Last week Penfield experienced a significant loss with the passing of Terry E. “Bub” Rothfuss. Many residents of the town knew and loved Terry, and I dedicate this week’s column to him and his family. Hopefully, for those who may not have had the honor or pleasure of knowing Terry, you will better know the man and what he meant to Penfield and what Penfield meant to him.

**Family** – Terry was a loyal and dedicated husband (to Mary Lou), father (to Brent, Heidi, Scott, Molly and their spouses), and grandfather (to Peyton, Jordan, Sydney). The sun rose and set on his family, he could not have been more proud of all their individual accomplishments. The fact they all lived on or adjacent to the farm was of very special importance to him. On a working farm there is always a lot of hard work and endless chores to be done; however, this farm was always a center of activities for family and friends, the neighborhood, East Penfield, and many other parts of our community for coffee, dinners, parties, and gatherings too many to list.

**Friend** – once you met Terry you were good friends forever. I’m not sure if it was his big smile, his teddy bear stature, the trademark bib-overalls or a combination of them all. To have known him was to love him. As a friend his focus was on you and never about him! If you needed help, Terry was the first one there to loan a hand, a piece of equipment, or maybe just an encouraging word. Any problem, issue or emergency was solved without the need of recognition or compensation.

**Farmer** – farming was bred in Terry’s bones. He was in his glory plowing a field, cutting/raking/baling hay, tending to a newborn calf, or repairing one of many tractors and other equipment necessary to complete a planting or harvest. Farming is as much a mentality or lifestyle as it is a profession. Most farmers face numerous setbacks, and they are really good at problem-solving. It may not be the best, prettiest, safest, or most effective solution, but at the end of the day farmers are incredibly resourceful. Farming is not only a very difficult job, it is arguably the first stepping stone towards an advanced society. When men put down spears and picked up plows, it allowed communities to stop wandering and to become established, as we see in Penfield.

This brings me to my last dimension that I so much admired about Terry, and that is **community involvement**. This can be as simple as saying hello or waving to a neighbor, attending church or other place of worship, belonging to a service organization, participating on a school PTA, shopping locally, attending a pancake breakfast for one of the many community sports teams, serving on a town committee, or helping out a friend, neighbor, or stranger.

So how did Terry live and define community involvement? Certainly everything I mentioned above was considered basic table-stakes for him; however, observing Terry over the years working on events, committees and many community interests or just helping others, being involved in the community meant much more to Terry. It meant making a great community even better. It meant building relationships with everyone; individuals, groups and organizations. He believed those relationships were the very things that bridge the gaps between barriers that could become “sticky issues” in the future. It meant spending the extra time during the day, night or weekends helping others out, knowing he had more than enough things to get done on the farm before his day was done. It meant taking an active interest in community problems and looking for ways to solve them. It meant getting personally involved and encouraging others to participate as well. It meant not turning your back on anyone! In Terry’s eyes, that is what community involvement was really about and that is how he lived each and every day.

It is important to mourn a loss, especially the loss of a great man. It is equally important for us all to follow the example that Terry has set around family, friends, and community involvement. We should all challenge ourselves to look for ways to make a difference each and every day in whatever we do—that would be a celebration of Terry’s life and would help to keep his legacy alive and growing in Penfield. To the Rothfuss family, thank you for sharing Terry with all of us!