williamsville

Legislator Rath proved there is great potential for increased tourism across WNY when he highlighted unique destinations in Amherst and Williamsville during a tour with Buffalo Niagara Convention & Visitors Bureau President Dottie Gallagher-Cohen.

"The few locations I chose to showcase are just a small sampling of the great attractions we have in our area," Legislator Rath. "I want to thank Dottie for taking the time to learn about these destinations and help in bringing tourism to the suburbs surrounding Buffalo."

The tour included: The Northtown Center at Amherst. The ice center has worldwide recognition and has hosted international tournaments bringing in some of the best young ice hockey players in the game today.

The next stop was, LeHigh Valley Depot and Caboose, located at the beginning of the Lehigh Memory Trail on South Long Street. Joe Kocsis, of Western New York Railway Historical Society, explained the many exciting projects underway in the depot and caboose.

The tour continued at The Hampton Inn-Williamsville, located in the heart of Williamsville. A lunch break was taken at The Eagle House, a well-known restaurant serving lunch and dinner.

The tour concluded with a walking tour of Williamsville, including the Water Mill which is expected to be renovated soon.

For information, visit [www.visitbuffaloniagara.com](http://www.visitbuffaloniagara.com).



During a tour of Amherst and Williamsville, Legislator Rath visited the LeHigh Valley Depot and Caboose (top) and The Northtown Center at Amherst.