

# Buffalo Ski Club

## Celebrating 75 years of fast downhill fun

by CHRISTOPHER GORDON  
Orchard Park Editor

Oke Johannsen, a director of the Buffalo Ski Club, is beginning his 42nd year with the organization.

Johannsen, who was born in Germany, moved to Kenmore when he was young and joined the Ski Club in 1965.

According to Johannsen, the organization is a family club and due to its age, now has three generations of families who have joined.

"You can come with your little kids and ski," said Johannsen, adding that every member looks out for the children, so if parents want to take a break, they can go eat or get a drink and know their children are being attended to.

The Buffalo Ski Club was formed in 1931 when eight families from Bavaria, Germany came together to share their love of skiing.

The club was originally based in

Holland, but in the 1950s, purchased property at its current location on Lower East Hill in Colden. Later, it purchased another Lower East Hill property, which was below the Sitzmarker Lodge. That lodge housed the Sitzmarker Club. In 1991, the two clubs merged and then in 2004, the Buffalo Ski Club acquired Ski Tamarack, which is in the same area. Thus, the Buffalo Ski Club consists of three lodges, 40 trails and six lifts. There are also ski lessons available for children and adults, with more than 50 certified instructors, as well as a nursery.

Orchard Park resident Howy Holmes, who works on the club's marketing team and has served on the board of directors, has been a member for nearly 25 years. Holmes said the cost of lessons is a separate fee from the membership costs, but he added that with the instructors that the club offers, it is worth it.

"We have a substantial school,"

said Holmes, noting that there are several forms of ski lessons that are available, including freestyle.

According to Johannsen, some children start lessons as early as age 3, but he said that there are many adults who take lessons as well.

"There were over 300 kids in our lesson program (last year)," said Johannsen, who noted that there are about 600 families who are members of the Buffalo Ski Club.

Each year, there are also racing teams and, according to Holmes, the racers take on other area racing teams throughout the winter.

"Every week there is a race at

one of the clubs," said Holmes, who noted that the Buffalo Ski Club is the oldest continuous private ski club in the United States.

He said there are members from places such as St. Catharines, Ontario because this is the closest ski club to them.

### Buffalo Ski Club

The club is open from noon to 10 p.m. Wednesdays, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Thursdays, from 5 to 10 p.m. Fridays, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturdays and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays at Lower East Hill Road, Orchard Park. For directions, visit [www.bsckiarea.com](http://www.bsckiarea.com).

Johannsen said there are members from almost every community in Western New York.

"We get people to stay," said Holmes. "Their kids grew up here."

He said Larry Erb, originally a member of the

Sitzmarker Club, is the longest current member. He joined in 1947.

And the club has one member

— John Hoffman — who remains an active skier at age 91.

The club offers a varied terrain, appealing to beginners as well as experienced skiers.

Johannsen noted that skiers do not need to be members of the club, but he said there are substantial discounts for joining the organization.

Part of the membership fees include access to events, including German and Italian Night.

"I wouldn't be a member for 42 years if it wasn't what I say it is," said Johannsen.

One of the lodges offers catered food, and the other two are available for those who want to bring food to cook.

The club is open from noon to 10 p.m. Wednesdays, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Thursdays, from 5 to 10 p.m. Fridays, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturdays and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays.

For more information on memberships, or for directions, visit [www.bsckiarea.com](http://www.bsckiarea.com).

### Community News

The Historic Preservation Commission has set its 2007 meeting schedule for April 11, July 25 and Nov. 14. Meetings are at 7 p.m. in the council chambers of Amherst Town Hall, 5583 Main St. For information, call 631-7051.

**Jonny C's**  
Monday-Sunday  
7AM-9PM

**NY DELI & CATERERS**

**Specials**

Boar's Head Oven Gold Turkey .....	\$5.99/lb.
Sahlen's Ham .....	\$4.99/lb.
Kosher Salami .....	\$3.99/lb.
Boar's Head American Cheese .....	\$3.99/lb.

**FREE** with your 1/2 Gallon of **MILK** \$15 COLD CUT purchase

Specials valid through January 16, 2007

---

**Buy any Breakfast Sandwich**

Jonny C's NY DELI & CATERERS Eat In OR Take Out **GET ONE FREE**

Expires: 01/16/07

---

**Buy any Full Sub**

Jonny C's NY DELI & CATERERS Eat In OR Take Out **GET ONE FREE**

Expires: 01/16/07

---

**Friday Fish Fry**

Jonny C's NY DELI & CATERERS Eat In OR Take Out **BUY 1 GET ONE FREE**

Expires: 01/16/07

**Visit Our New Location...**

**9350 TRANSIT ROAD**  
@ Casey Road • E. Amherst  
688-8400



**First Niagara Bank**

**Money Market Deposit Account**

**4.75% APY\***

**for balances of \$50,000 or more**

**Great rates come with rewards.**

Checking customers who open a new money market deposit account with \$10,000 or more can earn 5,000 ScoreCard™ Bonus Points, redeemable towards incredible merchandise and travel.\*\*

For a more rewarding relationship, call 1-800-421-0004, visit [fnfg.com](http://fnfg.com) or stop by your local branch by February 17, 2007.



Member FDIC \* The Annual Percentage Yield (APY) is accurate as of 1/7/07 and is subject to change without notice. A minimum deposit of \$25 is required to open the Relationship Builder Money Market Deposit Account and a minimum deposit balance of \$50,000 is required to obtain the advertised APY. The interest rate earned each day will be based on whether the end-of-day balance is less than \$10,000, at least \$10,000 but less than \$25,000, at least \$25,000 but less than \$50,000, or \$50,000 or more. Current interest rates for the four tiers are available at any First Niagara branch or by calling the Telephone Service Center at 1-800-421-0004. Interest rates for the four tiers may be changed by First Niagara Bank at any time. Fees could reduce the earnings on the account. Funds to open the account cannot presently be on deposit at First Niagara Bank. \*\* First Niagara Bank Preferred and Prestige checking customers with a MasterMoney™ debit card are eligible for the ScoreCard Program. ScoreCard Bonus Points can be earned with signature-based debit card transactions and for opening eligible First Niagara savings, money market and home equity accounts. Customers opening a new First Niagara Relationship Builder Money Market Deposit Account with a minimum of \$10,000 by February 17, 2007 will earn 5,000 ScoreCard Bonus Points (maximum of 5,000 ScoreCard Bonus Points per account/household). For more information on eligibility, earning and redeeming ScoreCard Bonus Points, please call 1-800-421-0004.