



The latest addition to the Town's parks and playgrounds, the Mill Creek Playground is now officially open to the public.

Mayor's Corner

This year's budget was approved at the Town Council meeting on July 28th and I am happy to announce that the aggregate of county and municipal taxes will, once again, remain flat. There will be a small increase in the school portion of your tax bill, which will result in an increase of \$40.40 on an average assessed home. My office and the Council worked alongside our administration and finance teams and with all departments to ensure taxes would remain stable.

When the teams started working on the budget and the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we knew keeping taxes stable was going to be a difficult task. As you can guess, the pandemic is having a significant impact on our revenues. Line items, such as hotel and parking tax receipts, have been significantly reduced. Furthermore, we needed to increase our reserves for tax appeals and uncollected taxes. Despite the many challenges, we kept analyzing, adjusting and steadily moving towards our goal. After all the hard work, it was a big relief when we achieved our goal of keeping taxes stable as we are acutely aware of how difficult times are currently for many of our residents and businesses.

As you may already know, the Town Council, administration and I continuously seek out and apply for grants to either cover or supplement the cost of many projects so we can keep improving our infrastructure, services, parks, etc. Funds from grants help us minimize the impact of these projects in our annual budget. My administration will continue to vigorously seek county, state and federal grants and pursue any source of funding available as our goal is always to lessen the burden on the taxpayer.



We are and will always continue to be mindful of spending and strive to be responsible stewards of your tax dollars.

Entertainment Around Town

Summer entertainment continues this month! Please enjoy every one of these events. Just remember to follow social distancing rules and wear a mask at all times. Stay home if you have a fever above 100.4° or have any symptoms typically associated with COVID-19.

Summer Concerts scheduled for 7:00 PM at Buchmuller Park except where noted

August 6—Bobby & The Jets—The music of Elton John –at Mill Creek Point

August 13—The Original Mix Company

August 20—Neil & The Diamonds

August 27—The Cameos

September 5—Jesse Garron's Tribute to Elvis (at Xchange)
Rain date is September 6th.

Movies—7:30 PM at the Ice Rink

Aug. 4 - Avengers: Endgame

Aug. 11 - Spiderman: Far From Home

Aug. 18 - Batman vs. Ninja Turtles

Aug. 25 - How to Train Your Dragon: Hidden World

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LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER
SECAUCUS, NJ 07094



Secaucus Municipal Government Center
Paterson Plank Road
Secaucus, NJ 07094

Bike Safety Program



A scorching day with high temperatures and humidity did not deter 24 young bike enthusiasts from participating in the first session of this year's Bike Safety Program held by the Secaucus Police Department on July 25th at Buchmuller Park. An enthusiastic Officer, Thomas Keegan, taught cyclists the ABCs of cycling (check Air, Brakes and Chain), proper fit of helmets, hand signals and safety tips while riding. Cyclists were able to use those tips on several obstacle-type courses set up for the event. Officer Keegan seemed to enjoy demonstrating on the course as much as the young cyclists! Several officers including Officers Eccles and Dobsz lent a hand assisting with

bike checks, helping fill air in tires, tightening seat bolts and making sure the bikes were in safe riding condition. The program ended on a few very enjoyable notes--free ice-cream for all participants generously donated by Sergio Gonzalez (also known as Mr. Softee), free giveaways from Mayor Michael Gonnelli and three raffle prizes: a BMX bike and two floating tubes.

All in all, an enjoyable event in a series planned by recently appointed Chief Dennis Miller in his effort to increase community-police partnership and further promote community policing in Secaucus.

Stay Fit, Seniors!



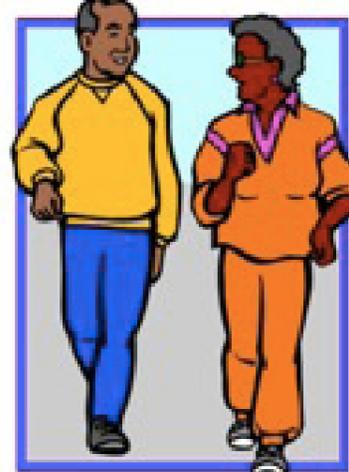
Aquafitness Class

Secaucus Swim Club, 200 Koelle Blvd.

12:00 – 1:00 PM

Call 201-865-4422 to register

Class limited to 20 participants



Walk in the Woods

Schmidt's Woods, Mill Ridge Road

9:00 to 10:30 AM, weather permitting

Water will be provided

Call 201-865-4422 if you have questions

Virtual Classes for Citizenship Test

The Secaucus Public Library invites residents who are preparing for the Citizenship Test to join virtual classes every Wednesday at 7:00 to 8:00 PM. Classes will be held from July 29th to September 9th. The Library also offers virtual English as Second Language (ESL) courses every Wednesday from 12:00 to 1:00 PM and Spanish language classes every Thursday from 3:00 to 4:00 PM.

Register for classes on the library website at www.secaucuslibrary.org. If you have questions or need more information, please email gladys.tous@secaucus.bccls.org.



Clean Up After Your Pet

The weather is perfect to walk your pets. But in recent weeks, the Department of Health has received several complaints of pet parents not cleaning up after their dog. It's unlawful, inconsiderate and a health hazard. Please be a good neighbor and keep our community clean. Remember these simple tips:

- Curb your dog and keep on leash.
- Clean up after your dog. It's not just nice, it's the law.
- Do not allow pet waste to accumulate on your property as it adversely affects by odor or runoff.
- Do not allow your pet to defecate in hallways, elevators, and other common areas if you live in multiple dwelling units
- Violations are subject to fines up to \$2,250 (Municipal Code Chapter 67, Article VI)

Secaucus Police Announce Therapy Dog Program

Where some of the public sentiment toward the police is negative, the Secaucus Police Department has created a Therapy Dog Program to enhance community relations and assist the general public, first responders and the staff of the Secaucus Police Department cope with the exposure to traumatic events.

Police Officer Taylor Ensmann, sparked the idea early in Chief Dennis Miller's tenure. Therapy Dog Programs exist in other states, like California, Ohio and Massachusetts, however there are no known police departments in New Jersey that employ the use of therapy dogs. A therapy dog will provide affection, comfort and support to those affected by trauma, mental health and crime.

Oakley, a golden retriever, is personally owned by Police Officer Ensmann, but is a certified "therapy dog" that is trained to provide affection, comfort and support to people, often in settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools, libraries, or disaster areas.

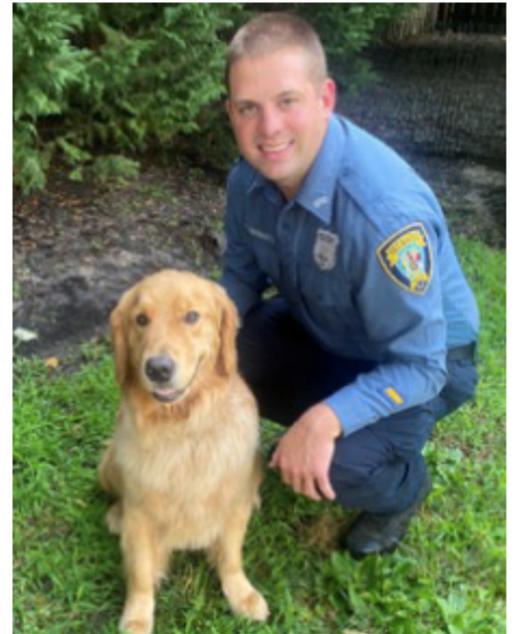
Oakley will accompany Police Officer Ensmann during his normal patrol duties and will be used at public events, such as street fairs, concerts, parks and on the newly implemented "park and walk" detail. Additionally, Oakley will be used to provide emotional support when following up with victims of traumatic events such as domestic violence, house fires or even a witness to a violent crime, especially a child witness. Police Officer Ensmann and Oakley will be visiting our local senior citizen housing facilities and the VA Clinic on Meadowlands Parkway. Additionally, Oakley will be used to assist in providing comfort and

affection when family members are grieving over the death of a close family member.

"When I was sworn in as Chief of Police I vowed to enhance community relations and I hold true to that vow," Chief Dennis Miller said. "The Therapy Dog Program is additional tool that will be utilized for community outreach and engagement, thereby bringing the Secaucus Police Department closer to the community it serves." Miller said.

"Adding a canine to our force is something I have dreamed about for a long time," Mayor Michael J. Gonnelli said.

"Oakley is wonderful addition to the department's community policing efforts. Make sure you say hello when you see him!" Gonnelli said.



Firefighters, Police Officers Make Dramatic Rescue in Apartment Fire



On June 24th, several Secaucus police officers and firefighters responded to a three-alarm fire in the "C" building of Chateau Garden Condominiums on Radio Avenue. A 56-year old woman who was found unresponsive in the first-floor apartment where the fire started was evacuated in critical condition by firefighters. Smoke filled the hallways and stairwells and many residents had to be rescued and evacuated by firefighters. When police arrived on the scene, they were alerted to a second-floor family with a 4-year old child that could not evacuate because of the smoke. Officers encouraged the couple to drop their child from their window, where several officers including Detectives Matthew Ford and Aniello Schaffer, Police Officers Stephen Hurtuk, Nicholas

Spangenberg, Jason Mitchell and Matthew Garzone waiting below, caught the boy and took him to safety. Fire-fighters later rescued the boy's mother and several residents. SPD Chief Dennis Miller and Fire Chief Carl Leppin applauded the professionalism shown by members of their department. An awards ceremony to honor the men and women in both departments who responded to this event was held at Buchmuller Park on July 27th. Visit the Secaucus Police Department's Facebook page for more pictures of the event. The event was attended by Hudson County Prosecutor Esther Suarez, Mayor Michael Gonnelli, members of the Town Council, families of police officers and firefighters and several residents.

Census Takers to Visit Homes

In order to ensure complete count of all residents, census takers will visit the homes of residents who have not yet responded to census. The census taker will wear a mask and follow all local public health guidelines when they visit your home. All census takers complete a virtual COVID-19 training on social distancing and other health and safety protocols before beginning their work.

Census takers are hired from our area, and their goal is to help you and everyone in your home be counted in the 2020 Census. If the census taker who visits your home does not speak your language, you may request a return visit from a census taker who does speak your language. Please be sure to check they have a valid ID badge with their photograph with a U.S. Department of Commerce watermark and an expiration date. Census workers may also carry Census Bureau bags and other equipment with the Census Bureau logo.

Respond online by visiting mycensus.gov or by calling 844-330-2020 today. Once you respond, a census taker is less likely to have to visit your home to collect your response.

Young Community Volunteers Receive Presidential Awards

Twenty-nine Secaucus youth volunteers, who met the requirements based on the number of hours of community service, were presented with the Presidential Volunteer Service Awards (PVSA) at a ceremony held at Schmidts Woods on July 19, 2020. A PVSA was also presented to Paula Leeds who started “Make a Mask with Love”, an organization that has been active in sewing and donating masks from the early days of the pandemic. “I am extremely proud of the dedication of these young women and men and the difference they are making in our community and beyond. They raise funds, prepare meals, collect non-perishable foods, organize donation drives, pack hygiene kits and so much more. I wish them success as they continue to volunteer and do good throughout their lives,” said Hygiene Project Director and group advisor, Cathy Wolf. Mayor Michael Gonnelli, community member Raj Pardasani and family members were also present to cheer for the volunteers.



Delivering Bags of Smiles

In the weeks following the COVID-19 lockdown, the youngest residents of Secaucus have received special surprise packages to help cheer them up. Bags filled with a random assortment of goodies including interactive toys, books, treats, crayons and markers. It was Mayor Michael Gonnelli’s idea to help make the lockdown a little easier to get through for the Town’s children. A whole team of people worked with him to procure donations from various organizations and pack the products. Adel Mikhail, an employee in the Buildings and Grounds department, personally delivered the packages to children’s homes. “We’re fortunate to have received donations during a very difficult time for our community and I’m so glad that we could deliver them, and a whole lot of smiles, to our children,” said Mayor Gonnelli.



Rescue Dog Finds Missing Pet Nine Days Later



A missing pet is an emotional time for any family. Often, the worst scenarios are assumed for the pet. That is what happened when Ava, a family’s beloved dog, went missing from the area of 7th Street. Ava’s owner, David, called on family and friends who searched everywhere, put up posters and alerted the entire community. Days went by slimming the chances of her being found. However, the bleak chances of finding Ava changed thanks to the help of a hero—a rescue dog named Enzo. Through mutual friends, Ava’s family contacted Enzo’s trainers. Soon, Enzo was prepped and was on his way following Ava’s scent, first to Meadowlands Parkway, then towards Route 3 and all the way to the other side of Town. Ava was found at Elizabeth court, nine days later!

Ava, Enzo and their families were reunited briefly at the Town Council meeting on July 28th. On that day Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council presented Enzo with a commendation plaque. It was clear by the continuous waiving of Ava’s tail that she was a happy (and we assume) thankful dog.

Police Department Adds Two New Officers

The Secaucus Police Department just expanded to 74 with the hiring of two new police officers. Thomas Hering Jr. and Jesus Rodriguez-Ferreira took the oath of office at a ceremony held at the Buchmuller Park bandshell on July 2, 2020. They will undergo intensive training at the Police Academy and return to SPD after completion of the program. The oath was administered by Town Clerk Michael Marra. Mayor Michael Gonnelli, members of the Town Council, Town Administrator Gary Jeffas, officers from SPD and families of the officers being sworn-in were present.

Welcoming the attendees to the ceremony, Chief Dennis Miller applauded the commendable job the department is doing in these challenging times. He thanked the Mayor, Town Council, administration, the community and the families of police officers for their support. Following the welcome address, Father Vic of Immaculate Conception Church was presented with the Police Chaplain badge. Father Vic has been the official chaplain of the SPD for several years now. Additionally, a new tradition was started when a gold badge was presented to Officer Thomas Keegan, the senior-most patrol officer in the SPD. Officer Keegan has been in the force since July 2000 and is currently assigned as a School Resource Officer. He also runs the bike safety program and is seen engaged with young cyclists, writing “citations” for free ice-cream at Mike’s for those who follow proper bike safety rules.

