Town offices were closed in observance of Veterans Day and the weather was some of the best of the fall season. I spent a good portion of my day outside enjoying the sun and warmth, cleaning up some last minute chores before the wintery weather sets in for the next three to four months. The nicest part of my day was participating in the Veterans Day celebration at GrandeVie Senior living in our Four Corners area. Veterans and their families were recognized for their service to our country. I was honored to spend time with these residents and learn about their service and careers after being discharged. We are so fortunate to have the senior facilities we have in Penfield, I encourage everyone to stop in one of them to visit and say hello, it is an uplifting experience. The group of about 60 residents and their families was entertained by Amanda Lee Peers (a recent participant on “The Voice” who was selected by coach Gwen Stefani) and Ryan James, former lead singer for Rochester’s party band Nic and the Nice Guys. Their patriotic music brought tears to many eyes. To learn more about these talented local artists and their music go to www.amandaleepeurs.com and www.teamryanjames.com.

The town’s Employee Safety & Risk Management Committee would like to pass along these winter weather safety tips, which may save you a strain, a pain, or worse. Wear weather appropriate footwear and increase traction with rubber soles and non-slip tread. Bring out those hands! Keep your hands free to improve balance and reduce the risk of falling while walking on ice or snow. Also, bend your knees a little and take shorter steps on wintry surfaces to greatly reduce your chances of falling. Watch where you are walking and slow down. Walk slowly at first until you are certain of surface condition. Pay careful attention to changing surface conditions. Avoid hazardous shortcuts, look for flat walking paths, and avoid slopes or ramps which could be icy. Avoid abrupt changes in direction and use handrails when available. To protect yourself from strains and sprains, warm up before exertion. Stretch and bend to increase blood flow and decreases your risk of injury. Wear high visibility outerwear to increase your chances of being seen. This 90-second video is a good resource to watch with your entire family...since there is nothing we can do to stop winter, we may as well make the best of it! Please be safe this season. http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=za2dzzizKAw.

Last week I met an incredible young lady by the name of Helen Kontis who was celebrating her 100th birthday at a small family gathering at Charlie Brown’s restaurant on Penfield Road. This amazing lady shared with me a bit about her life, family, and her move from Pennsylvania in 2002 to Penfield. I was honored to present her with a certificate of recognition on behalf of the Penfield community. Helen, best wishes to you for many more healthy and happy birthdays. Your energy is contagious, I see why you have such close family ties!

Our Penfield Recreation Department has again made direct contact with Santa’s Workshop, North Pole! Penfield children may send their letters to Santa Claus in care of Penfield Recreation. We will make sure Santa reads your letter and returns a personal reply before Christmas. All letters must be postmarked no later than December 8. This gives Santa proper time to check your Christmas list. (Be sure to include your return address) Please feel free to contact Penfield Recreation at 340-8655 with your questions. Send letters to: Santa Claus, c/o Penfield Recreation, 1985 Baird Rd, Penfield, NY 14526.

As we start thinking more about the holidays and looking for that “perfect” Christmas tree, please choose to look for that ideal tree right here in Penfield. Several farms in East and North Penfield offer excellent “cut your own tree” lots along with a variety of beautiful pre-cut trees for your convenience. Several local scout troops also offer trees for sale. Your support of local farms and scouts makes a difference and helps them return their support to the Penfield community. Everyone benefits when we choose to shop locally.

Until next week, I hope to see you out in our great community!

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