

# **Supervisor Brian Kulpa's December 2024 Message**

## **Wishing you Safe, Healthy and Happy Holidays!**

Each one of us has faced a form of difficulty this past year. It might have been a loss of a loved one, a health challenge, a job change, an accident, or any number of stresses. While stress is a part of everyone's life, it is also a commonality that can often isolate us when the struggle becomes too hard. That is why it is important to remember to think of others and lend a helping hand where you can. The saying, "Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about," is a reminder to strive to always be kind and giving.

Recently, the news of Weinberg Campus closing the Rosa Coplon Living Center hit our region hard. Its impact is far reaching, affecting more than 120 patients and hundreds of employees. It was extremely stressful, and despite the Town's efforts to work with State and Federal leaders urging the New York State Department of Health to work to save the complex, it currently sits completely vacant. Moving these vulnerable patients can put them at great risk for decline. It is a hardship on them and their family members. Additionally, hundreds of employees were left scrambling for work. I joined the emotional employees for a press conference on the day they learned the facility would be closing, and it wasn't just about losing a job, it was about losing a calling that they were passionate about.

As such, we have to look no further than our own next-door neighbor or friends and family to find an opportunity to help strengthen someone's life. There is always something we can do to help someone in need. Even if you can't fix big problems for them, being supportive in small ways can make a difference. Taking out a garbage tote, delivering a meal, shoveling a sidewalk or just being there to talk - anything that provides some relief to life's daily challenges is appreciated.

This holiday season, I want to commend the amazing neighbors in town who do all the above and so much more. Just last month, the Amherst Police Department's Food Drive collected enough donations to help nearly 2,000 of our neighbors. This is in addition to the community's effort to fill a semitruck with 30,697 pounds of food for FeedMore WNY during Rock Out Hunger at Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital. Over at the Senior Center, gifts were collected for nearly 150 young children and seniors to brighten the season and provide some assistance and hope.

More than 300 children benefitted from the Town's Youth and Recreation Department held its 38<sup>th</sup> annual Warm Clothing Project. Spanning almost four decades, this effort keeps our youth safe from the harsh elements. Everyone deserves to have warm winter gear as we brave these WNY winters together. Coming up from 6-8 p.m. Friday, December 20, there is another opportunity to donate. The Center for Senior Services is hosting a Holiday Happening event with tree lighting, wagon rides, fire pit with roasted marshmallows, photo station, visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus and more. This event is free of charge, but attendees are asking to bring a pack of new socks or underwear for those in need.

The mindfulness of so many in our community is truly impressive. In the spring, members of the Chapel joined Youth and Recreation Department and Senior Services for "Serve Day" and prior to the start of the school year, many partners came together for the Pop-Up Clothing and School Supply Pantry. Through these efforts, those helped are better set up for success. Just knowing there is someone out there who supports you and wants you to succeed can help make any situation a little less stressful.

If you are finding yourself in need, don't hesitate to ask for help. There are local, county and state resources available. My office would be happy to help you if you aren't sure where to start, please call (716) 631-7000 or email [toainfo@amherst.ny.us](mailto:toainfo@amherst.ny.us) and we'll do our best to connect you with assistance where available.

Wishing you all a very happy, healthy and safe holiday season.