I would like to begin this column by recognizing Superintendent John Carlevatti of the Penfield School District who will be retiring at the end of July. On behalf of the entire Penfield Town Board and Town Staff I want to thank John for being such a great community partner. Over the last two-and-a-half years I have had an opportunity to work with John on several matters of school and town interest, and have found him to be a visionary who wanted to help make the school district and community better for all our residents. John, we wish you all the best during your retirement and look forward to seeing you out in Penfield on a regular basis. Best wishes and congratulations.

The 2013 budget process is underway with all the town department heads submitting their first round of numbers. I continue to be impressed with their attention to detail and efforts to maximize tax dollars for our residents. Local communities continue to be faced with double digit inflation on many fronts. New York State has informed us that pension costs are up 21 percent from last year. Early on medical projections have costs and premiums up 12 percent. Workers Compensation is projected to increase between 12 and 15 percent and we are seeing overall insurance costs up by eight to ten percent. Most of these costs are unfunded mandates that must be absorbed to comply with the two percent mandated tax cap. I have consistently shared with our residents that if the State is requiring a tax cap on all local governments, they must also cap their run away spending. The town board has been, and continues to be, committed to absorbing these costs and to look for ways to keep the tax rate flat for our residents without major impact to services. We all must continue to keep the pressure on all levels of government to reduce costs and cut spending!

All of the amphitheater music events this season have been a tremendous success with the nice weather and great talent. It pains me to say that the season is already two-thirds over…time marches on. Please plan on attending one of the final events with your family. Cool Jazz on Tuesday July 31 with The White Hots; Kids Fest Thursday with the Mike Kornrich Band; and Saturdays on Stage August 4 with Gap Mangione and his Big Band. The music starts at 7:00 p.m. and there is great food available each night. I hope to see you there!

Our Penfield Librarian reminds me that there are still many exciting children’s programs scheduled for the month of August. Many of these programs are sponsored by the Friends of Penfield Library group that provides funding to enhance the library experience. Our six-year-old granddaughter has been participating in the reading game this summer as she readies herself for first grade. For more information on all the programs or to register, please log on to www.penfieldlibrary.org.

The Daytime Education at Recreation (DEAR) programs have been a wonderful experience for those attending. Tracing the Journey of Rene Robert LaSalle has peaked the interest of local history enthusiasts as they celebrate 343 years of LaSalle’s passage in Penfield. Please join “Captain” Dick Freitas on Thursday, August 9 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Auditorium as he discusses the famous world explorer and his travels through our area. For more information and to sign up for this program, log on to www.penfield.org.

I mentioned this next topic in last week’s column; however based on more than six fires over the last week, it bears repeating. Recent local fires have damaged lawns, landscaping and structures. Dry weather conditions have continued across upstate and western New York. New York State has instituted a statewide residential burn ban for 90 days through October 10. Penfield residents should contact the Fire Marshals Office at 340-8643 with questions regarding recreational fires. For more details on the statewide residential burn ban, please visit www.governor.ny.gov.

Until next week, be well and be safe!

Tony
340-8631
supervisor@penfield.org