

COURT NOTES



Murphy Named to Succeed Wilner As Head of Rules Committee

Appeals Judge's Experience Includes Sifting Through Dense Rules

Not only is Court of Special Appeals Chief Judge **Joseph F. Murphy** following former Chief Judge **Alan M. Wilner** as head of the court, but he's taking over Wilner's job as chair of the Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure as well.

The state's high court, the Court of Appeals, chooses the chair of the rules committee — which develops procedural protocols for state court cases — and last week Murphy was unanimously chosen for the job. He even got Wilner's vote, according to the signed order from the high court.



MURPHY: WINS PREDECES-SOR'S VOTE

Since Wilner was named to fill the vacant Court of Appeals slot left by retired Chief Judge Robert C. Murphy, he is ineligible to continue as leader of the rule-making body.

"I'm very grateful for the opportunity to serve in that capacity," Joseph Murphy said of his appointment.

The court chose Annapolis attorney **Linda M. Schmitt**, a member of the rules committee since 1983, to serve as vice-chair.

Murphy has long experience working through the details of dense court rules — he is author of the "Maryland Evidence Handbook," a reference used by many lawyers and judges.

And those skills are already being put to the test.

Rules Committee Reporter **Sandra F. Haines** said she sent Murphy a very large stack of documents for review prior to his first meeting as committee chair, which was set to take place Friday.

With groundbreaking rules on the admission of computer-generated evidence and new proposals for dealing with drug- and alcohol-addicted lawyers on the agenda, it seems a safe bet Murphy's already hard at work.