

## A Word from the Mayor

This month's column is about a sense of community. A community is not just a place on a map. It is the place where we know we belong, where we are connected to our families, friends and neighbors. Our homes, families, schools, churches, parks and fields are here. Our residents come from diverse backgrounds and have different religions and custom, but we share a common ground. My goal as Mayor is to bring the residents of Secaucus together as one united community. I want Secaucus to be recognized as a Town that values our people, cares for our property and open spaces, and provides the best essential services at the lowest possible cost to its residents every day.

Secaucus is known as "the Jewel of the Meadowlands" for many reasons. It could also be called "the Small Town with the Big Heart" for the many volunteers who give up their time to give back to our Town, whether it is through volunteering with the church, firefighters, service organizations, or serving on a volunteer board. This is what makes Secaucus such a great place. A community is built one person at a time.

I think a strong healthy community can be identified by the three following characteristics: responsible **stewardship** of the land and resources, **partnership** with local businesses; and **friendship** with our neighbors.

In terms of the environment we take immense pride in our parks, our wildlife, the meadowlands and its rivers, and the importance of preserving all of nature's habitats. As a lifelong resident I can say that our connection to nature on a daily basis has always been a part of our way of life. And I believe we must continue to ensure that we protect the environment and the rural charm of our Town from irresponsible over-development.

Also, our town's economy has been bolstered by businesses like Hartz, UPS, Best Buy, Goya, WalMart and Panasonic, to name a few. These corporate friends have been very generous donors to the new Community Center. They as well as our local family-owned businesses have always supported our recreation and senior programs. We are also developing a job program in connection with local businesses and the New Jersey Department of Labor to notify residents of employment opportunities, and have added a jobs link to the Town website – [www.SecaucusNJ.org](http://www.SecaucusNJ.org). The jobs link, which can be found on the left hand side of the home page, about mid-way down, features job openings at Secaucus-based businesses and employment websites. Additionally, we are in the process of putting together a Town-wide job fair, which should be announced shortly.

Additionally, we have a long tradition of partnerships with community service organizations. Among the many service and charitable organizations are Kiwanis, Unico, Knights of Columbus, Fil-Am, Rotary, the Indian Caucus and Swaminarayan Temple Shree. This year we have provided a number of events through the generosity of outside sponsors. It was a very busy summer. We started off with the Memorial Day Parade and continued the Concerts in the Park series, the Farmer's Market at the Library on Friday afternoons, the Town flea market, outdoor movies, pool nights for the teens and youngsters and music in the parks for teens as well. We held barbeques for the seniors at Schmidt's Woods and Buchmuller Park. With all these events, we made an effort to include everyone and bring the entire community together by holding them at various locations such as Harmon Cove, Harmon Cove Towers, the X-Change at Secaucus Junction, and the Recreation Center.

We are looking forward to two more concerts before the cooler weather sets in. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. On Saturday, the 18<sup>th</sup>, a tribute concert featuring the music of Elton John, James Taylor and Billy Joel will be held at the

amphitheater at the X-Change at Secaucus Junction beginning at 3 p.m. The concert on Wednesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> will be held at the Plaza at Harmon Cove featuring the Sensational Soul Cruisers and Car Show. It will start at 7 p.m. These concerts are free, and refreshments will be provided – also free of charge. Please plan to come and enjoy some great music and good times.

And last but not least is **friendship**. For me friendship is a connection based on civility that people share with one another. It is a connection of concern for the well-being of others, and it is what makes up the heart of a community.

A good community is a place where there is an ongoing respect for our way of life, our families, our friends, our hopes, and our dreams. It is a place where **stewardship, partnership, and friendship** are practiced every day. And I have committed my tenure as Mayor to doing just that.