

Niskayuna Town News



Fall 2004

Supervisor Says:

Another season of wet weather has resulted in numerous requests for the Town to fix its drainage system. The drainage system was not "broken" but rather, we had experienced significant amounts of rain in relatively short periods of time. The Town's drainage system was not designed to handle the type of downpours we experienced the past couple of months, but we responded to such requests, addressing the problem when it was determined that the Town was responsible. In most cases, however, the Town was not at fault.

Over the past several years, we have stepped up maintenance on our drainage system. The pipes and catch basins in our closed drainage system are monitored and cleaned when necessary. Natural drainage swales and streams have been cleaned, and brush cut back to ensure that the flow of water is unimpeded. This past year, the Mohawk Club worked cooperatively with us to enhance the retention of storm water on club property. This was instrumental in reducing flooding downstream during significant storms.

Residents have generally been helpful in keeping storm drains by their homes clear. Many times, debris collects on top of the catch basin grates restricting drainage. The Highway Department tries to keep these grates clean, but due to the large number of these fixtures, it is not possible to do so without our residents' help. You can also help by removing debris from streams or swales, or if you feel it would be dangerous to do so, call my office or the Highway Department and report the problem.

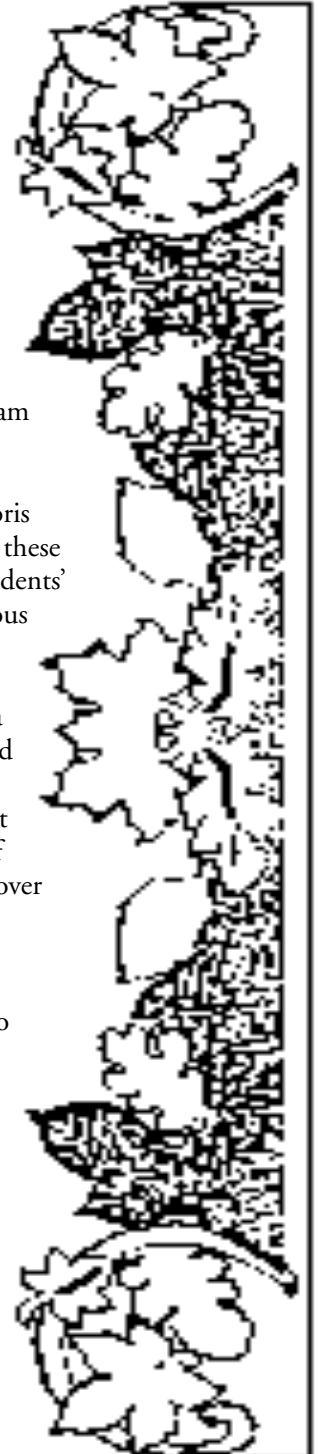
An existing drainage problem, which is not associated with the Town's drainage system, or is not in a drainage easement, could be addressed by establishing a special drainage district. This can be initiated by a group of residents petitioning the Town for the purpose of forming a Special Benefit Drainage District. If the majority of the residents representing over 50% of the assessed property value support this, then the Town can establish the district and all those who benefit would be taxed for the cost of that district. The Town has the ability to borrow to pay for this, which allows the costs to be spread over many years, keeping the annual cost for the district to a minimum.

In summary, the Town will always work to maintain its drainage system and will continue to accept responsibility for problems that are related to our system. Beyond this, we will work with residents to address problems on private property to the extent that the law allows.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Luke J. Smith".

Luke J. Smith
Supervisor



YOUR TOWN COMMITTEES AT WORK

Finance Committee: Luke Smith, Chair:

- Committee is reviewing our Time Warner Cable Franchise Agreement and exploring options for renegotiating our agreement which expires this year.
- Developing plans for a new Water and Sewer Maintenance Garage. Relocation out of Blatnick Park is likely.
- Reviewing proposals for a new health insurance broker.
- Made recommendations to the Town Board to accept bids for fencing at Little League and Girls Softball fields, and possibly for a Dog Park, if Town Board chooses to establish such a park.
- The process for 2005 Town Budget has begun. Tentative budget will be presented to the Board by September 30.

Technology Committee: Diane O'Donnell, Chair

- Purchased laptop and printer to be used by police in conducting accident investigation. Cost to be reimbursed by State grant.
- Purchased laser printer for Planning Department.
- GPS system operational in police and highway vehicles.
- Interactive Virtual Town Hall available at www.niskayuna.org.

Highway Committee: Richard Holt, Chair

- Yard waste pick up schedule being maintained.
 - Road reconstruction or topping proceeding despite difficult weather situation. Tamar; Regent; Rosa; N. Ravine; Fernwood; Eastern Pkwy; Village; Red Oak and Acorn have been done. Mohroff, McClellan and Winne have been scheduled.
- Bike Path reconstruction and paving (between Lyon's Park and Blatnick Park) scheduled.

Police Committee: Luke Smith, Chair

- Public meeting scheduled to discuss possibility of local law to restrict parking on Via Del Mar and Clifton Park Road, between Nott St. and Almeria.
- New surveillance cameras in use in parks for nighttime surveillance to deter vandalism. Arrests have already been made for vandalism at Avon Crest Park.

- Meetings held with State Dept. of Transportation regarding traffic issues at intersection of Balltown Road and Route 7.

Recreation Committee:

Liz Orzel Kasper, Chair

- Committee working on development of Dog Park has met and provided report on various issues. Decided to survey dog owners to determine potential level of use before making final decision to move forward.
- Upgrades to Little League field at Blatnick Park and Girls Softball fields at River Road are proceeding.
- Senior Citizens Bocce Ball has been a great success. Tournaments planned with other senior centers.
- Major reconstruction of town pool was unnecessary. Repairs were done at minimal cost.

Planning Committee: William Chapman, Chair

- Town Comprehensive Plan 2003 has been completed. Planning Committee is reviewing revisions to Zoning Ordinance and subdivision regulations to determine necessary changes to implement Plan 2003.
- Several housing sub-divisions are under review.
- Expansion at Hillside Commerce Park is proceeding. New town road nearing completion, and L & L Manufacturing is up and running.
- Re-zoned several hundred acres in the Northwest Corner of town, including Hillside Commerce Park from heavy industrial to light industrial/office technology.

Special Districts: Luke Smith, Chair

- Sludge dehydration process is up and running. Will save money on sludge disposal and avoid potential environmental accidents in transporting sludge.
- Project for fixing inflow and infiltration problems on Providence: Town Board approved a process by which repairs will be made by slip-lining the old sewer lines. This will avoid the cost and inconvenience of digging up the road.
- Replacement of water main along Rosendale Road and Old River Road is proceeding. Project will also include replacement of undersized pipe at the beginning of Lishakill Road.

- Bids received for Stanford/Fillmore Sewer project being reviewed for adequacy. We have not yet received any information on grant for which we applied to assist homeowners with lateral hookups.

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

ATTENTION HOMEOWNERS!

STAR Exemption could save you between \$484.00 and \$1,041.00 per year. Claim yours now!

Basic STAR Qualifications:

If you have not yet applied for the Basic STAR exemption, it's not too late. Please take advantage of this entitlement as soon as possible. You could save hundreds of dollars on your taxes if you satisfy the following requirements:

- You must be a one-, two-, three-, or four-family resident homeowner.
- There is no age restriction.
- There is no income limitation.

Residents of South Colonie and Niskayuna School Districts could save approximately \$484.00 and \$625.00 per year respectively by claiming the Basic STAR exemption.

Enhanced STAR Qualifications:

- You must be a one-, two-, three-, or four-family resident homeowner.
- At least one homeowner must be 65 years or older.
- Total household adjusted gross income cannot exceed \$64,650.
- Annual filing may be required. (Please call the Assessor's Office at 386-4550 for further clarification.)

Residents of South Colonie and Niskayuna School Districts, through the STAR Enhancement exemption, could save approximately \$807.00 and \$1,041.00 per year respectively.

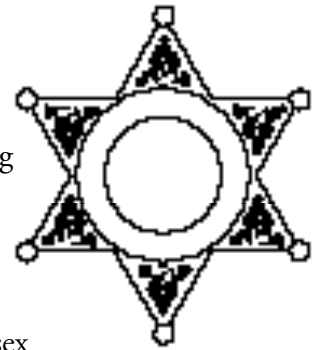
Veteran Exemption:

Did you serve during a period war? Please call the Assessor's Office at 386-4550 for veteran exemption details, or e-mail the Assessor, ahoulihan@niskayuna.org.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Community Notifications

Recently there have been media reports regarding registered sex offenders residing in the Town of Niskayuna. In July, the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services advised the Police Department that two Level 3 sex offenders intended to reside in town.



It was later decided that the address provided was not an appropriate location for one of the offenders, but the other was allowed to reside in Niskayuna. The Niskayuna Police Department, which takes community notification very seriously, promptly provided the "entities with vulnerable populations related to the nature of the offense" with the information, by utilizing the Town's web site, www.niskayuna.org, as well as other means, to announce this situation to the community.

The NYS Sex Offender Registry provides detailed information on all Levels 2 and 3 offenders in the State. It is just a few clicks away if you try accessing it through the link that is set up in the Police Department section of the Town's web site. It provides answers to frequently asked questions regarding the Registry and/or Megan's Law. You can also access the NYS Sex Offender Registry directly through <http://criminaljustice.state.ny.us/nsor/index.litm>. The information available to the public on high-risk offenders (Levels 2 and 3) may include the offender's photograph, offense description, approximate or exact address, and any special conditions imposed by the court.

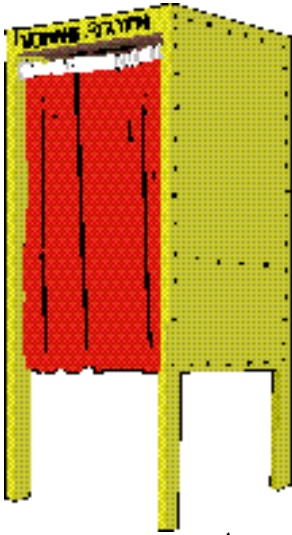
It is recommended that you take the time to look at these web sites, or at least contact the Niskayuna Police at 374-3159 if you have any questions on this topic.

Message from the Niskayuna Library Gardeners

The Niskayuna Library Gardeners thank those of you who donated tools. Our new storage shed has been a wonderful addition, allowing us to keep the library free



complements and hoses. We will continue to work throughout the fall – Thursdays 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Volunteers are always welcome.



TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Voters from Election District 1 First Reformed Church

Due to construction at the First Reformed Church, voters for Election District No.1 will vote at the Firehouse on Troy Road for election days during 2004. Voting will return to the church next year.

Voter Registration Days

Anyone needing to register to vote can do so on Tuesday, October 5 from 1 to 5 p.m. and Saturday, October 9 from 2 to 9 p.m. at Town Hall.

Travel Identification Alert

Those planning to travel with a New York State birth certificate should be alerted that many original birth certificates issued in the 1970's and 1980's are actually "Certificates of Birth Registrations." Although accepted in the past, these may not be currently adequate for identification purposes to travel out of the country without a passport. To secure a \$10 Certified Birth Certificate, call the municipality in which you were born. To request a certificate from the Town of Niskayuna call 386-4510.

Election Workers Needed for General Election

Residents wishing to work the polls for Election Day 2004, being held Tuesday, November 2, should contact Helen Kopke, Town Clerk at 386-4511.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

The Niskayuna Building Department investigates various Zoning Ordinance and Town Code nuisance complaints. The following are some general guidelines to help you, should you decide to make a complaint.

Try to Include an Address:

For the complaint to be filed, it must be attached to an address.

Your Name and Phone Number Help:

Often, as an aid to the investigation process, the inspectors will have questions for the complainant. Thus the requirement of your name and phone number. If, however, you want to remain anonymous, we will still proceed with the investigation, but may be unable to make a case without the assistance, or at least

an accounting of what you the complainant has heard or seen.

Be Specific:

As best as possible, give the exact location of the nuisance. For example, is the trash or abandoned vehicle in the side yard or behind the garage facing the alley? This helps staff to quickly identify the nuisance.

Keep a Record of Your Call:

You may want to write down the following information:

Date of complaint

Address of problem

Type of problem

Town department called and with whom you spoke.

Give the Town Time to Act:

If the complaint is blowing trash, for example, the Town will do its best to investigate and notify the property owner on the same day. However, many code violations take from several days to several months to correct. To follow the investigation, call again within a reasonable amount of time. Please be mindful, however, that some complaints may take longer to resolve than you might anticipate.

If the Problem Reoccurs or a New Problem Occurs, Call Again:

After receiving a complaint, an inspector will investigate, and in most cases, a phone call or a notice of violation to the owner of the property results in a correction of the nuisance, and a closing of the complaint case. However, if the problem reoccurs at the same property, a new case will most likely be opened.

Not everything is a Violation:

Not all things that may be annoying to you are necessarily regulated by town law. Be prepared to hear that we may not be able to affect your situation.

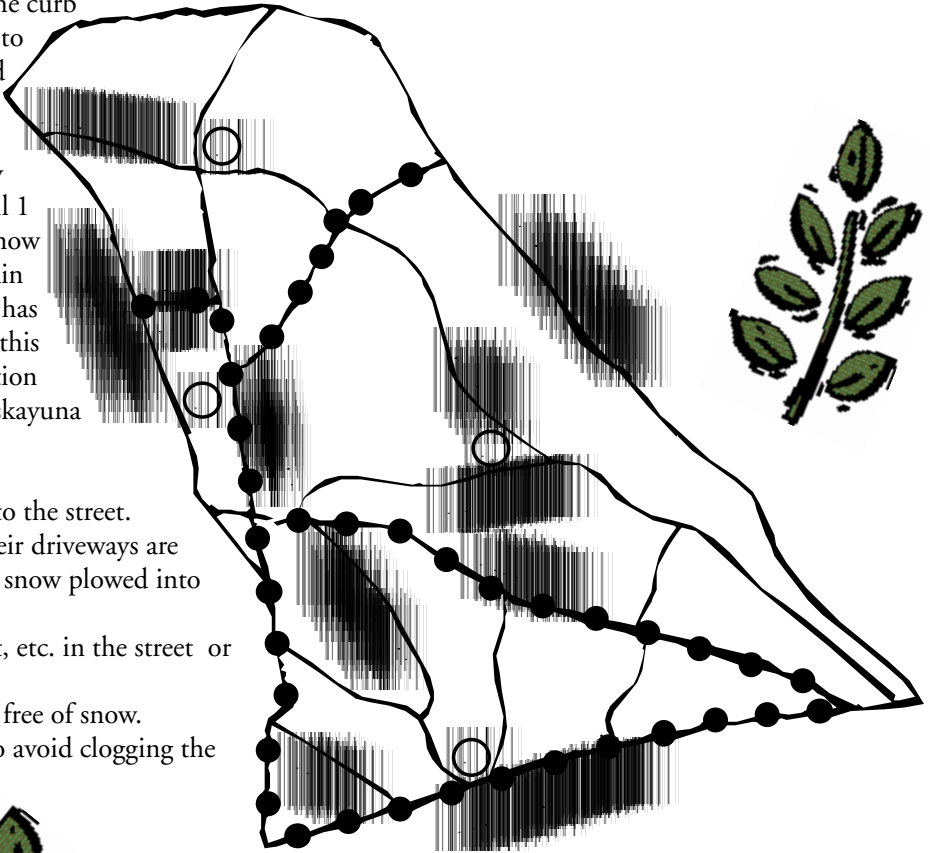
Niskayuna is a wonderful community where many people with diverse tastes and cultures live. Before making a complaint, try talking to your neighbors.

Many n
r e s o l v e

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Do's and Don'ts in Niskayuna

- All containers used for private collection of garbage, rubbish, refuse, and recyclables must be placed at the curb no earlier than 6:00 a.m. on the day prior to the day of collection, and shall be removed from the curb no later than 6:00 p.m. on the day following collection day.
- There is **NO PARKING** on State, County and Town roads from November 1 to April 1 between 3:00 a.m. and 6 a.m., or after a snow emergency (3" snowfall), which shall remain effective for 48 hours after the snowstorm has ceased. Any vehicles found in violation of this regulation will be towed away at the direction of the Highway Superintendent or the Niskayuna Police Department.
- Do pick up after your dog.
- Do not blow snow from your driveway into the street. Residents who hire contractors to plow their driveways are responsible for any damage resulting from snow plowed into the road by that contractor.
- Do not place basketball, soccer equipment, etc. in the street or right-of-way.
- Do keep the area in front of your mailbox free of snow.
- Do keep grass clippings out of the street to avoid clogging the storm drain.



Loose Brush and Leaf Pickup

There will be no loose brush or loose leaf pickup on Troy Road, Balltown Road, or Union Street, east of Balltown Road. Yard waste, free of sand, rocks or dirt must be put in containers of a volume not exceeding 32 gallons, or paper bags not more than 40 pounds in weight, and placed at the curb the night before the scheduled pickup date. The highway department will pick up at 6:30 a.m.

Due to the unpredictability of the weather, please bag your leaves after the initial pickup in your zone. A second pickup, even though it may be possible due to weather conditions, is not guaranteed. In the event of a snowfall, please put any remaining leaves in biodegradable bags. Plastic bags are not accepted and will not be picked up. Leaves should be placed on the roadway, as this possesses a danger to pedestrians. Do not pile leaves on your property in the Town's right-of-way.

Beginning Monday, October 18, **there will be no scheduled pickup** of yard waste. Bags and containers will be picked up at random by the Highway Department as the trucks circulate the town. Containers should be placed at the curb after being emptied.

Free stickers, which must be placed on the front of your container, are available at the Town Clerk's Office, the Highway Department, or Transfer Station.

Loose Brush Pickup:

Zone 1	Week of Oct. 4
Zone 2	Week of Oct. 11
Zone 3	Week of Oct. 18
Zone 4	Week of Oct. 25

Loose Leaf Pickup:

Zone 1	Week of Oct. 25 & Nov 15
Zone 2	Week of Nov. 1 & Nov. 22
Zone 3	Week of Nov. 1 & Nov. 29
Zone 4	Week of Nov. 8 & Dec. 6

If you have any questions, please call the Highway Department at 785-9753.

WATER & SEWER DEPARTMENT



What causes sewer backup?

Sewer lines can become blocked due to buildup or debris that become trapped in the pipes and create a blockage. When this occurs, wastewater flows backwards to the first possible outlet. Occasionally, the point is a fixture in a home or business.

When a sewage backup occurs, Department of water and Sewer crews will respond only to check the Town's sewer main to verify that the pipe is open and sewage is flowing. If the sewer main is found to be clear, it is the responsibility of the property owner to call a licensed plumber or drain-cleaning service to correct the problem. The Town of Niskayuna is committed to minimizing sewer backups through regular maintenance, mainline replacement, and public education. The Town recognizes that public improvements cannot solve all homeowner sewer problems. However, there are several things that residents can do to protect their property from sewer backups.

How can a backup be prevented?

The best way to protect against backups is through regular cleaning and maintenance of sewer pipes.

Here are a few tips that will help:

- **Roots:** Don't plant trees or large shrubs near sewer lines. Roots grow towards breaks and cracks in search of a water source. If roots get inside the pipe, they form root balls that clog the line.
- **Grease:** Do not throw grease or fats down the drain. They collect and harden inside the pipes forming a plug. Dispose of grease and fats with your trash.
- **Illegal plumbing Connections:** Don't connect backyard drains, sump pumps and other flood control systems to the sanitary sewer. It is illegal, and debris and silt will clog your line. Consult a plumber to undo any illegal connections.
- **Proper Floor Drain Maintenance:** Many older homes have a floor drain in the basement that is connected to the Town's sanitary sewer system. For many years, a device known as a Miller Trap was used in these basements. The Miller Trap drain relies on a movable part, which seals the trap inlet if a backup occurs in the sewer system. If the movable part fails, the seal would not be complete and would allow the backup of sewage, flooding the basement area. For this reason, traps with movable parts are no longer allowed. If you have a floor drain in your basement, have it inspected and serviced or removed by a licensed plumber.
- **Proper use of Clean-out Plugs:** Frequently, homeowners remove a sanitary sewer clean-out plug in their basement either to clean the sewer line or to allow groundwater to drain from the basement floor. If you remove a sanitary sewer clean-out plug in the basement,

it should be immediately replaced to avoid sewage blockage in the house or in the Town's line, resulting in flooding of the basement area.

Homeowner's Insurance Coverage

You are encouraged to check with your insurance agents to find out if repairs associated with sewer backups in the home are included in your homeowner's policy. In most cases, the cost of clean up and repairs are excluded.


New Water Meter Read Card

Thank you for your cooperation in completing the new scanable water read card. During the first cycle of this new semi-annual process we saved the time and effort of keypunching 80% of the 7,500 cards, eliminating over 100,000 keystrokes each cycle. By applying this low-cost technology to our self-read system, we achieved many of the benefits that are realized by other high-cost automated data collection systems used by companies such as Niagara Mohawk.

A correctly completed card is displayed below. If you darken the wrong number in error, simply darken a second number in the same column. The reader is programmed to reject multiple marks, and your reading, as written, will be entered manually.

Please follow these steps to help us increase the percentage of acceptable cards:

- Completely darken the number in the column below your reading in pencil or black/blue pen only.
- Do not write in the bar code area (upper left-hand rectangle of vertical lines).
- Do not place a return address sticker on the card. It jams the reader.
- Do not place the postage stamp over the edge of the post card. It jams the reader.



Name: _____

Address: _____

Account No.: _____

Meter Read on: 07127104

1046000							
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9

*Some meters may not have a leading digit

CUSTOM FORM NO. F-1977-TONL M 2004 028 5 2 2 1

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Despite having less than perfect weather this summer, the Recreation Department programs were more popular than ever! Our 5-week playground program, in particular, was an unexpected success with greatly increased attendance at both the River Road and Hillside School locations. We would like to thank everyone who worked so hard to make these programs better than ever, especially the boys and girls who volunteered as CIT's Counselors-in-Training. These young people attended our workshops and meetings, and were integral members of our staff. They provided the support and assistance needed to run a quality program, and we encourage any Niskayuna youngsters aged 13 years to 15 years to join us next summer. Most volunteers go on to become paid counselors, bringing with them loads of camp experience.

The Niskayuna Recreation Department would like to invite you to join us for the fall programs listed below. We keep the costs down while offering quality instruction in a variety of activities. If you would like more information about these or any programs we offer, please call the Recreation Department at 372-2519.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Tai Chi - Tuesdays, 9/14-11/16

Beginners: 6:15 p.m.; Intermediates: 7:30 p.m.
Niskayuna Community Center (upper level)
Instructor: Richard Chu • Cost: \$50

Adult Exercise - Mon/Wed., 9/20 - 12/15

6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. • Cost: \$65
Instructor: Linda Reilly -Van Antwerp Gym

Adult Exercise - Tues/Thurs. 9/21 - 12/16

4:00 - 5:00 p.m. • Cost: \$65
Instructor: Linda Reilly -Niskayuna Community Center

Open Basketball - Wed., 9/8 -12/15

7:45 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. • Cost: \$60
Van Antwerp Gym

Schenectady Chess Club

Meets Thursday evenings year-round at 7:00 p.m. at the Niskayuna Community Center, lower level.
All adults and young adults are invited to join.
Membership is \$36 per year. For more information, call the Niskayuna Recreation Department at 372-2519.

Competitive Table Tennis League - Mon., 9/20 - 11/29

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. • Cost: \$30.00
Instructor: Len Coffman - Niskayuna Community Center

Niskayuna Town Band is looking for new members. Practice year round. Call the Recreation Department at 372-2519 for details.

PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS

Niskayuna Senior Center Activities

Each Tuesday and Thursday

Senior Center at the Niskayuna Community Center
10:00 a.m. -Noon: Cards, Scrabble, Pool, Arts & Crafts, other activities
Noon: Lunch (\$2.50 donation)
12:45 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.: Program, Trip, Bingo, Bunco, and other activities
Transportation available for Niskayuna residents aged 60 +

Low Impact Fitness - Tues & Thurs. 9/9 - 12/16

9:00 am. - 10:15 a.m. Niskayuna Community Center
Especially for Seniors • Instructor: Linda Reilly • Cost: \$45

Line Dancing - Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

ALL ADULTS ARE WELCOMED • Cost: Free
Niskayuna Community Center • Instructor: Maryde King

Bocce - Thursdays, Adults: 10:30 a.m. - Noon

Niskayuna Community Center
Play year round, indoors and outdoors • Cost: Free

“55 Alive” Defensive Driving Course - October 18 and 20

Adults, 55 years and older • 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Instructor: AARP • Cost: \$10.00

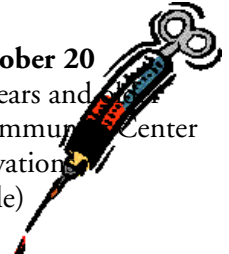
Flu Clinic - Wednesday, October 20

Schenectady County residents 65 years and older
1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. • Niskayuna Community Center
Cost: \$10.00 - Call for reservations
(transportation available)

Upcoming Senior Events

- Sept 10: Horse-drawn Carriage Tour of Historic Albany
- Sept. 15: Fort Ticonderoga Museum & The View Restaurant at Indian Kettles
- Sept. 20: Lake George Cruise aboard the Lac du Saint Sacrement & Tour of Fort William Henry Museum
- Sept. 25: Electric City Barbershop Matinee at Proctor's Theatre
- Sept. 29: Villa Borghese luncheon and show, “Let's Kill the Boss”
- Oct. 4- 7: Overnight trip to Wildwood Crest, NJ
- Oct. 9: Mabee Farm Historic Site Tour
- Nov 18: Thanksgiving Feast at Niskayuna Senior Center
- Dec. 16: Holiday Party and Celebration at Niskayuna Senior Center
- Feb. 2005: Annual Snow Ball at Niskayuna Senior Center
- Mar. 2005: Mystery Trip??!??

For more information on all senior programs, call Susan Leonard, Senior Program Coordinator, at 372-2519.



TOWN OF NISKAYUNA

One Niskayuna Circle
Niskayuna, New York 12309-4381

PRSRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Schenectady, NY
Permit No. 137

Luke J. Smith
Supervisor

Town Council

Liz Orzel Kasper
William R. Chapman
Diane P. O'Donnell
Richard A. Holt



continued

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

YOUTH PROGRAMS

**Cross Country Run - Wed. 10/6
(rain date 10/7)**

Girls/boys, Grades 1 - 6; Grades 1 & 2, 5:15 p.m.;
Grades 3 & 4, 5:30 p.m.;
Grades 5 & 6, 5:45 p.m.; River Road Park
No fee
(Register on site 10 minutes prior to event)

Chess Instruction

Session 1: Mon., 9/13 -10/18

Session 2: Mon., 10/25 - 11/22

Girls/Boys, 5 yrs. & older 6:30 p.m. - 7:45 p.m.
Instructor: Richard Chu • Fee: \$18

Fall Bowling - Wed., 9/22 - 11/10

Girls/Boys, 2nd - 5th Grade
Latham Bowlers Club
Bus takes children from school to bowling alley.
Parents pick up at 4:30 p.m. Cost: \$48
(includes transportation, shoes and instruction)

Fall Parties for Niskayuna Students

7:30 p.m -9:30 p.m.

Niskayuna Community Center • Cost \$4.00
Fri., 10/1 6th Grade "Back to School"
Fri., 10/8 8th Grade Party
Fri., 10/22 7th Grade Party
Fri., 11/19 7th/8th Grade Party - "Turkey Trot" (revised)
Fri., 12/10 7th/8th Grade Party

Roller Skating at Starburst Rink in Clifton Park

6:00 p.m. - 9:55 p.m.
Register at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall
Boys/Girls 5th - 8th Grades Fri. 9/17, 10/15, 10/29, 12/3
Bus leaves from and returns to Niskayuna Town Hall
Children must travel to and from the rink on bus.
May bring own skates, if desired.
Cost: \$8.00
(includes transportation, admission and skates.)

*For more information on our youth program,
please call the Recreation Dept. at 372-2519.*