



What's Happening in **Burlington County**



Hello Friends!

Happy Holidays! This year may be a little difficult for everyone with the coronavirus still plaguing our nation. We still have to be vigilant and health conscious, not traveling to see loved ones and not gathering with our families and friends. Even though this holiday season may not look and feel like those of our past, we can still celebrate with others via online chats, video calling and video messaging. We can also be thankful for each other and those of us who have been putting their lives on the line every day to keep our community safe.

We have been busy with a lot of activities. The recent General Election featured record-setting voter participation. I was proud to learn so many of our residents exercised their political voices.

We honored our veterans, and our military families, in recognition of Veterans Day and Military Families Appreciation Month. Burlington County is home to close to 25,000 veterans and we recognize their importance and sacrifices. And with the Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in our backyard, we go out of our way to make the installation's troops, civilian workers, and families, feel welcome here and that they have the resources they need and deserve.

Finally, on behalf of our entire Board, I wish you all a safe and healthy Holiday Season.

Permanent Art Easels at Smithville Give Residents a Place to Create Masterpieces

Burlington County artists have a few great locations to sketch, draw or paint.

"This new initiative is a great way for residents to enjoy the parks, while still maintaining social distancing during the pandemic," said Freeholder Director Felicia Hopson. "We hope residents take advantage of these new easels and share the artwork they created with the County."



Locations of Easels at Smithville Park:

[Near the Smithville Park Gazebo](#)

[On the Blue Trail overlooking the creek -](#)

[On the path along Smithville Lake](#)

Photo: Freeholder Director Felicia Hopson and Chrystal Walker, Artist and Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts, Willingboro Public Schools at the Art Easel overlooking Smithville Lake.

Burleo Continues to Respond to COVID-19



Much like the rest of the state and country, Burlington County has seen a dramatic rise in positive COVID-19 cases.

During the last two weeks alone, the county has seen an increase of more than 2,000 new cases. Where earlier this summer the county was averaging less than 20 new cases a day, this past week saw the county reach a record-high of nearly 400 new cases, and the positivity rate of testing performed by the County is now hovering around 15%. Earlier this summer the rate was less than 1%.

These numbers signal the arrival of the long-anticipated second wave of the pandemic and the need for residents to take precautions to protect friends, loved ones, neighbors and other vulnerable residents.

Wearing masks and obeying social-distancing requirements and quarantining guidance is more important than ever, and we need to everyone to be more vigilant to slow the spread.

COVID-19 testing is also available for all county residents and those who work in the county or attend school here. Testing is available three days a week at the Burlington County Human Services Building, 795 Woodlane Road in Westampton. And I encourage anyone who traveled out-of-state during this holiday or who gathered with family from other states to get tested.

“It’s time to shake off whatever COVID-19 fatigue we feel and return to following the precautions and guidance of doctors and scientists,” said Herb Conaway, Burlington County Health Department Director. “We proved we could manage it before. I implore you to do so again.”

Photo: Dr. Herb Conaway, Burlington County Health Department Director and COVID-19 Task Force Chair with Freeholder Dan O’Connell, Liaison to the Health Department at the latest coronavirus update media conference

Burleo Sees Record Election Participation

Participation in this year’s election was at an all-time high in Burlington County as a total of 267,122 voters cast ballots, amounting to 77% of the county’s registered voters.

The total turnout surpassed the previous high of 224,740 from the 2008 General Election.

By order of Gov. Phil Murphy, the election was conducted primarily with vote-by-mail ballots rather than in-person voting with machines to protect voters and poll workers from the virus.

More than 20,000 of new registrations were processed by the Superintendent of Elections Office between the Primary and General Election and a record 325,000-plus vote-by-mail ballots were issued by the Clerk’s Office.

A total of 251,738 participated via vote-by-mail ballots and another 15,347 voted at the polls on Nov. 3 with paper provisional ballots. Another 37 people voted with machine assistance at the polls because a disability prevented them from filling out a provisional ballot.



Burlington County Continues to Fight Hunger



The Freeholders continued their fight against hunger in Burlington County this season by partnering in three separate food distribution events.

The first was a Grab N Go Community in Burlington City where more than 500 catered meals were distributed to families in Burlington City through a partnership involving the offices of Sen. Troy Singleton and Assembly members Herb Conaway and Carol Murphy, Burlington City Police and the Burlington City High School.

The Freeholders [will](#) host their monthly food distribution event on Saturday, [December 19](#) at the County Emergency

Services campus in Westampton. During the November distribution, a total of 313 boxes of nonperishable groceries were given out to close to 250 families. The food is expected to help feed approximately 1,000 residents.

The Freeholders partnered again with Singleton's office and the Food Bank of South Jersey for a pop-up food distribution event in Beverly on November 14. In just two hours, more than 242 families received food for 970 people.

"No child or adult should have to go hungry because of the pandemic or recession," said Freeholder Director Felicia Hopson. "We've seen first-hand the need that exists, and we pledge to continue to work with our partners to try to provide help to every family who needs it."

Photo: Board Member Dan O'Connell, Director Felicia Hopson, Deputy Director Tom Pullion and Board Member Linda Hynes

Helping Veterans find the Burlington County VA Clinic

Little actions can make a big difference, especially if it can help veterans.

Burlington County's Freeholders proved that this summer when they arranged for the installation of two new directional signs in Evesham to alert motorists of the nearby location of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic off Route 73 and Lincoln Drive in Evesham.

The clinic, which was relocated from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst to Evesham after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, was notoriously hard to locate until Evesham leaders and the Freeholders learned of the situation and arranged for the new signs to be installed. [Read more.](#)

Photo: Burlington County Freeholder Deputy Director Tom Pullion and Evesham Township Deputy Mayor Heather Cooper visited the site of the new VA Clinic sign on Greentree Road.



Burlington County Sheriff's Department's Toy Drive Celebrates 25 years



A holiday tradition continues this year as the Burlington County Sheriff's Department is once again collecting toys for children in need this holiday season.

Now celebrating its 25th year, the Sheriff's Toy Drive is running from now until December 14 at more than 32 collection sites across the county.

"This year has been very difficult for many. That is why we are going to make our toy drive bigger than ever," Sheriff Anthony Basantis said. "Through the generosity of our volunteers and community partners, the County will come together to make this season more joyous for families that are less fortunate."

The Toy Drive got a huge lift last week from Amazon's Burlington Fulfillment Center, which made a \$26,000 donation of toys, sporting equipment electronic, household essentials and personal hygiene items. It is believed to be the largest single donation in the event's long

history.

"We're absolutely overwhelmed by Amazon's generosity and community spirit," Basantis said.

[Click here for a list of the collection sites.](#)

Photo: Sheriff Tony Basantis collected some of the toys that were donated at the box in the lobby of the County administration building in Mount Holly.

Recycle non-functioning holiday lights at Resource Recovery Center

While decorating for the holidays is a tradition many of us enjoy, too often strings of burnt out or damaged holiday lights end up being tossed out with household garbage. This is wasteful and harmful to the environment.

There is a greener way to properly dispose of these decorations. Instead of discarding non-working lights in the trash, the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders want residents to give them a second life by bringing them to the County's Resource Recovery Complex, where a permanent electronics disposal center is staffed Monday through Friday, from 7 AM to 4:30 PM and Saturdays, from 7 AM to 11:30 AM.

The Resource Recovery Center is located at 22000 Burlington-Columbus Road on the Florence-Mansfield border.

Photo: Freeholder Tom Pullion drops off non-functioning holiday lights at the resource recovery center to be recycled.



Update from County Administrator Eve A. Cullinan:



Burlington County has secured more than \$8 million in Federal CARES Act money. These funds have helped the County's COVID-19 response for initiative such as distributing free food to those in need, providing Personal Protection Equipment for first responders and long term care facilities, offering free COVID-19 testing, helping our most vulnerable with housing, and assisting small businesses with loans and promotions.

We are working hard to make sure our residents have the tools they need to navigate the pandemic and the ever-changing global health situation.

Citizens can receive this eNews (adapted to print version here for the Beverly Bee) by signing up on the County website, asking to be added to our news list or emailing the County. If you would like to be taken off the list, please respond to this email with unsubscribe.

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