

# O'Loughlin throws hat in county executive ring

by JESSICA L. FINCH  
Associate Editor

Amherst Town Board Member William A. O'Loughlin Jr. has announced his candidacy for the position of Erie County executive.

O'Loughlin, who has served on the Town Board for three and a half years, said he has gotten a taste of government and wants to pursue it at a higher level.

He is the first Republican to officially announce for the position, which will be decided in November 2007.

Included in his platform is improving business throughout the county and keeping young adults in the area.

"I will energize and engage the business leaders of our community to work with me to use their contacts to persuade division heads of major corporations to bring their spouses and take a look at all we have to offer in Western New York," he said during his announcement last Thursday at Amherst Town Hall.

O'Loughlin added that he will focus on hiring the best people for positions and will work to help re-elect officials who are doing their jobs.

"I plan to enthusiastically work with both Republican and Democrat elected officials throughout Western New York," he said about focusing on a bipartisan work ethic.

While forming a strong county office, O'Loughlin said he will spend time in the community visiting every town and village — not just once in a while



William A. O'Loughlin Jr.

but all the time.

"I will have two offices — the second will be my car," he said.

According to O'Loughlin, it is for the people in those towns and villages that he wants to be in the office of county executive.

O'Loughlin will also focus on the heavy tax burden he said residents face year after year.

"I'm not going into county hall to raise taxes. We've had enough of that," he said. "It's time to get our fiscal house in order and off the backs of the property owners and consumers of Erie County."

O'Loughlin said he is a conservative businessman and an independent Republican who believes in solid business growth, fighting for lower taxes and reducing the size of government.

O'Loughlin is the resident branch manager of O'Loughlin Financial Group and Brookstreet Securities in Williamsville. He has 40 years experience as a financial advisor.

In addition to his service on the Town Board, he was recently appointed by Gov. George E. Pataki as a commissioner of the New York State Insurance Fund, New York's largest workers' compensation and disability benefits carrier.

Two other public officials have announced their candidacy for the position — Amherst Town Board Member Dan Ward, and West Seneca Supervisor Paul Clark, both are Democrats.

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**TAKING THE CAKE** — Andy Brocato, of Tops Markets at 3980 Maple Road, helps Linda Vanbuskirk and Marlene Schillinger, load a portion of 33 tons of donations to the Food Bank of Western New York into a truck. The event was held from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. and collected a record amount of food for those in need this holiday season.

Photo by John Rusac

## Winter festival show planned at planetarium for Dec. 21

The planetarium at Williamsville North High School, 1595 Hopkins Road, will be holding "Season of Light," at 6 and 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 21.

This planetarium star show features the customs and traditions of winter festivals of long ago. The show is about the coldest and darkest of seasons — a season that holds some of the warmest and brightest celebrations of the year and recounts the historical, religious, and cultural rituals practiced during the winter solstice. Naturally, astronomy is a focus in the show — a few constellations, the Sun's path across the sky, and the Earth's tilt and orbit around the Sun are used to explain the changing seasons.

For more information, visit [www.williamsvillek12.org/planetarium](http://www.williamsvillek12.org/planetarium) or call 626-8523.

# District accepts \$70,000 bid for storm cleanup

## Board recognizes efforts of emergency responders

by JESSICA L. FINCH  
Associate Editor

The storm cleanup efforts continue on Williamsville Central School District grounds with Board of Education approval on Dec. 12 of a \$69,850 bid from Scott Lawn Yard, in Sanborn, for tree restoration and removal services.

Thomas R. Maturiski, assistant superintendent for finance and management services, said dangerous trees near the schools were taken care of following the storm, and this funding is for assessing the overall damage of the remaining trees.

"The tree trimming they are doing is broken down into two categories, removal of trees that are damaged beyond saving and removing hanging branches," Maturiski said, adding that with the assistance of a certified arborist, 203 trees on school grounds have been marked for attention.

"It is our intent to do this work to salvage as many trees as possible by trimming damaged trees now so that they have the best chance to survive," he said.

According to the resolution, stump grinding will also be paid for in this bid.

"This is a major cost; the only others were personnel and the collapse of three baseball backstops," Maturiski said.

The board awarded a bid of \$23,528 to L.A. Steelcraft Products Inc. for two baseball backstops at East High School.

While cleanup continues, the board took time to reflect on the frightening moments of Oct. 12 when the snow was piling up and tree limbs were littering the streets. They acknowledged

three town leaders who stepped up the moment conditions became dangerous.

During the Dec. 12 meeting, the School Board thanked Emergency Services Director Jim Zymanek and Assistant Police Chief John Askey for their efforts. Police Chief John Moslow was also acknowledged but unable to attend the meeting.

"We are honored to publicly acknowledge three officials from the Town of Amherst who demonstrated superior leadership during the recent October Storm," Superintendent Howard Smith said. "Police Chief John Moslow, Assistant Police Chief John Askey, and James Zymanek, director of emergency services and safety, worked together to coordinate the emergency response throughout the town."

Smith added that as early as the first night of the storm, Moslow recognized the potential impact that it would have on schools and contacted each of the three superintendents.

"He involved us in daily briefings where we received the best information available in order to make important decisions regarding the status of our schools," he said.

"This significant, widespread emergency demanded an unparalleled response. From the onset, the teamwork, coordination and leadership demonstrated by these individuals and their staff members were incredible."

He said it is important to acknowledge that safety and security does not just happen by chance, especially in a crisis situation.

"It is the result of untold hours of planning by law enforcement, fire, and emergency personnel,

working in conjunction with others in the community — including our schools — to keep the community safe," Smith said. "We owe them a debt of gratitude for their

tireless service on our behalf, each and every day."

Following the recognition, Zymanek and Askey said the success in handling the disaster was

simply the result of teamwork.

The next board meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 9 in the board room, 105 Casey Road.

## Children give up candy, get a whole lot more

Youths from around the area gave up their Halloween candy to help feed those in need. Those who sold back the most candy were recently awarded gifts for their generosity.

Dr. Michael Foley of Winning Smiles Pediatric Dentistry on Amherst Manor Road held the Got Candy??? contest following Halloween through Nov. 22.

Children were asked to sell back their Halloween candy for a \$1 per pound. For each dollar given out, the office put another dollar towards buying turkeys at St. Luke's Missionary Center this past Thanksgiving. The candy was also donated as a special treat.

By selling back their candy, the youths were also eligible for prizes in addition to the cash.

On Dec. 11 Winning Smiles announced the winners.

The Maczka family, Emily, 2, Allison, 5, and Samantha, 7, chose a \$75 gift card to Toys R Us. Originally the contest offered a bicycle to the winner of the younger group but the family chose the gift card.

Gregory Sarratori, 11, from the older group was awarded an i-Pod shuffle.

The program was created in hopes of reducing the number of children afflicted with cavities and to promote goodwill within the community.



**Dr. Mike Foley, of Winning Smiles Pediatric Dentistry, congratulates Emily, 2, front row, left, Allison, 5, and Samantha Maczka, 7, along with Gregory Sarratori, 11, back row, for donating their candy to help buy food for the needy this past holiday.**

Photo by Joe Eberle