



CHAMBER of COMMERCE







AMHERST, TONAWANDA OFFICIALS PROMOTE SAFE 'SHOP LOCAL' EVENTS, VACCINE CLINICS & NEW KSL DIAGNOSTICS TESTING SITE



(Amherst, NY) – Amherst Town Supervisor Brian Kulpa and Tonawanda Town Supervisor Joseph Emminger were joined today by Amherst Chamber of Commerce President/CEO A.J. Baynes and Kenmore – Town of Tonawanda Chamber of Commerce President Cathy Piciulo, along with Kevin Lawson, President and CEO of KSL Diagnostics, and Don Arthur III, owner of Brighton Eggert Pharmacy, to address the importance of COVID-19 vaccines and testing while encouraging holiday shoppers to shop local and follow health guidelines to keep everyone safe.

"The rising COVID numbers are absolutely a concern and we are asking everyone to continue to work together to reduce cases and keep our family members and neighbors safe. The town worked with KSL Diagnostics to open the drive-thru site, expanding access to testing and reducing wait times," said Amherst Supervisor Brian Kulpa. "Get vaccinated, get tested if you are feeling ill, and do your part to be part of a community-wide effort to protect each other. By taking the proper precautions and following health guidelines, we can stay open for business and support our local businesses."

"As all of us have seen over the past few weeks, we are not yet out of the pandemic. Since the fall of 2020, Tonawanda has partnered Brighton-Eggert Pharmacy to test and vaccinate our residents, but now is not the time to stop these efforts. We need more people to get vaccinated and just as important now, we need to get more people to get the booster shot," said Tonawanda Supervisor Joseph Emminger. "I have full confidence that together, we can continue to support our local businesses during the busy holiday season and at the same time ease the burden that is being placed on our local medical professionals, by just being a little more vigilant in our now, well-known COVID health protocols and being a little more compassionate about what others are experiencing in these difficult times."

Today's announcement urged patrons to enjoy safe holiday shopping at the shopping districts throughout the community that feature local businesses, shops and restaurants.

"The Amherst Chamber of Commerce is focused on keeping our dollars local this holiday season. Through our partnership with Erie County and the SHOP716 e-gift card program you can be assured that you are supporting our small business community. We encourage everyone to shop local and do you part to ensure we keep our businesses open," said Amherst Chamber of Commerce President/CEO A.J. Baynes.

"As we all make the effort to enjoy the season and support our communities, we do it with the kindness of the season in our hearts. We hope that people will make an effort to shop and buy locally.

For those who have taken a wait and see approach to the get vaccinated, we hope that the successful implementation of the program for many months for millions of people will encourage them to take that step now to protect themselves and those who are more vulnerable. It will go a long way to help us avoid any further mandates," said Kenmore – Town of Tonawanda Chamber of Commerce President Cathy Piciulo.

As a reminder, the outdoor Town of Amherst Holiday Market will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 4 on the Buffalo Niagara Heritage Village grounds, 3755 Tonawanda Creek Road, Amherst. The market will feature more than 25 vendors, local businesses, food trucks, plant sale, giveaways, and more. Admission and parking are free. Also on Saturday, Williamsville's Holiday in the Village will run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. along Main Street featuring local shopping and dining options.

The Village of Kenmore and Town of Tonawanda Youth, Parks and Recreation welcomes the community to Santa in the Village, being held from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 3 at the Kenmore Village Green, corner of Delaware Road & Delaware Avenue. Additional details: www.business.kentonchamber.org/events.

Anyone concerned about shopping in person, should contact local shops to see if they offer contactless pickup and/or online shopping options.

Also announced was KSL Diagnostics efforts to open a drive-thru site at 500 Maple Road, Amherst at the Audubon Golf Course.

"In collaboration with the Town of Amherst, KSL Diagnostics is able to add this drive-thru testing site to take some stress off the Youngs Road location that was experiencing long waits and traffic congestion. We have already conducted more than a half million COVID-19 tests since the start of the pandemic, and rising transmission rates has increased the demand for testing. With this additional site, KSL is more prepared to meet the needs of the community," said Kevin Lawson, President and CEO of KSL Diagnostics.

The new drive-thru site will offer less than 24-hour PCR tests. Individuals in need of rapid RT-PCR or antigen testing are directed to other KSL locations that can be found at www.ksldx.com/locations.

"After a 12-year effort to secure the authority to vaccinate, independent community pharmacies, in conjunction with KSL Diagnostics, have embraced the responsibility we have to improve the health outcomes of the communities we serve through convenient access to vital services which include vaccines, testing and treatments," said Donald W. Arthur Jr., owner and partner Brighton Eggert Pharmacy. "We continue to vaccinate over 250 WNY residents daily at our three COVID vaccination locations, Brighton Eggert Pharmacy, Black Rock Pharmacy and Walden Galleria. We have been able to offer vaccinations to our WNY community with no appointments required and walk-ins welcome. We recognize the challenges that appointment only programs have had especially for our seniors."

Information about vaccination clinics can be found at https://brightoneggertpharmacy.com/covid-services/vaccination.

For video of the press conference, please <u>CLICK HERE</u>.

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