



N.C.D.A.

Edward Lucas, 59, of Great Neck

Probation for false job application

BY GARY DYMSKI
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A former Town of North Hempstead employee was sentenced to community service and probation yesterday for falsifying information on a job application with the town, Nassau County prosecutors said.

Edward Lucas, 59, of Great Neck, was sentenced by acting County Court Judge Francis Ricigliano to 500 hours of community service and 3 years of probation, prosecutors said.

He had pleaded guilty in June to first-degree attempted offering a false instrument for filing, a misdemeanor.

Lucas filed separate job applications — in 2009, 2012 and 2013 — with the Town of North Hempstead, where under penalties of perjury he swore to the truth of his written statements, according to Nassau District Attorney Kathleen Rice's office.

On all three applications he checked "no" when asked "Except for the above traffic offense have you ever been convicted of any violation, misdemeanor, or felony?"

Rice's office said Lucas failed to disclose a 2005 federal felony mail fraud conviction fraud in which he "falsely overbilled clients of Lucas' hand-assembly and third-party mailing company, A.P.A.C. Inc., for postage and other services which were not rendered."

The false applications were uncovered by investigators after the town contacted the district attorney.

Lucas was hired in summer 2009 as a part-time attendant and then a full-time parking meter servicer handling revenue for the Port Washington parking district. He was fired in February 2013. His attorney didn't return calls.

Bronx cop indicted in woman's June attack

A Bronx cop was indicted yesterday for allegedly breaking into a woman's apartment and beating her in June, according to the Bronx DA's office.

Eugene Donnelly, 27, was charged with several misdemeanors, including for assault, criminal trespass and criminal mischief. He pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Donnelly allegedly broke the chain lock on the woman's Woodlawn Heights apartment in the early morning hours on June 11, according to the criminal complaint.

The alleged attack was after Donnelly had finished celebrating his Police Combat Cross award, the department's second highest honor.

After breaking in, Donnelly allegedly threw the woman to the ground and started hitting her, according to the criminal complaint. If convicted, Donnelly would face up to 1 year in prison.

—AMNEWYORK

Lawyers charged with buying clients

Three defense lawyers bribed a court insider to steer more than 100 clients to them, shelling out more than \$40,000 to get recommended to arrestees with means as they awaited arraignment, prosecutors said yesterday.

By paying off a worker for a nonprofit group that interviews new defendants, the lawyers and a paralegal working for them "undermined the confidence in our criminal justice system," Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr. said.

Attorneys Jae Lee, Dwane Smith and Benjamin Yu and paralegal Jose Nunez pleaded not guilty yesterday to bribery and conspiracy charges.

The worker hasn't been charged, and Vance wouldn't name the person, saying that he or she is a cooperating witness in the continuing investigation. The nonprofit group, the New York City Criminal Justice Agency, didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

To help keep the wheels of justice turning in the city's busy courts, the court system hires the Criminal Justice Agency to interview people await-

ing arraignment, gathering information to help a judge decide how likely they are to return to court if released. That can entail asking about arrestees' jobs.

The bribed worker used interviews with people facing low-level charges to suss out which defendants likely could pay a lawyer, instead of having one appointed, prosecutors said. Then the worker suggested those arrestees hire Yu, Smith or Lee in order to get their cases called faster, according to prosecutors.

In return, the lawyers paid the worker as much as \$1,000 per case, roughly doubling the person's salary, Vance said.

Judge wants comfort for immigrant kids

A federal immigration judge says his priority when dealing with traumatized children facing deportation is to create a kinder, gentler courtroom.

New York's assistant chief immigration judge, Robert Weisel, told a City Council hearing yesterday that he takes off his black robes and speaks to young children from the bench in a more casual tone.

"Our objective is to lower the level of anxiety, lower the level of fear, because after all, when you see someone in a black robe, it's very scary," the judge said.

Weisel testified before the council's Committee on Immigration, which is assessing the needs of children smuggled into the United States from Central America. The cases of more than 1,100 of them are pending before New York City immigration judges. Some face deportation.

24 schools to install solar power panels

Mayor Bill de Blasio announced yesterday that his administration will devote resources for 24 schools to install solar panels over the next two years.

Students will track the amount of emissions that have been offset.

Currently, nine schools use solar energy. De Blasio spoke at the Bronx's Kennedy High School, which gets 5 percent of its power from the sun.

Compiled with wire service reports

was taken Tuesday night from the locker room at Life Time Athletic, 350 Robbins Lane, police said. Over several months, "miscellaneous personal property" was taken, mostly from the locker room, police said yesterday. "We have some investigations dating back more than a few months," a police spokeswoman said.

The Chanhassen, Minnesota-based company aims "to deliver a safe environment and a secure environment for our members," said Natalie Bushaw, a spokeswoman at Life Time headquarters. Cameras are at key spots, and signs are being added to encourage members to refrain from bringing valuables and cash into the club, as well as to scramble the number dials on the lockers' coded locks after the members have shut the door.

— PATRICIA KITCHEN
AND TED PHILLIPS

LIDO BEACH

Attorney charged with stealing clients' escrow

A Lido Beach attorney was arrested yesterday and charged with stealing more than \$16,000 in escrow instead of using the money to pay off state taxes on the sale of her clients' apartment, the Nassau district attorney's office said.

Susan Odery, 56, was arraigned on two counts of third-degree grand larceny and released on her own recognizance, prosecutors said.

The victims, a mother and daughter from New Jersey, had filed a complaint with the district attorney's office after the state taxation department fined them last April for failing to pay the estimated tax on the sale of their New York City apartment.

They had closed on the sale April 25, 2012, and they expected \$16,758 in escrow funds to be applied toward the taxes, according to District Attorney Kathleen Rice. They repeatedly called

ty, and the attorney gave them several excuses, prosecutors said. Odery first said it was a mistake and that she'd take care of it, authorities said.

Investigators learned Odery had written two checks to New York State at the closing to pay taxes. But when state officials tried to cash the checks May 16 and 18, 2012, the checks were returned unpaid, prosecutors said. Odery's bank later told Rice's investigators the attorney had put a stop payment order on the checks and that the escrow account did not have enough money.

Odery is due back in court April 4. She and her attorney could not be reached yesterday.

— ELLEN YAN

BELLPORT

4 suspects arrested in theft of power tools

A Fifth Precinct officer who took a report Tuesday about the theft of power tools from a Bellport Home Depot later helped arrest the suspects on his way home from work, Suffolk County police said.

Officer Martin Gill responded to the store, at 20 Farber Dr., at about 2:30 p.m. after three men were reported to have taken several power tools and left in a Ford Explorer, police said. Gill filed a report on the theft, police said, and later, when driving home, spotted an Explorer matching the description of the suspects' vehicle.

He followed and made updates to a dispatcher until marked police vehicles stopped the Explorer on County Road 99 and Patchogue-Holbrook Road in Holbrook about 4:15 p.m., police said.

Four men were arrested and charged with fourth-degree grand larceny: Frank Defilippo, 35, of 255 Auburn Ave., Staten Island; Ryan Dayton, 31, of 280 Bellmore Ave., East Islip; Jonathan Farinella, 26, of 35 Pine Gate, East Patchogue; and Jeffrey Martin, 22, of 11...

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