

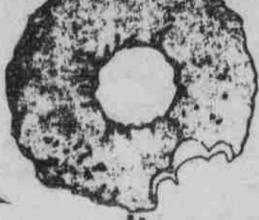
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Bette Bonn suit resulted in business bureau silence

Continued from p.1

Until three years ago, prospective Bette Bonn enrollees could telephone the Better Business Bureau (BBB) for a report on the modeling and charm school instruction. The BBB referred inquirers to former Bette Bonn clients, related details of legal conflicts between Bette Bonn International and the Iowa attorney general's office and stated that the modeling school would not supply lists of models associated with the firm.

But the BBB now maintains a silence about the Bette Bonn operation, pending the outcome of a lawsuit filed by Ledwith against the BBB.

The suit, filed in February 1972, charges the BBB "repeatedly disseminated false, misleading and inaccurate information concerning Bette Bonn and her business."

Such information, the suit contends, "contains statements impugning the veracity and honesty of Bette Bonn and her business and advising people not to deal with the modeling and charm school."

The suit charges the BBB report on Bette Bonn is "false and malicious" and was made "recklessly without sufficient investigation."

Lincoln attorney Lloyd Marti, senior partner in Marti, Dalton, Bruckner, O'Gara and Keating, attorneys for the Cornhusker Better Business Bureau, said recently that in filing suit against the BBB, Bette Bonn was "challenging the BBB's right to disseminate any information about Bette Bonn or anyone else."

No fight in the press

Marti said it was on his advice that the BBB ceased giving information about Bette Bonn to the public, adding that such a ban would probably continue until the suit was settled in court. He refused to give specific information about the BBB's files on the modeling school, saying, "We don't need to fight Bette Bonn in the press."

Jerry Fennel of the Nebraska attorney general's office said last week he has started checking into the Bette Bonn operation in Nebraska after discovering that his predecessor, Terry Shaw, had collected some complaints against the firm.

Lincoln area department stores report no market for trained models. Most stores use sales personnel as models whenever the need arises, according to Liz Weekes of Miller and Paine's advertising department.

And for more sophisticated advertising, such as television commercials, her store relies on the talents of KOLN's Sheri Erway, Weekes said.

Overrun with volunteers

Lee Schoonover, fashion coordinator for Hovland-Swanson, said his department is overrun with women volunteering to model and, with the exception of Hovland's fashion model Gayle Warren, his store has no need to hire professional models.

While Magee's sometimes hires a professional model for fashion projects, Marjorie Mengshol of the store's advertising department stressed "not the Bette Bonn student."

She said that for most Magee's fashion shows her firm works with members of local social groups and uses their members as models.

Recent Bette Bonn

advertising mentions modeling work at the Sheraton Inn fashion shows and at KUON's "TV Auction." Sheraton manager Richard Block said Monday his hotel does use "a couple of Bette Bonn models for our Tuesday and Thursday noontime shows."

He said the models are paid about \$10 each per show.

KUON's "TV Auction" coordinator Mary Hillegas said the Bette Bonn school had volunteered models for this year's fund-raising project. She said KUON was not paying for the models' services.

District court case

In a district court case tried in Des Moines last July, Iowa Attorney General Richard Turner charged Bette Bonn International with violations of the Iowa Consumer Fraud Act, contending that Bette Bonn used advertisements in the help wanted section of the local newspaper to attract prospective clients who were then persuaded to enroll in modeling courses.

The Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law issued by Judge Dale S. Missildine stated that "Bette Bonn Ledwith would generally begin the interview by telling the prospect that they were definitely modeling material."

In a further section, Missildine stated that Ledwith "represented that she had immediately available, paying modeling jobs which would be given to girls who decided to come in with her and that they could expect to begin to obtain paid modeling assignments

immediately, as there were more paying modeling jobs available in the Des Moines area than the defendant had girls to fill and that they could expect to make anywhere from \$15 to \$50 an hour as stated in the help wanted ads. Toward the end of the interview Bette Bonn would inform the prospective customer that prior to being eligible to obtain one of the advertised modeling jobs that she would first have to pay for and take the Bette Bonn 'professional model training course'."

Missildine also stated "Many of the witnesses did not receive any modeling assignments while they were taking the defendant's course, a few of the witnesses received one or two modeling jobs while they were taking the course and several of the witnesses received a number of modeling jobs during the time they took the course. However, most of the individuals who did in fact obtain modeling jobs through the defendant during the time they were taking the defendant's course were not paid for the job. Many of the witnesses had paid for the course in full and were not paid by the defendant for modeling jobs performed by them."

Missildine ruled that Bette Bonn had violated the Iowa Consumer Fraud Act, ordered her to make restitution to 29 former modeling students in the total amount of \$10,558 and entered an order for permanent injunction against Bette Bonn Ledwith.

ASUN Agenda

Today, 6:30 p.m. Nebraska Union

- I. Executive Report
 - A. CSL
 - B. Regents Meeting
 - C. Appointments
- II. Open Forum
- III. Old Business
- IV. New Business
 - A. Resolution No. 7 Oklahoma vs. Nebraska Football Game Migration
 - B. Resolution No. 8 Student Fees Committee
 - C. Resolution No. 9 Regent Action on Faculty Tenure
 - D. Resolution No. 1 Government Bill
- V. Announcements

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