

Letters to the Editor

Why Were Investigators Assigned To Check UCWA Non-Profit Status

Editor's Note: The following letter was sent to District 21 representatives in the State Legislature and copied to this newspaper.

I write to request your assistance in understanding why the Office of Criminal Investigation sent two agents to my home requesting information about the Union County Watchdog Association's (UCWA) non-profit status. I suspect that dispatching the special agents to address an anonymous complaint regarding an entirely administrative question was a clear effort to intimidate me from continuing my activities as a leader of the UCWA.

Had the agents or their supervisors bothered to research the false allegation that the UCWA was not registered with the State of New Jersey and allowed to lawfully solicit charitable donations, they would have discovered that the UCWA was indeed properly registered. Had they sent a letter, an e-mail, or made a phone call prior to making their trip to my home unannounced the matter could have been readily resolved.

Imagine my astonishment when two special agents from the Office of Criminal Investigation arrived at my doorstep on the morning of January 11, 2012 to investigate the UCWA. Can it be that the choice to send state agents to address

such a minor matter is commonplace in a state struggling to balance its budget?

As your constituent I hope and expect that you will help me put an end to the intimidation of individuals who are trying to participate in their government and taking a stand against government waste, corruption and incompetence in New Jersey. And if I am incorrect in my assumption that this is not the normal way to deal with such a minor administrative matter, certainly there must be a more efficient way for the Office of Criminal Investigation to deploy resources.

Please feel free to contact me for any further information that you may require. I look forward to your anticipated prompt response to my concerns and questions.

Tina Renna
President UCWA
Cranford



Bigas Graduates from Salisbury University

SALISBURY, Md.— Jeffrey Bigas, M.Ed., of Cranford, recently graduated from Salisbury University. Jeffrey was among the 498 undergraduate students who received 441 bachelor's and 57 master's degrees during the University's annual winter Commencement ceremony.

Garwood Planning Board Approves Permanent Cosmetics Business

By **CHRISTINA M. HINKE**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

GARWOOD – The borough's planning board voted, 7-2, with Bill Nierstedt and Georgia MacIndoe dissenting, to approve the application of Andrea Lopez to operate a permanent cosmetics business at last Wednesday's board meeting.

Ms. Lopez, a Westfield resident, has signed a lease at 341 South Avenue in Garwood to open up her permanent cosmetic business, Joli Visage, where she will offer paramedical techniques of cosmetic correction, such as areola complex color restoration for women who have undergone a breast mastectomy reconstructive surgery, scar camouflaging, and other applications, as well as eye, lip and eyebrow artistry. She has 10 years' experience in permanent cosmetics and has her license and insurance.

The board discussed at length its interpretation of a state statute to determine if a micropigmentation permanent cosmetics business is a personal service use and if it is a permitted use in the commercial community zone. The zone does not allow tattoo parlors and the board deliberated if her business was considered tattooing or not.

Victor Vinegra, the board's planner, who after meeting with the applicant privately and reviewing a packet of information on her business, said, "I felt this was a cosme-

tology type procedure and I gave that approval."

"This procedure is a cosmetic procedure and it is not defined as a tattoo," Board President Steve Greet said in his motion to approve the application.

"The interpretation of this board is that the practice as described by the applicant does not fall under the definition of tattooing as contemplated by the Garwood zoning ordinance and therefore this is not a use which is prohibited by the Garwood zoning ordinance," clarified Board Attorney Donald Fraser.

Mr. Nierstedt stated, "...the definition itself is

contradictory...resulting in permanent coloration of the skin, which this is not, and this includes all forms of permanent cosmetics." He later said, "I still think it is tattooing."

"The intention of the ink is not to be permanent in the skin," Ms. Lopez said. "They blend into the skin. They really are different [than tattoo ink]." She said she uses different ink than that used for a tattoo. When doing eyebrows, she said it is meant to look like hair.

The technique is also different, she said, in that she uses a small needle that is pen-like, and does not go deep into the skin like a tattoo artist would to create a tattoo. "You are feathering the skin," she described.

Ms. Lopez said permanent cosmetics last anywhere from six months to two years, and the length depends on a person's pH balance of the skin. She also said she would lose her certification and license if she or anyone she hired were to do a tattoo. "I'm not allowed to do flowers or designs, nothing," she said.

As part of her business where she uses paramedical techniques, she works with medical professionals to discuss a client's needs "to create beautiful, natural results to the area of their body that has suffered trauma," as stated in her business summary.

UCC Alumni to Host Atlantic City Trip

CRANFORD – On Sunday, March 4, the Union County College Alumni Association is taking a trip to Atlantic City and will be going to the Showboat Casino. The cost is \$30 and each person will receive \$30 in slot play at the Showboat Casino and a light continental breakfast on the bus. The first pick-up will be at 8 a.m. at the Elizabeth campus in front of the Kellogg Building and the second pick-up will be at 8:30 a.m. at the Cranford campus in Parking Lot 1.

For more information on either event, contact Rebecca May at (908) 709-7495 or email rebecca.may@ucc.edu.

Probitas Verus Honos