

# UNICO Welcomes 'ZooToo'

The Secaucus Chapter of UNICO welcomed "ZooToo," a newly formed organization dedicated to shelter animals to its meeting at LaReggia on November 14. ZooToo, based in Secaucus, is offering a complete shelter makeover valued up to \$1 million through a public nomination process. The program is open to shelters across the nation.

John Thompson, employee at the Secaucus Animal Shelter, briefed the club on the local shelter. He pointed out the functions as well as the condition of the facility. He pointed out the roof leaks, the heating system for the feral cat shed is broken and some walls are separating from the foundation in the quarantine room. He pointed out numerous additional repairs the shelter needs. "It would be a great benefit to win any amount of the prize money for repairs to the shelter," he stressed.

Renée Lane, curator of ZooToo, gave a presentation on how the organization as well as the general public could support the local shelter in winning the makeover. "ZooToo recognizes how busy the animal caretakers are taking care of the animals and their shelters so we've designed the program so that the community does the work for them." She explained how the public could support Secaucus, by registering online at [www.ZooToo.com](http://www.ZooToo.com) and selecting the Secaucus Animal Shelter to support. "Once people register, points are earned by rating and reviewing pet products and services." Lane said people are invited to tell stories about their pets, or attach photos to earn additional points as well as state why their town's shelter needs the makeover. "People who do not own pets could still support the shelter by watching news stories on the site and writing comments that also earn points for the shelter. Every click counts."

She explained the top 20-point earners are in the running to win up to a \$1 million makeover. "A panel of ZooToo experts would determine the winner after visiting each of the top 20 contenders. The second runner up wins \$10,000 cash and all 18 others will receive \$5,000 cash." She said everyone wins. "The concept



**The Secaucus Chapter of UNICO welcomed Renée Lane, curator of ZooToo, to its meeting held November 14. Lane explained ZooToo's animal shelter makeover program that could provide a \$1 million upgrade to the Secaucus Animal Shelter that is in desperate need of repairs. Pictured holding "Do You ZooToo?" t-shirts at the meeting are (l. to r.) committee member Wayne Sabella, curator Lane, Secaucus Animal Shelter employee John Thompson, committee member Joseph Morano, and club president Peter Weiner.**

is to increase awareness of local shelters. We've found that 70 percent of the people in a community don't know where the local animal shelter is. This program will undoubtedly increase adoptions and volunteering, therefore, making that shelter a winner as well."

Lane said she was honored to be a guest of UNICO. "This group is just a wonderful bunch and an incredible organization!"

UNICO committee member Wayne Sabella said winning the makeover would make a big difference for the animals and staff of the shelter, even if it were a runner up. "The cost of the repairs and upgrades to the shelter would take the burden off the town and the taxpayers." He noted the town would also be nationally recognized as a winning participant.

ZooToo was created by Richard Thompson, former CEO and top cat of Meow Mix Company located in Secaucus. "During my years in the pet food industry, I've seen the dedication and commitment of the people who keep our shelters operating and save the lives of thousands of animals every day," said Thompson. "Yet, despite all their hard work,

many shelters lack financial resources and manpower to provide a proper place for animals to live while pursuing the ultimate goal of finding a permanent loving home for every pet."

The ZooToo house advisory board includes Thompson, Bill Meade, of Shelter Planners of America, Wayne

Pacelle, president of The Humane Society, and other experts. To register as a supporter for Secaucus Animal Shelter, go to [www.ZooToo.com](http://www.ZooToo.com). Follow registration instructions and remember to respond to a confirmation email to qualify points.

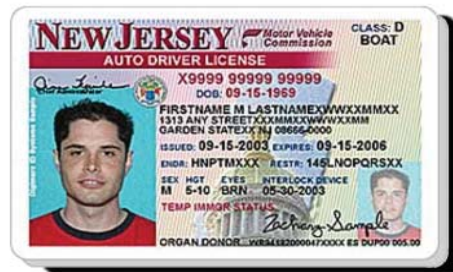
—JUDY KENNELLY



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