



## Message from the Mayor

MAYOR JASON F. CILETO

January 2025

Happy New Year to all of Dunellen's residents, business owners, and friends! The Borough of Dunellen celebrated the start of the New Year with its annual Reorganization Meeting on Wednesday, January 1, 2025. Congratulations and welcome back to Council Members Teresa Albertson and William Scott who were sworn in

by Assemblywoman Nancy Muñoz and Assemblywoman Michele Matsikoudis of New Jersey's 21st Legislative District. Congratulations to Daniel Cole Sigmon who was unanimously chosen to serve as Council President for 2025.



A special thank you to Assemblywoman Nancy Muñoz and Assemblywoman Michele Matsikoudis for administering the oath of office to our Council Members. The Borough of Dunellen is grateful for their ongoing support and we look forward to continuing our collaboration throughout 2025.



...Continued on page 3

## Big 106th Birthday Celebration

SUBMITTED BY BARBARA SEIF

We were all gathered around to celebrate Ida Cihanowyz's 106th Birthday. Helping her celebrate were her children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, her younger sister and best friend Marian, nieces and nephews. Ida still enjoys socializing, taking walks and talking to relatives and friends. She is one amazing Jersey girl-born and raised in central New Jersey.



Ida is sitting in the center, wearing a green coat.

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**Message from the Mayor**

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The meeting also saw the swearing-in of Patrolman Paul Condit to the Dunellen Borough Police Department, Borough Attorney William Robertson, and our volunteers who will be serving on Dunellen’s many boards and commissions.

Congratulations to Margaret “Peg” Lockwood, who was recognized as Dunellen’s Volunteer Citizen of the Year 2024. Peg is a founding member of both the Dunellen Downtown Management Organization (DDMO) and the Dunellen Arts, Inclusion, & Culture Commission (DAICC), the former of which she has served as the Chair or Acting Chair since 2012.

I would also like to congratulate Kathleen “Kathy” Wilson who was presented with Dunellen’s 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award. Kathy has lived in Dunellen for most of her life and grew up participating in Dunellen Recreation programming before joining Dunellen Recreation as an Associate Member and has now served on the Dunellen Parks & Recreation since 2002.

Finally, during the Reorganization Meeting, I had the honor of sharing my sixth *State of the Borough* address, highlighting Dunellen’s accomplishments in 2024 and providing a look into our agenda for 2025.



**A Look Back at the Accomplishments of 2024:**

- The Borough of Dunellen completed several redevelopment projects including 526 North Avenue, 150 North Avenue, and Dunellen Station while work on “The Gateway” at 745 Bound Brook began construction.
- Dunellen received several awards and recognitions including the 2024 New Jersey Future Smart Growth Award for The Nell at Dunellen Station, a feature in Business View Magazine in the October 2024 edition, the “Great Downtown” designation from the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association, and will be featured in the January edition of New Jersey Real Estate.
- 1.8 miles of road were paved, with 10 of our 16 miles of municipal roadways being paved since 2020.

*...Continued on page 8*

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## Dunellen Fire Department Volunteer with the Dunellen Fire Department

### Volunteers needed!

Did you ever want to help your community by joining the fire department? Now is your opportunity!

We are accepting new applicants. If you're at least 16 years old...you can join with us in one of the following categories:

#### Junior Firefighter

Our Junior Program is for high school students 16-18 years old and offers a taste of what volunteering in the fire department is all about. Don't worry moms and dads, your baby won't be going into any burning buildings just yet, but they will get the opportunity to start learning about the different types of calls we go on, the equipment we use, the apparatus we have, and how to hone in those people skills while helping the people in their community. Junior Members are also part of our company side where they can help with fundraising activities and help plan for upcoming events.

#### Active Firefighter

The Active Firefighter is responsible for answering the calls. If you

don't have any previous experience, don't worry, most of us didn't when we first started out either. The Fire Department will pay for all training. We also hold monthly in-house trainings to keep our skills sharp as well as monthly truck checks to make sure all of our equipment and vehicles are in tip-top, response-ready shape. The Active Firefighter is also an active member on our company side where we have our monthly meetings, do fundraisers, and plan for any upcoming events.

#### Associate Member

If running into burning houses and responding to fire alarms at 3:00 AM isn't your thing, then we have a category for you! Our associate members are responsible for coming to our monthly meetings, helping plan and run any fundraisers, attending community events, and giving input during the meetings. This is the perfect support role position without being directly on the front lines.

If any of this sounds interesting to you, we encourage you to check out our website at [www.dunellenfd.com](http://www.dunellenfd.com) and email us at [Joindfd@dunellenfd.com](mailto:Joindfd@dunellenfd.com).

We look forward to hearing from you!

## The Dunellen Fire Department Celebrates the Reopening and Rededication of the George W. Hodulik Firehouse

The Dunellen Fire Department celebrated the grand reopening and rededication of the George W. Hodulik Firehouse on Saturday, December 7 following a fire that broke out in October 2021 and shut down the facility for three years.

Restoration work on the George W. Hodulik Firehouse began shortly after the fire. Due to smoke damage, the building had to be gutted, leading to a complete overhaul of the structure. While a major focus was on restoring the basic services and equipment that were lost, all systems within the building were modernized as the building transitioned from its original 1962 construction to a 2024 state-of-the-art facility. Upgrades include new electric, HVAC, and building systems, and the installation of an elevator, full fire sprinklers, display screens, and a PA system to allow enhanced training sessions to be held in the hall. To replace the vehicles lost in the fire, the Dunellen Fire Department has proudly welcomed brand-new Engine 3 and Truck 4, which join the sole survivor of the blaze, Engine 2, which was sent to E-One in Florida to be fully refurbished and has been back with the department since late 2022. All three apparatus were manufactured by E-One in Florida and sold and serviced by Absolute Fire Protection in South Plainfield, NJ.

The George W. Hodulik Firehouse was renamed to honor lifelong Dunellen resident, George W. Hodulik. George, who is currently 98 years old, has been a member of the Dunellen Fire Department since 1961 and served in the U.S. Navy from 1944 to 1946 in World War II and from 1950 to 1953 in the Korean War. While George couldn't attend the ceremony in person, he was able to address the crowd and participate through a video call.



Fire departments throughout New Jersey and even Pennsylvania, including the Green Brook Fire Department and Chester Township (Pennsylvania) Fire Department, which both lent trucks to the Dunellen Fire Department in the aftermath of the fire so they could continue serving the public, attended the reopening ceremony to show their support. Also attending were members of Dunellen Defender Fire Company #1, the Dunellen Borough Police Department, Dunellen Rescue Squad, Dunellen Office of Emergency Management, Absolute

Fire Protection, Business Administrator Alex Miller, Mayor Jason F. Cilento, the Dunellen Borough Council, Middlesex County Sheriff Mildred Scott, members of the Hodulik family, and more.

This building has been a cornerstone of our community since 1962, and today, it is stronger than ever, ready to serve generations of firefighters to come. Welcome home Dunellen Fire Department!



## A Magical Evening: Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony Brings Holiday Cheer

WASHINGTON MEMORIAL PARK – DECEMBER 6, 2024

The holiday season officially began in Dunellen with the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, held on a crisp winter evening at Washington Memorial Park. At 6:30 PM, families, friends, and community members gathered to celebrate the season with music, festive lights, and holiday magic.

Santa Claus made a grand entrance, delighting children and spreading Christmas cheer. The atmosphere was filled with joy as the 5th Grade Choir, under the expert direction of Mr. Geiger, performed a selection of holiday classics.

Adding to the festive spirit, the Imperial Brass Band delivered an outstanding performance, filling the park with lively and heartwarming tunes.

This cherished community event was made possible by the dedication and support of our Dunellen Recreation Department—special thanks to the Dunellen-Green Brook Rotary Club for supplying warm hot chocolate. We'd also like to thank the Dunellen Fire Department, Rescue Squad, Police Department, and Office of Emergency Management (OEM), whose efforts ensured a safe and enjoyable evening.

As the evening culminated, the Christmas tree was illuminated in a dazzling display of lights, a beacon of hope and joy for the season. The event was a beautiful reminder of the warmth and unity that define our community during the holidays.

Here's to a holiday season filled with peace, love, and togetherness!



## Menorah Lighting Celebration



On Sunday, December 29, the Borough of Dunellen held a Menorah Lighting Celebration in honor of Hanukkah. Special thanks to Chabad House-Lubavitch at Rutgers University for joining the celebration, Rabbi Mendi for sharing a brief history of the holiday, Kelly Seader, Alex Miller, Billy George, and Ryan Ferrer from the Borough for their help in setting up the event, and Diana and David Starace for assisting with the event and providing music and warm cider for our guests.

When was the last time you checked your house value?

*Isn't it time?*



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2009-2010, 2012-2017, 2019



## Dunellen Downtown Management Organization (DDMO)

### Dunellen Welcome New Businesses to Its Downtown

Downtown Dunellen has seen a recent influx of new businesses, bringing fresh energy to the downtown. From a new florist and candle-making studio to home design, these additions aim to provide residents with more options for shopping, self-care, entertainment, and more.

#### Dreamy Dresses

150 North Avenue, Store A  
(732) 200-5727  
www.dreamydressesnj.com

#### Elegant Fades Barber Shop

150 North Avenue, Store B  
(732) 474-0031

#### Luxury Kitchen & Bath

118 N. Washington Avenue  
(929) 374-9031

#### Manuel Orosco New Home Builders and Home Supply (Coming Soon)

760 Bound Brook Road



#### Real Skin Spa

387 North Avenue

#### Starlight Beauty Spa

10 S. Washington Avenue  
(732) 529-6668  
www.starlightbeautyspanj.com

#### Sweet Flowers Flower Shop

376 North Avenue, Store B  
(732) 200-5109  
www.sweetflowersNJ.com

#### The Wick Studio (Coming Soon)

362 North Avenue

**Follow the Dunellen Downtown Management Organization on Facebook (@DunellenDowntown) to stay in the know about new businesses and grand opening celebrations.**

## Annual Reassessment of Properties

In an effort to ensure fair property tax bills for all residents, the Borough is continuing with the annual reassessment of properties (residential homes, commercial property, vacant land, etc.). The process calls for all properties to be evaluated through an analysis of the real estate market, while 20% of the town's properties will have an in-person inspection to update the property record cards. If your property is in the selected area, you will receive a letter in advance from our inspection company Professional Property Appraisers, Inc. (PPA), notifying you when they expect to be in your neighborhood.

The annual reassessment program helps to preserve the values of properties in the Borough close to 100% of market value ensuring equality of taxation throughout the town. This process allows for a fair and accurate distribution of the overall tax levy, which covers costs associated with operating the municipality, school district, county, library, and open space. In addition, this program helps preclude the Borough from being in the position it was in, in 2016, when the State mandated a town-wide revaluation (which we had not done in 33 years), which proved to be expensive, and impactful to taxpayers who were not appropriately assessed in a program such as the one the Borough has currently structured.

It should be noted that each year in February you receive a postcard in the mail entitled, "Notice of Property Tax Assessment for 2025." This postcard lists your property location and

2025 property assessment, along with your 2024 property assessment and property taxes billed (but not necessarily paid) in 2024.

If your assessment increased between 2024 and 2025, this DOES NOT mean that your property taxes will increase proportionately, nor does it mean your property taxes will increase by the difference between your 2024 and 2025 assessments. Even when assessed values increase, some homeowners may not see an increase at all, some may see an increase, and others may see a decrease. This is dependent upon the Library and Borough's budgets, as well as the Board of Education and County's budgets. Any increase in property taxes is based on the tax rate. The municipal tax rate is set when each of the governing agencies that levy taxes has completed their budgets. This will be done later this year. You will not feel the impact of your 2025 taxes until the 3rd quarter in August 2025, because the 1st and 2nd quarters have already been issued. Once the municipal tax rate has been set, the Borough provides a calculator on its website to estimate your taxes for 2025. Therefore, to emphasize once more, the postcard DOES NOT include your 2025 property taxes because budgets for the Borough, County, and School District will not be adopted formally until later in 2025.



**Please visit our website, [www.Dunellen-NJ.gov/PropertyReassessment](http://www.Dunellen-NJ.gov/PropertyReassessment) or scan the QR code to learn more.**

## Ordinance #2024-30 An Ordinance Amending the Borough Code to Prohibit Short-Term Rentals

At the December 2, 2024, Dunellen Borough Council Meeting, Ordinance #2024-30 was passed amending the Borough Code to prohibit the short-term rental of residential properties within the Borough of Dunellen.

This ordinance was introduced to address the increasingly widespread practice of renting or leasing various types of dwellings, or segments of said dwellings, located primarily in residential neighborhoods, on a short-term basis to transient guests. This practice has been popularized and facilitated by various websites that advertise and broker such rentals. Left unregulated, this practice will transform many residential dwellings to the detriment of the health, safety, and quiet enjoyment of the affected neighborhoods.

Ordinance #2024-30 prohibits individuals, including any hosting platform operator, from undertaking, maintaining, authorizing, aiding, facilitating, or advertising any short-term rental activity that does not comply with the Code of the Borough.

To read the full ordinance and to view the Code of the Borough of Dunellen, visit [www.ecode360.com/DU0547](http://www.ecode360.com/DU0547)



## Animal Control Solutions

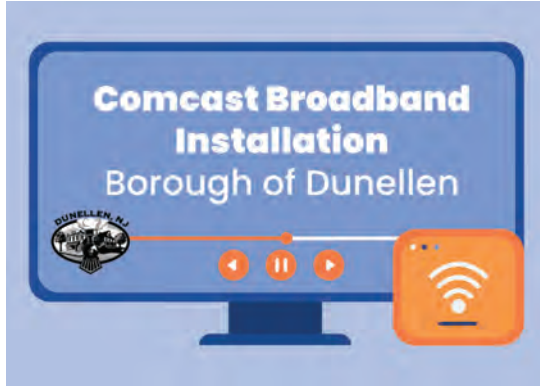
The Borough of Dunellen has contracted Animal Control Solutions, based out of Flemington, New Jersey, for animal control services. Their services include:

- The rescue of injured and stray animals.
- The rescue of injured, sick, or orphaned wildlife.
- Reuniting lost pets with their owners.
- Enforcing local and state animal laws including the investigation of dog bites and animal attacks.
- Animal welfare checks and nuisance complaints.
- Removal of deceased wildlife on public property and roadways, excluding deer, livestock, or large wildlife.

Animal Control Solutions can be contacted via phone at (908) 722-1271 or by email at [main@animalcontrolsolutions.org](mailto:main@animalcontrolsolutions.org). For more information, you can visit their website, [www.AnimalControlSolutions.org](http://www.AnimalControlSolutions.org).

## Comcast Installation Work

Comcast, Dunellen's newest service provider has begun underground work to install fiber lines prior to their cable and internet services becoming available throughout the Borough. Minor traffic diversions are possible. Please note that Comcast will not be disturbing any newly paved roads. Service to the borough will be delivered with fiber to the home that can provide high-speed internet access, digital video, video on demand, high-definition television, and Xfinity Voice. Comcast will join Optimum/Altice as another provider for internet, television, and phone services in the Borough of Dunellen.



Notices for upcoming work will be shared through Mayor Cilento's Facebook Page (Facebook.com/MayorCilento) and Instagram (@MayorCilento) as well as the Borough of Dunellen's Facebook. Comcast will also provide door hanger notices to residents approximately one week before work is anticipated to begin on their street.

For any issues or concerns, please contact Ronald Boogaard at Comcast at (609) 947-0066 or ronald\_boogaard@comcast.com.

Visit [www.Dunellen-NJ.gov/Comcast](http://www.Dunellen-NJ.gov/Comcast) to stay up to date on the latest installation work taking place throughout the Borough. It is anticipated that Comcast will become available throughout the entire Borough of Dunellen by 2026.

## Dunellen Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

OEM Deputy Joe Cummins received the 2024 Outstanding Volunteer Award from the New Jersey Emergency Management Association (NJEMA) at its year-end training meeting on Wednesday, December 10, 2024, held at the Palms Plaza in Matawan, NJ. At that same event, Dunellen OEM Director Homer Mosley was sworn in as NJEMA Recording Secretary.



The mission of the New Jersey Emergency Management Association is to promote the efforts of its members to protect the property and lives of all the residents within the geographical limits of New Jersey against any enemy or natural disaster for the preservation of our local and national security.

The organization is led by current emergency management professionals representing emergency management organizations throughout New Jersey who understand today's challenges and work tirelessly to advance the profession through multi-jurisdictional collaboration, innovative training and education, and strategic partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organizations.



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Greenbrook Rd  
Route 28/Union Ave  
Wendy's  
DUNKIN'  
MIDDLESEX SHOPPING CENTER  
DOLLAR TREE

**LOCATED IN THE MIDDLESEX SHOPPING CENTER**  
**738 UNION AVE, MIDDLESEX**




**Message from the Mayor**

*Continued from page 3...*

- We have welcomed Comcast as the Borough’s newest broadband service provider, and they have been at work installing fiber lines in anticipation of their services becoming available.
- The Borough implemented key organizational changes in our administrative office allowing us to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency in our operations.
- Communication efforts increased, allowing the Borough to more effectively distribute information to residents.
- Dunellen Parks & Recreation expanded 11 youth programs, added new programming for all ages, and saw record attendance for events throughout the year.
- 4x Olympic Gold Medalist and Dunellen Native Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone returned home to our miracle for a Homecoming Celebration following her incredible performance in the 2024 Paris Olympics where she took home two more gold medals and set her sixth world record.
- Our Municipal Clerk has continued to provide a variety of services for our residents including the processing of pet and marriage licenses, and successfully navigated the 2024 election, ensuring our residents were able to cast their ballots.
- The Dunellen Fire Department celebrated the reopening of the George W. Hodulik Firehouse in December and responded to over 300 calls throughout the year despite not having a permanent home for the majority of the year.
- The Dunellen Borough Police Department celebrated their 100th anniversary, the retirement of several officers, the arrival of a new officer to the department, and Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Captain promotions. Several officers were also recognized for their outstanding work by Mothers Against Drunk Driving.
- The Construction Department issued 275 permits, conducted 93 rental inspections, completed 34 time-of-sale inspections, and processed 104 zoning applications.
- The Municipal Court, led by the Honorable Judge Katherine Howes welcomed new Court Administrator Liz Dabbagh and celebrated the retirement of former Court Administrator Terri Crisafulli. Denise Donato was promoted to Deputy Court Administrator and Dawn Mayer-Doll was hired as the part-

time Violations Clerk ensuring the smooth operation of the department during a time of transition.

- The Department of Public Works swept 310 miles of road, collected 380 tons of debris, restored 10 catch basins, installed new planters at Washington Memorial Park and Columbia Park, planted 45 new trees in Downtown Dunellen, and played an integral role in the maintenance of the Bandalong Bandit Litter Trap in the Green Brook.
- We had 167 volunteers between our Recreation programs and Volunteer Organizations.
- The Dunellen Downtown Management Organization hosted its 11th Annual HarvestFest, celebrated the grand openings of several new businesses, commemorated milestone anniversaries for longtime local businesses, and offered their Small Business Saturday promotion to help drive traffic to our many unique businesses.
- The Dunellen Arts, Inclusion, and Culture Commission facilitated the completion of the Madison Avenue Mural and the approval of the Prospect Avenue Mural.
- The Dunellen Municipal Alliance has remained committed to its mission of educating our students and community about Substance Abuse Disorders.
- The Dunellen Office of Emergency Management secured a \$10,000 Emergency Management Assistance Grant and welcomed a second Deputy, Joe Cummins, who was recognized with the Outstand Service Award from the New Jersey Emergency Management Association.
- The Dunellen Rescue Squad bid farewell to their old building on North Avenue and have continued to focus on providing high-quality EMS services as they prepare for their eventual move to a new building at 635 Bound Brook Road.
- The Dunellen Parking Authority transitioned to a monthly meeting schedule, added a new Superintendent position to manage day-to-day operations, worked with the Borough to amend and adopt an ordinance improving downtown parking, and celebrated the holiday season by offering free parking downtown throughout the month of December.

.....  
**2024 Year  
 In Review  
 Summary on  
 next page.**  
 .....

**Agenda Items for 2025:**

- The development of new properties including 120-126 North Avenue, the North Hamilton Project at 405 North Avenue, 431-441 North Avenue, 337 Front Street, 440 North Avenue, and continued negotiations on the potential redevelopment of 501 North Avenue.

*...Continued on page 13*

Wishing you a  
happy, healthy  
& prosperous  
New Year!

CHECK OUT OUR WEEKLY SPECIALS  
ON OUR WEBSITE!

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by following us on Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/Dunellenhotel](http://www.facebook.com/Dunellenhotel)



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Fri-Sat	11:30am-10:00pm
Sunday	12:00pm-9:00pm

*\*Hours subject to change. Please call for updates.*

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# BOROUGH OF DUNELLEN



# Year 2024 IN REVIEW

#MiracleMileMeansCommunity

- North Avenue Phase 1 - Began installation of ADA-compliant ramps
- Approvals were given for Flashing Beacons on Madison Avenue & Washington Avenue
- Columbia Park Walkway

## PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

- Center Street
- Kline Place
- N. Washington Avenue
- Penfield Place
- Maple Avenue
- Pulaski Street
- Madison Avenue
- Mountainview Terrace

## 1.8 MILES OF NEWLY PAVED STREETS

Basketball, Flag Football, Baseball, Softball, Spring, Summer, & Fall Tennis, Doubles Tennis Track, Spring & Fall Soccer, Rec Summer Camp, Adult Yoga, Winter Pickleball

## 14 RECREATION PROGRAMS

- Business View Magazine, featured in October 2024 edition
- NJ Future Smart Growth Award, *The Nell*
- Great Downtown Award, NJ APA
- Real Estate New Jersey, upcoming feature in January 2025 edition

## 4 Awards & Recognitions



GEORGE W. HODULIK FIREHOUSE REOPENING



SYDNEY MCLAUGHLIN-LEVRONE

- Second Street Phase 2
- S. Washington & New Market Rd.
- Mountainview Terrace Bike Path
- Bound Brook Rd. Streetscape

## \$1,414,120 GRANT AWARDS

- North Hamilton Project at 405 North Avenue
- 431-441 North Avenue
- 337 Front Street

## 3 Approved Redevelopment Projects



## \$1,979,794 IN PILOT REVENUE

## 760

Registrants in Rec Programs

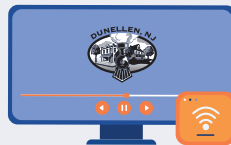
## 167

Volunteers for Rec programs and Borough commissions, committees, boards, etc.

## community involvement

- Letrice Skin Beauty
- Supreme Eventz
- Elegant Fades Barbershop
- Dreamy Dresses
- Luxury Kitchen & Bath
- Sweet Flowers
- Beauty and a Touch of Class

## 7 NEW BUSINESSES



## COMCAST BROADBAND & CABLE INSTALLATION



Making our Local Government more effective and efficient through

## 11

## Borough Organizational Structure Changes

- Walks & Talks with the Mayor
- Mayoral Town Halls: Volunteering in Dunellen, OEM & Storm Preparedness, & Redevelopment in Dunellen

## 7 MAYORAL EVENTS

- Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone, *Dunellen Native & Olympic Gold medalist wins two gold medals at the 2024 Paris Olympics and breaks World Record for Women's 400m Hurdles*
- Dunellen Fire Department, *Reopening & Rededication of the George W. Hodulik Firehouse*
- Dunellen Borough Police Department, *Celebrates 100th Anniversary*
- George W. McDonald, *Dunellen Resident Publishes 5th novel "Exodus from Rye"*
- Jake Mosca, *Releases New Album "From Home"*
- Mis Amigos Mexican Grill, *Featured at #2 in NJ.com's Article "19 Best Burritos in New Jersey 2024"*
- Bandalong Bandit Litter Trap, *Dunellen Becomes First Municipality in NJ to Install Litter Trap as part of Pilot Program*
- Downtown Dunellen, *Featured on News12 New Jersey's "Main Street New Jersey" Segment*
- Joe Cummins, *2024 Outstanding Volunteer Award from the New Jersey Emergency Management Association (NJEMA)*

## IN THE NEWS



COMPLETION OF PULASKI STREET CULVERT

Incorporated 1887 | 7,711 population  
2,725 housing units | Median age: 41.7  
Median income \$84,789 | 245 School children: 623 in elementary, 300 in middle & 388 in high school  
13% of population is senior citizens  
63% of housing is owner-occupied  
37% of housing is renter-occupied  
3.1 average family size

## SNAPSHOT IN TIME\*

\*American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, 2023 and NJ School Performance Report, 2022-2023

## Dunellen Borough Police Department

### Ptln. Daniel Walkout

On Monday, September 29, the Dunellen Borough Police Department held a walkout ceremony for Patrolman James Daniel who retired after 25 years of law enforcement service, including 21 years with the Borough of Dunellen. Prior to his time here, Ptln. Daniel served as a Sheriff's Officer with the Middlesex County Sheriff's Office, as well as a Dispatcher and Auxiliary Police Officer in Edison. We wish him and happy and healthy retirement!



**Unit Citation:** DSgt. Nicholas Goldman, Ptln. Kevin Conduis, and Ptln. Saul Vargas were recognized for their response to a reported Structure Fire on September 19. Responding officers located a small but growing fire in the kitchen and were able to extinguish it preventing a much more significant loss.

**Military Service:** Ptln. Saul Vargas was recognized with a citation for his years of service with the United States Army Reserve.

**Meritorious Service:** Ptln. Brian O'Neill and Middlesex Officer Fran Sweeney (Ret.) were recognized for their actions in handling an emotionally disturbed person.

### Annual Holiday Party & Department Awards Ceremony

On Friday, December 13, current and retired members of the Dunellen Borough Police Department gathered with friends and family for the department's annual holiday party and awards ceremony at the Dunellen Hotel. Chief Smith proudly recognized several officers for their outstanding accomplishments in 2024:

**Exceptional Duty:** Ptln. Keith Irons was recognized for the most Driving While Intoxicated arrests in 2024 with a total of 24.

**Exceptional Duty:** Ptln. Brian O'Neill was recognized for proudly serving 15 years with the Middlesex County Special Operations Response Team (SORT).

**Life Saving:** Ptln. Michael Lowder and Det. Anthony Issler were recognized for successfully utilizing CPR to save a 65-year-old resident on November 5.

**Life Saving:** Ptln. Brian O'Neill and Ptln. Michael Lowder were recognized for their successful use of Narcan and CPR to revive a patient on June 28.

**Unit Citation:** DSgt. Nicholas Goldman and Ptln. Joe Dudley (Ret.) were recognized for their de-escalation and negotiation with a juvenile experiencing a mental health crisis who was attempting to jump from a high location.

**Unit Citation:** DSgt. Nicholas Goldman, Ptln. Kevin Conduis, Ptln. Saul Vargas, and Ptln. Joe Dudley (Ret.) were recognized for their response to the report of an individual who was brandishing a firearm and actively threatening several people, ensuring a safe apprehension and investigation.

### PBA Toy Drive & Movie Night

The Dunellen PBA #146 and the Piscataway PBA #93 partnered with Zupko's Tavern / Dunellen Theatre for the 2024 Toy Drive / Movie Nights.

This annual tradition, which began in 2017, was conducted by the New Jersey State PBA to benefit Embrella (formerly the Foster and Adoptive Family Services of New Jersey), a group that provides support and resources to New Jersey youth who are currently living in foster or group home situations.

On Friday, December 6, and Saturday, December 7, residents throughout the state came out for showings of National Lampoon's *A Christmas Vacation*, *Elf*, and *The Polar Express*, featuring visits from a very special guest! The cost of admission? Just an unwrapped toy to donate. As usual, we filled the PBA trailer with a generous amount of gifts for a great cause!



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## Dunellen Borough Police Department Celebrates 100 Years of Service

The Dunellen Borough Police Department proudly celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2024, marking a century of dedicated service and commitment to the Dunellen community.

The department was officially founded by ordinance in 1924 with just three officers, Chief Owen Mohan and Patrolmen Patrick Tarpey and Samuel Strickland, and steadily grew over the years. Throughout the past century, the Dunellen Borough Police Department has evolved significantly, from a small, local police force to a modern, professional law enforcement agency equipped with the latest technology and training to meet the ever-changing needs of the community.

“We are incredibly proud of our history and the contributions of every officer who has served Dunellen over the past 100 years,” said Police Chief Daniel Smith. “This milestone is not just about our past, but also about continuing our tradition of excellence and dedication to the people of this great community.”

Throughout its history, the department has been at the forefront of fostering public safety and community trust. From implementing innovative crime prevention programs to actively engaging with residents through community policing initiatives, the Dunellen



Borough Police Department has consistently worked to strengthen its bond with the people it serves. The department’s commitment to transparency and collaboration has made it a cornerstone of the Borough’s identity.

“The Dunellen Borough Police Department is a truly integral part of our Borough’s history. For 100 years, our officers have gone above and beyond to protect and serve while fostering a sense of trust and safety

in our community. On behalf of the Borough of Dunellen, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to every officer and staff member, past and present, for their dedication and service,” said Mayor Jason F. Cilento.

Looking ahead, the Dunellen Borough Police Department remains committed to meeting the challenges of modern policing with the same dedication and professionalism that has defined its first 100 years, ensuring that Dunellen remains a safe and welcoming place to live, work, and visit.

“We couldn’t be more excited about the future of the Dunellen Borough Police Department,” said Police Committee Chair Harold VanDermark. “The dedication of countless officers over the last century is truly inspiring, and I know they will continue to hold the same values as they safeguard our Borough through the next 100 years and beyond.”

For a more detailed history of the Dunellen Borough Police Department, please visit <https://www.dunellenpd.com/department-info/history>.

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# DUNELLEN PARKS AND RECREATION

## Ready, Set, Hike! Youth Winter Flag Football

The winter season is here and it's time for young athletes to lace up their cleats and embrace the excitement of the **Winter Youth Flag Football Program!** Designed for boys and girls of all skill levels, this program is a perfect way to stay active, have fun, and learn teamwork during the colder months. Whether your child is a seasoned player or trying flag football for the first time, they'll find opportunities to grow and shine.

Each 90-minute session will be divided into full team dynamic warm-ups, football-based agility exercises, skill instruction, and mini-games!

### Program Details

- **Open to players in grades 4-8**
- **Season Dates:** 1/5-2/23
- **Location:** Turf Football field, Columbia Park Orange Street, Dunellen
- **Registration Fee:** \$40

Don't let the chilly weather keep your kids indoors. Enroll them in the Winter Youth Flag Football Program today and let them experience the thrill of the game all season long!

### How to Register

Registration is open at:  
[www.dunellenparksandrecreation.com](http://www.dunellenparksandrecreation.com)

## Youth Basketball Program Tipped Off January 4 – Registration Still Open!

Get ready to dribble, shoot, and score! Our much-anticipated youth basketball program began on Saturday, January 4, offering children from grades K-6 an opportunity to learn and enjoy the game in a fun and supportive environment.

This program is perfect for kids looking to develop their basketball skills, stay active, and learn the fundamentals. Sessions will take place every Saturday, with specialized instruction tailored to different age groups and skill levels.

In addition, 5th and 6th graders will enjoy the chance to compete and sharpen their skills during Monday night game sessions, providing an extra opportunity for teamwork and growth.

It's not too late to join! You can still register at: [www.dunellenparksandrecreation.com](http://www.dunellenparksandrecreation.com)

In order for this program to be successful, volunteer parent coaches are needed! If you are interested in becoming a parent volunteer, please contact Rec Program Coordinator Kelly Seader at [kseader@dunellenborough.com](mailto:kseader@dunellenborough.com).

## Looking Ahead: A Spring Sports Preview

As winter's chill is in the air, the anticipation for spring sports heats up. Athletes, coaches, and fans alike are preparing for another thrilling season of competition. From the intensity of the track to the finesse of tennis and the camaraderie of the baseball and softball diamonds, this spring promises to deliver excitement and inspiration.

### TRACK AND FIELD: Pushing Boundaries

Build strength, speed, and stamina while enjoying the fresh air. Perfect for runners of all abilities!

### TENNIS: The Court Kings and Queens

On the tennis courts, precision and strategy will take center stage. Swing into action and learn this lifelong sport in a fun and supportive environment.

### BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL: Diamonds of Dreams

Batter up! Learn the fundamentals, build teamwork, and enjoy America's favorite pastime.

Grab your gloves and hit the diamond. Fun and fundamentals combine in this thrilling sport.

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT: The Heart of It All

Whether on the track, court, or diamond, spring sports unite the community.

The upcoming season is a celebration of teamwork, resilience, and the joy of sport. As the days grow longer and the temperatures rise, these athletes are ready to shine. Let the season begin!

Registration for spring sports will open up in late January / early February. Please keep your eye on [www.dunellenparksandrecreation.com](http://www.dunellenparksandrecreation.com) for registration details.

## Message from the Mayor

*Continued from page 8...*

- Wayfinding signage through a NJDOT Transit Village Grant which includes guides to key locations such as Borough Hall and public parking areas, signage detailing the history of Dunellen, and QR codes for digital maps and a directory of Dunellen businesses.
- We will continue our assessment of a Special Improvement District for our downtown with INK Creative Strategies.
- The Borough will continue to advocate for the modernization of the Dunellen Train Station alongside our state representatives from Legislative District 21.
- Second Street Phase 1 will begin in the spring, which spans from Schwartz Place to Madison Avenue and will include the removal and replacement of severely damaged curbs and sidewalks, the installation of new ADA-accessible sidewalk ramps at the intersections, the replacement of any damaged castings, and the installation of two-speed check radar systems, push-button beacon lights, enhanced traffic safety strips, and markings, concluding with the milling and paving of the road.
- The Washington Avenue Streetlighting Project will see the installation of decorative LED lights along Washington Avenue between First Street & Dunellen Avenue and between North Avenue & the Railroad Tracks.
- Further pedestrian safety improvements include the installation of ADA-compliant sidewalk

ramps along Route 28, the installation of push-button flashing beacons at the intersections of Sanford Avenue & Bound Brook Road, Lincoln Avenue & North Avenue, Prospect Avenue & North Avenue, and Jackson Avenue & North Avenue.

- Push-button flashing beacons will also be installed on Madison Avenue at Dunellen Avenue & First Street, and North Washington Avenue at Dunellen Avenue & First Street.
- The traffic lights at Washington Avenue and Madison Avenue will receive updated pedestrian crossing signals.
- The Borough will continue working with the Dunellen Parking Authority for a Downtown Parking Assessment to determine locations for future parking and how we can make our current lots more accessible for parking and bicycling.

It is a true honor to serve as the Mayor of our Miracle Mile and I am excited for all that 2025 has in store for us. The Borough of Dunellen is a truly special place thanks to our residents, businesses, and volunteers and there is a bright future ahead as we continue to work together. I wish

everyone a happy and healthy new year filled with success, growth, and opportunity.

Sincerely,



Jason F. Cilento, Mayor  
Borough of Dunellen



To read my full *State of the Borough* address, visit [www.Dunellen-NJ.gov/2025Reorganization](http://www.Dunellen-NJ.gov/2025Reorganization)

## Friends of the Dunellen Public Library New Adventures Await You At The Dunellen Public Library

The Friends of the Dunellen Public Library are happy to announce the availability of Library Museum Passes and Memberships which can be checked out using your library card. This service is a great way to offer new adventures for library patrons, giving them the opportunity to learn and discover new places or visit old favorites without having to pay admission fees.

Museum Passes / Memberships are currently available for the following places:

### The Intrepid, New York City

- Free access for 2 adults and 2 children to the Intrepid Museum, Space Shuttle Pavilion, and the submarine.
- Access to the express members-only admission line.
- Discounted tickets for additional guests (\$18 for Adults and \$13 for children).

### The Guggenheim, New York City

- 2 passes, each pass good for free admission for 4 people and allow 2 extra people at \$5 each.

### Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, New York

- Free admission for 2 adults all children under 18 living in the same household.
- Gift shop discount.

### Montclair Art Museum, Montclair, New Jersey

- Free admission for 2 adults and all children in the household.

### The Newark Art Museum, Newark, New Jersey

- Free admission for 2 adults and all children in the household.
- 10% Discount in the Museum Shops.

### Museum of Natural History, New York City

- 1 admission voucher is good for 1 person.
- Ages 3 and up require a voucher.

### Coming Soon:

- **Turtleback Zoo, West Orange, New Jersey**  
Admission for 4 adults, 6 children.  
Turtleback Zoo merchandise discount.

To learn more about these wonderful opportunities or to check out Library Museum Passes, visit the Dunellen Public Library at 100 New Market Road.



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Phone: (732) 968-2828

James A. Gustafson, President/Manager, NJ Lic. No. 4205  
Daniel M. Erickson, Director, NJ Lic. No. 4798

## Dunellen Outings Community Committee (DOCC)

At the end of 2024, the Dunellen Outings Community Committee hosted several fun events for our Dunellen adult citizens and families.

Our September event, a Paint (by numbers!) and Sip evening thanks to Melanie's Hair Salon, was a huge success. Due to popular demand, we are looking to include this and similar events in our 2025 calendar! In October, DOCC hosted a trip to Columbia, NJ for a session at the Lakota Wolf Preserve. Participants had a wonderful day learning from the presenters about the wolf packs, foxes, bobcats, and lynx on the preserve and how they care for these animals, followed by lunch at the Blairstown Inn! November brought us back to Dunellen where we had great conversation and laughter over dinner at the Dunellen BBQ Meetup. Our last two events of the year, the annual Holiday Christmas Market trip, this year to the Sussex County Fairgrounds German Holiday Market, and Caroling Around Town took place in December. Join us for any and all of these events! It's always a good time!



Be sure to follow our Facebook Page, DOCC – Dunellen Outings Community Committee, to “Know What’s Up” with DOCC events. Our full 2025 calendar will be available in January, but we’re excited to offer a preview of what to expect in the first quarter:

- January:** Seafood Boil Meet Up
- February:** Learn to Play Mahjong Session
- March:** Train Trip to the Somerville St. Patrick's Day Parade

If you are interested in joining our committee (volunteers working under the Dunellen Recreation Department) or have any questions or recommendations, feel free to send us a private message through Messenger or our email address: [dunellendocc@dunellenborough.com](mailto:dunellendocc@dunellenborough.com). Events are open to present and prior Dunellen residents, ages 18+, and their guests, however many are family-friendly where specified. We're looking forward to a fun 2025 and meeting more of our neighbors!



## Important Winter Weather Information

**Don't get a ticket! Remove your vehicle(s) from the street during snow events.**

In order to allow snowplows to operate freely and unimpeded, during the period of time commencing one hour after snow has been continuously falling and ending 12 hours after snow ceases to fall, no person shall park, stop, stand, or leave abandoned vehicles on a street within the Borough of Dunellen, according to Borough Code §256-5. Alternate off-street parking during snow emergencies is available at:



- American Legion Post 119, 137 New Market Road
- McCoy Park, 246 Fourth Street
- Columbia Park, 200 Orange Street

The Dunellen Police Department will mail tickets to vehicle owners who do not comply with removing their vehicles from streets in the Borough of Dunellen when roads are snow-covered.

### Shovel Your Sidewalk Within 24 Hours

The owner or occupant of lands bordering sidewalks are required to remove all snow and ice from sidewalks within 24 hours after snow ceases, according to Borough Code §256-1. The Borough code inspector will mail notices of fines to persons who do not comply.

### Clear Snow From Around Fire Hydrants

If a fire hydrant is located adjacent to your property, please clear a

3 foot perimeter of snow around the fire hydrant. This will help the fire department respond to emergencies more quickly.

### Emergency Numbers

In the case of an emergency, call 9-1-1; for all other non-emergency matters call (732) 968-3000, x0.

### PSE&G Outages and Downed Wires

To report downed wires or power outages, customers should call PSE&G's customer service line at (800) 436-7734. General outage activity is available online at [www.pseg.com/outagecenter](http://www.pseg.com/outagecenter) and updates are posted at [www.pseg.com](http://www.pseg.com) during severe weather.

*PSE&G's Tips for Planning Ahead for Bad Weather* <https://nj.pseg.com/safetyandreliability/stormsafety>

### New Jersey American Water

Customer service center: (800) 272-1325

### 2-1-1

NJ 211 is an information and referral service that connects people in need with services that can help. Visit their website for more information: <https://www.nj211.org/>

### Important Resources from the State of New Jersey Office of Emergency Management

NJ Weather Forecasts and Warnings: <https://www.weather.gov/phi/>  
 NJ Office of Emergency Management: <https://nj.gov/njoem/>

## Borough of Dunellen Receives Over \$1.5M in Grants for 2025 Fiscal Year

### North Avenue Improvement Project

The Borough of Dunellen is excited to announce that we are a recipient of the 2025 Transit Village Grant Awards in the amount of \$430,000. This funding will support the North Avenue Streetscape Improvement project, which includes the installation of decorative LED lights along North Avenue from Jackson Avenue to Jefferson Avenue. Building off of last year's successful installation of similar lighting along Bound Brook Road, this project will complete the illumination of the entire length of Route 28 (North Avenue) with decorative LED lights, enhancing the safety, appearance, and overall experience for residents and visitors.

### NJDOT Safe Streets Program - South Washington Avenue Sidewalk Replacement

The Borough of Dunellen has been awarded \$646,000 from the New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) Fiscal Year 2025 Safe Streets to Transit Program. These funds will go towards the replacement of sidewalks along the entirety of South Washington Avenue.

### Sanford Avenue Improvement Project

The Borough was just awarded a \$460,830.00 grant from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) for work on Sanford Avenue from Bound Brook Road to

Third Street. The scope of work will include removing and replacing any severely damaged curbs and sidewalks, installing all-new ADA-compliant sidewalk ramps at all intersections, push button flashing beacon crosswalk at the intersection of Sanford Avenue & First Street (at Morecraft Park), speed check radar detectors and pedestrian safety enhanced road striping, and milling and paving of the street. This project is projected to take place in 2027.

While the grants for these projects have been awarded for the 2025 Fiscal Year, it is important to note that their completion follows a two-year cycle due to the timelines and financial obligations of projects that are currently underway.

## DUNELLEN GOVERNMENT DIRECTORY

[www.dunellen-nj.gov](http://www.dunellen-nj.gov)

All council meetings are held in the Municipal Council Chambers, on the first and third Monday of the month, located at 355 North Ave, Dunellen. Meetings commence at 7:00pm, unless otherwise noted.

### Elected Officials:

**Jason F. Cilento, Mayor**

732-882-4551, [jcilento@dunellen-nj.gov](mailto:jcilento@dunellen-nj.gov)

**Daniel Cole Sigmon, Council President**

[dsigmon@dunellen-nj.gov](mailto:dsigmon@dunellen-nj.gov)

**Teresa Albertson, Councilmember**

[talbertson@dunellen-nj.gov](mailto:talbertson@dunellen-nj.gov)

**Crisol-Iris Lantz, Councilmember**

[clantz@dunellen-nj.gov](mailto:clantz@dunellen-nj.gov)

**Trina Rios, Councilmember**

[trios@dunellen-nj.gov](mailto:trios@dunellen-nj.gov)

**William Scott, Councilmember**

[wscott@dunellen-nj.gov](mailto:wscott@dunellen-nj.gov)

**Harold VanDermark, Councilmember**

[hvandermark@dunellen-nj.gov](mailto:hvandermark@dunellen-nj.gov)

### Business Administrator, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Superintendent of Department of Public Works:

**Alexander Miller**

732-968-3033, [amiller@dunellenborough.com](mailto:amiller@dunellenborough.com)

### Municipal Clerk:

**Lauren Staats, RMC**

732-968-3033 (Phone)

732-968-8605 (Fax)

M-F: 9:00am-4:30pm

### Communications Coordinator:

**William George**

[communications@dunellenborough.com](mailto:communications@dunellenborough.com)

### Registrar:

**Lauren Staats, CMR**

M-F: 9:00am-3:00pm

*Marriage License Applications are by appointment only.*

### Tax Collector:

**Dawn Hutchison**

[dhutchison@dunellenborough.com](mailto:dhutchison@dunellenborough.com)

**Maria Santos, Tax Clerk**

[msantos@dunellenborough.com](mailto:msantos@dunellenborough.com)

732-968-1226 (Phone)

732-968-3903 (Fax)

M-F: 9:00am-4:30pm

### Tax Assessor:

**Dawn Gutschall**

[dgutschall@dunellenborough.com](mailto:dgutschall@dunellenborough.com)

1st & 3rd Monday of the month

5:00-7:30pm (or by appointment)

732-289-8131 (Phone)

732-968-3903 (Fax)

### Construction Office:

**Scott Brescher**

[sbrescher@dunellenborough.com](mailto:sbrescher@dunellenborough.com)

101 Prospect Ave, off Skinner Plaza

M-F: 9:00am-4:30pm

#### Inspections

**Monday: Building Inspection**

3:00pm-6:00pm

**Tuesday: Fire, Electrical, & Plumbing**

**Inspections 3:00pm-6:00pm**

**Thursday: Building, Fire,**

**Electrical & Plumbing Inspections**

3:00pm-6:00pm

**Wednesday & Friday: No inspections**

732-968-3323 (Phone)

732-968-3872 (Fax)

### Recreation Program Coordinator:

**Kelly Seader**

[kseader@dunellenborough.com](mailto:kseader@dunellenborough.com)

### Planning Board:

Regular meetings - 4th Monday of each

month at 7:00pm

Municipal Building

### Director of Community

#### Development:

**Derryck White**

[dwhite@dunellenborough.com](mailto:dwhite@dunellenborough.com)

### Office of Emergency Management:

732-968-3033 ext. 126

**Homer Mosley, OEM Coordinator**

[hmosley@dunellenborough.com](mailto:hmosley@dunellenborough.com)

**Bill Carlson, OEM Deputy Coordinator**

[wcarlson@dunellenborough.com](mailto:wcarlson@dunellenborough.com)

**Joseph Cummins, OEM Deputy Coordinator**

[jcummins@dunellenborough.com](mailto:jcummins@dunellenborough.com)

### Code Enforcement:

**George Deene**

908-672-2593, [gdeene@dunellenborough.com](mailto:gdeene@dunellenborough.com)

**Ken Baudendistel**

[kbaudendistel@dunellenborough.com](mailto:kbaudendistel@dunellenborough.com)

### Public Works

M-Sat: 8:00am-2:00pm

235 Hall Steet, 732-968-5455

Paint Drop Off: 2nd Saturday each month

(8:00am-12:00pm)

### Municipal Attorney:

**William P. Robertson**

### MCIA – Division of Recycling

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# Dunellen Public Schools

## 10 Ways to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse

Just coming off of their production of *10 Ways to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse*, Dunellen High School is already taking a bite out of their next production!

Dunellen High School Performing Arts has been exceptionally busy this fall. Students from the Drama department performed at Founders' Day, a Borough event in October, presented their fall play in November, and are now rehearsing for *The Addams Family, The Musical*, which performs March 6-8 at the High School. Pictured in the photo are Gwendolynn Dubrow as Fester, Maria Stein as Wednesday, Kayden Perdomo as Gomez, Gianna Spano as Thing, Genevieve Sa-Onoy as Morticia, Matwo Morales as Lurch, Maya Borrás as Cousin It, and Amaya Noel as Grandma. Keep your eyes and ears open on how you can purchase tickets for this great event!

Beyond rehearsals for productions, the Drama Department is being represented by students Maria Stein and Samuel Souffrant at the English Speaking Union's Shakespeare Competition in February and several students will be performing at the Middlesex Teen Arts Festival in March the week after the spring production.

"This year is a very exciting one for performing arts in Dunellen. We hope you all get a chance and come out to one of our events or many fundraising activities", Stated Tori Clemens, Drama and Public Speaking teacher and Director for Dunellen High School.



## Dunellen High School

### New Jersey Department of Education Seal of Biliteracy 2024-2025 School Year

For the past few years, Dunellen High School students have been gaining their New Jersey Department of Education Seal of Biliteracy, this year is no different. Students decided to forgo a Saturday of sleeping in, to come in and sit for the STAMP test, one final requirement to qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy. This year we have students seeking qualification for Spanish, German, Hindi, and French. Over the years we have had students seek the seal for Spanish, French, German, Russian and Ukrainian. The importance of this seal, as students graduate and move into the workforce, is the endorsement of their lingual capabilities amounting to more than simply a resume self-report. This increases the marketability of our students in an ever increasing global society. As is our custom in Dunellen, each year, at our annual Award Night presentation in May, the students receiving their seal of Biliteracy for that year will be announced and awarded their certificates. During the award night program graduating seniors also receive local scholarships, therefore, many students are gaining several awards and recognition in one action packed evening. Dunellen Public Schools seeks to prepare students for the challenges of the world and the Seal of Biliteracy is one such preparatory step!

## Dunellen High School Hosts Annual Freshman Focus Day for Career Exploration

On Thursday, December 5, Dunellen High School (DHS) held its annual **Freshman Focus Day**, an enriching event dedicated to helping freshmen students explore potential career paths and envision their future.

The day began with an interactive session where students completed **interest inventories**, designed to match their unique preferences and strengths with suitable career options. This exercise provided students with a personalized starting point for considering future aspirations.

The highlight of the day featured engaging presentations by four guest speakers representing a diverse range of professions:

- **Middlesex County Sheriff's K9 Unit:**  
Offering an up-close look at law enforcement and the specialized training of K9 teams.
- **Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy:**  
Showcasing how therapy with horses is making strides in mental health care.
- **Commercial Airline Pilot:**  
Sharing insights into the high-flying world of aviation and the journey to earning wings.
- **Forensic Document Examination:**  
Delving into the intriguing field of forensic science and document analysis.

Each speaker provided valuable perspectives on their careers, discussing their educational and training paths, daily responsibilities, and advice for students considering similar fields.

The day concluded with **small group discussions**, where students reflected on their own interests and explored how these could align with various career opportunities. These conversations aimed to inspire students to think critically about their futures and the steps they can take now to achieve their goals.

Dunellen High School remains committed to fostering career readiness and helping students achieve their full potential. Freshman Focus Day is just one of the many initiatives designed to prepare students for successful and fulfilling futures.

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# Dunellen Public Schools

## Preschool Expansion

### John P. Faber Elementary School New Seats for 2025-26 school year!

- Offering new seats to preschool students who will turn 3 or 4 years of age before October 1, 2025.
- Please note: this interest survey is for families NOT YET enrolled in the Dunellen Public Schools preschool program.
- If your child is currently enrolled, your spot is saved for next year.
- 2025-26 seats will be provided on a lottery basis.

If you are interested in this preschool expansion opportunity for the 2025-26 school year, please fill out the Interest Survey by scanning the QR code.

Please contact Melissa Vanraes, Early Childhood Supervisor, with any questions or concerns: [vanraesm@dunellenschools.org](mailto:vanraesm@dunellenschools.org).



## Expansión Preescolar

### Escuela primaria John P. Faber ¡Nuevos asientos para el año escolar 2025-26!

- Ofreciendo nuevos asientos a niños de preescolar que cumplan 3 o 4 años antes del 1 de octubre de 2025.
- Tenga en cuenta: esta encuesta de interés es para familias que AÚN NO están inscritas en el programa preescolar de las Escuelas Públicas de Dunellen.
- Si su hijo está actualmente inscrito, su lugar se guarda para el próximo año.
- 2025-26 Los asientos se proporcionarán por lotería.

Si está interesado en esta oportunidad de expansión preescolar para el año escolar 2025-26, complete la Encuesta de interés escaneando el código QR.

Comuníquese con Melissa Vanraes, Supervisora de Primera Infancia, si tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud: [vanraesm@dunellenschools.org](mailto:vanraesm@dunellenschools.org).



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DUN25

## Dunellen Earns Prestigious Awards and Acknowledgements for Smart Growth, Downtown Excellence, and Innovation

The Borough of Dunellen has recently received a series of recognitions for its commitment to sustainable growth, community development, and infrastructure improvement. These awards reflect Dunellen's commitment to fostering responsible, community-centered advancements while providing new opportunities for housing, diverse businesses, and public improvements that will benefit our Borough.

First, in October 2024, Dunellen was featured in Business View Magazine. This leading North American publication reports on the latest advances in municipal public works, green initiatives, and college sustainability programs. The feature highlights Dunellen's small-town charm and proactive approach to growth while preserving our rich history and community values.

On October 22, The Nell at Dunellen Station received the prestigious 2024 Smart Growth Award from New Jersey Future. Mayor Jason F. Cilento and Business Administrator Alex Miller joined representatives from Prism Capital Partners and Spiezle Architectural Group at the New Brunswick Performing Arts Center to accept the award on behalf of the Borough. This honor recognizes the transformative vision of the Nell at Dunellen Station, a development that has revitalized a former industrial site into a thriving mixed-use community.

In November 2024, Downtown Dunellen was awarded the "Great Downtown" designation by the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association (NJ APA). This annual award celebrates



outstanding places that demonstrate the transformative power of great planning to create vibrant, healthy, equitable, and sustainable communities. The official awards ceremony was held on December 12 at the South Orange Performing Arts Center. Dunellen's downtown has become a model of community spirit and innovation, featuring diverse businesses, new housing opportunities, and a welcoming atmosphere for residents and visitors alike.

"Dunellen's recent recognitions highlight how far we've come with balancing growth and our community's identity. Our efforts aren't just about new buildings, but about ensuring that every step we take benefits our residents and future generations to come. It is encouraging to see our years of planning, hard work, and community input being recognized by so many organizations and publications," said 2024 Dunellen Borough Council President Teresa Albertson.

Finally, Dunellen will be starting 2025 with a feature in the January edition of Real Estate New Jersey's monthly issue, which will be available in both digital and print formats. Mayor Cilento sat down with the publication to discuss new construction projects in the Borough as well as our larger efforts to revitalize our downtown. The January issue of Real Estate New Jersey is expected to be published online a week or so into the month with physical copies to be released the following week.

Mayor Jason F. Cilento expressed his gratitude for these recognitions and for the efforts that made them possible, "These awards are a testament to the incredible teamwork and dedication of everyone involved in shaping the future of Dunellen. We are incredibly fortunate to work with such knowledgeable and dedicated individuals from our municipal team and project partners to our local businesses, residents, and volunteers. None of this would be possible without you, and I look forward to our continued collaboration here in our Miracle Mile."

The Borough of Dunellen extends its thanks to DMR Architects, NW Financial Group, LLC, McManimon, Scotland & Baumann, CME Associates, Windels Marx Lane & Mittendorf, King, Moench & Collins LLP, Gabe Bailer, Mayor Robert J. Seader, former and current members of the Dunellen Borough Council, the Dunellen Planning Board, Business Administrator Alex Miller, Director of Community Development Derryck C. White, the Dunellen Downtown Management Organization, the Dunellen Arts & Culture Commission, the Dunellen Parking Authority, our Borough employees, volunteers, residents, and business owners, and all who have had a hand in the incredible progress our Miracle Mile has made.

"The Dunellen Team has done an amazing job, recreating the downtown and overall Borough appeal, all without sacrificing the rich history and traditions that make the Borough unique. I am excited as we look to the future and continue to collectively work towards the mayor and council's vision of a sustainable hometown feel with destination locations woven into the fabric of the Borough," said Director of Community Development Derryck White.

### Dunellen Arts, Inclusion, & Culture Commission (DAICC)

The Dunellen Arts, Inclusion, and Culture Commission is working with the Dunellen High School Coordinator for the Black Student Union (BSU) to help recognize Black History Month and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Details will be provided soon on the DAICC Facebook page, @DunellenDAICC.

Details for the Dunellen Arts, Inclusion, and Culture Commission's Cake Decorating Class, which will take place on January 27, are coming soon. Follow DAICC on Facebook, @DunellenDAICC, for the latest updates!

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