Each year the George Eastman House hosts a gingerbread exhibit that has become a popular tradition for young and old to enjoy. The display presents 70 skillfully designed gingerbread houses throughout the historic landmark. The Sweet Creations’ Gingerbread House Display features clever confections from professional bakers, families, and community groups. The one that caught my eye was from Girl Scout Troop 771 of Penfield that featured the Penfield Town Hall. The exhibit read, “In celebration of the bicentennial in Penfield, New York, Girl Scout Troop 771 has made a lovely replica of the Town Hall. They used a variety of candy including gumdrops, pretzels, chocolate Kit Kat bars, and chewing gum.” I must say, I thought it was best in show: great job Troop 771 for supporting Penfield’s Bicentennial celebration!

Last week I met Madeline Loretta Burdick of Penfield who celebrated her 103rd birthday on December 17. Madeline was married for 63 years, has four children, 13 grandchildren, and many more great-grandchildren. Still very active, you can see her at the Penfield Community Center most every Tuesday playing cards and reminding this supervisor that some padding on the chairs would be great. Happy Birthday Madeline, I wish you many more to come—keep winning at cards!

The Town of Penfield employees, along with several members of the community, collected a large van-full of toys, games, stuffed animals, and food for the Penfield Cares & Shares Ecumenical Food Shelf. I was impressed with the spirit and generosity of everyone that participated. I should not be surprised with what I saw; each and every day I observe the caring nature of our employees and residents who help those that are not as fortunate. Many Penfield families will have a better holiday season with food on the table and toys under the tree as a result of this “act of kindness”! A special thank you to all who participated, this is what makes Penfield so great.

I sit on the Council of Governments representing Penfield. All of the Towns, Villages, County of Monroe, City of Rochester, and the Monroe County School Board Association make up this council. Current issues we are addressing include economic development, unfunded mandates from the State and Federal Government, and pension reform. Pension reform is the next big issue that the State Senate and Assembly must address. The public sector must move new employees to defined contribution plans immediately, similar to private sector 401K accounts. The Council of Governments is working on a resolution to our State representatives demanding they address this issue as their first order of business in this next session. Stay tuned; I am sure there will be more attention brought to this matter in 2011.

Recently, I met with Dr. Buddhi M. Shrestha and his wife Sheila who are new residents of Penfield. I had the honor of witnessing his oath of office as a member of the New York State Rural Health Council for a fourth term, which is an appointment from the Governor. Dr. Shrestha’s resume and accomplishments could fill this week’s paper! I will note a few key facts: Dr. Shrestha is the Director of New York State Oral Health Technical Assistance Center and Senior Vice-President for Oral Health at Rochester Primary Care Network; he is a member of the American Dental Association and a life-member of the International Association for Dental Research; a member of the State Medical Advisory Committee; he has been recently elected as the Chairman of the Anthony L. Jordan Health Center Board, and is the recipient of a number of community service awards. Dr. Shrestha is a recognized leader in oral health care throughout the State of New York and worldwide. This is another example of the great people who call Penfield home.

This is my last plug before the holidays to remind you to consider supporting Penfield businesses for your last minute purchases for friends, family, and co-workers. All of our businesses are here to serve and support you in any way they can, please shop locally, it does make a difference.

On behalf of the Town Board and the entire staff of the Town of Penfield…Merry Christmas and a very Happy Holiday Season!

Tony
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