



Secaucus Monthly

June

2019

A look at the Community, including upcoming events, important notices, meetings, and more.



Third Grade Visits Town Hall

Secaucus Town Hall had some very special visitors on Thursday, May 17th. Third grade students from Clendon School visited the Mayor's office, held a mock trial, talked to Secaucus Police Officers and Detectives, and went on a tour of the building, learning about various departments along the way. The children left with a much better understanding of the workings of our local government and had a great time.

Monthly Newsletter Available Online

The Secaucus Newsletter is available monthly by visiting SecaucusNJ.gov

Newsletter Submissions

Do you have any photos taken in our Town to share?

Send articles and photos to Pia Valentin: pvalentin@secaucus.net for consideration.

The Mayor's Corner

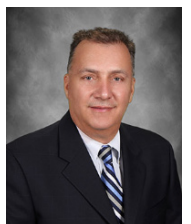
Summer is just around the corner and it is time to enjoy the warm weather outside. As you may know, the Town Pool is now open. It is a great place to spend time with family and friends, gather for July 4th fireworks, enjoy other special events and of course, cool off in the summer. The staff at the pool is ready to welcome you! If you didn't already get a membership, you will be happy to learn that membership fees have been substantially lowered this year! All season and weekend only memberships are available, so sign up and make the most of this wonderful recreational facility.

Summer is also a great time to enjoy the weekly concert series. As always, we have secured excellent bands which you are sure to enjoy. You should have received a mailer listing all of the bands and concert dates so mark your calendars.

Over the summer months, the upgrades to the PSE&G gas delivery system, 495 road improvements and work on the Paterson Plank Road Bridge over Route 3 will continue. While the inconvenience is temporary, the much needed upgrades will benefit the Town for years to come. Our Police Traffic Division is doing a great job to keep the traffic moving. Please be patient and allow extra travel time.

For a list of town events and construction updates, please visit our website at www.secaucusnj.gov.

Mayor Michael J. Gonnelli



2019 Memorial Day Parade

Sunny skies, warm weather, patriotic pride and gratitude for veterans who gave their lives for our country marked the 2019 annual Secaucus Memorial Day Parade on May 18th. The parade was led by Grand Marshall Claud Macchieraldo, who served in the U.S. Army from 1969 to 1975.



Waving flags, salutes and cheers greeted Secaucus veterans. "What a great tribute this parade is to those who selflessly gave their lives for our freedom and for our veterans," stated Mayor Gonnelli.

The parade started at Huber Street School, culminated with a community barbeque at Buchmuller Park. Younger residents enjoyed pony rides, a bouncy house, petting zoo, face painting and more. The parade and after party was enjoyed by all.

Parents Who Host Lose the Most



The Secaucus Coalition reminds parents and community members that there may be serious consequences if you provide alcohol to underage individuals. We wish all a safe and fun summer. Remember, Parents who Host Lose the Most.



SECAUCUS COALITION

Elected Officials

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Upgrades to the Emergency Communications Systems

An exciting new upgrade to the public safety communications system was unveiled at the Secaucus Office of Emergency Management on April 24, 2019.

For several months, The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Coordinator Vincent Massaro Jr., the Secaucus IT Department under the direction of Wayne Sabella, members of the Department of Public Works and the Police Department's Communications Commander, Lieutenant Wayne Bruton, worked collaboratively toward the upgraded communications system to make it modern, mobile and fully integrated across various departments.



The network, communications and display systems at the OEM were upgraded to allow live relay from the scene of an emergency through a variety of channels. A mobile command unit that can serve as a base station was also purchased. "This helps us get real time information to our decision makers quickly," said OEM Coordinator Vincent Massaro Jr.

The team also "cloned" a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) and installed it at a second location—the OEM's Emergency Operations Center. Additionally, Police, Fire and EMS radios were installed along with Geo-Mapping and other state of the art equipment. This serves two purposes: in the event the Municipal Government Center is evacuated or the police dispatch area within the Municipal Government Center becomes inoperable, police staff can respond at the Emergency Operations Center and operate as efficiently and effectively as they do regularly. Secondly, by being able to answer and dispatch calls from an "Operations Center," the Town of Secaucus can operate under a true "unified command," incorporating Police, Fire, EMS, DPW and other Town departments in the decision-making process. "What we did with the new PSAP is truly ground-breaking, the first of its kind in the state. It's a system that can serve as an example for other jurisdictions," said Lieutenant Wayne Bruton.

Unlike most other jurisdictions in Hudson County, the Secaucus Police Department operates a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), which means when you call 9-1-1 for a police, fire or medical emergency, you are routed directly to the Secaucus Police Department dispatch center, and not to a regional or county dispatch center. The handling of this system locally reduces our response time. The PSAP system was impacted by flooding as a result of Hurricane Sandy and the Secaucus Office of Emergency Management Coordinator, Vincent Massaro Jr., the Mayor and the Town Council wanted to preempt such an issue in the future.

"I'm proud about what we accomplished and will make sure we stay at the cutting edge of technology," said IT Director Wayne Sabella. Before this equipment was unveiled, it underwent testing by the State of New Jersey's Office of Emergency Telecommunications (OETS) and was certified as another Town of Secaucus Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP).

"It's an excellent example of how different departments in our Town work together to make the safety of our residents a priority. I thank the teams from the OEM, Police and IT departments for their vision, planning and successful implementation of the PSAP upgrade," said Mayor Michael Gonnelli.

World War II Remembrance Program at Public Library

"Hudson County: At Home and At War," an event commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-Day and remembrance of World War II, will be held at the Secaucus Public Library on Thursday, June 6, 2019. Councilman and Vietnam War Veteran, William Mckeever will speak about the connections between event in New Jersey and local history at that time. Therese Loong will share her personal story through the screening of her documentary, "Every day is a Holiday," followed by a Q&A session and a musical step back in time with Cassandra Elyse. Light refreshments will be served. Register at secaucuslibrary.org.

Secaucus Continues Crackdown on Unlawful Housing

Because of its proximity to New York City and desirability of neighborhoods across Secaucus, there has been a spike in demand for rental housing in Town. This demand has resulted in some homeowners making unauthorized changes to existing properties, creating dwelling spaces that are not lawful, and in many cases, create unsafe, or even hazardous, rental spaces. Mayor Gonnelli and the Council passed an ordinance last year to help stem this rising problem.

Unlawful rental units adversely affect the community in many ways. Some streets, which already have limited parking, are further congested. Public schools are unduly burdened by an increased student population and corresponding increase in cost to the taxpayer. Increased demand for emergency services and police, trash and recyclables pick-up, building inspections, increased traffic, etc. all affect the quality of life for everyone. Perhaps most important, quite often, illegal units fail to meet health, safety and building code standards, creating unsafe conditions for the tenant, homeowner and first responders.

For years now, the Town has required that a Certificate of Continued Occupancy be secured by a homeowner for every real estate sale and every time there is a change in tenancy. The new Ordinance adopted in June 2018 provides for annual registration of every rental unit in Town, with limited exceptions. We are setting up an internal process for registrations and will be letting property owners know when that process will begin. The Mayor and Council hired a Housing Inspector to investigate complaints, develop a data base, inspect properties and work with property owners to remedy violations. Any person violating the ordinance will be subject to fines of \$500 to \$2,000 per day per violation. The responsible party will also be required to pay an amount equal to six times the monthly rental to the displaced tenant of an illegal apartment, which is in line the New Jersey Statutes governing illegal tenancies. An additional restitution fee may be imposed to pay for costs borne by the school system and the Town as it relates to illegal occupants.

Earth Day: Lending a Helping Hand

On Saturday, April 20th, the Secaucus Environmental Department hosted its third town-wide cleanup celebrating Earth Day, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Mill Creek Marsh. Even though the weather was uncooperative, about 30 brave souls came prepared in rain gear to help clean up the marsh.

Earth Day is the perfect opportunity for students, businesses and other groups in need of community service opportunities. Secaucus has a close working relationship with several businesses in town who are looking for exactly that! On April 19th, the Environmental Department held a clean-up near the train station with a group from Embassy Suites. On Earth Day, April 22nd, 25 SML employees collected over 75 bags of garbage along the Hackensack River from Snipes Park to the end of the walkway behind Hudson Regional Hospital. On April 23rd, volunteers from Schneider Electric, a long-time supporter of annual cleanup, collected many bags of garbage, a TV and 11 tires around the Burlington Coat Factory outlet. The NBA team helped clean up the Duck Pond area on May 1st. It is great to have such support from so many residents and businesses.



The Secaucus Environmental Department hosts cleanups for businesses and residents all summer long, not only around Earth Day! For those looking for a chance to get involved, please contact Lynn Kramer at lkramer@secaucus.net or 201-330-2000 ext. 3205. The Town provides pick-up sticks, bags, gloves, water and snacks to all those who participate.

Secaucus Senior Artists Honored

The weeklong 2019 Hudson County Senior Arts Exhibit concluded with an Artist Awards Reception at the Historic Brennan Courthouse in Jersey City on May 2nd, 2019. Senior citizen artists from around Hudson County were honored. Our very own Carol Ellison's oil painting 'Craig and His Hat' won first prize in the non-professional oil category and will be entered in the state level competition. Other Secaucus artists who were honored with awards are Danielle Fry (2nd Place—Mixed Media and Pastel), Carol Ellison (1st place-Mixed Media, 2nd place-Drawing), Craig Ellison (2nd place Photography), Maureen McDonald (3rd place—Drawing), and Sue Mei (Honorable Mention—Acrylic). Select artworks by members of the Senior Citizens Art Club is now on display at the Secaucus Public Library. An Artist's Reception will be held on June 13th, 2019 from 6.30 to 9pm. All are invited.



Secaucus Secures Grant for Franklin Street Improvements

The Town of Secaucus recently secured a grant of \$450,000 from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Municipal Aid Program for the Franklin Street Roadway Preservation Project. With the funds secured, the Town will repave the street, replace a compromised storm water line and replace sidewalks, curbs and driveway aprons, as needed, on the stretch of Franklin Street, between Paterson Plank Rd. and Gillis Place. The work is expected to take place this summer.

The NJDOT Municipal Aid Program is a competitive program which assists local governments in improving and preserving the local transportation network. Funds are available from the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) supported by the State gas tax.

"We're really happy that the Franklin Project grant was approved. Grants like this help us to improve infrastructure with little impact on the budget. We always have and will continue to aggressively pursue grants to help keep improving the Town," said Mayor Michael Gonnelli on receiving the grant award. Secaucus has successfully secured other grants in recent months, including more than \$2 million from NJDOT's Local Freight Impact Fund Program for the rehabilitation of the Meadowlands Parkway, \$346,000 from the US Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) Port Security Grant Program for a new Fire Rescue Boat, \$500,000 from the Hudson County Open Space Fund toward an indoor sports facility, to name a few. The Town also has many more applications in the pipeline.

Recent completed projects supported by grants are the Born Street Storm Water Project funded by the NJDOT Local Aid Infrastructure Fund and the milling and paving of several streets including Luhmann Terrace, Arch Street, Garry Terrace and First Street funded primarily by Municipal Aid grants.

Delivering Good

The Secaucus Town Council and Department of Senior Services in partnership with Delivering Good and volunteers from international clothing retailer American Eagle Outfitters (AEO), organized a successful Pasta Luncheon for senior citizens on May 10, 2019. AEO volunteers helped Florence Tarantino from our Social Services Department prepare and serve the meal. Mayor Michael Gonnelli welcomed residents and thanked Delivering Good and AEO volunteers. "We have seventeen employees volunteering today and we're so happy for this opportunity," said AEO organizer Nicki Dipillo. AEO also donated caps and hats to the seniors who attended.

Major PSEG Infrastructure Upgrade Underway

In recent weeks, residents may have noticed PSEG work and related street closures around Town. As part of the ongoing upgrade, crews will dig trenches, install new pipes, connect service and restore pipes. This is all part of an effort to modernize the ageing gas delivery system and ensure the highest level of safety. The mains and services will be replaced with stronger, more durable, materials which are much less likely to have leaks and release methane. New safety measures being installed will dramatically reduce gas flow if a service line is damaged and provide better support for the use of high efficiency appliances. We appreciate your patience and understanding as PSEG completes these important upgrades. For a list of streets where crews will be working in the following week, please visit our website secaucusnj.gov.

Town Museum Celebrates 1st Anniversary

Last summer, on a steamy July day, the Secaucus Town Museum opened with fanfare, newspaper reporters and dozens of visitors. During the past year, the Museum received many additional donations from our neighbors who visited and realized they had artifacts to add to the displays. We thank each and every one who was kind enough to part with their Secaucus "heirlooms." Through research, hidden warehouses (don't ask where!), antique sites, and perseverance, other very old items used by past generations were purchased.

The Museum's Directors invite you to a 1st anniversary celebration with music and snacks at the Museum on Saturday, July 13th from noon to 3:00 p.m. If you haven't been to the Museum, or visited many months ago, please stop in and see how the Museum has grown. (It's still expanding week by week.)

Additionally, this summer, when there is a Thursday night concert at Buchmuller Park, the museum will be open from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. so you can take advantage of a "double header evening:" first visit the museum, then enjoy the concert. The Museum is located at 150 Plaza Center. For more information, visit www.secaucusmuseum.org or call 551-257-7205.



Spotlight: Elva Grace Robinson

There are those who deserve to be honored, not just for what they do for the community, but also for the grace and humility with which they serve. Secaucus resident, Elva Grace Robison is one such individual. Elva was named Secaucus Senior Citizen of the Year and was also named 2019 Hudson County Senior Citizen of the Year. What a fitting honor.

At the Awards Ceremony on May 15th at Liberty House in Jersey City, Elva was praised for her focus on “nourishing” both the body and spirit for those in need. Her caring and generous personality shines in whatever she does—whether it is preparing meals for those who need it or touching people with her thoughtful, attentive presence on her visits to patients at hospitals and nursing homes. She does this with a joyful attitude and is very shy about any public acknowledgement of the impact she has on those around her.

A proud American of Jamaican descent, Elva has touched our community in a variety of ways: she initiated the distribution of holiday meal packs to homebound seniors, developed weekly Saturday home delivery of meals to senior citizens, invited and coordinated with 3 churches for weekend meals for over 25 years, made and delivered meals to the PERC Shelter with a team at First Reformed Church, made volunteer visits to patients at local nursing homes and hospitals, and is an Elder/Liturgist at the First Reformed Church.

Even though Elva would have preferred not to be in the public limelight for her work, she has been recognized and has received several awards including the YWCA-Bergen County Tribute to Women in Industry in 1977, Black Achievers of Business and Education YM-WCA of Newark and Vicinity in 1984, TWIN Award-President of Forum and Member of YWCA Board in 2001, and the Betty Foley Memorial Award-Jersey Journal Everyday Hero Award in 2004.

Elva touches those around her not just by her volunteerism but also by her classy style and energetic, effervescent personality. She is creative, expressive and is always willing to go out of her way to be a positive presence everywhere she goes. Secaucus is indeed blessed to have her as a member of our community.



Project Pride

Girl Scouts of Secaucus, Brownie Troop 12251, participated in Project Pride—an effort to keep the Town clean, beautiful and welcoming. On May 4th, they planted flowers in the center of Town with help from the Secaucus DPW.

Secaucus Patriots Win County Championship



Congratulations to the Secaucus Patriots Softball team on winning the Hudson County Championships by defeating Bayonne in the 7th inning by a score of 5 to 4. Great job ladies!

Fishing Derby

Despite overcast skies and light rain, many residents came out to the Duck Pond to participate in the annual Secaucus Fishing Derby on May 4, 2019. Fishing enthusiasts of all ages enjoyed fishing in the catch-and-release program organized by the Secaucus Recreation Department. Here is a list of our proud winners:

Youngest Male Fisherman: Kaileb Rodriguez
Youngest Female Fisherman: Luciani Azaceta
Biggest Catfish: Santino Leon (21")
Biggest Bass: Sloan Bello (8")
Most Fish: Steven Vega (19)

