Did you know that between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day, Americans generate 25 percent more waste per week than normal? That’s five million tons of extra waste during the 2019 holidays. This can be changed through some creative recycling and gift-giving ideas that can help divert some of that waste from landfills:

- Reuse ribbons and bows from last year, bonus points if they already perfectly fit your gift box!
- Make the package part of the gift—use a basket, blanket, or another useful item when packaging your gift.
- Repurpose Christmas cards you’ve received into festive gift tags. Cut off the front of the card, punch a hole, and add a ribbon—or just tape directly onto your package.
- Plan a treasure hunt to find gifts instead of wrapping each one. The little ones will love this, and it will give you a little peace during the hectic holidays.
- Make recycling easy to find for guests at your holiday party, from dishware to packaging and everything in between.
- Include rechargeable batteries with electronic gifts—it’s one less item that will end up in the landfill.
- Many big box stores may recycle your old electronics. Out with the old and slow, in with the new and speedy!
- In Penfield, live Christmas trees may be dropped off at the Department of Public Works, 1607 Jackson Road. They will be ground up and added to our mulch pile.
- Finally, don’t forget Monroe County’s “ecopark” for paper, metal, glass, plastic, and much more. Go to www.monroecounty.gov/ecopark for details.

Last week I joined the Penfield Business Chamber (PBC) for their “Morning Spark” hosted by the Eastside YMCA. Morning Spark is a networking event that gives businesses the opportunity to grab a cup of coffee and share thoughts and ideas. When appropriate, the group also tours the business or facility. I would like to recognize Anne Thornton, Executive Director of the Y, for their hospitality. I also thank the leadership of the PBC for connecting the membership to the many businesses involved with the chamber.

I read with interest the article in the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle that stated our region was ranked sixth among top metro areas for 2020 for real estate growth and sales. In Penfield, we are seeing homes sell very quickly; many are not on the market very long and they are selling for tens of thousands over asking prices. Jobs, quality of life, schools, and many more attributes are bringing people to the region and our community.

Last Monday evening I had the honor of joining the Penfield Rotary Club and President-elect Barbara Power for the lighting of the Rotary Holiday Tree in the Four Corners. The tree was donated by Penfield Business Chamber (PBC) President Marie Cinti and her husband Steven. Several members of Rotary, PBC, and residents were on hand for the lighting, singing, and of course hot chocolate and munchkins. A special thank you to the Penfield Rotary for hosting this wonderful event.
This will be the last in the series for ways to “Beat Holiday Stress” from the Town’s Employee Wellness Committee...from all of them to all of you, happy holidays and Merry Christmas! Avoid isolation—the holidays can be a depressing time for those who’ve lost loved ones. Get out of the house whenever possible and reconnect with old friends. Make a gratitude list—review it whenever you are feeling depressed, anxious, or stressed out. Take a time out—indulge in things you stopped doing because you “just don’t have time for anymore” like a long lunch or night out with friends.

The Penfield Ecumenical Food Shelf will be very busy over the next several weeks as they look to provide food for more than 125 families that may not have enough over this holiday season. Thank you in advance for any support you may give to this wonderful organization that does so much for those who need an extra helping hand, especially at this time of the year!

Are you looking for something to do and give back to your community? Please consider volunteering with Bri-Pen Senior Rides. Bring Brighton and Penfield Seniors to medical appointments, religious services or the town recreation centers. Drivers are trained by Lifespan’s Give a Lift program and are given FREE supplemental care insurance. If interested in learning more or helping out, please call 340-8674!

Until next week, be well and be safe!

Tony

supervisor@penfield.org