This year marks the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in New York State in 1917, three years ahead of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution in 1920. To recognize and celebrate this milestone, Pam Mount from Penfield Recreation, Peggy O’Neil from the Penfield Library, and Kathy Kanauer, our Town Historian & Local History Room Coordinator, will co-sponsor programs throughout 2017. First up is a series entitled “SuffraTeas” that kicks off on Susan B. Anthony’s birthday, Wednesday, February 15 at 2:00 PM in the Senior Lounge at the Community Center. Pam and Kathy will discuss women getting the right to vote and the importance of this right. Please note that registration is not required for this event. As the rest of the schedule is firmed up details will be shared by Penfield Recreation, the Penfield Public Library, and also online at www.penfieldrec.org.

I received the following information from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC): Oak wilt, a deadly fungal disease affecting oak trees, was discovered in six new locations in New York last year. This disease can be spread by beetles that are attracted to freshly cut or injured trees. Protect your oak trees from deadly infection by pruning in winter instead of during the growing season. The oak wilt fungus clogs the trees’ transport vessels, cutting off water and food from leaves and the rest of the tree. Oak wilt spreads when fungal spores hitch rides on insects. Sap beetles, one of the main culprits, are extremely attracted to fresh tree wounds. Therefore, pruning oaks during the growing season greatly increases the chances of insects infecting them with oak wilt.

Here is a summary of how you can protect your oak trees:

- Prune oaks between October and February, NOT during the growing season.
- Follow existing regulations and quarantines meant to protect trees and forests.
- Don’t move firewood. Firewood can transport oak wilt and other deadly pests and diseases to new areas.

Learn to identify the symptoms of oak wilt which include discoloration around the entire leaf edge and sudden loss of a substantial portion of leaves during the summer. Direct your questions to the DEC Forest Health office at 1-866-640-0652 or email photos of tree symptoms to foresthealth@dec.ny.gov. Visit the DEC website for more information on oak wilt.

Waste Management of New York is reminding residents to recycle cardboard, especially after the holidays. Cardboard used for shipping has become one of the most disposed of household materials with the increasing popularity of online shopping. It is important to remember to recycle materials properly, as Waste Management continues to see cardboard in our landfills, which could instead be recycled into new products. Almost 20 percent of annual retail purchases are made during the holiday season, resulting in a spike in recyclable materials. Cardboard can be recycled through curbside recycling pickup or at the Monroe County Ecopark, 10 Avion Drive. To recycle curbside, cardboard must be flattened down or cut into small pieces and placed in or under the recycling container. Greeting cards, gift boxes, wrapping paper and wrapping paper tubes can all be placed in recycling bins as well. Please note that the Monroe County Ecopark is open Wednesdays from 1:00 to 6:30 PM and Saturdays from 7:30 AM to 1:00 PM. For information on recycling visit www.monroecounty.gov/ecopark.

The AARP Foundation Tax Aide Program will once again be offering free income tax preparation on Wednesday and Friday mornings at the Penfield Community Center by appointment only, beginning February 1, 2017. The AARP Foundation Tax Aide Program was designed to provide free income tax preparation services for low to moderate income households. While the program is available to anyone, its intent is to help those with limited resources who cannot afford to have their returns prepared by a private person or company.
This year AARP is migrating to a new software program which means that your return may take a little longer to prepare. Please keep this in mind when booking your appointment. One important thing to note is that preparers will NOT have access to any prior year carryover information. It is important that you bring last year’s tax return and supporting documents with you to your appointment—even if prepared by the AARP Tax Aide program.

Other information that MUST be brought to your appointment:

- Photo ID
- Social Security cards for yourself and dependents
- Checkbook or a voided check if you want to direct deposit any refund. AARP cannot take routing numbers or account numbers verbally or from any other documents.
- Proof of health care coverage

To help you book your tax appointment, please review the following list of mailing deadlines for tax information you will need to bring with you to file your taxes. (Keep in mind that it will take several days before you actually receive documents from providers.)

- W-2, 1099INT, 1099DIV, 1099R forms must be mailed by February 1
- 1099B and consolidate brokerage investment accounts have a mailing deadline of February 15, but many companies are granted an extension to March 15
- K-1s have a mailing deadline of April 15

To make an appointment contact Penfield Recreation beginning January 17 at 340-8655, ext. 0. Appointments are available February 1 through April 12.

Until next week, enjoy the mild weather. Because of recent rain and snow melt, please take a moment to clean the road drain in front of your home of leaves and other debris to ensure proper drainage.

Tony

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