

# Niskayuna Town News



Spring 2008

## Dear Neighbors,

**M**y first three months as Town Supervisor have been challenging as well as very rewarding. As the new Supervisor, I realized early on that the Town is very fortunate to have a dedicated and competent core of employees who ensure that your government functions properly. Also, the experience, expertise and insights of the four Town Board members have been valuable as we address opportunities and implement future programs and policies in the Town.

As temperatures increase and the snow eventually disappears, our highway crews will be out picking up your leaves and lawn debris. As many of you know, the Town Board conducted a recent public hearing on a proposal that would have made changes to the types of containers allowable for lawn and leaf pick-up. After considering the suggestions and comments from numerous residents, we have decided not to change the current policy. Leaf and lawn debris can be placed at the curb in biodegradable bags, or in containers made of metal or plastic. Alternatively, loose leaves can just be raked to the curb. For those residents who place their lawn debris in a metal or plastic container, please do not overload your containers. Keep in mind that our highway employees lift hundreds of containers each day.

Over the past couple of months, representatives from club sports, the school athletic director's office and the Town have held meetings to coordinate the use of Town fields and parks by high school and middle school athletic teams. Not surprisingly, the ongoing construction at the district's schools has resulted in the closure of some school fields for the spring season. I believe that all representatives are working with a spirit of cooperation to share the fields and parks. So, don't be surprised when you see a high school lacrosse game followed by a club soccer game on the same Town field. I applaud the participants for their patience and hard work, and for recognizing that the beneficiaries of these discussions are our children.

Sincerely,

Joe Landry  
Supervisor

# RECREATION

## Activities this Spring for Children will Include:

- Soccer
- Fencing
- Skateboard Camp
- Middle School Parties
- Babysitting Course
- Chess Instruction
- Roller Skating
- Field Hockey
- Family Fun Run - Niska-Day

## Activities for Adults Include:

- Tai Chi
- Golf Lessons
- Class for individuals age 55 and older
- Family Fun Run
- Table Tennis League
- Men's Basketball
- Defensive Driving
- Chess Club
- Exercise

All programs detailed in our annual Spring Recreation Activity flyer are available at the Recreation Office, Niskayuna Town Hall, and online at [www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org). Call the Recreation Department at 372-2519 for information.

**Niskayuna Skate Park:** Located in Blatnick Park on River Road, the Niskayuna Skate Park will open in early to mid-May, weather permitting. For use by skateboards and rollerblades only—no bicycles. Users will be required to wear helmets and elbow and knee pads and follow all posted rules. Skate Park rules will be strictly enforced. Children under 11 years of age must be accompanied by an adult when using this facility. Admission is free. Please note: Skate Park will be open only when conditions are safe. If in doubt, we suggest you check with the Recreation Department to verify that the park is open. Adult supervision provided.

**Niskayuna Dog Park:** The Niskayuna Dog Park is located in Blatnick Park on River Road across the path from the Niskayuna Skate Park. The dog park is open year round, from dawn until dusk. The park is completely fenced and gated, and there is a septic system for waste. All dogs must be leashed when outside the dog park, but may run freely within the fenced area. Niskayuna Dog Park tags are required for dogs to use the park, and are available at the Town Clerk's Office in Niskayuna Town Hall, Nott Street East, weekdays between 9:00 am until 5:00 pm. To

obtain a permit, owners must show proof of Niskayuna residency and dogs must be licensed and have proof of current rabies and distemper vaccinations. Niskayuna Dog Park permits are valid from August 1st through July 31st each year. The annual permit fee is \$30 for first dog and \$15 for each additional dog per family. Niskayuna residents 65 years and older may purchase annual dog park permits at half price. Beginning on March 1st of each year, residents may purchase tags valid for the remainder of the year (through July 31st) and all of the following year for \$45.00/\$22.50 for senior citizens.

**Dog Park Permits:** Dog Park Permits requested after March 1, 2008, can be purchased for a pro-rated fee of \$15 if \$30 permits are also purchased for next year.

**Town Pool Membership I.D. Cards:** Membership registration cards are available online at [www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org). If your photo (less than 3 years old) is already on file, simply complete the card, and return with check to the Niskayuna Recreation Department. Your passes will be waiting for you the first time you use the pool. For those who need photos taken, you can come to the Niskayuna Community Center on May 15 & May 22 from 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm, on June 7 from 9:00 am – 10:30 am, and on June 8 from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm.

**Summer Activities:** The Recreation Department summer activity booklet will be available the second week of May. Copies will be available at the Recreation Office, Town Hall information table, at all elementary and middle schools for students to bring home, and online. Information on the town pool, the driving range, playground program, sports camps, parks, summer concert series at the gazebo, and fall recreational soccer will be included in the booklet.

**Picnics:** Don't forget, you can rent the pavilion at Blatnick Park, River Road Park, Avon Crest Park and the Recreation Complex for parties, picnics, family gatherings and other events. Please call the Recreation Department to reserve a pavilion.

# RECREATION

**Summer Concerts:** The Niskayuna Recreation Department will once again sponsor a series of family concerts on the green in the gazebo at Town Hall. The complete concert schedule will be available in early May online and in the Summer Program Booklet.

**Driving Range:** The Niskayuna Driving Range, called the “Best Kept Secret in Niskayuna”, and foted “Best Driving Range in the Capital Region” by the Albany Times Union, will open for the season in mid-April. Located on River Road near the entrance to the Recycling Station, just east of Blatnick Park, the driving range offers golfers an inexpensive and delightful way to practice and improve their driving skills.

**Youth Employment:** Niskayuna youth interested in employment ranging from babysitting to yard work to part-time jobs in area businesses are encouraged to call the Niskayuna Youth Employment Service at 372-2519, or visit Betty Ferencik in the media center at Niskayuna High School. Similarly, if you have a job to be filled, call the Youth Employment Service for names of available workers. In addition, the Recreation Department needs youths and adults to work in a variety of part-time spring and summer jobs as referees, counselors, lifeguards, and specialists. For more information, call the Recreation Department.

**The Niskayuna Community Center:** Located at 2682 Aqueduct Road, Niskayuna, this handicapped-accessible, two-level building is available for private party rentals by Niskayuna residents throughout the year. The building includes a large, upstairs open room and a large downstairs room with banquet tables. Amenities include a pool table, ping pong tables, large screen television, VCR, shuffleboard table, foosball table, and basketball game.

## **NISKA-DAY 2008**

As a result of the construction at the High School, festivities will be held at Craig Elementary School on

Saturday, May 17. The format of the day will remain the same and the parade will retain the current route, except it will end at St. James Square instead of the High School. Look for your Niska-Day button at the Co-Op Supermarket or on Niska-Day.

*For more information about the day, please visit our much requested and anticipated web site at [www.niskaday.org](http://www.niskaday.org).*

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Did you know that the Police Department is the only department that operates twenty-four hours a day in the Town? Our employees, besides making and receiving calls and dispatching for the Police Department, also answer E-911 calls, dispatch for three local fire companies, and notify private ambulance companies when they are needed.

Although there are longer daylight hours in spring and summer, most emergency calls occur at night. For this reason, it is of utmost importance that your house numbers be brightly lit and visible to responding emergency personnel should they have to come to your home. Our technology, although capable of finding cross streets to any address, will not pinpoint an address exactly. The guidelines listed below should be helpful when purchasing house numbers:

- Your house number should be no less than four inches tall.
- Your mailbox number should be no less than three inches tall.
- Purchase thick, wide numbers in bold type.
- Show only your house number on your mailbox. It is not necessary to put your address on your mailbox; especially if in doing so you have to make your number smaller.
- BE CERTAIN, BE SAFE. Check your house and mailbox numbers at night. If you are unable to see the numbers at night, don't assume anyone else can.

# NISKAYUNA SENIOR NEWS

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## **The Niskayuna Senior Center**

**Sue Leonard and Edie Cannizzo, Directors**

JOIN US AT THE NISKAYUNA

SENIORS..... each Tuesday and Thursday year-round, at the Niskayuna Recreation Center, 2682 Aqueduct Road. Activities begin at 9:00 am and include Senior Fitness Classes; Line Dancing; Indoor Bowling; Pickle Ball; Bocce and Shuffleboard; Crafts with Edie; Bridge; Scrabble; Pinochle; Golf; Phase 10 and more.... Chef-prepared hot lunch is served at noon (suggested donation is \$3), followed by an early afternoon activity with speakers, games, movies, or other entertainment. A free blood pressure clinic is offered monthly by the Visiting Nurses. Monthly meal/activity calendars are available at the Senior Center, Town Hall, and online at [www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org). We invite all area seniors to participate, and welcome suggestions for interesting and new programs. There is no membership fee and most activities are free of charge. We provide door-to-door bus transportation for Niskayuna residents age 60 and older. Donation suggested. Please come and join us.

## **SPECIAL SENIOR EVENTS - SPRING 2008**

Upcoming Activities Include:

**March 1st - April 30th:** 4th Annual Senior Citizen Arts & Crafts Show at Niskayuna Town Hall.

*Wed., April 16th:* A Day on Your Own in NYC

*Wed., April 23rd:* The Senior Mystery Trip of '08

*Sun., April 27th:* "Sylvia," at Stillwater Players Dinner Theatre.

*Sun., May 11th:* "Anything Goes," Schenectady Light Opera.

*Mon. - Thursday, May 12th - 15th:* Cape May, NJ.

*Thurs., May 15th:* "Movin' Out," at Proctor's Theatre.

*Mon. & Wed., May 19th & 21st:* "55 Alive," AARP Defensive Driving Course. 9:30 AM - 1:30 pm at Niskayuna Senior Center. Must pre-register & attend both days. \$10 fee.

*Tues., May 20th:* 23rd Anniversary Celebration of the Niskayuna Senior Center. Festivities begin at 11:30 am with a special luncheon and entertainment by the Hillside Elementary School Chorus. Reservations required. Call the Senior Center for details. Suggested luncheon donation \$5.

*Fri., June 13th:* Trip to Culinary institute "Escoffier Restaurant," in Hyde Park.

*Sun., June 29th:* "Same Time Next Year," Theatre Barn.

*Upcoming summer trips will include Capital Rep, Erie Canal Cruise, Lake George Dinner Theatre, and trip aboard the Lac du Saint Sacrement, and much more....*

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## **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

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### **Highway Obstruction (Basketball Hoops)**

Many residents have been placing their basketball hoops too close to the road. In most instances, there should be a minimum distance of 17 feet between your basketball hoop and the edge of the road. When you place your basketball hoop out this spring for the children to use, please put it an appropriate location. Our highway crews will be informing you if your basketball hoop is placed too close to the road.

### **Roads to be Resurfaced**

Foxhollow Rd. (Sandra - Britney), Barcelona Road, Valencia Rd. (Barcelona - Almeria), Downing St. (Durham-Worcester), Stafford Lane, Village Rd., Fernwood Dr., Tamar Dr., N. Ravine Rd., Rosa Rd.,

Morhoff Rd., Winne Rd., Rec. Center Rd., Regent St. (Baker - Niskayuna), McClellan St. (Dorwaldt - City Line).

### **Roads to be Reconstructed**

North Alandale Ave., Buckingham Dr. (Ferris - Pearse), Ferris Rd., Becker St. (Central Ave. - Mohawk Commons), Fairfax Ave. (Rte 5 - Becker St.).

### **Weekly Waste Pick-Up**

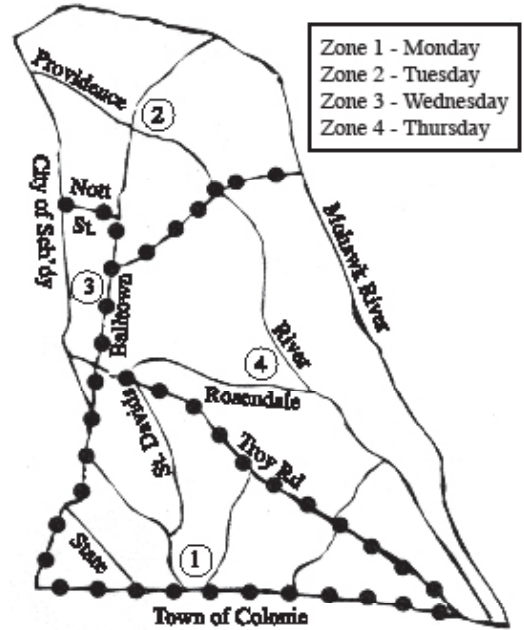
From Monday, April 7th through Friday, May 9th (weather permitting), highway trucks will circulate the town to randomly pickup yard waste that is placed at the curb. Scheduled pickup by zone will begin on Monday, May 12th.

# HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

## Zone and Pick up Day Change

The yard waste pickup map has been modified, which may have resulted in a change in your pickup schedule. The following areas have been affected: Balltown Road (from Consaul Road to Route 7), Hexam Garden Section, Oakmont Section, Hummingbird Section, West side of St. David's Lane, and the north side of Consaul Road will now be Zone 3, scheduled to be picked up on Wednesday.

Please check the map provided to see whether you have been affected, or call the Highway Department at 785-9753 if you have any questions. Except for the brown, biodegradable bags, all containers used for yard waste must be labeled with the Town's yard waste sticker, which is available at the Town Clerk's Office, Highway Department, Recreation Department, or Transfer Station. If using bags, the weight cannot exceed 40 lbs. If using any other container, its volume cannot exceed 32 gallons.



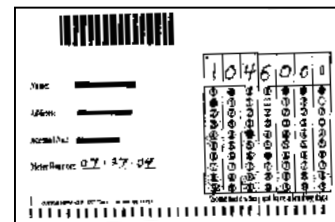
Please bundle and tie all brush with biodegradable material only (no wires). Brush bundles should not exceed 3'X3' nor be heavier than 30 lbs.

# WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT

## Dos and Don'ts for Water Meter Read Cards

Our water meter read cards work well and save time and money as long as everyone follows the basic ground rules listed below:

1. Completely darken the appropriate numbers in the columns below your hand-written reading. Use pencil or black/blue pen only.
2. If you accidentally darken the wrong number, simply fill in a second number in the same column. The reader is programmed to reject cards with multiple marks. Rejected cards will then be entered manually.
3. Do not write in the bar code area (the vertical lines located in the upper left portion of the card).
4. Do not place return address stickers on the card. They cause the card reader to jam.
5. Do not place postage stamps over the edge of the post card. This also jams the card reader.



## Hydrant Flushing

From Monday, March 31st, through Friday, May 16th, the water Department will conduct its annual hydrant and water main flushing in two shifts: the regular day shift from 7 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., and the midnight shift from 11 p.m. – 7 a.m. If you have any problems associated with our shifts, please call the Water Department at 377-8411 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. It is our recommendation that you avoid doing laundry when your area is being flushed. Detailed information in this regard will be published in the Gazette and on the Town web page at [www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org), under the Water and Sewer Department.

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# WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENT

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## **New Approach to Fix Sewer Lines**

The Sewer Department will receive a new, large truck in June loaded with state of the art equipment that will repair sewer pipes in places with no digging. The process is called in-situ rehabilitation. The new equipment can:

- Pinpoint exactly where a pipe is broken or where infiltration or ex-filtration is occurring
- Help evaluate the magnitude of the problem with both visual feedback and air pressure testing
- Isolate the area that needs repair with inflatable bladders
- Convey multiple chemical components (epoxy-type grout mixtures) through multi-port tubing to the repair site
- Re-test a repair to ensure the work has been successful.

We plan to use this equipment during the midnight shift when the flow through the sewer system is at its lowest level, so don't be surprised to see a large, white truck working on the sewers in the middle of the night.

## **Illicit Discharge and the Connection Detection and Elimination Program**

NYSDEC and EPA regulations require Niskayuna to develop and fully implement a stormwater management program (SWMP). An important part of the Town's SWMP is the development of an Illicit Discharge and Connection Detection and Elimination Program.

## **What is an Illicit Discharge or Connection?**

An illicit discharge is any discharge to the storm sewer system that is not composed entirely of rain water or ground water. Examples include the dumping of motor vehicle fluids, household

## **How Do You Spot an Illicit Discharge or Connection?**

- Look for makeshift pipes or hoses that lead to a storm drain or body of water.
- Watch for stains, unusual odors, structural damage to streets or gutters, and abnormal vegetative growth in nearby lakes and streams.

If you see an illicit discharge or connection, report it to the Town of Niskayuna Department of Engineering at 386-4520. An Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Local Law was adopted by the Town last fall. The law gives the Town legal authority to inspect and sample discharges, as well as impose penalties for violations. You can help support the Town's efforts to control and correct illicit discharges by maintaining your septic system, if you have one, and by proper disposal of your household trash.

Hazardous materials such as excess paint, paint thinner, motor oil, antifreeze, pesticides or other common household chemicals should not be poured down storm drains or on the ground. For information on disposal, contact the Town of Niskayuna Department of Engineering, or visit the Town's website at [www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org).

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# BUILDING DEPARTMENT

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In an effort to make your projects 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." There you will find the Building and Zoning Permit application and fee schedule and also the Town's requirements for items

that need permits like fences, sheds, decks, swimming pools and residential buildings.

As always, call, write or e-mail us any time you have questions or concerns. Building Inspector Tom Cannizzo, and secretary, Sharon Gilbert, will be happy to assist you in any way possible.

# TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

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## **Volunteer Needed**

A volunteer is needed to help scan documents as part of the Town's Records Management Program. Must be comfortable with operating computers. Prior office experience helpful. Contact Helen Kopke via email at [hkopke@niskayuna.org](mailto:hkopke@niskayuna.org).

## **Marriage Licenses**

To obtain a marriage license, couples need to show their birth certificates and a current ID (either a driver's license or passport). If it is not a first marriage, papers of all prior marriages must be presented to the clerk before a marriage license can be issued. Licenses are \$40 and are good for 60 days. There is a 24-hour waiting period.

## **Town Code**

Residents may now search our Town Code through our website: [www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org).

## **News on the Web**

To keep up-to-date on the latest Town news, residents are encouraged to E-Subscribe for Public Notices, Recreation Department News, and/or Senior News. You will find the link on the bottom right corner of the Town's Home Page.

## **Town Board Meetings Televised**

Town Board meetings will be broadcast on Channel 16 on Sunday mornings at 11 a.m.

## **Lost & Found at Town Hall**

Set of 9 keys on a ring.  
Key fob for a GM vehicle  
1 gold, heart-shaped pierced earring  
1 silver/onyx, teardrop-shaped pierced earring  
1 pair women's black Isotoner-type gloves

## **Electronic Recycling Day**

April 26, 2008 is Electronic Recycling Day. Details to follow. Also, from March 8 through April 26, Technology Surplus Store, 405 Scotia Industrial Park, will offer free recycling of appliances, air conditioners, printers, computers, cell phones, scrap metal, etc. Please call the store at 377-2200 for more information. Please note that the Technology Surplus Store is a private company and is not affiliated with the Town of Niskayuna.

## **Library Gardeners Begin New Season**

Last year, District III of the Federated Garden Clubs of New York State selected the Niskayuna Library Gardens from among area not-for-profit community gardens for a special landscape design certificate. What an honor! It comes to us as the result of wonderful community support for the development of the gardens over many years, and diligent care by the Library Garden volunteers throughout the season. Now as we look forward to the upcoming season, we would be delighted to have additional volunteers to help maintain these award-winning gardens.

The Library Gardeners will have an orientation and planning meeting on Wednesday, May 7, at 7:00 PM in the Niskayuna Library Community Room. We are happy to have both experienced gardeners and "gardeners-to-be" to help with a wide variety of tasks. We need helping hands, both women and men, to assist with planting, weeding, pruning, edging, and mulching. Early in the season, we are especially happy to have extra helpers to clean up from the winter and get annuals planted. The meeting on May 7 will be an opportunity to get acquainted with other gardeners and find out how you can contribute to our gardening efforts.

If interested, but unable to attend the May 7 meeting, please call Elaine at 377-4541 for more information, or stop by any Thursday, beginning May 8th, at 9:30 AM, to work in the gardens with us.

## **Tax Office**

Second notices have been sent to all property owners whose tax bills are unpaid. The late charge for March is 2.50%. We have been granted an extension by Schenectady County to collect taxes in April when the late charge will be 3.75%.

Water rent bills are being sent out in late March and early April. In response to many requests of our residents, water bill payments can be brought or mailed to Town Hall. This collection will end on June 1st, and any unpaid balances at that time will be added to the fall bills with an 8% penalty.

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

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

Joe Landry  
Supervisor

Town Council  
Liz Orzel Kasper  
Julie M. McDonnell  
Diane P. O'Donnell  
Maria P. Freund



## **TOWN'S REASSESSMENT PROJECT UPDATE**

The Town reassessment project is near completion. The full disclosure notices were mailed to property owners during the first week in March. Notice information included the 2008 preliminary assessment, the prior assessment, and illustrated tax liability.

Interested property owners or those who did not agree with their 2008 market value assessment were able to review sales and other assessments at the information center and attended "understanding your new property assessment" workshops.

Informal hearings were scheduled during the month of March for those owners who disagreed with the market value of their property. Informal Hearing decision notices will be mailed to homeowners during the month of April.

Property owners can also grieve their assessments to the Board of Assessment Review (BAR) after the filing of the Tentative Assessment roll, which will be published on or before May 1, 2008. Grievance forms will be available in the Assessor's Office on May 1st or online at [www.orps.state.ny.us](http://www.orps.state.ny.us)

Completed grievance forms must be received in the Assessor's Office on or before Grievance Day: May 27, 2008. If a property owner wants to present information to the BAR, an appointment can be scheduled upon the receipt of a completed form by the Assessor.

The Final Assessment roll will be published on or before July 1, 2008.

Please visit the Towns' website for continuing Assessor's information at [www.niskayuna.org](http://www.niskayuna.org) or call 518-386-4550 should you have any assessment questions.