

# Niskayuna Town News



Fall 2005

## Supervisor Says:

Two years ago, the Town experienced a spring and summer season punctuated by severe rainstorms that caused flooding in several parts of town. In response to this, the Town stepped up its drainage system maintenance and, in some cases, undertook projects to enhance retention of water to avoid flooding. The most notable project was done in cooperation with the Mohawk Club. They worked with us to retain more water on the club's property. As a result of those efforts, last season – a year ago – seemed to be problem-free. Then this season, we had some incredible storms that taxed our system and again resulted in flooding in many parts of town. In response, the Town met with many residents and neighborhood groups to explore the causes of the flooding to see if the Town's drainage system was deficient and, if so, what should be done to mitigate the situation.

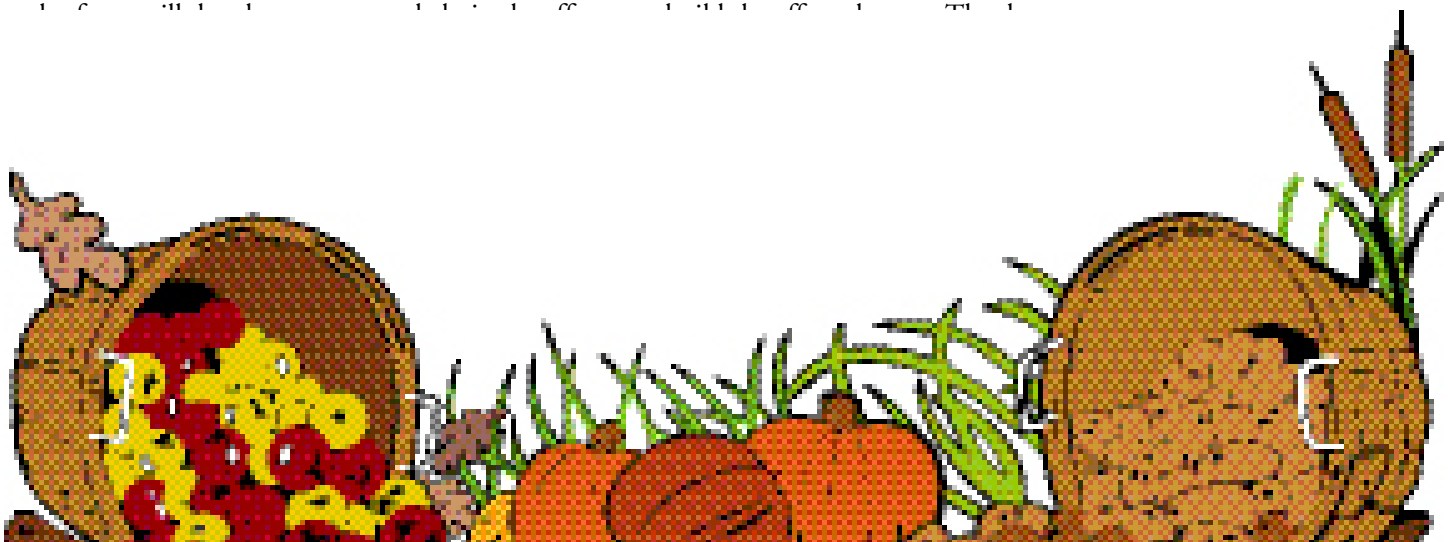
In some cases, there is work that can be done within town easements to help when we have heavy rains. Our Highway Superintendent, who is responsible for our storm drainage system, is working on developing a project plan for next fiscal year to address the most severe situations. This work will be done on town easements. It is unlikely, however, that we will be able to address storms that drop 2-3 inches of rain within an hour, but we will do what we can to minimize the flooding.

Sometimes drainage problems arise on private property, encompassing a significant portion of a neighborhood that is, in many cases, not a part of the town's drainage system. This may have occurred because residents changed the grade of their property over the years, or as a result of natural changes that occur over time to the topography.

The Town has no authority to do work on private property. This is the responsibility of the homeowners. A neighborhood can petition the town to create a "Special Benefit Drainage District," which would allow us to borrow money to do work on properties of homeowners who would benefit specifically from this district. Therefore, only those homeowners of the Special Benefit Drainage District would repay this loan.

If you believe that your neighborhood could benefit from such a drainage district, please call my office or the Town Engineer, so that we can give you the specifics. In the meantime, the Town will continue to upgrade our overall drainage infrastructure, and it is my hope that this will result in a significantly improved drainage system.

In closing, I hope we are all thinking of our neighbors who were in the path of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. I know that



# YOUR TOWN COMMITTEES AT WORK

## **FINANCE**

### **COMMITTEE:**

*Luke Smith, Chair*

- Developing 2006 budget
- Working with other municipalities to establish a Cable Consortium to renegotiate Cable Franchise Agreement with Time Warner
- County has budgeted to take over heavy maintenance – reconstruction and paving of Bike Path. Town will continue general maintenance
- Recommended bonding for new equipment for the wastewater treatment process
- Continuing work with County on workers compensation administration. Final results of study due from County soon.



## **TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE:**

*Diane O'Donnell, Chair*

- Approved advanced training for our technical staff
- Renewed software maintenance agreements through the Town's Master License Agreement
- Purchased computer software for Police Department to analyze traffic counter data
- Completed network interface with satellite offices, which will enhance water billing system
- Approved purchase of pump station controls and communication equipment to enhance data acquisition, and monitoring of sanitary pump stations.

## **POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY:**

*Luke Smith, Chair*

- Police Benevolent Association and Town have reached tentative contract settlement.
- New software allows police to not only do traffic counts, but also track speeds. Data allows police to deploy traffic enforcement more effectively

## **HIGHWAY COMMITTEE:**

*Rich Holt, Chair*

- Second section of bike path being reconstructed with help from County
- Drainage projects being planned in response to severe rains
- Road reconstruction and drainage work being

- completed in the Stanford/Fillmore Avenues area
- Tennis courts being resurfaced
- Dog park fencing completed

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

*William Chapman, Chair*

- Rezoned area in southwest part of Town Land Conservation, which will result in its being substantially forever wild.
- Cerrone/Paulsen residential subdivisions were approved by the Planning Board.
- Planned Unit Development (PUD) application on Consaul Rd. being considered by town.

## **SPECIAL DISTRICTS:**

*Luke Smith, Chair*

- Stanford/Fillmore sewer project in final stages of completion
- Upgrades to our Wastewater Treatment Plant are underway and will result in greater efficiencies by recycling wastewater in treatment process.
- New modular trailer/office installed at our Water Treatment Plant off Lock 7 Road
- Work on aging infrastructure continues to be top priority.

## **RECREATION COMMITTEE:**

*Liz Orzel Kasper, Chair*

- Dog Park open and being enjoyed by many. Visit our Town Clerk for a permit to use the facility.
- Senior citizens' picnic was held in early September.
- Fall recreation soccer program underway with over 700 participants on 66 teams
- Summer recreation program was a big success, serving over 500 children. New programs introduced at Arts & Crafts, Yoga for kids, and Skateboard Camp.
- Middle-schoolers and senior citizens painted a mural at the Senior Center



## **ASSESSOR'S OFFICE**

The Town Board is in the process of considering a town-wide evaluation

project. The factors the Board will be considering before a final decision is made include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Cost of the project
- New York State reimbursement to the Town
- Trend of the town's equalization rate
- Data collection procedures
- Request for proposal from contractors

*We will keep you informed as the process unfolds.*

### **To All Veterans:**

If you served on active duty during the following periods of war, you may be entitled to a veteran exemption.

- World War II: December 7, 1941 through December 31, 1946
- Korean War : June 27, 1950 through January 31, 1955
- Vietnam War: December 22, 1961 through May 7, 1975
- Persian Gulf War: August 2, 1990 to present

### **All seniors 65 Years of Age or Older:**

You may be entitled to an "over-65" Senior Exemption or the Senior Enhanced STAR exemption depending on your income level.

### **All Ambulance and Volunteer Firefighters**

Depending on your length of service, you may be entitled to a volunteer firefighter exemption.

### **All one-, two-, three-, or four-family Resident Homeowners**

You may be entitled to the BASIC STAR exemption.

All exemption applications must be filed in the Assessor's Office no later than March 1, 2006.

Please call the Assessor's Office at (518) 386-4550 or e-mail [ahoulihan@niskayuna.org](mailto:ahoulihan@niskayuna.org) if you think you qualify for the exemptions listed above.

### **TAX OFFICE**

All homeowners who have not yet paid their School Taxes are reminded that the school tax can be paid without penalty through October 5, 2005. We apologize to South Colonie School residents for the

misprint on their bills. All bills will be due on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Payments received after October 5, 2005, will be charged a 2% late penalty up until the last day of collection on October 31, 2005.

Water Rent bills can be paid without penalty through October 21, 2005. There is an 8% late penalty for payments received after October 21, 2005, through the last day of collection on November 4, 2005.



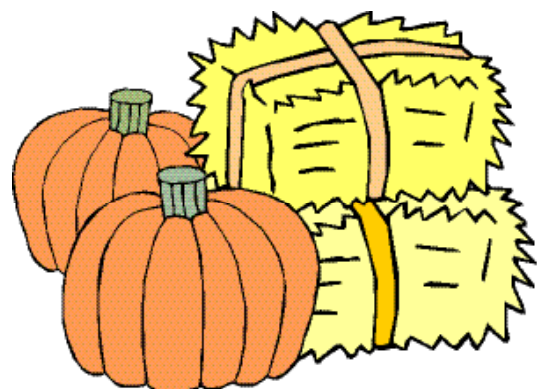
Homeowners wishing to pay both water and school tax bills are kindly requested to provide separate checks.

Please do not send unpaid bills to the Town's Tax Office for the school tax and water rent after their closing dates of October 31, 2005, and November 4, 2005 respectively. All unpaid school and water amounts will be added to the January tax bills.

### **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

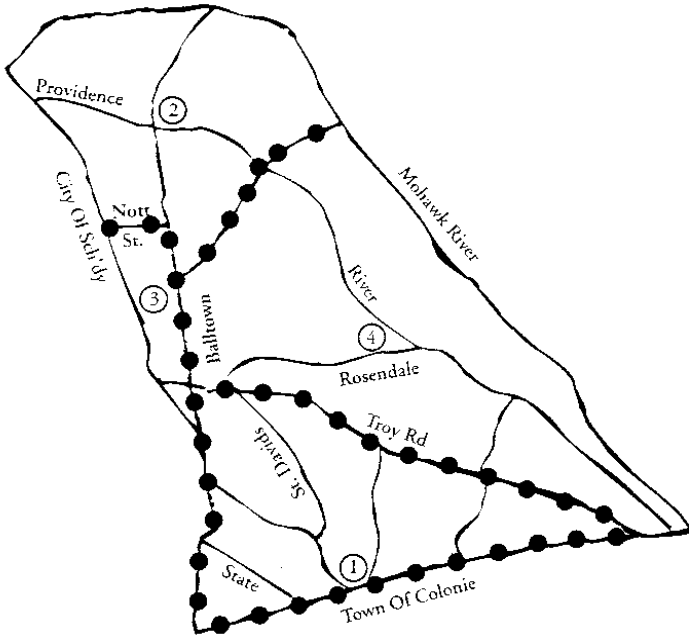
A survey of the Town's highways showed that some property owners were in violation of the NYS Highway Law, Section 319, which prohibits obstruction of any kind including, but not limited to, basketball hoops, rocks, posts, bushes and trees in the right-of-way. Not only are obstructions hazardous, they also impede work at the site.

If you are in violation of the obstruction law, the Highway Department will notify you. Please comply as directed, or the Town will correct the problem and hold you responsible for the expenses incurred.



**Loose Brush Pickup:**

|        |                 |
|--------|-----------------|
| Zone 1 | Week of Oct. 10 |
| Zone 2 | Week of Oct. 17 |
| Zone 3 | Week of Oct 17  |
| Zone 4 | Week of Oct. 24 |



**Loose Leaf Pickup:**

|        |                           |
|--------|---------------------------|
| Zone 1 | Week of Oct. 31 & Nov. 21 |
| Zone 2 | Week of Nov. 7 & Nov. 28  |
| Zone 3 | Week of Nov. 7 & Nov. 28  |
| Zone 4 | Week of Nov. 14 & Dec. 5  |

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

**LOOSE LEAF AND BRUSH PICKUP**

**There will be no loose leaf or loose brush pickup on Troy Road, Balltown Road, or Union Street east of Balltown Road.** Loose leaves and loose brush will be picked up in other areas of town, according to zone, as indicated by our schedules.

Beginning at 6:30 a.m. on Monday, October 24, the highway trucks will randomly circulate the town picking up yard waste that has been placed in bags and other containers. Please have your waste at the curb ready for pickup when they arrive. If you are not picked up on the very first day, please do not be alarmed. The trucks will get to your neighborhood some time during the week. Please promptly remove the empty containers from the curb; and do not hesitate to contact the Highway Department with any

questions you may have concerning your pickup. Yard Waste, free of sand, rocks and dirt, could be put into pails, barrels or brown paper bags. Barrels and pails should not exceed a volume of 32 gallons and paper bags should not exceed 40 pounds. Free “Town of Niskayuna Yardwaste” stickers, which must be placed on barrels or pails, are available at the Town Clerk’s Office, Recreation and Highway Departments, and Transfer Station.

Due to the unpredictability of the weather, you are asked to bag your leaves after your first scheduled pickup, as any subsequent pickup may be impeded due to weather conditions.

Barrels, pails, or are acceptable c Plastic bags will picked up. All and loose leaves placed at the cu property – NO roadway – in order to avoid a possible hazardous condition for pedestrians and drivers.



**DO’S AND DON’TS IN NISKAYUNA. YOUR COOPERATION WILL BE APPRECIATED.**

- All containers used for private collection of garbage and recyclables must be placed at the curb no earlier that 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.
- Do keep your loose leaves and loose brush in separate piles off the street.
- Brush should not be more than 4 feet long and 3 feet in diameter, or more than 30 lbs.
- Please try to be respectful of others by picking up after your dog – even when using the Dog Park.
- Avoid blowing snow from your property onto the street. You will be held responsible for any damage caused as a result of snow that has been blown onto the street from your property.
- 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 off the street to avoid clogging the storm drain.
- **NO PARKING** on State, County, or Town roads from November 1 to April 1 between 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m., or after a snow emergency (3" snowfall), which will 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.

school year, several summonses have been issued in our neighborhoods for a variety of violations. It is our hope that these numbers will decrease as drivers become more cognizant of their driving habits, thereby reducing the number of potential accidents or injuries.

**Just a reminder:** In order to keep our streets clean and safe, The Town of Niskayuna has on record a law to help our highway crews with snow removal. By enactment of Local Law 9 (1981), the Town amended its Vehicle and Traffic Code to read as follows:

## **BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

In an effort to make things easier for you, the Building Department has posted many downloadable forms on the Town's website at [www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org).



Once you are at the website, just click on *Departments*, *Building Inspector* and *Downloadable Forms* to find the Building and Zoning Permit application and fee schedule, and information pertaining to the requirements of permits for building sheds, fences, decks, etc.

**NO PARKING AS SPECIFIED, AT ANY TIME BETWEEN THE FIRST DAY OF NOVEMBER IN EACH YEAR AND THE FIRST DAY OF APRIL IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR, ON ALL PUBLIC HIGHWAYS IN THE TOWN OF NISKAYUNA FROM 3:00 A.M. TO 6:00 A.M.**

Violators of the above-mentioned law may be issued parking summonses to appear in town court, and face possible fines. The Niskayuna Police wish to thank everyone for their cooperation in obeying the laws of the Town.

As always, you are encouraged to call, write, or e-mail the Building Department with any questions you may have. The Senior Building Inspector, Scott Kalm, and his staff, Building Inspector Tom Cannizzo, and secretary, Sharon Gilbert, will be happy to assist you in any way possible.

## **ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT Citizens' Action Needed to Address Drainage Problems:**

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

### **Vehicle and Traffic Laws**

As many residents may have already noticed, there has been an increase in the enforcement of the Vehicle and Traffic Laws by the Niskayuna Police Department. This "zero tolerance" enforcement policy targets the sections of the law pertaining to stop signs and speed, and is as a result of complains we received from residents who are concerned about the safety of children and others using the streets for recreational purposes.

The Town has been actively working on upgrading and increasing maintenance on its sanitary and storm drain systems, but that is only a partial solution to drainage issues. Residents must also take action to help mitigate the problems resulting from poor drainage.

Residents may ask, "Why doesn't the town just install larger pipes?" Replacing existing storm and sanitary pipes with larger pipes is extremely expensive, and this approach, rather than solving the problem, actually transfers problems from one area to another. Increased storage capacity is a fundamental element in solving drainage problems; and the Town, over the past couple of years, has repaired stormwater detention facilities and plans to do more, but residents have to help also.

Since the beginning of the

*\*Continued on Page 8*

# Recreation Department #372-2519

*Please call the Niskayuna Recreation Department for information on all programs.*

## **ADULT PROGRAMS:**

### **TAI CHI**

Tues., 9/13 – 11/15

Tues., 11/22 – 1/31/06 (no class 12/27)

Beginners: 6:15 p.m. Intermediates: 7:30 p.m.

Instructor: Richard Chu

Niskayuna Community Center (upper level)

Cost \$50.00

### **ADULT EXERCISE**

Mon/Wed., 9/26

– 12/14

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Instructor: Linda Reilly

Van Antwerp Gym

Cost \$65.00



### **NISKAYUNA MOM'S GROUP**

For moms and their infant and pre-school children.

Meets year-round on most Wednesday mornings at the Niskayuna Community Center, lower level.

Includes occasional field trips and "Moms' Nights Out." For more information, please call Robin Herbon at 399-2730 or Jill Bogdanowicz-Wilson at 374-0923.

### **ADULT EXERCISE**

Tues/Thurs., 9/27–12/15 (no class 11/24)

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Instructor: Linda Reilly

Niskayuna community Center

Cost \$65.00

### **OPEN BASKETBALL**

Wed. 9/7–11/16

7:30 p.m. – 9:15 p.m.

Van Antwerp Gym

Cost \$60.00

### **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/year.

### **COMPETITIVE TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE**

Mon., 9/12 – 11/28

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Instructor: Len Coffman

Niskayuna Community Center

Cost \$30.00

**NISKAYUNA TOWN BAND** is looking for new members. Practice year round. Call the Recreation Department for details.

### **PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS**

#### **NISKAYUNA SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES**

Each Tuesday and Thursday, year-round.

Senior Center at the Niskayuna Community Center  
10:00 a.m. – noon: Cards, Scrabble, Pool, Arts and Crafts, Bocce, and Shuffleboard

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 age 60+.

### **UPCOMING SENIOR EVENTS**

- Oct. 6:** Come with us to Chef Josef's in Agawam, MA. for a spectacular good ol' country music jamboree with hits by Dolly Parton, Conway Twitty, Johnny Cash, Patsy Cline, Tammy Wynette, Merle Haggard, and more.
- Oct. 29:** "Brother Act," barbershop harmony and comedy at Schenectady High School
- Nov:** Thanksgiving Feast at Niskayuna Senior Center
- Dec:** Holiday Party and Celebration at Niskayuna Senior Center
- Feb. 2006:** Annual Snow Ba  
Niskayuna Seni
- Mar. 2006:** Mystery Trip!

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



## FLU CLINIC

Schenectady County residents 65 years and older  
October (date to be announced)

Niskayuna Community Center

Cost \$10.00

Mini bus transportation available each Tuesday  
and Thursday, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. for  
Niskayuna residents aged 60 years and older. Bus  
can bring passengers to the Senior Center, doctor's  
appointment, hair appointment, and shopping.

## LOW IMPACT FITNESS

Especially for seniors

Tues/Thurs 9/27 – 12/15

9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Niskayuna Community Center

Instructor: Linda Reilly

Cost \$45.00

## LINE DANCING

All adults are welcomed.

Tuesdays 10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Niskayuna Community Center

Instructor: Maryde King

Cost: Free

## BOCCE

Adults

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. – Noon

Niskayuna Community Center

Play year round, indoors and outdoors.

Cost: Free

## YOUTH PROGRAMS

### YOUTH FENCING

Girls/Boys ages 8 – 16 years

Session 1: Wed., 9/12 – 10/26

Session 2: Wed., 11/2 – 12/14 ( no class 11/23)

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Instructor: Mitch Berliner, Sabre Outreach Network

Cost: \$70.00/session (includes all equipment)

### CROSS COUNTRY RUN

Girls/boys, Grades 1-6

Wed. 10/5 (rain date 10/6)

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

Girls/boys, 5 yrs. & older

Session 1:

Mon, 9/12 – 10/17

Session 2:

Mon, 10/24 – 11/21

6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

Instructor:

Richard Chu

Fee: \$18.00

## FALL BOWLING

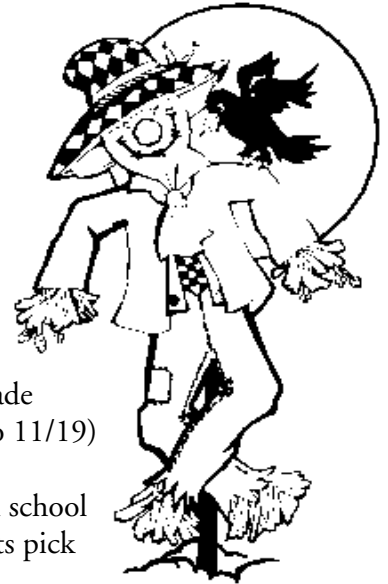
Girls/boys, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Wed., 9/21 – 11/16 (no 11/19)

Latham Bowlers Club

Bus takes children from school  
to bowling alley. Parents pick  
up at 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$8.00 (includes transportation, shoes, and  
instruction)



## FALL PARTIES FOR NISKAYUNA STUDENTS

Fri., 9/23: 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade “Back to School”

Fri., 10/14: 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Party

Fri., 11/18: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Party

Fri., 12/2: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Party

Fri., 12/9: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Party

Niskayuna Community Center

7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Cost \$4.00

## ROLLER SKATING PARTY AT GUPTIL'S ARENA IN LATHAM

Boys/girls 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Friday, 9/16, 10/21

6:00 p.m. – 9:55 p.m.

Bus leaves from and returns to Niskayuna Town Hall\*

Register at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall

\*Children must travel to and from rink on bus.

May bring own skates, if desired.

Cost: 8:00 (includes transportation, admission, skates)

## FRIDAY NIGHT BOWLING

Girls/boys, 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Friday, 9/30 & 11/4

Bowlers Club, Rt. 7, Latham

Bus leaves from and returns to Niskayuna Town Hall\*

Register at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall

\*Children must travel to and from bowling alley  
on bus.

Cost: \$8.00 (includes bus, shoes, ball, and bowling)

**TOWN OF NISKAYUNA**  
One Niskayuna Circle  
Niskayuna, New York 12309-4381

PRSR 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



### **COMMUNITY FUN NIGHT**

Girls/boys, 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Friday, 10/7  
Niskayuna Community Center  
7:30 p.m – 9:00 p.m.  
Cost \$2.00

*Activities include music, games, TV, pool, fooseball, shuffleboard, table hockey, ping-pong, socialization.*

### **FALL TENNIS INSTRUCTION**

Boys/Girls, ages 8 years and older  
Saturday, 9/17, 9/24, & 10/1  
Iroquois Middle School Courts  
12:30 p.m. – 2 p.m.  
Instructors: Members of Niskayuna Tennis Team  
Cost: \$25.00

### **DANCE EXPRESSIONS**

Boys/girls, ages 6 – 9 years  
Saturdays, Oct 1 – Oct 29  
Niskayuna Community Center  
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
Instructor: Alicia Murray, advanced dance student  
Cost \$30.00

### **So what can residents do to control flooding?**

*Continued from Page 5*

- Look at how your property sheds water and consider ways to slow down the discharge. Simply cutting your grass a bit longer helps to retard the flow of water. Very short, tight grass responds like pavement – the water doesn't sink in or slow down.
- Preserving the trees you already have and planting new ones would help also.
- Don't install gutters unless they are a necessity.
- Don't pipe the gutter downspouts to the storm drain or nearest stream. Rather, let the water run over the surface.
- Maintain drainage-ways, piped systems, and catch basin grates so they don't become clogged with litter, grass clippings, leaves and other debris.
- Don't fill, alter or clear wetlands. If anything, consider returning former wetlands or portions thereof back to its natural state.
- One way or another, storage capacity must be re-created.