



Get Ready For Fall!

The signature wagon with pumpkins, chrysanthemums and cornstalks is back again at Plaza Center. Fall in Love with Secaucus and other seasonal banners are up all along Paterson Plank Road, and summer flowers have been replaced with warm, colorful Fall blooms. Mark your calendars and get ready to enjoy all the events lined up for October. Check the Monthly Community Calendar mailed to your home, or our website [www.secaucusnj.gov](http://www.secaucusnj.gov) and the Town of Secaucus Facebook page for the latest.

Mayor’s Corner

The season for summer concerts is over; now we welcome Fall and get ready for cooler temperatures. Many seniors I met said they are going to miss the opportunity to meet friends at the concert. I would like to remind them that we still have a range of activities to enjoy. The team at the Department of Senior and Social Services, headed by Lisa Snedeker, always has programs and activities so our senior residents can stay connected, engaged, and active. Check out the Senior Services calendar that is mailed out every month. Make Yoga, Bingo and Walk at the American Dream part of your exercise routine on Mondays. Go shopping for groceries on Tuesday morning and follow it up with Aerobics and Movie at the Library. Explore new places through fun trips planned on Wednesdays; explore different dishes during Thursday’s trips to restaurants. Our new program, Social Fridays, is becoming increasingly popular and is an ideal time to meet friends or even make new friends.

While the Department does a great job providing events that boost the mood, it also assists with more immediate needs such as providing meals and medical escort services. If a senior you know needs help with meals or with transportation to medical appointments, please be assured that help is just a phone call away. A shuttle bus that can pick up seniors and drop off anywhere in Town is also available.

The Social Services Department is also ready to assist qualified families and residents in need with a range of services including access to basic staples at the Emergency Food Pantry, and information about assistance with housing, rental assistance, employment, energy bills, medical screenings, and more. Even with a recent surge in the number of families seeking help, the Department is well-prepared to handle your requests and inquiries. Our staff can also direct you to other resources that may be able to better assist your situation.

Remember, help is just a phone call or click away. Visit our website [www.secaucusnj.gov/departments](http://www.secaucusnj.gov/departments) or call one of these numbers:

Medical Escort: 201-330-2082  
Senior Shuttle Service: 201-865-4422  
Food Pantry: 201-330-2014  
Social Services: 201-330-2014  
Employment: 201-863-2532  
Lisa Snedeker: 201-617-5917



Youth Volunteers Serve in Panama

By Raahi Mehta



In August, a group of 9 high school volunteers from Hygiene Project’s SIA Secaucus Cares group, traveled to Panamá City, Panamá for their 10th Community Outreach Program (COP) trip. Their service project started with a boat journey across the Chagres River to Embera Village where they donated hygiene kits to locals affected by a serious fire. Participants gained first-hand experience of Embera culture and lifestyle and as well as an understanding of a community’s needs in another country.

The trip was partially funded by the Secaucus Youth Alliance.

- Mayor Michael Gonnelli- [mayor@secaucus.net](mailto:mayor@secaucus.net) - O: 201-330-2005

Councilman William McKeever  
[wmckeever@secaucus.net](mailto:wmckeever@secaucus.net)  
C: 551-665-7650

Councilman John Gerbasio  
[gerbasio@secaucus.net](mailto:gerbasio@secaucus.net)  
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Councilman Robert Costantino  
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C: 201-401-9315

Councilman James Clancy  
[jclancy@secaucus.net](mailto:jclancy@secaucus.net)  
C: 201-906-9657

Councilman Mark Dehnert  
[mdehnert@secaucus.net](mailto:mdehnert@secaucus.net)  
O: 201-330-2000

Councilwoman Orietta Tringali  
[otringali@secaucus.net](mailto:otringali@secaucus.net)  
O: 201-330-2000
- LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER  
SECaucus, NJ 07094
- 
- Secaucus Municipal Government Center  
Paterson Plank Road  
Secaucus, NJ 07094



## Marra's Celebrates 100 Years

Marra's Drugs, the oldest store in Secaucus that has been an icon and significant part of the downtown landscape, turned 100 this September! The store, currently owned and run by pharmacists Joseph Marra and Darin Marra, serves approximately 450 people a day. A whopping 5 million prescriptions have been filled here since the store first opened on September 17, 1923.

Founder Gerard A. Marra Sr., an Italian-American who was born in 1896, worked at a pharmacy since he was 11 and went on to earn a degree at Rutgers College of Pharmacy. He opened the store after his return from service in the U.S. Army's medical corps in World War I. During his stint as pharmacist at the store, he was so helpful and connected to the community that he was nicknamed "Mr. Secaucus." He was also a member of the Secaucus Board of Education for more than 40 years, and held active leadership roles at American Legion, UNICO, Elks, Moose, ACS, Kiwanis, Knights of Columbus, Union City Selective Service Board and other local organizations.



Marra's Drug Store was initially located at 1273 Paterson Plank Road Store (which is now the Post Office) as Peerless Drug. It stayed there until 1927 when it moved to its current location at 1285 Paterson Plank Road, when Gerard bought the property from the Niederer family. The store occupied the street level and the family lived upstairs, where sons Michael III, Joseph, Gerard Jr. and Angelo were raised.

During the Great Depression, the store evolved to become the town center and unofficial meeting place, offering a luncheonette and soda fountain. It also became the Town's primary health hub due to the absence of local hospitals and limited availability of physicians. In the early years of the business, a number of young residents who worked at Marra Drugs went on to become popular Secaucus figures including Mayor Paul Amico, Police Chief Nicholas Zaccario, Public Defender Frank Jones, Board of Health President William Lillis, School Board Secretary Ronald Temple, Board of Education President Eleanor Reinl and more.

The second generation of the store saw Michael and Gerard who became registered pharmacists graduating from St. John's University, and Angelo managing the front of the business. To serve Secaucus better, they expanded the store in 1975, almost doubling its size. It became the area's first lottery ticketing agent and holds the distinction of being the oldest Hallmark Card store. In recent years the store's business has been affected by online pharmacies as well as the CVS and Walmart pharmacies nearby. What keeps the business strong and is its focus on personal connection with its customers and the motto to help everyone who walks through the store's doors. When you visit the store today, you'll likely see many of Gerard Sr.'s great grandchildren working and continuing his tradition of personal service.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Marra's Drug Store, Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council invited the family to the September 12, 2023, Town Council Meeting and presented a Proclamation prepared for the event. Congratulations to the Marra family and everyone who made Marra's Drug Store's 100 years a success!

## Pinto Foundation Donates to PBA

The Frank A. Pinto Foundation held a successful Cornhole Tournament at the Secaucus Ice Rink on September 17, 2023. Proceeds benefit local programs and included a generous donation of \$2,000 to the Secaucus PBA. The Foundation was formed to honor the memory of Frank A. Pinto, who served at the North Bergen Police Department for nearly 30 years and contributed his time and efforts to several community initiatives including the PBA, Kiwanis Club, Unico and more. He was named Hudson County Person of the Year and Jersey Journal's Everyday Hero for Community Service. He also shared Secaucus Unico's Man of the Year award with his friend David Toma—together they worked against drug and alcohol addiction. Through the Foundation, Pinto's family and friends continue to help families in need, victims of drug and alcohol addiction, contributions to community and local events and assistance to families affected by natural and other disasters. To learn more about the Foundation and to donate, please visit [www.frankpinto.org](http://www.frankpinto.org).



## Bocce League Champions



The Cannolis Team is the official winner of the Secaucus Bocce League! Champions Scott Barone, Ron Mroz, Kathy Hamilton, Sally Ensmann (Cannolis Team Captain) and Ed Feinhals are known to bring fun to every game. Congratulations!

## Environmental Camp



The Environmental Department hosted an unforgettable trip-based camp for 25 students at the end of August. The students immersed themselves in nature and learned about preserving natural habitats and sustainable practices. The students visited Liberty Science Center, the Raptor Trust, Sedge Island, and Essex County Environmental Center. Each trip ignited their curiosity and planted seeds of environmental consciousness, encouraging them to make a positive impact on the world around them.

## November 7th is Election Day

There are currently 3 ways to vote in the State of New Jersey:

1. In person, on Election Day. Polls are open from 6:00 AM – 8:00 PM.
2. Early in-person voting.
3. Vote by Mail.



### 2023 General Election Deadlines:

Vote by Mail Applications (Top QR Code), sent via USPS, due on October 31, 2023 (must be postmarked 10/31/23). Applications will also be accepted in-person at the Hudson County Clerk's office until 3:00 PM on November 6th. Application is available online and in-person at the Town Clerk's Office located at 1203 Paterson Plank Road.

Deadline to register to vote (Bottom QR Code) is Tuesday, October 17, 2023. The Secaucus Town Clerk's Office will remain open until 9:00 PM that day. Applications are available online and in-person at the Town Clerk's Office.

Early voting will commence on Saturday, October 28, 2023, and continue through Sunday, November 3, 2023 from 10:00 AM– 8:00 PM Locations to be determined. Call the Town Clerk's Office at 201-330-2016 for more information.

## Ukrainian Independence Day



On August 24th, Mayor Gonnelli, Town Council members Jim Clancy, John Gerbasio and William McKeever, were joined by Anna Petelina and Tamara Syby, leading members of Ukrainian National Women's League of America (UNWLA), in a flag-raising ceremony to commemorate the Ukrainian Declaration of Independence in 1991. The ceremony held at the Plaza Center Municipal Parking Lot was held in the gazebo due to heavy rain, which could not dampen the spirit of residents of Ukrainian descent, who were gathered there. Both representatives of UNWLA thanked Mayor Gonnelli and the Town of Secaucus for their support, solidarity, and donation of supplies for Ukrainians affect by the current war.



## Plank Road Inn: “Where Everybody Calls You Names”

Years before World War I or the tragedy of the Titanic, Charles Mosey Sr. decided to turn a barbershop at 1538 Paterson Plank Road into a bar that is still in operation today. That happened in 1910! Later Mosey Jr. and his wife Ella took over the tavern and it was a place for local pig farmers and trolley riders on their way to Hoboken to get a beer or whiskey. After 60 plus years, the Mosey era came to an end but not before the legend that Mrs. Mosey’s spirit still haunts the place got started. A man named Mueller took over the space from the Moseys, renovated it to its current J-shaped bar layout and the name Plank Road Inn came into being. His stint at the bar lasted only two years before Bill and Barbara Zarsky took over in the early 1970s. Son of Ukrainian immigrants, Bill made the Plank Road Inn a lively place, often buying a round or two of drinks for the raucous happy-hour crowd. The Plank Road Inn became a favorite place for friends to meet—with bets that their loaded hot dogs, fried chicken and hot chili were the best. They started several new traditions that continue at Plank Road Inn to this day, including a yearly Christmas party for the regulars. Plank Road Inn also hosted many up-and coming stand-up comics including Chris Rock and Collin Quinn.



In 1993, Bill decided to sell the place to the Rennie brothers, Bruce and Brian. They took over the bar, fast-tracked a renovation and re-opened it as a sports bar in September 1993. Their vision of a sports bar had finally become a reality. It was one of the few sports bars in the area with satellite TV and became the place to watch a game, especially on football Saturdays and Sundays. It has been listed as one of the top sports bars in New Jersey, and even won Best Wings in New Jersey on Jersey Bites food blog. “It’s the type of place where nobody is immune from a few lighthearted jabs. Instead of the famous Cheers line “where everybody knows your name” it’s more like “where everybody calls you names” because there is no such thing as stopping at the Plank Road for a quiet drink,” says Jeff Rennie.

At the August 22nd Town Council meeting, Mayor Michael Gonnelli and the Town Council honored Bruce and Brian Rennie for continuing the Plank Road Inn traditions for the last 30 years. We wish Plank Road Inn continued success as a place for residents to meet friends and start new friendships.



### New Night for Wine Night

Indulge in the finest wines from around the world and expand your palate. Join us for an evening of wine tasting, music by Hunter Hayes, and appetizers. Attendees must be 21 or older to attend ID is required. Entrance is \$5.00 which includes 5 wine tastings, food, and entertainment. All proceeds benefit the Friends of the Secaucus Library. \*No outside liquor will be allowed inside.

**Friday, October 27, 2023**  
**6:30 pm**

**Secaucus Recreation Center**  
1200 Koelle Blvd.  
Secaucus, NJ





## HISPANIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION

**OCTOBER 18, 2023**  
**6:30 PM**  
**Secaucus Recreation Center**  
1200 Koelle Blvd., Secaucus, NJ

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, join us for an evening of music, food, & dance, with world renowned dance instructor and choreographer Talia Castro-Pozo, and friends. Enjoy live music with the Cuarteto Siboney Band.

Snacks provided by Goya.

(NO PARTNER OR EXPERIENCE NECESSARY)



TALIA CASTRO-POZO



CUARTETO SIBONEY



SPONSOR



Register using the calendar @ [secaucuslibrary.org](https://secaucuslibrary.org)

Mayor Michael Gonnelli and The Town Council  
invite young residents to

## TRICK OR TREAT

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31**  
**-HALLOWEEN-**  
**5:00PM UNTIL 7:00PM**  
(while candy supplies last)

### SCHMIDT'S WOODS



\*\*\*\*\*  
The Mayor & Town Council  
Invite all residents to participate in a



## Town Wide Garage Sale

**Saturday, October 7, 2023**  
Rain date Sunday, October 8, 2023  
8 am-----?????  
Register online  
<https://secaucusnj.gov/garage>  
before October 2nd  
to put your address on the list  
that will be posted



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## HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR

**OCTOBER 25TH**  
**5:00 PM**  
**2nd Floor Panasonic Room**

Children ages 4 and up are invited to join us for a Spooktacular Halloween Celebration! Dress up in your Halloween costume. You will be able to trick-or-treat, have your photo taken, hear a spooky story and decorate cookies with us. Space is limited. Sign up on the calendar @ [Secaucuslibrary.org](https://secaucuslibrary.org)




JOIN MAYOR GONNELLI & THE TOWN COUNCIL:



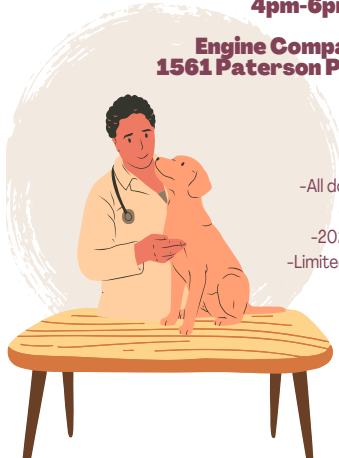
## HALLOWEEN PARADE

**OCT 29** BEGINNING AT CLARENDON SCHOOL  
12:00 NOON  
ENDING AT BUCHMULLER PARK

AND DON'T FORGET TO JOIN US FOR TRICK OR TREAT AT SCHMIDT'S WOODS  
ON HALLOWEEN FROM 5:00PM UNTIL 7:00PM

## Vaccination Clinic

**Thursday, October 5, 2023**  
**4pm-6pm**  
**Engine Company #2**  
**1561 Paterson Plank Road**



- Open to Dogs and Cats
- Secaucus residents only
- All dogs must be leashed and cats in carriers
- 2023 Pet licenses will be available
- Limited quantity; First come first serve;
- No appointments

**Contact 201-330-2031 for more information**

MAYOR MICHAEL GONNELLI AND THE TOWN COUNCIL INVITE RESIDENTS TO

## SPOOKY FRIDAY

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2023**  
**SCHMIDT'S WOODS**

**"NOT SO HAUNTED HOUSE" AND CHILDRENS' ACTIVITIES**  
**6:00PM - 8:00PM**

**HAUNTED TRAIL**  
**7:00PM - 8:30PM**

Please note: The haunted trail is not recommended for small children or the elderly.



Secaucus Public Library

### Thomas Edison Film Festival Screening

## HISPANIC FILMMAKERS

**OCTOBER 24TH**  
**12:00 PM**  
**PANASONIC RM.**

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, please join us for a FREE screening of selected films curated by the Thomas Edison Film Festival honoring Hispanic Filmmakers.







Dear Patriot Family,

Welcome to the 2023/2024 school year!

The start of a new school year always carries a unique blend of emotions – excitement, anticipation, and perhaps even a touch of nervousness. Regardless of the mix of feelings, know that we are all united in a shared mission: ensuring that every child has the opportunity to grow, learn, and shine in a safe and inclusive environment.

Our dedicated staff has been working diligently throughout the summer, preparing curricula, enhancing our facilities, and creating a conducive environment for our students to thrive. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to every teacher, administrator, support staff, and custodians who contributed to these efforts.



This year promises to be an exciting one, filled with numerous opportunities. As we continue to provide a rigorous and relevant education for our students, the importance of community, resilience, and collaboration cannot be overstated. I am humbled by the tenacity, passion, and commitment demonstrated by each member of our school community.

To our returning families, welcome back. To those new to our community, we are delighted to have you with us and eagerly anticipate the fresh perspectives and rich experiences you bring. Together, as educators, parents, and community members, we will cultivate learning experiences that will leave a lasting imprint on our students’ lives and prepare them for the world ahead.

As your Superintendent, I am committed to ensuring that every student receives the highest quality education in a safe and nurturing environment. My door is always open, and I welcome your insights, questions, and feedback.

Let us embrace this new beginning with optimism, collaboration, and an unwavering dedication to excellence. Here’s to a fulfilling, engaging, and successful school year!

Yours in service,  
Erick Alfonso, Ed.D., M.B.A. - Superintendent of Schools

## Nominations Welcome for SHS Alumni Academic Hall of Achievement Award

Secaucus High School has a clear vision of preparing our students with learning opportunities that will successfully prepare them for post-secondary life. Our underlying mission is to create a dynamic and thriving district, in partnership with a supportive and collaborative community that inspires and empowers all learners to flourish as ethical and global citizens. It is in this spirit, that we ask ourselves what this global citizen looks like as a role model to our community. How have they leveraged their academic, business, and social acumen to motivate and inspire us? What are the accomplishments that set them apart from their peers?

The Secaucus High School Alumni Academic Hall of Achievement Award has been established to honor alumni who have typified the SHS tradition of excellence and brought credit to our community by their personal accomplishments, professional achievements, or humanitarian services. By honoring our alumni, we recognize and celebrate not only their singular accomplishments but also the collective depth and breadth of their interests, talents, career paths, and achievements in all sectors of society.

All graduates of the Secaucus High School who have received their diploma between 1976-2013 are eligible for consideration of this award. Award recipients will be chosen by a committee composed of past award recipients and members of the current administration. The committee will review the submitted materials and select those candidates who are deemed most deserving of this recognition and whose achievements most closely exemplify the highest ideals to which SHS is dedicated. Alumni who are chosen for the awards will be notified by the high school administration and all nominators will be informed of the overall results.

An Academic Hall of Achievement Alumni Award will be given to each recipient, or posthumously to a family member or individual designated by the committee chairperson during an upcoming awards ceremony to be scheduled in the Spring of 2024. Winners will receive a plaque that will be installed in The Hall of Achievement at Secaucus High School. Winners will also receive a lifetime pass to all Secaucus High School events.

If you know of Secaucus High School alumni who excel in their field and/or are making an impact in others’ lives, we want to know about them! Nominate them today! Nominations for the Alumni Academic Hall of Achievement Award must be completed and returned no later than December 1, 2023 for the upcoming selection year. Online submissions are preferred and can be located on the Secaucus High School website under “Our School”.

## School Resource Officers: Keeping Our Schools Safe

As part of their commitment to safety in schools, Mayor Gonnelli and the Town Council, along with the Secaucus Police Department and the School District initiated the School Resource Officer program at all schools in Town. Secaucus is one of the very few school districts that have an officer assigned to each school individually. These officers have years of law enforcement experience and bring their expertise as well as their interests to the new job as safety personnel on school premises.

In early September the Town welcomed Officer Leslie Feinholtz, assigned to the Early Learning Center at Mill Ridge Road. She retired from Hudson County Prosecutor’s Office two and half years ago. She combines her love of working with children and her expertise in law enforcement to help ensure safety in schools. Other SLEO III include Officer Lonnie Friedman, assigned to Clarendon School, who has over 25 years of experience as in law enforcement and is also a nationally certified EMT and firefighter; Officer Jerome Mercado who has 32 years of law enforcement experience, and David Smentkowski with 25 years of experience, both at the Secaucus Police Department.

All Officers are committed to keeping children, staff and faculty of all schools safe. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, regarding school safety, please feel free to call the Police Department’s non-emergency number 201-330-2060.

