

# Gloucester County Today

ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED AND MORE FROM GLOUCESTER COUNTY

## COLLABORATIVE COUNTY INITIATIVE FOR NEURODIVERSITY

In a groundbreaking initiative that could be a national model for the provision of lifelong services for the developmentally disabled, Gloucester County was pleased to enter a partnership with Rowan College of South Jersey (RCSJ), the Schools for Neurodiversity at the Gloucester County Special Services School District, Rowan University and its medical schools, and Cumberland County for the creation of the collaborative Academy for Neurodiversity on the RCSJ campus.



Speaking: Michael Givens, RCSJ ACT student; Dr. Guy Davidson, Dean of Academic Advancement and Special Services, RCSJ; Interpreting: Courtney Schoettle, Sign Language Interpreter from GCSSSD

The new initiative was announced at a press conference attended by former Senate President Steve Sweeney; Chad Bruner, Gloucester County Administrator and Rowan University Board of Trustees Chair; Gloucester County Board of Commissioners Director Frank DiMarco; RCSJ President Frederick Keating; Gloucester County Special Services District Superintendent James Dundee; Dr. Jennifer LeComte, Director of the Rowan Integrated Special Needs Center at Rowan's School of Osteopathic Medicine, and other officials, parents, and students. The Residences at South College Drive, an on-site housing complex featuring 24 one-bedroom apartments and community facilities has been made possible by a significant investment of \$7.365 million



in National Housing Trust funds and \$3.75 million in grants from Gloucester County.

Commissioner Director DiMarco noted that Gloucester County has been on the cutting edge of a wide range of shared services, from countywide tax assessment and ambulance services to jails, but said that partnerships that have been created to provide coordinated special services to the developmentally

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Bumping elbows with former Senate President Steve Sweeney is Dominic Lomanno, Food Services Coordinator at GCSSSD

## CONGRATULATIONS TO EMS ACADEMY CLASS #008



The graduation ceremony for the Gloucester County EMS Academy Class #008, was held on Wednesday, November 8th. Commissioners DiCarlo and Jefferson attended, as did Trauma Surgeon Dr. John Chovanes from Cooper University Healthcare Systems. Dr. Beard and Dr. Bonner from Inspira Health Network delivered congratulatory remarks virtually. Congratulations to the entire class!

## SANTA PAWS IS COMING TO TOWN

Commissioner Frank J. DiMarco, the Director of the Board of Commissioners and Liaison to the Animal Shelter, welcomes the community to Santa Paws, the perfect opportunity to make the holiday season extra special by adding a new four-legged family member to your home. During this event, the adoption fee is reduced, making it even more accessible to provide a loving forever home to a deserving pet. Every adopter will receive a go-home gift bag generously filled with goodies to ensure that your new family member starts their journey with all the love and care they deserve. The gift bags include new dog sweaters donated from CVS (only dogs), water bowls, toys and treats. The highlight of the day is a special appearance by none other than Santa Claus himself. Don't miss the chance to capture the magic of the season with a cherished photograph for just \$5.

This heartwarming event will take place on December 5th from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Gloucester County Animal Shelter, 1200 N Delsea Dr., Clayton NJ 08312. Let's make this holiday season extra special by opening our hearts and homes to the furry friends who need us most.

Find our adoption application at [www.gloucestercountynj.gov/FormCenter/Animal-Shelter-5/PreAdoption-Application-50](http://www.gloucestercountynj.gov/FormCenter/Animal-Shelter-5/PreAdoption-Application-50) or scan the QR code.



## FIVE YEARS OF LIFESAVING EXCELLENCE



Recently, Commissioner Denice DiCarlo, the liaison to the Department of Public Safety, marked a significant milestone—the Five-Year Anniversary of the Gloucester County EMS Training Academy.

During this memorable event, a proclamation was presented, acknowledging the unwavering dedication, commitment, and remarkable lifesaving work accomplished by the Academy.

Over the past five years, the Gloucester County EMS Training Academy has shone brightly as a beacon of hope, knowledge, and expertise within our community. The Academy has produced a cadre of skilled and compassionate first responders who have, in turn, saved countless lives.

Congratulations to the Gloucester County EMS Training Academy on this remarkable milestone and the invaluable service it provides to our community.

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## GRANT FUNDS UTILIZED FOR FIRE SAFETY

Commissioner Director Frank J. DiMarco joined Commissioners Denice DiCarlo and Jim Jefferson as well as over 60 firefighters to celebrate the beam signing of the new modernized training facility for the Fire Academy. This was made possible through the use of a \$5 million grant from the State of New Jersey. The County is using \$3 million from the grant on improvement projects to better equip county fire personnel. These improvements include renovations and modernization to the existing Fire Academy, an expansion of a new state-of-the-art instructional building, new apparatus, new training props, and a class "A" live fire training building.



## WHITALL HOUSE CANDLELIGHT TOURS AWAITS AT RED BANK BATTLEFIELD

This December, Commissioner Jim Jefferson, Liaison to the Parks & Recreation Department, invites you to experience Whitall House Candlelight Tours at Red Bank Battlefield, an unforgettable journey into the heart of Yuletide traditions. Admission is free, the ambiance is enchanting, and the history is rich. Don't miss this opportunity to step back in time and experience Christmas in the Colonial era. One of the many charms of the Whitall House Candlelight Tours is that

each year, a different Yuletide theme takes center stage. These themes provide a fresh perspective on holiday traditions and their origins in the Colonial Days. The Whitall House Candlelight Tours offer a unique opportunity to delve into the holiday season as it would have been experienced during the Colonial era. The historic setting takes on a new life as it becomes a canvas for Christmas traditions of yesteryear.



**Where:** Red Bank Battlefield, National Park

**When:** Friday, December 8, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, Saturday, December 9, from 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm, Sunday, December 10, from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm

**For more information about the Whitall House Candlelight Tours, call (856) 224-8045.**

Initiative for Neurodiversity—continued from Page 1

disabled have been the most rewarding.

"What's incredible here is the partnerships that have teamed up so smoothly to serve the needs of those who need our assistance the most," said Bruner.

Sweeney, who championed programs for the developmentally disabled as both Gloucester County Freeholder Director and as Senate President, joined Keating in leading a tour of the Stephen M. Sweeney Center for Special Services' job training and placement programs and the Bankbridge Developmental Center's autism unit following the press conference.

## TAX APPEAL REMINDER

Commissioner Director Frank J. DiMarco is happy to provide you with some important information from the County Board of Taxation. As the year draws to a close, it's that time again when taxpayers need to keep a close eye on their assessments and consider filing a tax appeal.

### Important Dates

Mark your calendars! Tax appeals for the year 2024 can be filed between November 15th and January 15th. These crucial dates are your window of opportunity to ensure your property's assessment is fair and accurate.

### Assessment Notifications

In early November, residents in 22 out of the County's 24 municipalities will receive a postcard in the mail. This postcard will notify you of your tax assessment for the upcoming year. It's a heads-up that's worth its weight in gold.

### Special Attention: Clayton Borough and Logan Township

If you happen to reside in Clayton Borough or Logan Township, these areas are currently undergoing reassessments. Watch for more information regarding your new assessments in the coming months, during November and December. You'll also be given the opportunity to meet with representatives from the Tax Assessor's Office to discuss the data used to determine the value of your property. Please stay tuned for further details, including the extended tax appeal filing deadline.

### How to File a Tax Appeal

The postcard you receive will include instructions on how to file an appeal. Alternatively, you can visit the Gloucester County website, navigate to the "Departments" section, and find the "Board of Taxation" for additional details. If you prefer, you can call the County Tax Board at 856-307-6448.

### Understanding the Burden of Proof

It's vital to understand that in a tax appeal, the burden of proof lies with the taxpayer (petitioner). You'll need to demonstrate what a willing buyer would have paid a willing seller for your property on October 1, 2023.

This date serves as the basis for assessments in 2024, and assessments are primarily based on "market value."

### What You Cannot Appeal

Let's clear up any misconceptions: When filing a tax appeal, there are certain aspects that you cannot challenge. These include:

- The actual amount of taxes you're required to pay.
- Your ability to afford the taxes.
- Comparisons with others paying less in taxes.
- Assessments of other properties being lower than yours.
- The separation of land and improvements in your appeal; they must be evaluated together.

We hope this information proves helpful as you prepare for the upcoming tax appeal season. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions, our office number is (856) 307-6445 or online at [www.gloucestercountynj.gov/241/Board-of-Taxation-County-Assessors-Office](http://www.gloucestercountynj.gov/241/Board-of-Taxation-County-Assessors-Office) or scan the QR code. The County Board of Taxation is here to assist you throughout the process.



## NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH

November has arrived, and with it comes the annual observance of National Diabetes Month. This year, the focus is on taking proactive steps to prevent diabetes-related health issues, as the battle against this pervasive disease rages on.

Commissioner Jim Jefferson, a dedicated advocate for health and well-being and Liaison to Health, Senior, Human, and Special Services, emphasizes the resources available to Gloucester County residents. The Gloucester County Health Department offers free health screenings at the Gloucester County Store, conveniently situated at the Deptford Mall. These screenings are provided on the first Friday of each month, between 10:00 am and 12:00 pm.

National Diabetes Month serves as a stark reminder of the ongoing battle against this disease. By collectively taking action, spreading awareness, and encouraging one another to adopt healthier lifestyles, we can work towards a future where diabetes-related health problems become a thing of the past.

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## 2023 FLU SHOT SCHEDULE



Commissioner Jim Jefferson, liaison to the Gloucester County Department of Health, reminds residents that the County offers free flu shot clinics to help keep our families healthy during flu season. For the convenience of residents:

- Drive-through clinics help those citizens who have difficulty walking or standing in lines get their shot.
- Designated preschool/daycare/family clinics are scheduled for families with children 18 years and younger. All family members can get vaccinated at the same time.
- Clinics are scheduled on weekdays, weekends, and during evening hours.



**Monday, December 4, 2023**

2pm-3pm  
Gloucester Co. Health Department  
204 East Holly Avenue Sewell, NJ 08080

**Thursday, December 7, 2023**

5pm-6pm  
Gloucester Co. Health Department  
204 East Holly Avenue, Sewell, NJ 08080

**Monday, December 11, 2023**

4pm-5pm  
Gloucester Co. Health Department  
204 East Holly Avenue, Sewell, NJ 08080

**Thursday, December 14, 2023**

1pm-2pm  
Gloucester Co. Health Department  
204 East Holly Avenue, Sewell, NJ 08080

**Monday, December 18, 2023**

3pm-4pm  
Gloucester Co. Health Department  
204 East Holly Avenue, Sewell, NJ 08080

**Thursday, December 21, 2023**

4pm-5pm  
Gloucester Co. Health Department  
204 East Holly Avenue, Sewell, NJ 08080

**Thursday, December 28, 2023**

3pm - 5pm  
**Daycare, Preschool, Family Clinic**  
Gloucester Co. Health Department  
204 East Holly Avenue, Sewell, NJ 08080

For more information  
regarding flu shots,  
visit [www.glocestercountynj.gov/334/Influenza](http://www.glocestercountynj.gov/334/Influenza),  
scan the QR code, or call  
(856) 218-4101



## DEER CARCASS REMOVAL

The Gloucester County Public Works Department provides a pick-up service for deer carcasses on county and municipal roads and within the right of way. If you are traveling through Gloucester County and see a deer carcass on one of these roadways you can report it to the Public Works Department by calling 856-307-6400 or sending an email to [publicworks@co.glooucester.nj.us](mailto:publicworks@co.glooucester.nj.us).

**Deer carcasses on State roadways can be reported by calling the NJDOT at 609-588-6212 or by sending an email to [publicworks@co.glooucester.nj.us](mailto:publicworks@co.glooucester.nj.us)**

## HONORING OUR HEROES: APPLY NOW FOR THE GLOUCESTER COUNTY MILITARY SERVICE MEDAL

Gloucester County is gearing up to pay tribute to the brave men and women who have served in the military. Commissioner Denice DiCarlo, Liaison to the Office of Veterans Affairs, is calling upon all eligible veterans to apply for the Gloucester County Military Service Medal.

The Gloucester County Military Service Medal is a symbol of the County's deep appreciation for the sacrifices made by our military heroes. It serves as a heartfelt acknowledgment of their dedication and commitment to preserving the safety and freedom of our nation.

To be eligible for the Gloucester County Military Service Medal, veterans must be a resident of Gloucester County or have entered military service from Gloucester County. Veterans can pick up the application in person at the Office of Veterans Affairs, located at 211 County House Road, Sewell, NJ.

Alternatively, you can download the application online at [gloucestercounty.gov](http://gloucestercounty.gov). Go to the "Departments" section, and select "Veterans Affairs." Once you've printed the application, complete it, and don't forget to sign it. Veterans must also provide a copy of their Honorable Discharge. In the case of deceased veterans, family members can apply on their behalf. To do this, attach the Death Certificate and a copy of the veteran's DD214 to the application.

**Completed applications, along with the required documents, can be mailed to the Office of Veterans Affairs at P.O. Box 337, Woodbury, NJ 08096. Alternatively, you can drop them off in person at the Office of Veterans Affairs. For any questions or assistance, feel free to contact the Office of Veterans Affairs at (856) 401-7660.**

The Gloucester County Military Service Medal will be officially awarded at a special ceremony in April 2024.

## WORLD AIDS DAY

December 1 is World AIDS Day dedicated to raising awareness about HIV, reducing stigma, showing support for those living with the virus, and commemorating the lives lost. Commissioner Jim Jefferson is shining a light on the HIV counseling and testing services available at the Gloucester County Department of Health. Public Health Nurses and a dedicated social worker are available to provide testing and counseling to those in need. These sessions encompass discussions about risk factors and strategies for risk reduction. Appointments are required.

**For additional information or to schedule an appointment, you can contact the Gloucester County Department of Health at 856-218-4102 or visit Gloucester County's Medicat Connect to register for an account and make an appointment.**



## RESTORE'S 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Last month, the Gloucester County Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Pitman celebrated its 15th Anniversary. The ReStore is a great resource for Gloucester County residents looking to both donate and find affordable items for their home. The work done at the store gives back to the community by building safe, comfortable, and affordable houses for those in need.



# INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY: GLOUCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT'S UPCOMING PROJECTS

Gloucester County is gearing up for a series of impactful infrastructure projects, each designed to enhance our community's safety, accessibility, and overall quality of life. These projects, managed by the Public Works Department, are a testament to the County's commitment to progress and development. Heather Simmons, Deputy Director of the Board of Commissioners and Liaison to the Department of Public Works, underlines the importance of these initiatives in shaping the County's future.



## Projects Underway Last Month



- Bridge Rehabilitation Project - This vital project encompasses the rehabilitation of three bridges in different townships:
- Bridge 3-E-7 on CR 653 Paulsboro Swedesboro Road, spanning Pargey Creek between CR 607 Tomlin Station Road and CR 684 Repaupo Station Road / Asbury Station Road in Greenwich and Logan Townships.
- Bridge 3-E-4 on CR 653 Paulsboro Swedesboro Road, crossing London Branch between CR 607 Tomlin Station Road and Interstate 295 in Greenwich Township.
- Bridge 3-G-2 on CR 678 Mantua Paulsboro Road, traversing Edwards Run at Lock No. 9 in East Greenwich. This bridge is situated south of the CR 551 Kings Highway intersection.
- Resurfacing and Safety Improvements - The Public Works Department is embarking on a resurfacing and safety improvement project for several crucial roads:
- Monroeville Road (CR 604) and Dutch Row Road (CR 611) in Franklin and Elk Townships.
- Clems Run Road (CR 623) in Elk and Harrison Townships.
- Delaware and Cooper Streets (CR 640 / 534) in West Deptford Township and the City of Woodbury.
- Swedesboro Road / Mullica Hill Road (US 322) in Harrison Township.

## Projects Set to Commence Later This Year

- Resurfacing and Safety Improvements to Harrisonville Road (CR 668) will benefit the Townships of South Harrison and Woolwich. This project aims to enhance road quality and safety for residents in these areas.
- Roundabout Installation at College Drive (CR 712) and Alumni Drive is scheduled to take place on the campus of Rowan College of South Jersey in Deptford Township. This addition promises to streamline traffic flow and enhance safety on campus.
- Countywide Drainage and Stormwater Improvements Project - This significant initiative will address drainage and stormwater concerns across the County. It involves minor concrete repairs and the installation of erosion control measures at more than a dozen bridges throughout Gloucester County.

## GLOUCESTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Frank J. DiMarco, *Director*

Heather Simmons, *Deputy Director*

Lyman Barnes

Nicholas DeSilvio

Denice DiCarlo

Jim Jefferson

Christopher Konawel Jr.

# EXPLORE YOUR CREATIVE SIDE WITH ACRYLIC PAINTING CLASSES

Unleash your creativity and join us for a series of exciting acrylic painting classes at our Senior Nutrition Sites. We extend a warm invitation to all Gloucester County residents aged 60 and older to join us in these creative sessions. Whether you're a seasoned artist or a beginner looking to explore your artistic side, these classes are designed to cater to all skill levels. Due to the overwhelming response from previous sessions, we're delighted to announce that we're expanding our offerings to ensure more of our residents can participate and enjoy this artistic experience.

### Dates:

- **December 7** @ 10:00 am – Thorofare Fire Hall, 100 Firehouse Rd. Thorofare, NJ 08086
- **December 14** @ 10:00 am – Pfeiffer Community Center, 301 Blue Bell Rd. Williamstown, NJ 08094
- **December 19** @ 10:00 am – First Baptist Church of Jericho, 981 Mail Ave. Deptford, NJ 08096
- **December 21** @ 10:00 am – Second Baptist Church, 1540 Swedesboro Ave. Paulsboro, NJ 08066



**Please be aware that due to the popularity of these classes, seating is limited.**

**To secure your spot registration is required. Simply contact the Division of Senior Services at (856) 384-6900 or send an email to [seniors@co.goucester.nj.us](mailto:seniors@co.goucester.nj.us). Get ready to paint, express yourself, and explore your creativity.**

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The County of Gloucester complies with all state and federal rules and regulations against discrimination in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, and activities. In addition, the County encourages participation of people with disabilities in its programs and activities and offers special services to all residents 60 years of age and older. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the County's ADA Coordinator at (856) 384-6842/ New Jersey Relay Service 711.