

## UCUA Trash Incinerator At 90 Percent Capacity

By SARA MAGNOLA  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

RAHWAY — Sunil Garg, who will become the executive director of the Union County Utilities Authority (UCUA) on June 30 when Joseph Spatola of Scotch Plains officially retires, reported at the UCUA meeting last Thursday that the authority is "on track for meeting our requirements and commitments to Covanta Energy," the operator of the Union County Resource Recovery Facility in Rahway.

The facility, which came on-line in June 1994, processes up to 1,540 tons of solid waste each day into enough electrical energy to power some 30,000 homes and businesses. The Route 1 and 9 facility is owned by the UCUA and operated by Covanta Energy under a 25-year lease negotiated in 1998.

"Once again there are no deviations from the last three or four years worth of data. We are on track for meeting our requirements and commitments to Covanta and their capacity continues to be at the 88.6 to 90 percent [capacity] range, [which is] very high in the industry," Mr. Garg told UCUA commissioners at their June 21 meeting.

Mr. Garg also reported that "everything again is going along according to schedule" with the Route 1 and 9 alignment by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT). Construction, which has been ongoing since March 2004, is part of a \$270 million DOT project to make improvements to the 80-year old highway.

He said the resulting alterations should help with traffic and safety issues along the congested corridor from I-287 in Middlesex County to the Route 1 and 9 bridge, which is being replaced with \$20.5 million in federal funds. The bridge, according to the DOT, was built in 1929.

During an earlier UCUA meeting, the DOT expressed a desire to pave and open the section of Route 1 directly in front of the resource recovery facility. UCUA officials said this could be "problematic" since the electric gate for the new entrance to the facility would not yet be installed due to back-ordered parts.

The highway authority told Covanta they would provide for a round the clock guarded gate at the alternative entrance in the mean time. The issue is still under discussion.

In other news, the statewide Solid Waste Management Committee met for the first time this past month to

discuss any necessary amendments to the county's disposal strategy. UCUA Comptroller Tom Brennan, who is serving on the committee, reported that "a big portion of it would be recycling and we've reached out to the county to appoint a person to coordinate with us."

The committee is currently "compiling numbers" before meeting again in about two weeks. Mr. Brennan said he expects to have a more in-depth report for the authority's next meeting.

In response to questioning, Mr. Garg reminded commissioners that currently the UCUA only has responsibility over institutional and commercial recycling and has no authority over municipal recycling.

The UCUA appointed Joseph Bodek, clerk of the authority, as the custodian of records. The appointment was in accordance with the Open Public Records Act, which requires that the board "appoint a custodian of records who is responsible for receiving and responding to requests." In the case of Mr. Bodek's absence, Deputy Clerk Lisa Miskiewicz will fulfill the responsibility.

The UCUA next meeting is Wednesday, July 19 at 6:30 p.m.

## County United Way Certifies Agencies

AREA—The United Way of Greater Union County has certified 56 non-profit agencies that serve Union County residents. The 2006-2008 certified agencies include (listed by municipality):

Westfield: CONTACT We Care, Inc., Girl Scouts—Washington Rock Council, Literacy Volunteers of America, Mobile Meals of Westfield, Visiting Health Services of Union County, Inc., Westfield Community Center, and Youth And Family Counseling Service.

Clark: Prevention Links; Cranford, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark, Cerebral Palsy League, Cranford Family Care and the Mental Health Association of Union County.

Scotch Plains: Jewish Community Center of Central New Jersey and Resolve Community Counseling Center, Inc.

Springfield: ARC of Union County and Lifetime Support Incorporated. Summit: SAGE Eldercare.

For clubs and organization information, see [goleader.com/organizations](http://goleader.com/organizations)



RAISING AWARENESS... Former Governor Donald DiFrancesco is honored by the CARES Foundation, Inc., a group that raises awareness of Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia, an inherited disorder affecting the adrenal gland. Pictured, left to right, are: Erin Anthony, associate director; Meryl Stone, executive director; Kelly Leight, Mr. DiFrancesco and Mariel Vargas.

## Mountainside Council Passes No-Knock Policy

By KIMBERLY A. BROADWELL  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

MOUNTAINSIDE — The Mountainside borough council voted unanimously to adopt an ordinance to create a "no-knock" registry and a commercial solicitation and peddling ordinance at its June 20 meeting.

Borough Attorney John Post explained that a previously passed ordinance requiring commercial, religious and charitable organizations to register with the borough's police department before going "door to door" was found "illegal and unconstitutional" by the courts after a local environmental group questioned first amendment rights.

He stated that because of the court rulings brought by the environmental group, if a Mountainside citizen wishes to exercise his or her right not to be solicited they have to go to the police and ask to be placed on a "no solicitation list."

Mr. Post then stated that, under the new ordinance, residents are required to place a small clearly marked "no solicitation."

Mr. Post also stated that the ordinance was created similar to the no-calls registry that had been adopted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). He also noted violators would be subject to a fine of up to \$2,000.

In other business, it was announced that savings bonds were awarded to the valedictorian and salutatorians of Deerfield School and they would receive resolutions of congratulations by the mayor and council.

Erica Gennaro was named Valedictorian, and Jasmine Chan and Justine

Amezquita were named salutatorians.

The council unanimously passed a resolution appointing Martha De Jesus as the borough clerk to a three-year term.

Mayor Robert Vigilanti noted that the former acting borough clerk had just taken the state exam in April and passed. He said "she did something that many people don't do; she passed the test the very first time. She did a good job."

## Garwood Democrats Launch 2006 Campaign

GARWOOD -- The Garwood Democratic Party has announced that Mayor Dennis McCarthy, Councilwoman Kathleen Villaggio and first time candidate for Borough Council, Keith Sluka, have organized their 2006 Campaign Committee.

The Election Committee has selected Karen Resetar to serve as campaign manager, Rosemary Snow as honorary campaign manager and Stephen Napolitano as campaign committee treasurer.

## \$15.5 Mil. Recouped In Fraudulent Claims

NEWARK — Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey (Horizon BCBSNJ) announced that its investigations unit has recouped \$15.5 million as a result of fraudulent activity in 2005.

Since 1999, Horizon BCBSNJ's Special Investigations Unit has recovered and saved over \$80 million, officials said.

## Freeholders Asked Not to Use Quarry for Shelter

By SARA MAGNOLA  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

RAHWAY — The Union County freeholder board was asked last week by a Springfield environmental group not to proceed with a plan to build an animal shelter at the Houdaille Quarry in the township.

Faith Brancato of the Springfield Environmental Commission asked the board to "consider carefully changing the quarry," saying "it would be a shame to ruin it" and invited the freeholders to a walking tour of the land.

Freeholder Chairman Alexander Mirabella maintained his commitment to building a county animal shelter.

Several members of the animal rights activist group Humane Union County were also on hand for the board's June 22 meeting to share their thoughts after county officials met with representatives of Fall Church, Va.-based Geese Peace, a non-profit organization focused on humane methods to reduce the population of Canadian Geese.

Freeholder Mirabella said the county is "planning on using some of the practices (of Geese Peace) as a pilot plan in some of the parks."

Members of the activist group pointed out that these methods would be more humane and cost-efficient at controlling the Canadian Geese population than the current practice of euthanizing them since most of the work would be done by volunteers.

The board's meeting last Thursday was the second mobile session for the board outside of the county's administration building in Elizabeth. The meeting was held at the Rahway City Hall. The mobile meetings are preceded by "County Government" days during which the board provides seminars and events on county services.

Freeholder Mirabella thanked Rahway Mayor Kennedy for hosting the county and presented him with a flag of Union County as a "remembrance of the day."

During the board agenda meeting, the board approved a resolution to continue the county's deferred compensation plan, which provides benefits, such as life insurance to county employees.

Director of the Department of Human Services Frank Guzzo informed freeholders that the Summer Job Training program, which provides kids throughout the county with summer employment, received a 26 percent funding cut this year. A Rahway resident said the result of lowered funds will mean about 90 kids will not get jobs this summer and questioned what will happen if funding continues to be cut from the program.

Joseph Sharp, director of Runnells Specialized Hospital, was questioned by Freeholder Daniel Sullivan regarding a resolution to pay off over \$50,000 in outstanding ambulance charges. Mr. Sharp explained that when ambulances transport patients both to the hospital and to other locations, Runnells incurs the service charge.

The board also approved a resolution to increase the contract amount with This Is It Productions!, a Hoboken-based production company that produces the county's Rhythm and Blues concert, from \$35,000 to \$130,800 due to increased performance and production fees.

According to County Manager George Devaney, the concert held on June 10 in Plainfield's Cedar Brook Park, saw a "great turn out."

During the regular meeting, the freeholders heard a presentation from Paul Swartz of USA Architects, who has designed the upcoming renovations to the Union County Arts Center in Rahway. The vaudeville theatre, located in downtown Rahway, is a historical structure so the proposed changes will be "minimal but apparent," such as repairs to the roof, installation of air-conditioning and enhancing the lighting.

Mr. Swartz said there will also be a small two-story addition put on the building to provide dressing and practice rooms for performers. According to Mr. Swartz, the project "is very close to fruition" with construction to start in September.

Several members of the animal rights activist group Humane Union County asked the freeholders what their thoughts were after a meeting between county officials and Geese Peace. Freeholder Mirabella said they are "planning on using some of the practices as a pilot plan in some of the parks."

Members of the activist group pointed out that these methods would be more humane and cost-efficient at controlling the Canadian Geese population than the current practice of euthanizing them since most of the work would be done by volunteers.

The board approved an amended resolution for the county's annual transportation plan for inclusion in the state's Transportation Trust Fund.

The projects proposed are: Raritan Road in Cranford from Highland Avenue to Verona Avenue; New Providence Road/Summit Lane in Mountainside from Coles Avenue to Trailside Museum to Summit Road; Morris Avenue in Springfield, and Centennial Avenue in Cranford.

The freeholders will hold their next agenda meeting Thursday, July 13 at 7 p.m. in Elizabeth.



REPUBLICAN PLAN... Sen. Leonard Lance (left), Republican leader in the state senate, discusses the current political showdown between Gov. Jon Corzine and Democrats, over the status of the state budget. The event was held June 21 at the Westfield home of Assemblyman Jon Bramnick (right), holding his dog, Fluffy.



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