

**PRESS RELEASE FROM  
LEGISLATOR JOHN M. KENNEDY, JR.**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 28, 2011**

**CONTACT: ALI NAZIR  
LEGISLATIVE AIDE**  
PHONE: (631) 854-3735  
CELL: (631) 767-6230  
Email: [Ali.Nazir@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:Ali.Nazir@suffolkcountyny.gov)



**LEGISLATOR KENNEDY REFLECTS ON ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2011**

**Dec. 28, 2011:** Suffolk County Legislature Minority Leader John M. Kennedy Jr. (12<sup>th</sup> District) paused today to reflect on the high points of 2011.

“Whether it was witnessing the culmination of the landmark 9/11 Responders Remembered monument and park, generating record one-day blood donations at our annual summer barbecue, keeping the John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility in operation to ensure Suffolk residents have access

to high-quality, local nursing and rehabilitation services, or saving over 600 county jobs slated for elimination without increasing general fund property taxes, this was a remarkably productive year," Legislator Kennedy said. "While I was proud and humbled to play a role in these efforts, they are also the product of the good will and hard work of residents of the 12<sup>th</sup> District and beyond, who came together to celebrate our shared values, improve our community and rebuild our local economy while keeping an eye out for neighbors in need."

These achievements of 2011 include:

- With the 9/11 Responders Remembered Committee, constructed and opened the first-ever monument and park dedicated to 9/11 responders who died as a result of their services in the rescue and recovery efforts following the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.
- Secured \$700,000 in funding toward the Town of Smithtown's total \$1.4 million effort to improve groundwater discharge – as part of larger effort to reduce the region's chronic groundwater flooding – and arrest pollution of environmentally sensitive parkland in the Smithtown community.
- Secured \$400,000 in funding toward the planning and design of groundwater remediation efforts in the portion of the Nissequogue River Northeast Branch that runs through the Village of the Branch, in an effort to provide relief from groundwater flooding to both homeowners in the Village itself as well as the larger Smithtown community, which also relies on free-flowing Nissequogue tributaries to prevent water-table buildup.
- Facilitated the meeting of government representatives and community stakeholders to improve the safety of Main Street in Smithtown following repeated traffic accidents and injuries.
- Successfully opposed efforts to close the John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility, which would have compromised Suffolk's long-term investment in the nursing and rehabilitation services, and potentially left some Suffolk residents without access to nursing home care.
- Continued the tradition of providing robust services to constituents, with over 1,400 cases ongoing or successfully resolved as of the close of 2011.
- Maintained local employment by supporting a 2012 operating budget that saved over 600 jobs slated for elimination in the county executive's budget proposal – without raising county general fund property taxes.
- Further saved jobs and ensured widespread access to medical care by supporting a compromise plan that prevented the closure of two Suffolk County health centers following an unprecedented reduction in state funding.
- Sponsored a successfully enacted measure calling for a 2012 popular referendum on the creation of a program allowing local government emergency-response agencies to take advantage of Suffolk County's stockpiled yet substantially unused development credits to improve and expand provision of local fire, medical and police services – without requiring local

governments to purchase these credits, which would likely have resulted in increased taxes.

- Sponsored (along with the Nesconset Chamber of Commerce, Long Island Cares the Suffolk County Executive's Office) the wildly popular Nesconset Summer Concert Series at the Nesconset Gazebo for the fourth consecutive summer, generating private donations and 773 pounds of food for the Harry Chapin Food Bank and raising over \$1,000 for the Veterans Assistance Fund of 9-1-1 Veterans, which provides emergency funding to U.S. military veterans and their families to cover basic life necessities.
- Secured funding for restoration of Terry Road area sumps, improving their groundwater collection and recharge capacity to aid efforts to lower the area's chronically elevated water table.
- Cosponsored a successfully enacted groundbreaking ethics law imposing stricter financial disclosure requirements on Suffolk County public officials in an effort to avoid corruption or the appearance of corruption.
- With the Lake Ronkonkoma Advisory Task Force, developed and began implementation of plans to create two private, nonprofit corporations to assemble community stakeholders to advise municipal governments and secure grant funding for community development and environmental protection projects in the Lake Ronkonkoma watershed.
- Along with residents, the Nesconset Chamber of Commerce, the Suffolk County Water Authority Smithtown Supervisor Patrick Vecchio and the Town Board, and Mazelis Landscaping, developed the overgrown, unused triangle of land at the intersection of Terry Road and Smithtown Boulevard into a decorated island welcoming visitors to Nesconset.
- Began the rejuvenation of Blydenburgh Park, commencing restoration of the Blydenburgh Mill and seeking interested parties to form a Friends of Blydenburgh Park to aid in the restorations and improvements.
- Secured funding, and solicited private-sector donations, toward the restoration of Walter S. Commerdinger County Park and Preserve.
- Sponsored a \$1 million capital project to expand the Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program at Stony Brook University Medical Center to dramatically increase the hospital's capacity to provide emergency psychiatric evaluation and counseling to the Suffolk County community.
- Hosted another successful summer blood drive tour, which included the collection of a county-record-setting 124 pints at Legislator Kennedy's annual summer Bloodfest barbecue. Kennedy's events have collected over 1,500 pints in aggregate since he began sponsoring regular blood drives in 2006.
- Aided Commack community members in pursuing preservation options for the historic Marion Carll Farm, which was threatened with development when its owner, the Commack School District, could no longer afford to maintain the premises.

"I look forward to continuing my zealous efforts on these fronts in the New Year, and hope to realize similar successes in serving my constituents, improving our community and economy, and providing higher quality county government without unnecessarily increasing its quantity," Legislator Kennedy said. "Constituent contact is always welcome. I can be reached at my office, located at 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, North Complex, Building 17, Smithtown, N.Y., which is open every business day of the year. Furthermore, comments and suggestions can be sent to [john.kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:john.kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov); call my office anytime at 631-854-3735. Happy New Year and see you in 2012!"

"Finally, I would like to thank my staff: Leslie, Ali, Seth, Fabrice, Danielle, Mark, Andy, Wendy, Joe, Rob and all who helped to make 2011 a solid year of accomplishment," Legislator Kennedy said. "I will be counting on them in 2012."

*Photo Caption: Legislator Kennedy poses with his members of his staff at the District 12 Office in Smithtown Dec. 28.*