



## Earth Day Cleanup

A huge thank you to all the amazing Secaucus residents and businesses including Secaucus Cares, Equinox, and Brilliant Earth, who came out this morning to help us clean up the creek near Kane Stadium! Together, we collected a whopping 39 bags of trash!

## Mayor's Corner

As councilmembers and I meet and talk with residents and business owners, we discuss many important topics. If I were asked what topics seem to be the most common, I would have to



say it would be taxes, safety, housing/development and flooding. These are not only common themes for our residents and business owners, but something the governing body pays close attention to. Therefore, we have decided to include some short articles on the first and second pages of the newsletter providing some details on these key topics. I hope you will find the articles informative.

On another exciting note, please save the date for the town's 125th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday, May 31st ! It is sure to be a fun time for all. I wish you all a happy and safe Spring.

## Working To Keep Property Taxes Stable

Did you know the average year over year increase on the total property taxes in Secaucus since 2014 is 8.7%? If you think about the increase in expenses you experienced due to inflation and other factors over that same period of time, we think you will agree this is quite impressive. Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council have continuously worked to run government efficiently and provide the highest level of services. If you talk to friends or acquaintances from other towns throughout the State, you will find that few enjoy the benefits we offer, i.e. excellent services to our seniors, top-notch recreation programs, a well-funded and proactive police department, a DPW that is second to none, beautiful and well-maintained parks and fields, and a lot more.

The Town is working on the 2025 budget and hope to finalize it shortly. Mayor Gonnelli and the Council recognize they are stewards of your tax dollars, and they will continue to work diligently to control costs with the goal of keeping taxes stable in the future.



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SECAUCUS, NJ 07094



Secaucus Municipal Government Center  
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## Proactive Policing and License Plate Reading Cameras Prove to be a Success

- Just over a year ago the Mayor and Council allocated \$500,000 to install license plate reading cameras at all entrances/exits in town.
- This system is comprised of 44 cameras, and is another tool our police use to assist them in proactively policing our town and combating crime.
- These cameras help identify vehicles that are entering the town that are stolen or have been used in the commission of another crime.
- Since the implementation, and as a direct result of the cameras, our police made a total of 14 stops, which resulted in 13 arrests.
- The cameras have also provided valuable information used in the prosecution of criminals.
- Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council know the safety and security of our residents and business community is of paramount importance and continue to work closely with our police department to ensure they have the tools and training they need to succeed.



## Continuously Working to Combat Flooding



- Since hurricane Sandy the Mayor and Council have been working hard to minimize the impacts of flooding and improve flood infrastructure.
- We have built and restored miles of berm along the river throughout town and shored up areas of coastline. This work not only offers flood protection but also provides miles of walking paths along the river.
- Infrastructure has been improved to stormwater lines leading to our pump stations on Humbolt Street, Golden Avenue and Grace Avenue, which allows a greater volume of stormwater to reach the stations and helps ensure debris does not block the flow of water.
- We are working with the County on replacement of the “Penhorn Avenue” pump station, which will reduce flooding from the Penhorn Creek.
- We are in the process of enhancing the pump system to minimize flooding to the homes on Humboldt Street and Golden Avenue. We are hopeful this project will be completed this year.
- These are only some of the projects the town has completed or has plans for. Mayor Gonnelli and the Council know that flood control is of great importance, and they will continue to work to improve the infrastructure to minimize flooding impacts.

## Working to Control Development

- The governing body has been working to keep Secaucus a suburban oasis in a very densely populated region by encouraging responsible development.
- Did you know there are many locations in town where developers wanted to build residential housing, but the Mayor and Council resisted those efforts?
- Some of these locations are:
  - ❑ The “Mori Tract” - a large parcel of land at the intersection of Paterson Plank Road and Park Plaza Drive.
  - ❑ The “Malanka Tract” – a parcel in the area of Secaucus Junction Train Station.
  - ❑ The Former Empire Hotel.
  - ❑ The Fuel 4 Gas Station in the center of town.
- These parcel amount to over 100 acres. While we do not know what level of residential development may have been built on the properties, it is not hard to imagine. The Xchange complex on the south end of town, approved by the prior administration, is approximately 48 acres with just under 3000 residences.



## Secaucus' 125 Anniversary Celebrations!

May 31, 2025, promises to be a very special day in Secaucus! Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council present a grand Secaucus Day celebration with an array of festivities to commemorate the Town's 125th Anniversary. The celebration will be filled with top-notch entertainment, fun-filled games, rides, tournaments, a range of food vendors, beer garden, and fireworks to end the day. The center of Town, including Buchmuller Park, Little League Field, Ice Rink, and First Avenue will be abuzz with excitement so be sure to come over with family and friends!

To show off your Secaucus pride, you may purchase commemorative t-shirts and mugs available at Town Hall and Senior/Social Services.

**What:** Secaucus' 125th Anniversary Celebration

**When:** Saturday, May 31st from 11:00 AM to 9:00 PM (Rain date: June 1)

**Where:** Buchmuller Park and Town Center

## Fourth Grader Makes it to Semifinals in NASA Challenge

Secaucus resident Diya Loganathan, a 4th grader at Montclair Kimberley Academy, was selected as one of just 45 semifinalists, out of over 2,050 participants nationwide in NASA's Power to Explore Challenge. She is one of only 15 in her age category. The winners will be announced in May. If she makes it, she will get to visit NASA Headquarters and meet actual space scientists, which she is incredibly excited about.

NASA's Power to Explore Challenge asked students from all over the country to design a space mission using Radioisotope Power Systems (RPS), which are used to power spacecraft when solar energy isn't an option.

Diya came up with a mission called Evermore, a spacecraft that lands on Jupiter's moon, Europa, drills through the icy surface with lasers, and sends a fish-like robot into the ocean underneath to look for signs of life. She chose Europa because scientists think there might be life in its hidden ocean, and someday she may help prove it!



## Isabel Umana Chosen "Chief for the Day"

Each year, the Secaucus Police Department chooses a high school student to be "Chief for the Day" after a lengthy selection process based on submitted essays focusing on best police programs and practices. This year's pick was Secaucus High School student Isabel Umana. The program is part of SPD's community initiatives and aims to promote a better relationship with the Town's youth.

Isabel, the "Chief for the Day", was invited to the Police Department on April 8th and was given an overview of the department's workings and an introduction to the different units. She was later invited to the Town Council meeting where Chief Dennis Miller introduced her to the Mayor and Town Council and shared the positive impression Isabel made through her essay. She demonstrated a clear understanding of the needs of the police department and had practical suggestions on the programs that could be implemented. On behalf of Mayor Gonnelli, Police Department Liaison Councilmember John Gerbasio presented a proclamation.



## Police Officers Honored for Resuscitating Unresponsive Resident

Four Secaucus police officers were honored at the April 8th Town Council meeting for their quick response and professionalism in saving a resident's life. Here's what happened: On March 18th, the Police Department received a call about an unresponsive male

on Julianne Terrace. Secaucus Sergeant Nicholas Spangenberg, Officers Thomas Schaffer, Matthew Cutola and Thomas Spuler arrived on the scene and immediately started lifesaving CPR until Hudson Regional Hospital's EMTs joined them. Those critical moments, along with other techniques by the EMT's, revived the patient. He was later transferred to a hospital for further medical care and was in stable condition.

Mayor Gonnelli, Town Council members and SPD Chief Dennis Miller congratulated the officers for using their skills and training to save the life of a Secaucus resident. On behalf of the Mayor, Police Liaison John Gerbasio presented the officers with Proclamations and commended them for the immeasurable impact on the patient's family and our community.



## Laundromat Opens Under New Management



Bubbles and Beyond, the only self-service laundromat in Town, officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on February 19th. The business is now owned by three women friends and entrepreneurs-Colleen Behan, Tam Le and Orietta Tringali. Mayor Gonnelli, several Town Council members, well wishers and friends attended the official opening day celebrations. The laundromat was recently upgraded with new floors, lighting, snack machines, and even a specially curated music lineup. The business, located on Front Street, offers self-service as well as wash and fold pick-up and drop-off options.

## Spring Fling gets the Season Started for Senior Residents

Spring Fling Senior Prom is a special day for our senior citizens as Secaucus High School students hosted the event at the PAC atrium. Seniors brought their enthusiastic spirit, with gorgeous outfits and dancing shoes as S.A.I.L. club students served delicious small bites, dinner and dessert. The Secaucus Concert Band's music started off the event, and tunes by DJ Tommy Schwarz provided toe-tapping entertainment as the dance floor filled with students and seniors dancing together. Glenda and Harmon Kaplan were named 2025 Prom Queen and King.



## Secaucus' 125th Anniversary at the Town Museum

Celebrate the 125th anniversary with \$125!!!

Beginning Saturday, April 19th, come to the Secaucus Town Museum and register your name for our special drawing. The winner of \$125 will be announced at the anniversary celebration, on May 31st.

Drop in on any Saturday from April 19th thru May 24th to enter. It's that easy!

## Crescent Lighting Event Held



The Muslim Community of Secaucus gathered at Plaza Center for the annual Crescent Lighting Event on March 23, 2025. Mayor Gonnelli and Town Council members greeted families who came together for the event on a weekend morning when the sun felt warmer after a cold winter streak. The community observes the month of Ramadan which started on March 1st and ended with Eid on March 30th.

## Eagle Scout Jayden Altamura Recognized

Jayden Altamura of Troop 146 was awarded the Eagle Scout badge on March 1, 2025, at the Court of Honor at St. Matthews Lutheran Church. He earned a total of 42 merit badges, adding a silver and bronze palm to his Eagle badge. Jayden also received various awards and religious emblems for his dedication to scouting and religion.

For Jayden's Eagle Project, he coordinated a successful pancake fundraiser and led others in the assembly collecting over 200 supply bags, including essential clothing, hygiene kits, and hand-knit blankets, benefitting guests of The Hoboken Shelter. He surpassed his fundraising goal enabling him to donate \$700 to an additional beneficiary, the Father Michael Food Pantry of St. Francis Church.

Jayden's leadership roles include Quartermaster in several different patrols until earning the role of Chief Quartermaster for Troop 146, following it for about three years. In 2021, he was the Head Chef for the joint camping trip including Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts and earned the Chef Extraordinaire Award. He won third place at a cooking competition at the 2023 Camp Glen Gray. As a Roman Catholic Boy Scout, he earned the Order of the Sword of Saint George, Ad Altare Dei Emblem, and Pope Pius XII Emblem. He is a proud member of the Order of the Arrow (OA) with the rank of Brotherhood and served on the Election Team and as staff at the Lenapehoking Lodge IX 2024 Conclave. Jayden was elected to be the Vice Chief of Unit Relations and currently serves on the executive board of the lodge.

Jayden attended three summer camp sessions at Camp Turrell in Cuddebackville, NY, and two high adventure camping trips involving sailing, scuba diving and rustic camping in US Virgin Islands, and canoeing through the wilderness of Canada. For all his achievements and the Eagle badge, we congratulate Jayden and wish him the best!



## Three Officers Added to Police Department

Secaucus welcomed three new police officers who were sworn in at a special ceremony held at Town Hall on February 13, 2025. Officer Ryan Bier transferred to the Secaucus Police Department (SPD) from NJ Transit Police Department with 3.5 years of law enforcement experience; Officer Thomas Spuler with 2.5 years of experience is from the Holland Township Police Department; and Officer Emmanuel Mikros transferred from the Burlington County Sheriff's Department with about 2 years of law enforcement experience. The SPD is 86 members strong with these additions. The officers were sworn in by Town Clerk Michael Marra in the presence of Mayor Gonnelli, Town Council members, families of the new officers, and a large group from SPD.

Chief Dennis Miller thanked Mayor Gonnelli and Town Council members for supporting the department's decision to expand its ranks. Welcoming the new officers to the SPD fraternity, he promised that they would get all the support needed from the department and reminded them of the high standards expected of them. Police Liaison Councilmember John Gerbasio also addressed the gathering and expressed Town Council's support to the newly sworn-in officers.



## Women Firefighters in the SFD

Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council would like to thank our women firefighters Stephanie A. Aponte-Orgueira (Tower 2), Bailey E. Fearon (Engine 1), Kory A. Avila (Washington Hook & Ladder Co. #1), Jasmine N. Garcia of (Engine 1), Junior Firefighter Mriam S. Awad (Washington Hook & Ladder Co. #1) and Recruit Hailey M. Mojica (Chicora Park Engine Co. #3). They are valuable additions to our all-volunteer fire department and their contributions are immensely valued and appreciated.

Firefighting can be a tough job for any person, male or female. And female firefighters derive inspiration from the same sources as everyone else. "The reward of doing something most people are afraid to do," inspires Bailey Fearon. Helping people in need and "having a sense of purpose" drives Kory Avila and for Jasmine Garcia, it's "the love of giving back to my community." No matter what the inspiration, our female firefighters have been with their fellow firefighters giving it their all.

They acknowledge the job is not without challenges including their size. "I'm tiny but mighty" stresses Bailey. She adapts her firefighting strategy to make what may seem to be a disadvantage—a sentiment that was echoed by several other female firefighters.

Though firefighting is deemed a male-dominant career, SFD women interviewed agreed that women are absolutely capable of becoming firefighters. As Bailey said, "you're going to test your fears and strengths and learn things about yourself you never thought possible." We invite all aspiring girls and women considering firefighting to explore opportunities at the Secaucus Fire Department. You'll find a supportive group of people working with you to keep our community safe. For more information about how to become a volunteer firefighter, please email Fire Chief Larry Marciano at [lmarciano@secaucus.net](mailto:lmarciano@secaucus.net).

## Winners of Patriot's Pen Essay Contest

Three Secaucus students made Secaucus proud by winning top spots in the 2024 Patriot's Pen Essay Competition organized by Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) nationally. Adwaitgiri Goswami won first prize, and Anya Patel and Anya Mehta won runner-up positions at the Post level. The competition invited middle schoolers to write an essay themed "My Voice in American Democracy". All three winners were invited to the Town Council meeting on February 11, 2025. Phil Papa, President of VFW Post 3776 presented the winners with certificates and scholarship checks. Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council applauded them and presented a certificate and gifts.



## Hockey Team Honored At Town Council Meeting



HWS (Hoboken High School, Weehawken High School and Secaucus High School) team was honored by Mayor Gonnelli and Councilmembers at the February 25th Town Council meeting. HWS is a tri-op high school ice hockey program. The team plays in the NJIHL (New Jersey Interscholastic Ice Hockey League) Conference and plays in the McMullen Division. In 2024-2025 HWS finished first in the McMullen Division, and also won the McMullen Division Cup, defeating Bayonne 8-0.

## Art Show at Town Hall



On April 2nd, Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council hosted the 2025 Residents Art Show. Town Hall was transformed into a beautiful art gallery, complete with amazing artwork by Secaucus residents, live harp music, passed hor'd oeuvres and camaraderie created by artists and residents talking about the displays. Twenty-four resident artists were showcased with a special tribute to three artists—Bobby Travieso and Danielle Fry who passed away weeks before the show; and Diane Albert who is currently in a rehab center. We thank all artists who took part in the show for making the event a success!