

## Redekop back at the helm in Fort Erie



By John Robbins / Managing Editor  
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Fort Erie Mayor Wayne Redekop and his wife Cathy. Photo by Daryl Wells.

FORT ERIE - After an eight-year absence from Town Hall, Wayne Redekop is back at the helm.

Redekop, who served as a councillor from 1991 to 1994 and mayor for three terms from 1997 to 2006, was sworn in as head-of-council Monday evening during a festive ceremony held inside the Fort Erie Leisureplex.

During his speech, Redekop stressed the need for council and the community to set aside divisions and rally together in common cause to address the challenges facing the fourth-largest municipality in Niagara.

"The road ahead is clear to me," said Redekop, who takes over from outgoing mayor Doug Martin.

"If we truly believe that Fort Erie is a wonderful place to live, work, play and raise a family; if we truly love Fort Erie, we will come together as a community to meet the challenges that face us."

Redekop continued: "We will honour our ancestors. We will set aside our differences, respect the views of others, listen to each other, encourage civic involvement and act upon the best and

boldest of opportunities to make our community unique and prosperous. We can do this. We must do this."

Redekop inherits a largely rookie council.

Six members of council were inaugurated Monday evening: George McDermott (Ward 1 - North Fort Erie); Rick Shular (Ward 2 - South Fort Erie); Kimberly Zanko (Ward 3 - Crescent Park); Marina Butler (Ward 4 - Ridgeway); Don Lubberts (Ward 5 - Crystal Beach); and Chris Knutt (Ward 6 - Stevensville).

All are new to council, with the exception of Lubberts, who was elected in 2010 and Shular, who has served on council since 2003.

Sandy Annunziata, who served on town council from 2006 to 2010, will represent Fort Erie at the region - along with Redekop - for the next four years.

Regional councillors will take their seats on Dec. 11.

Redekop enumerated a number of tasks that will demand the immediate focus of council:

Verbatim from his speech, these are:

- restoring Fort Erie's image;
- creating a strong administrative team;
- ensuring that Town Hall is open, accessible, accountable, reliable and trusted;
- involving residents in the decision-making process;
- developing strategies to capture the limitless opportunities presented to us;
- revitalizing our infrastructure;
- establishing the partnerships necessary to leverage investment, empower community groups, resolve border and transportation issues and bring post-secondary education to Fort Erie;
- completing the many exciting projects already in the works;
- creating the environment and conditions to bring jobs to Fort Erie;
- and advocating for the needs of our residents, whether health care, transportation, literacy, shelter or basic needs.

Also sworn in Monday evening were municipal councils in St. Catharines, Welland, Port Colborne, Pelham and Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Niagara Falls city council will be inaugurated Tuesday evening in a ceremony at the Scotiabank Convention Centre.