

Van of special needs family stolen from Harlem Road

By **Jim Herr** - September 24, 2018



Ed Kast and his son Little Eddie. (Contributed)

CHEEKTOWAGA – Eddie Kast was picking up dinner from a Harlem Road Chinese restaurant Sunday night when his van was stolen.

He tells Cheektowaga Chronicle that he was inside China Jade Kitchen at 2509 Harlem Road for just five minutes.

“The key was in the ignition, and the door was unlocked. There was no one around, it was quarter to six, and I should’ve locked the van, but I didn’t. I jumped out to grab our food,” said Mr. Kast.

A witness at the plaza saw an older teenager jump in the van and drive away down Kemp Avenue according to Cheektowaga Police records.

The theft stole more than just a late model Dodge Caravan. Inside was a stroller valued at \$2,000 and medical equipment for Mr. Kast’s 37-year-old handicap son, Little Eddie, who had Congenital Rubella Syndrome as a fetus.

“It affected his brain development in the first trimester. As a consequence, he has a laundry list of physical and sensory disabilities. He’s fairly functional but he’s also mentally retarded and non-verbal,” said Mr. Kast. “Everything he does depends on someone helping him do it or doing it with him.”



This past February, Little Eddie was hospitalized for eleven days after having a seizure.

“It came close to taking his life, but they managed to save him. He was on a ventilator for a few days, and then they weaned him off with oxygen,” Mr. Kast said. “We’re survivors. We’re a family of strong spiritual and religious roots.”

Little Eddie’s favorite things are getting out and about in the van or going for a walk in the stroller.

Mr. Kast says former Buffalo Sabre Patrick Kaleta learned about the theft from social media and his HITS Foundation donated a new stroller for Little Eddie.

A law enforcement source tells Cheektowaga Chronicle that the van was recovered on Dartmouth Avenue in the City of Buffalo six hours later.

We’re told Buffalo Police responded to a loud party on the street and found the vehicle in front of the house.

It was not immediately known if the contents of the van were still inside.

The investigation continues.

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