

# Arundel Report

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Community news

## Judge lets suit against clerk of court stand

By JANE THOMPSON  
Staff Writer

A judge has refused to dismiss a lawsuit filed by three former top-level court clerks in which they claim Clerk of the Court Mary M. Rose fired or demoted them for political reasons.

Howard County Circuit Court Judge Cornelius F. Sybert Jr. gave no reason for his decision in a matter under federal jurisdiction by attorneys for both sides, the lawyers said.

No trial date has been set for the lawsuit filed by former court clerks Carroll L. "Bunky" George II, Bolton H. "Buster" Rankin and Donald C. Ward.

Mr. George and Mr. Rankin were fired by

Mrs. Rose in December. Mr. Ward was demoted and immediately resigned. They sued Mrs. Rose for \$8 million in January, claiming her actions were illegal.

Assistant Attorney General Julia Freit, who is representing Mrs. Rose because the lawsuit challenges official actions of the clerk, said yesterday she was surprised by the judge's decision.

"Mrs. Rose also was surprised."

"The whole issue is that the whole democracy is on trial, not me," she said. "I promised in my campaign to make management changes and I kept my promise."

Ms. Freit said she argued during a court hearing Friday that the lawsuit should be thrown out because it did not follow the

rules of legal procedure.

She also argued that the firings were not illegal because Mrs. Rose followed rules laid out by state Court of Appeals Chief Judge Robert C. Murphy, the state's top judge.

Judge Murphy approved the dismissals and said he consulted Anne Arundel County Circuit Court judges Raymond G. Thieme Jr. and Bruce C. Williams before doing so.

"They said it was done for political motivation, but we argued that if it was political, Judge Murphy and the other judges wouldn't have approved it."

Alan H. Legum, an Annapolis lawyer for the three former clerks, said Judge Sybert's ruling was expected, considering a 1988 Court of Appeals case he cited in his

arguments.

In that case, the court ruled that a chief deputy clerk from Carroll County who claimed he was fired for political reasons could sue the clerk of the court.

Mr. Legum also cited a U.S. Supreme Court case in which the court said public employees who claim their dismissals were based on political reasons can sue.

"Regardless of whether or not she followed the rules, if her motivation was political, then there is a cause of action," he said.

Ms. Freit said she now will file a request for summary judgment asking Judge Sybert to rule in Mrs. Rose's favor without a trial.

Mr. Legum said he expects the case to go to trial.

"To win on summary judgment, she has to show there is no dispute of material facts. If they deny this was done for politics, I can't see that there is no dispute of material facts," he said.

Mr. Legum said it will be easy to prove that Mrs. Rose played a key role in the employees' dismissals.

"I think what has happened since then says a lot," he said, pointing to Mrs. Rose's hiring of two Republican party activists.

She recently hired Robert P. Duckworth, who unsuccessfully ran for Congress and is running again this year. Mrs. Rose is on Mr. Duckworth's campaign committee.

## Trail ad signs a bust

By DAN CASEY  
Staff Writer

A controversial proposal to allow advertising signs along the Baltimore & Annapolis Trail Park generated interest among almost everyone — except advertisers.

For that reason, the Department of Recreation and Parks has killed the 2-month-old program, spokeswoman Christine Coffin said yesterday.

"There have been three inquiries, but no contracts had been signed so (Recreation and Parks Director) Joe McCann said, 'OK, let's not do it,'" Ms. Coffin said.

"We accomplished our goal and got rid of all the illegal signs."

As the idea of Park Superintendent David Dionne, the advertising program was designed to combat a proliferation of different-sized, illegal signs by businesses trying to attract customers along the 14-mile-long hiking and biking trail.

Under the program, businesses near the trail could have bought advertising from the county for \$250 per year for a 36-by-10-inch blue and white sign. The businesses also would have had to pay for the sign, which would have cost about \$80.

The program was advertised in May by handbills distributed to merchants who own businesses along the trail, and started on June 1.

Proceeds from the sign sales would have been returned to the county general fund.

The Greater Severna Park Council endorsed the plan shortly after it was implemented. However, the sign program was opposed by the Severna River Association, an environmental umbrella group of civic associations.

Members of the association criticized the plan as blatant commercialization of a natural area.

The plan was endorsed by County Executive Robert B. Neall, who on June 18 asked the association to give the idea a chance. He said he would "rip out" the signs if the park began to look like Coney Island.

Mr. Dionne refused to discuss the decision to end the sign program with *The Capital* yesterday, referring inquiries to Ms. Coffin.

The lack of sales could have been caused by the publicity the program generated, Ms. Coffin said.

None of the three firms that inquired met guidelines for businesses allowed to purchase advertising along the trail, she said.

## TALL, FAIR AND ...



Four fair queen hopefuls gaze up at the newly installed Fair Giant yesterday at the entrance to the Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds. The giant is Paul Bunyan, who for 15 years stood at the former Baldwin Service Center on Generals Highway at Route 450. The 20-foot-tall steel and fibreglass statue was donated to the fairgrounds by Rhoda L. Baldwin. He will welcome visitors to the fair, which opens Sept. 11.

By George N. Lundinow — The Capital

## Pharmacists plan to counter drugs-by-mail

By DAN CASEY  
Staff Writer

Some area pharmacists, upset at a mail-order prescription plan offered to county government employees, learned this week that there is no way the county can halt the program until at least next year.

Pharmacists describe the program as a drain on their businesses that local government should not be promoting. In addition, prescription-by-mail programs can be dangerous because mail-order firms don't keep tabs on possible drug interactions for patients, they said.

"The bottom line is the program's been initiated and it will stay in force until it's up for renewal next year, regardless of what we or anyone else say," said Rick Williams, owner of the Medicine Shoppe in Brooklyn Park.

Meanwhile, the county school system will begin offering the same program for 4,500 of its employees on Oct. 1, county Fiscal Officer William Peacock said.

Anne Arundel Community College also is studying the program and could offer it to 450 of its employees who are enrolled in health insurance through the college, said Debbie Shaughney, AACC spokeswoman.

The county implemented the plan on July 1 as a cost-cutting suggestion offered by Blue Cross/Blue Shield, a major health insurer of county employees, acting county Personnel Officer Michael J. Milanowski said.

There is no requirement that the 3,050 employees and retirees enrolled in Blue Cross have their prescriptions filled by mail-order, but the option presents potential savings.

Under the option, patients can order medicines from the Illinois-based Baxter Healthcare Corp. at \$10 per prescription for a three-month supply. Depending on the drug that is prescribed, it could be considerably cheaper than having a local pharmacy fill the prescription.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield reimburses patients for 80 percent of the cost of

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— Rick Williams  
Medicine Shoppe owner

prescriptions, after a deductible. But the reimbursement often involves completing paperwork.

The county's action created an uproar among some local pharmacists, who said they resented the county sending its business out of state.

Mr. Williams said he wasn't satisfied by the meeting with county officials Wednesday, except that he and other area pharmacists were able to air their concerns.

David Miller, executive director of the Maryland Pharmacists Association, said his organization would work with area pharmacies to come up with a plan that could match the cost-savings benefits of the mail-order program.

It could be offered as an alternative to the mail-order plan by the time the county is ready to negotiate a new health insurance contract, he said.

Also, some area pharmacies will begin a campaign aimed at educating consumers on the dangers they see in mail-order prescription drugs, Mr. Miller said.

"We're not keeping quiet about this. We're going to continue to put this issue that mail-order pharmacy is not appropriate and not professional before the public," he said.

Mr. Milanowski said the county would measure the savings over the term of the contract to see if the pharmacists are correct in claiming that savings are negligible.

## Ex-youth worker pleads guilty to molestation

By JANE THOMPSON  
Staff Writer

A former Little League coach and Methodist church youth minister from Deale pleaded guilty in county Circuit Court this week to molesting two neighborhood boys.

Brian R. Manifold, 24, pleaded guilty to child sexual abuse and a second-degree sex offense on Monday, according to court records.

He could get up to 35 years in prison when he is sentenced Oct. 21 by Judge Raymond G. Thieme Jr.

In both cases, the boys had been molested numerous times. Assistant State's Attorney William C. Mulford

when the boy was 14½, Mr. Mulford said.

The other boy was molested while Manifold baby-sat him, Mr. Mulford said. The abuse began when the boy was 5 years old and ended 1½ years later, the prosecutor said.

Manifold made no statement to police when he was arrested, but admitted to his minister that he molested the older boy, Mr. Mulford said.

Manifold no longer has any involvement with youths and is being counseled, according to his lawyer.

"We have had Brian in psychiatric

## Streets to close

By PETER KHOURY  
Staff Writer

A number of Annapolis streets will be closed temporarily tonight and Sunday morning for a parade and a 10-mile run.

A parade kicking off the Wiley H. Bates Foundation's festival and carnival will begin at 7 tonight. As a result, West Street will be closed between West Washington Street and Taylor Avenue from about 7:15 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Spa Road also will be closed from West and Smithville streets between about 7:30 p.m. and 8 p.m., said Sgt. Phillip Turner, Annapolis police spokesman.

The parade begins at Adams Park School at Glenwood and Clay streets. It will proceed up Clay Street to West Washington Street, and then to West Street. It then will go west on West Street toward Spa Road, then onto Smithville and the old Bates High School.

On Sunday, the Annapolis 10-mile Run begins at 7:45 a.m. at

Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium, and police are encouraging motorists to avoid the downtown area between then and 10 a.m.

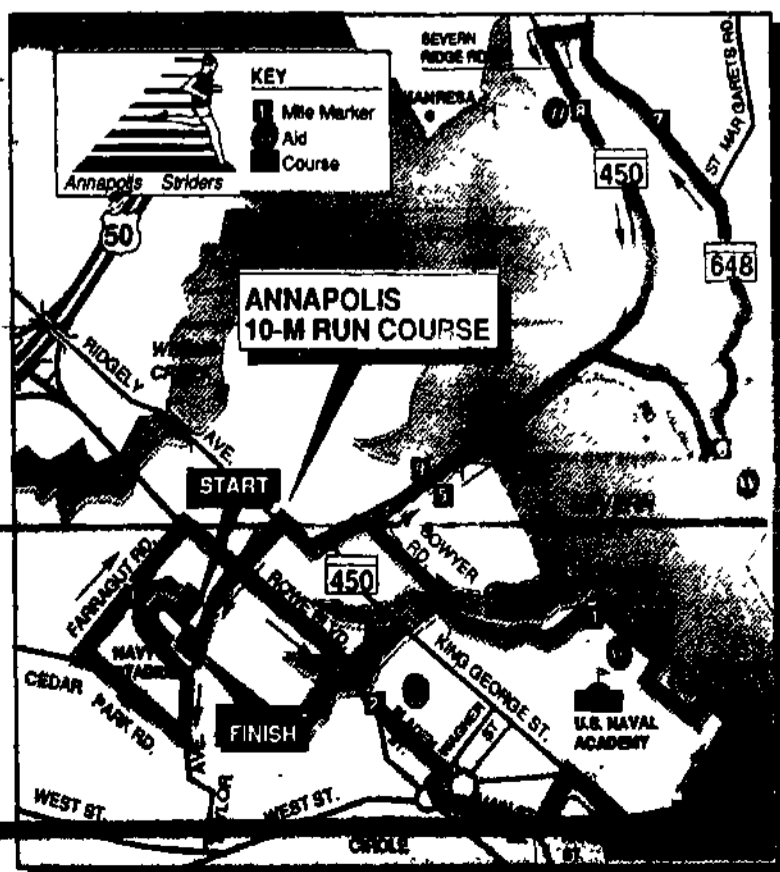
With Rowe Boulevard closed between Farragut Road and Calvert Street, traffic will be routed on one side along Farragut Road to Cedar Park Road and West Street. Along the other, traffic will be routed up Calvert to West Street.

Taylor Avenue will be closed from Cedar Park up to Route 450. Route 450 will be closed from Taylor Avenue to the Old Severna River Bridge.

"We will be periodically opening up (roads) for traffic flow, but the race holds priority," Sgt. Turner said.

One lane of Route 648 will remain open during the race between Greenbury Point Road and St. Mary's Road. Police will alternate directions of traffic flow.

About 45 police officers from the city, county and state will be on duty for the race.



In one case, the victim was molested on countless occasions over a period of years. It ended last year

psychiatric report for the judge at sentencing," said his lawyer, Gill Cochran.