The Recreation Department, in conjunction with the Monroe County Sheriff Department (MCSD), will be offering an exciting free nine week “Senior Citizen Academy” beginning Thursday, March 31 and continuing for nine consecutive Thursdays from 9:30-11:30AM at the Community Center. Participants will get a first-hand account of the different agencies and departments that make up the MCSD. The program will also include bus tours to the Public Safety Building, Emergency Operations Center, Public Safety Training Facility, the Police Stables, and more. Adults 55 and older can register for this program at the Recreation Department or by going online at www.penfield.org. Deputy Michael Manioci is coordinating this wonderful educational program.

Last week I had the honor of participating in celebrating “Catholic Schools Month” at Saint Joseph School, which acknowledges and thanks community leaders and friends for their ongoing support. This is another example of the great partnerships we have across the entire community of Penfield. I wish to thank Father James Schwarz and Principal Sister Christina Luczynski for their ongoing commitment to the youth of our community and their families.

With the vision of a very active Energy and Environmental Advisory Council and the support of a very enthusiastic Town Board, Penfield will be embarking on an exciting project involving solar energy. We have identified an opportunity to run one of our sanitary sewer pump stations at a net-zero energy cost to the Town of Penfield. The combination of a New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) grant that will cover approximately half of the cost and installation by Town staff will help us realize a return on investment in just four to five years on a system that will provide power for more than 30 years. Local municipalities will continue to be faced with unfunded mandates and associated increasing operating costs. We can sit around and complain about the situation and look at raising taxes of our residents or we can be forward thinking and look for other opportunities to continue to manage costs. I prefer to look for creative ways to control costs. While solar power is not the answer for every application for energy reduction in Town facilities, it is another tool in the tool box to help manage fixed costs. I look forward to keeping you posted on the progress of this project.

The Girl Scouts organization has been in existence for almost 99 years. Girl Scouting helps girls develop their full individual potential which contributes to the improvement of society through their abilities, leadership skills, and cooperation with others. The highest award in Girl Scouts is the “Gold Award.” I would like to introduce you to Jillian McCord. Jillian is soon to receive the prestigious “Gold Award.” To complete this award, each project must be at least 80 hours long and include leadership, community involvement, and lasting effects. Jillian’s project was a video production of the history of Penfield over the course of the 200 years we have been a town. To achieve the sustainability aspects of the project, she will give a DVD copy to area elementary schools to incorporate the history of Penfield into their fourth grade curriculum when they study New York State from the late 1700s to the early 1800s. Additionally, a copy will also be available at the Local History Room and the Penfield Library. On behalf of our entire community, I want to congratulate Jillian on her work to achieve the “Gold Award” by developing this amazing program, “A History of Penfield: Celebrating Penfield’s Bicentennial.” Great job Jillian, we are all proud of your accomplishment.

Last week I attended the Penfield Library Board meeting to present Jim Richardson a proclamation on behalf of the Town Board for his 20 years of service as a valued member of the Library Board. During his tenure, Jim had the distinction of having served the community in every office of the Library Board of Trustees. In presenting this recognition I was made aware that Jim’s wife Ruth also served on the board in the late 1950s. What an amazing couple; their commitment to Penfield is second to none…a special thank you to both Jim and Ruth for helping to make the Penfield Library the best in the County.

Lastly, I would like to remind all of our residents that all exemptions must be filed with the Assessor’s Office by Tuesday March 1. Renewal exemptions and enhanced STAR exemptions for senior citizens must be filed by March 1 as well. If you have any questions about exemptions, please contact the Assessor’s Office between 9AM – 5PM, Monday – Friday at 340-8610.

Until next week, be well and be safe!

Tony
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