Normally the New Year brings a sense of excitement and new beginning as we all ready for the year ahead. Unfortunately the Town of Webster and the West Webster Fire District experienced an unthinkable horrific tragedy last week when a gunman took the lives of two volunteer firefighters and seriously injured two other firefighters. This tragedy impacts so many lives across the entire community of Monroe. Many times we take for granted those members of fire, police, and EMS that serve our communities and watch over us while we are sleeping or enjoying family and friends. These are the men and women who give so much of themselves each and every day for our personal safety. Our thoughts and prayers go out to those families impacted—let us never forget the service they provide our communities…thank you to all who serve!

The Penfield Recreation Department has introduced “Rec Gift Certificates.” Now you can give your family and friends a gift of wellness and activity from Penfield Recreation. Certificates are available in any denomination and may be purchased at the Recreation Office at the Community Center or over the phone with a credit card at 340-8655; option 6. Gift certificates can be used for any program or services offered by Penfield Recreation.

The Town’s Wellness Committee reminds me that the first quarter of the New Year is focused on theme of nutrition and weight management, and we should remember portions vs. servings when choosing a plate of food. Remember to eat right and stay fit! If you need a little help to get you going, check out the countless number of wellness programs offered in 2013 through Penfield Recreation. Log on to www.penfieldrec.org for complete offerings and details. Registration begins Wednesday, January 2.

The Penfield Trails Committee invites Penfield and area residents to participate in a series of guided hikes. The hikes are free; pre-registration is requested by contacting Penfield Rec at 340-8655. First, dust off your cross country skis or snowshoes for Ellison Park on Saturday, January 12 from 10:00 a.m. to noon. If there isn’t any snow, a hike will still take place. Meet at the north side of parking lot off Blossom Road. Next, the ever popular “Indoor Hike” on Saturday, February 16 from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Penfield Town Hall auditorium. Come meet the staff behind all the various town hiking programs in the greater Monroe County area and see what they have planned for 2013.

Because the snow for the season came so late, I thought it best to remind all our residents that snow plow rules are in effect from November 15 to April 1. This means no parking is allowed on Penfield roads and highways between 2:00 to 7:00 a.m. so highway crews can safely and effectively maintain the roadways. Thank you in advance for assisting our crews in making the roads safer for everyone traveling to work, school or other activities.

Just when you were already getting sick of the snow and cold, the “Friends of the Penfield Library” is offering a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) program with Wickham Farms on Monday, January 7 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the library. A CSA has become a popular way for consumers to buy local, seasonal food directly from farmers. How does it work? Interested consumers purchase a share ("membership" or "subscription") and in return receive a box (bag, basket) of seasonal produce each week throughout the farming season. For further details on this program and much more, log on to www.penfieldlibrary.org. It’s not too early to start planning for the 2013 planting season!

Until next week, be active and be well!

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