



Inauguration Day

Mayor Michael Gonnelli along with Councilmen Mark Dehnert, Robert Costantino, and Bill McKeever were sworn in during the first council meeting of the year. Members of the Secaucus Fire Department and Secaucus Police Department were also present to be sworn in for new positions and promotions.

Mayor's Corner

January in Secaucus marked an important milestone—it has been a full year since we started our COVID-19 vaccination POD, offering vaccinations right here in Town. It is an unprecedented service in response to one of the most challenging times of our lives. As of now, the Secaucus Vaccination POD has administered more than 12,000 doses through clinics at the Recreation Center and Town Hall, and traveling clinics at Senior Housing, schools and local businesses.

In December 2020, Secaucus became one of the first in New Jersey to have a local vaccine POD. This had never been done before, but the Town Council and I, with full support of our Administration, decided this was a necessary response to a very difficult health crisis. Our efforts were minutely planned, and flexible at the same time, so we could best respond to the ever-changing CDC and DOH guidelines. We started off in a tent in the Recreation Center parking lot, initially administering vaccines to first responders, as mandated. More vaccines became available in January 2021, and we opened the clinic to the public, eventually moving the POD inside the Recreation Center. The Health Department, Administration, Police, OEM, Environmental Department, Recreation staff, DPW, the Secaucus Housing Authority, and countless others pitched in, and went above and beyond to make this effort a success.

Looking back at December 2020, I realize how little time we had to plan and organize such an unprecedented service to our residents. Every detail, no matter how small, had to be orchestrated precisely. Behind the smooth flow of socially distanced lines of people at the vaccine site, we had several organizational details: A grant was secured to fund it, vaccine coordinators were recruited and

trained, nurses and EMTs were lined up; employees in various departments pitched in with answering phone calls and other organizational requirements. Our Administration meticulously worked to maximize the number of vaccine doses we could secure for our community. An online system to make appointments, and a method for seniors who do not have online access, was put in place. Appointments were tracked, reminders sent, and calls were made to those who missed the appointment, and replacements were scheduled in order to minimize wasting of any vaccine. Additionally, along the way, we also helped coordinate vaccine services for other area vaccine providers. In short, we did everything we could to make sure that everyone who wanted a vaccine had access to it.



I have no doubt all these efforts saved lives and kept many out of the hospital. I deeply appreciate each and every one who contributed to the continuing success of this effort, including Town Administrator Gary Jeffas, whose hands-on approach and detailed attention made a big difference in making it a smooth operation.

The POD continues to offer first, second, third and booster doses. Please call the Health Department at 201-330-2031 if you need more information or visit secaucusnj.gov/vaccine for vaccine details.

Mayor Michael Gonnelli- mayor@secaucus.net - O: 201-330-2005

Councilman William McKeever
wmckeever@secaucus.net
C: 551-665-7650

Councilman Robert Costantino
rcostantino@secaucus.net
C: 201-401-9315

Councilman Mark Dehnert
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Councilman John Gerbasio
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Councilman James Clancy
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O: 201-330-2000

Councilwoman Orietta Tringali
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O: 201-330-2000

LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER
SECAUCUS, NJ 07094



Secaucus Municipal Government Center
Paterson Plank Road
Secaucus, NJ 07094

Nancy Minervini Retires

Nancy Minervini, a Town of Secaucus employee for more than 20 years, retired in December 2021. She was Mayor Gonnelli's Administrative Assistant for many years and has worked in several departments including the DPW. Town Hall employees gathered on December 21st to celebrate the milestone. We wish Nancy a Happy Retired life.

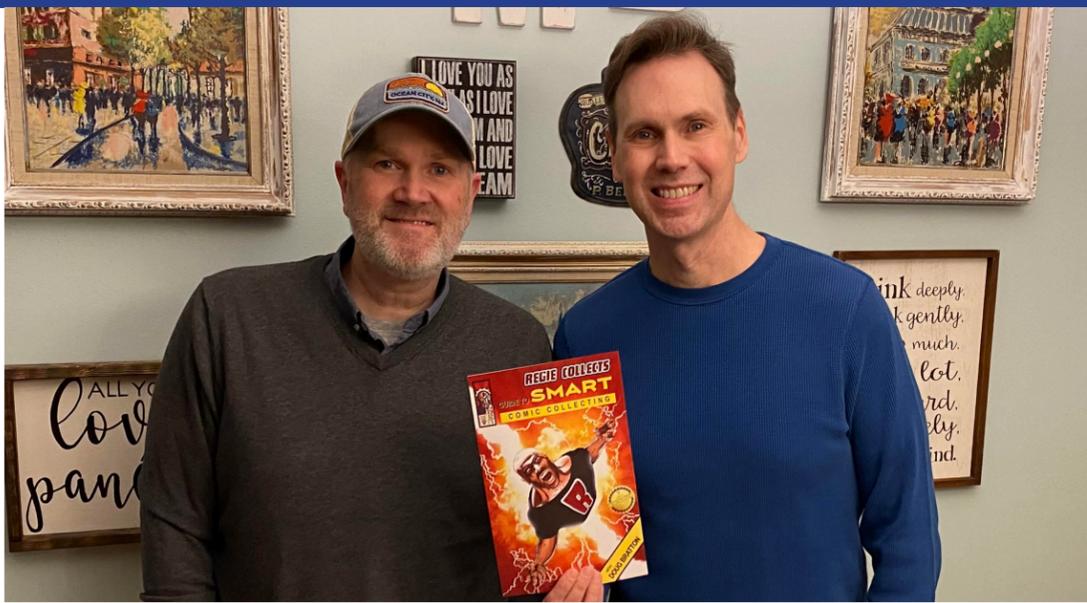


Secaucus Town Employee Creates Cover for Book About Comic Collecting

Dave Bratton, the Secaucus Coalition Coordinator, grew up reading and collecting comic books with his brother, Doug. They even wrote and drew their own comics together as children. Little did they know what was to come decades later. Doug Bratton, the Executive Director for the Secaucus-based Partners in Prevention non-profit, recently co-authored a book about comic collecting with popular and award-winning YouTuber, Regie Simmons from the Regie Collects channel. The first run of their book, *A Guide to SMART Comic Collecting*, sold out its first run—over 3,000 copies—in just a few days. Doug and Regie turned to Dave Bratton for a new cover for the second printing, an homage to a famous Black Adam comic book cover. Although Dave has been drawing since childhood, this is the first time his art has been published professionally.

"It's exciting to have my art featured as the cover of Doug and Regie's book. I couldn't have done it without the terrific digital paint work of our good friend, Adam Schirmer. I hope they sell out of this print, too!" said Dave Bratton.

The guide outlines the basics and not-so-basics of comic book collecting and is written for collectors of any age and experience.



Loved and Lost

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected many people throughout the world and continues to do so today. During this time, many lives of loved ones, family and friends have been lost. Loved and Lost is a statewide collaboration whose goal is to honor, document and celebrate the lives of New Jersey residents who passed away from Covid-19.

Loved and Lost is coordinated by the Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State University, which has created a website for friends and family to share their loved one's names and stories to further recognize their lives. So far, the website has more than 1,300 names and continues to grow every day as family members and friends input information about people they have lost.

They include individuals such as Daniel Conroy III, a Giants and Yankees fan who succumbed to the virus on April 11, 2020, at the age of 57. He worked for Commercial Furniture Transport in Secaucus and loved visiting the flea market on Saturdays. His family remembers his larger-than-life personality and his generosity.

Loved and Lost's mission is to keep the memory of those lost during the pandemic alive and to recognize the toll that this crisis had on the residents of New Jersey. If you or a friend have lost a loved one during the pandemic, please add their name and story by visiting this website: <https://lovedandlostnj.com>

COVID Testing Sites – Secaucus

If you need a COVID-19 test, you may call or visit the following testing sites. Please note, these independent sites are not affiliated with the Town of Secaucus.

Hudson Regional Hospital
55 Meadowlands Parkway
201-392-3100

Riverside Medical Groups
714 10th Street
Call: 201 865 2050 for an appointment

UHCA – Agile Urgent Care
20 Meadowlands Parkway
Call: 201 381 4800 for an appointment and information

Care Station – Urgent Care
210 Meadowlands Parkway
Call: 908 925 2273

North Hudson Community Action
North Bergen: 201 330 2632
Union City: 201 863 7077

Annual Pet License Due

January is pet-registration month! The Secaucus Department of Health reminds all residents that annual pet licenses are required in Secaucus. Complete registration forms and make payments on our website www.secaucusnj.gov/departments/health. Please have proof of rabies vaccination handy when you register. If your pet's rabies vaccine is not current, you may be eligible for a free vaccine voucher. For more information, or if you have any questions, please call the Health Department at 201-330-2031.



Environmental Opportunity for High Schoolers

Hudson County 4-H and Hudson County Improvement Authority have teamed up to provide Junior Master Composters. This is an opportunity for teens to learn about reducing food waste, making compost, and spearheading change in their own communities. Composting food scraps helps preserve our environment because it can reduce greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change, and it can reduce the amount of trash communities send to landfills. In the spring, youth will complete seven (7) seminars, get hands-on experience making compost, and participate in field trips to learn about different composting models. During the summer, youth will complete ten (10) volunteer hours at one community compost site in Hudson County and later complete a final project in their community as part of their certificate. Youth who complete the program will earn service hours, a certificate, a compost tool kit, and a \$100 gift card. Youth in grades 9th – 12th are encouraged to apply and attend our information session. To learn more, register for the information session, and APPLY, please visit: <https://go.rutgers.edu/qz6t0pgc>

Deadline to apply is February 17th.

Donations From Residents

What makes Secaucus special? It's the kindness and giving nature of residents in our Town.

Ron Sutedja, a Huber Street resident, celebrated his birthday with a food drive and cash donation for the Secaucus Food Pantry.

For the last two years, Heather Aciz has been organizing "Tommy's Toy Drive" in memory of her father, Thomas Aciz, who passed away suddenly on May 11, 2020. She has raised money for the toy program for low-income residents. This year, she included her nieces and nephews to make 50 "Blessings Bags" for the homeless.

Tom and Joann Sansevere of Seagate Logistics have been donating to the Secaucus Fire Department and the Secaucus Emergency Fund for many years. This year, their donation presentation coincided with Santa's visit to Town.

Ron, Heather, Tom and Joanne are few of many residents who donated generously to various programs in Town. It's what makes Secaucus a caring, kind-hearted community.

Thank you, residents, for making our Town so special!



Girl Scouts Calling

If you are a 6th, 7th or 8th Grader or know someone in that group, this is an opportunity to help girls influence the world around them. The Girl Scouts of Secaucus are looking for some Leaders to volunteer their time. They are also looking to start a Secaucus Daisy Troop for ages 5-7 years. Volunteer and help girls build courage, confidence and character—all skills that can benefit a girl as she grows into adulthood by giving her a foundation for leadership.

To help, or for more information, please call Cassandra Cabrera at 551-697-0926.

Change in Traffic Flow

As a result of inquiries by residents and at the recommendation of the Secaucus Police Department, Traffic Division, the Mayor and Town Council passed a resolution to streamline the traffic flow pattern on First, Second, Third and Fourth Streets. Currently, the flow of traffic is not unidirectional on some of the streets. In the coming few weeks, signs and striping will be changed for better traffic flow as follows:

First and Third Streets: All traffic will be one-way towards Flanagan Way

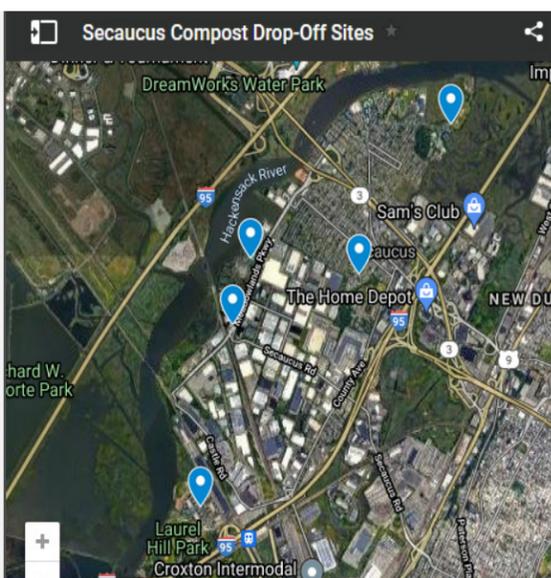
Second and Fourth Street: All traffic will be one-way towards Centre Ave

Signs will be conspicuously posted when the changes take effect.

Composting Program Is Here to Stay!

The 2021 composting pilot program in Secaucus with five (5) public collecting sheds and about 200 participants was a huge success! In the last six months, Secaucus participants diverted more than 9,300 lbs. of food scraps away from landfills and into Community Compost Company's system where food scraps were processed into certified organic compost. Following robust participation and its resounding success, the program will continue with hopes of major expansion in the future and a few minor changes to locations.

In 2022, the composting drop-off shed locations at Mill Ridge Ball Fields, Fountain Park and Harmon Cove Towers will remain the same. The Shetik Field shed has been relocated to The Cove Club at Harmon Cove, on the curb facing Hudson Regional Hospital, behind the new Dog Park. The shed at Xchange will be relocated from Laurel Hill Park to Riverside Station Blvd., next to the SMUA pumping station. All changes will make it easier for participants to drive up and drop off compostable materials.



In addition to the CCC composting sheds, the Secaucus Environmental Department also encourages all Community Garden participants to use the compost bin systems located at each garden. The Department also conducts informational and training programs throughout the year. All programs are listed on their website www.green.secaucusnj.gov as they are scheduled, so please be sure to visit often.

"Composting is a climate mitigation strategy that everyone can take part in, so get involved in 2022 and become part of the solution. Whether it's your backyard, a drop spot, or your community garden's compost bin, your banana peels, eggshells and coffee grinds will help restore the soil's health for growing nutrient rich food and reducing emissions generated in landfills. We are honored to partner with Secaucus to offer support and ensure the success of the food waste recycling program in 2022," said Eileen Banyra, President of Community Compost Co.

If you are interested in helping the environment by diverting material away from landfills and making useful organic compost, please visit www.secaucusnj.gov/compost to register for the free program. Inquiries can also be made directly to the Environmental Department at 201-864-7336 or environmental@secaucus.net.

America: Where Do We Go from Here?

This essay by Paul Youn, a Secaucus Middle School student, won the county level VFW-Voice of Democracy contest. Paul is automatically entered in the state level competition.

As a country, we have notoriously been the epitome of true patriotism. Throughout the past, Americans have shown love for their home through sacrifices made by people who make this place special. We have been the pinnacle of great countries due to the fact that we were strong and united. Our strength and unification were key in order to make this nation great; however, we are starting to lack in those fields. Unfortunately, our country is slowly turning away from the united nation we were meant to be.

Where do we go from here? Here refers to this place, this broken country. It's the fact that some citizens are ashamed to live here that causes our patriotism to die. Having said that, the solution is not as simple as we wished. There will always be people that disagree with the majority, and that's okay. Those people deserve a chance to be heard, and they are lucky to have that privilege. Instead of rebuking them, it is crucial to our society to find a middle ground and agree on one thing: we are not always right.

Where do we go from here? To put it simply, we move forward. We grow past our differences and evolve. We, as a country, must find a way to flourish and work harmoniously in order to become a better place to live. It is simply impossible for life in this society to be black and white. Everyone must sacrifice their pride and find some middle ground. Right now, that gray area is very scarce because people are divided by political opinions, race, gender and so much more. Despite this, it is vital for the people of these United States to know that we are all something that anyone should be proud of: Americans.

The solution seems easy to follow, but that is far from the truth. We, as humans, yearn for the feeling to be right. We want to be respected and a part of whatever is taking place. Sadly, involving others in our own thought process makes us feel unheard, or maybe even makes us feel that our opinion doesn't matter. Obviously, that isn't true, but it's just integrated in our minds that whatever we think must be right. The country as a whole needs to learn how to listen to others and understand them. We all need this to eventually reunite, with every voice being heard.

Yes, we could be different in many ways, but it is also true that we should not let that separate us. Instead, we should embrace our differences and grow with each other. Difference is fundamental in a society. It prevents us from thinking one way forever, and it allows different perspectives to come into play. A new door is opened for our minds to grow in, and that is exactly what a country needs. We need people to think and agree in order to finally head into the right direction. Move forward to the solution. This place is meant to be loved, and not hated for all of its impurities. After all, America is always going to be remembered as one of the greatest nations to ever exist, and nothing is going to change that.



Town Museum Updates

The residents of Secaucus are discovering where to go on Saturdays for fun, information, socializing and, of course, (on occasion) donuts and coffee! During two recent Saturdays, the museum welcomed over sixty people; mostly residents, but others passing through from Washington D.C., Cape May and Italy!

New Exhibit on Valentine's Saturday - Get an early start to satisfy your sweet tooth! The museum is celebrating Valentine's Day on Saturday, February 12th, from 11am to 3pm, to show the museums' HEART felt thanks for all the support it receives. Show your Valentine spirit, with or without your sweetheart, and stop in for sweets and hot coffee. Love is in the air!

The museum received an extensive collection of Norman Rockwell plates with his artwork dating back to early 1900's. A New York artist and illustrator, Rockwell has broad appeal in the U.S. because it reflects American culture. Come and view these beautiful collector items displayed in the museum lobby. 150 Plaza Drive. ADMISSION IS ALWAYS FREE!



Mayor Gonnelli &
The Town Council

wish to send the following update

January 24, 2022- Governor Philip D. Murphy and Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver today announced the upcoming launch of the Emergency Rescue Mortgage Assistance Program (ERMA) on February 8, 2022. This program – financed by the Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) – provides up to \$35,000 in assistance to cover mortgage arrearages and other housing cost delinquencies for eligible homeowners negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The ERMA application portal opens on Tuesday, February 8 at 9 AM. Access the application portal at <https://njerma.com>.
- Free housing counseling is available to assist with applications. Find a participating counselor [here](#).
- Contact (855) 647-7700 or HAFservicing@njhmfa.gov for additional support.

To qualify for the ERMA program, homeowners must meet the following requirements:

- Be a New Jersey homeowner with a demonstrated COVID-19 related financial hardship occurring after January 20, 2020;
- Own and occupy an eligible primary residence;
- Have an income at or below 150% of their county's Area Median Income (AMI).

Once the ERMA portal opens, you will be able to submit an ERMA application using a personal computer, laptop, smartphone, or tablet. Housing counselors are available NOW to assist homeowners that need help understanding all available options and through the application process once it opens.



2022 MEMBERSHIPS

BASKETBALL COURT, POOL & TRACK MEMBERSHIP*

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Individual Household Member | \$ 25.00 per year |
| Each Additional Household Member** | \$ 5.00 per year |
| Additional Household Members <u>under</u> 18 years of age | \$ 5.00 per year |
| Additional Household Members <u>over</u> 18 years of age | \$ 25.00 per year |

** LIMITED TO 2 ADULTS PER MEMBERSHIP

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERSHIP LEVELS INCLUDE USE OF THE BASKETBALL COURT, POOL & TRACK:*

FITNESS AREA MEMBERSHIP

| | |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Individual <u>over</u> 16 years of age | \$ 120.00 per year <u>OR</u> \$ 20.00 per month |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|

FITNESS CLASS MEMBERSHIP

| | |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Individual <u>over</u> 16 years of age | \$ 150.00 per year <u>OR</u> \$ 30.00 per month |
| Seven (7) class Punch Card | \$ 50.00 |

CLASS SIZES ARE LIMITED & ARE BASED ON A FIRST COME FIRST SERVED BASIS

FITNESS AREA & CLASS MEMBERSHIP

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Individual <u>between</u> the ages of 16–62 years of age | \$ 50.00 per month <u>OR</u> \$ 250.00 per year |
| Individual <u>over</u> 62 years of age | \$ 175.00 per year |
| Two-Person Household both <u>over</u> 62 years of age | \$ 300.00 per year |

*When facilities are available/open.

ALL MEMBERS ENTERING THE RECREATION CENTER MUST HAVE THEIR OWN ID CARD. REPLACEMENT SWIPE CARDS ARE \$ 10.00 EACH.

SECAUCUS RECREATION CENTER
1200 Koelle Boulevard
(201) 330-3299