Town of Penfield Supervisor’s Column
Week of August 11, 2014

The Recreation Department will mail the 2014 fall PenRec Brochure to all town residents in the coming week. The brochure contains hundreds of programs for the entire family that run from September through the end of the year. Registration begins on September 2. We encourage you to register early as many of our programs fill up quickly. You may be eligible for a discount by signing up early or registering for multiple programs. For more details, please log on to www.penfieldrec.org.

Summer is flying by, and it seems everyone is looking for a few more barbecues, more time in the pool, campfires under the stars, or a little more baseball. Summer provides a chance to clear the calendar for what really matters, spending time with family and friends. Something else that truly matters in summer months is blood donation. Donations typically decline in summer, this year is no exception. Since May, the Red Cross has experienced a shortfall of almost 80,000 donations. Your donation of blood or platelets could help save up to three lives. Please consider donating, and bring a friend! Penfield is hosting a blood drive Friday, August 22, from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Community Center, 1985 Baird Road. Schedule an appointment by visiting www.redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Thank you in advance for helping someone in need.

The Monroe County Sheriff’s Department has shared with me that speeding across the county continues to be a huge problem and has resulted in many accidents, including several fatalities. They are writing record numbers of speed violations and are asking drivers to obey posted speed limits for their own safety and the safety of others. The higher the speed, the more points you receive on your license. Do not become a statistic or jeopardize your license…please slow down!

The Penfield Library invites you to an open house on Sunday, August 17, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The library and the Local History Room will be open for business as usual, and special events will include demonstrations of improvisational theater, karate, and dance in the Braman Room. The community center grounds will feature an electric car demonstration and the Zoomobile. There will be door prizes throughout the event, a variety of short concerts in the Community Room, and stories for children in the Storyhour Room. Refreshments will be available. See the full program of events at www.penfieldlibrary.org.

Town budget 2015 update…we are another week closer to the presentation of the 2015 “Tentative Budget” to the town board and Penfield community on September 3 at 7:30 p.m. We are still looking for ways to trim $1.2 million of additional costs from 2014 to 2015. I can assure you that the Town Comptroller and I have left no stone unturned as we review materials submitted by department heads. The New York State tax cap rate for 2015 is 1.56%. The state is requiring all towns to budget for a 20 percent increase in pension costs. I still struggle with New York State “talking out of both sides of its mouth.” We hear the state budget is on time and balanced, and living within the tax cap. So why is it so hard for local government to do the same? Well, if you are pushing your costs down to others to deal with, no wonder you can claim success. Now the state’s problem becomes a local problem, as we can only pass these costs on to our residents. In Penfield, we have made some hard decisions in the past to keep the tax rate flat. We will have to make even harder decisions in the future. We have been fortunate to keep services at the same level year on year; however, in the future we may have to change the way services are delivered or even cut services in some areas. Please stay engaged with the budget process. Once the “Tentative Budget” is released on September 3 it will be available for your review on our website. You will then have until October 10 to comment and recommend changes and updates.

Until next week, please enjoy your summer and consider donating (the gift of life) blood on August 22!

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