Last week I had the honor and challenge of judging the “Penfield Scene” paintings at the annual Penfield Art Association exhibit at theLegacy at Willow Pond. This art show is one of many that Penfield Art Association hosts within our community. After several visits and much deliberation, I selected a painting by Teresa Barlis entitled “Schutt’s Barn” as the “Best Penfield Scene.” To me, this painting best represents our great community by tying our rich agricultural roots to a modern day designation for families and residents of all ages. Schutt’s Apple Mill has been operating for three generations since 1918 at 1063 Plank Road. Please consider visiting this country store to shop for many locally grown products or go on line to www.schuttsapplemill.com for more details. (You may see me there getting an apple frosty!) I would like to take this opportunity to thank Suzi Zefting-Kuhn, current President of the Penfield Art Association, and all the artists for their wonderful works.

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, I am reminded of the many Penfield families that may not be as fortunate as many to have a table filled with food. The Penfield Ecumenical Food Shelf, located in the basement of the First Baptist Church at 1862 Penfield Road, is a not-for-profit and totally volunteer run organization that provides groceries and distribution of fresh foods to retirees on a very limited income, single mothers, the disabled, and the forgotten. The Food Shelf is celebrating its thirteenth anniversary serving Penfield families this year. This wonderful organization is always looking for volunteers, donated food goods including frozen turkeys for the holidays, and monetary contributions. For more information on how you may be able to help, please call 234-0799. My family supports this wonderful program; I hope many other Penfield residents are able to assist as well.

To say the Penfield Community Victory Garden on Five Mile Line Road adjacent to Rothfuss Park was a success in the first year is an understatement! The community garden connects to Penfield’s rich agriculture heritage, Go-Green initiative, provides for an enhancement of community, and provides for children’s educational activities. This program encouraged so many good things in its first year: composting, food sustainability and local consumption, organic gardening, building healthy soil; and providing food for the needy. More than 65 individual gardens were developed and more than forty pounds of fresh products were provided to the Ecumenical Food Shelf for distribution. On behalf of the entire Penfield Community, I would like to recognize Dave and Carol Boyer for their vision and leadership of this amazing project. More gardens are planned for 2011; please watch for the Recreation brochure due out in December and sign up for a garden experience, or log on to www.penfield.org.

It has been a while since I updated you on the Energy & Environmental Advisory Committee. The committee has met monthly this year and has identified and completed many worthwhile items that include recycling totes in all of our parks; reduced mowing along roadways; reduced chemical/fertilizer in our parks; a public information session on leaf management; and useful information for the www.renewpenfield.org newsletter. So what’s next? The committee will continue to look for more ways to recycle and reuse materials; establish and grow partnerships with business, schools, scouts, and others; look at a solar project in the community; and continue with a very active communication plan with all Penfield residents. As stewards of the environment, all of us in this great community have a stake in sustainability. We welcome your thoughts and ideas as to what we should be addressing in 2011.

As the weather starts to turn a bit nastier, there is no need to stay cooped up in the house! Consider getting involved in one of the many aquatic, youth, teen, adult, or family programs offered by the Recreation Department or Penfield Library. Take a look at the brochure or log on to www.penfield.org to see what programs are offered, you will be amazed what is available…enjoy!

With cooler weather comes the flu season. Receiving a flu shot is one of the most effective ways you can lower your risk of getting the flu. If you have not received a flu shot, please consider making an appointment to get one soon.

Until next week, be well and be safe.

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