



12 of 34 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 1994, The Baltimore Sun Company
The Baltimore Sun

August 15, 1994, Monday, ARUNDEL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS, Pg. 6B

LENGTH: 1228 words

HEADLINE: District 30 leaves big shoes to fill

BYLINE: Liz Atwood, SUN STAFF WRITER

BODY:

Two men loom large in the District 30 House of Delegates race for three seats, but neither is running.

Six Democratic candidates seeking the seat are trying to inherit the environmentalist mantle of retiring Sen. Gerald W. Winegrad in the legislature. The Republicans talk about the legacy of the late Dr. Aris T. Allen, who won the seat in 1990 after a decade out of the legislature but took his own life in February 1991 after discovering he had terminal cancer.

Incumbent Michael Busch, seeking his third term, leads the field of Democrats. Recently appointed to the Economic Matters Committee, he is presenting himself as an influential delegate who can get more for the district.

In the past he has supported handgun control, mandatory sentences for drug dealers, tougher penalties for drunken drivers and funding for a new Baltimore Convention Center. He said he wants to work on a comprehensive crime bill that would include education reforms, improvements in the health care and auto insurance industries and stricter gun controls.

Mr. Busch, an administrator with the Anne Arundel Department of Recreation and Parks, is running on a ticket with County Councilwoman Virginia Clagett. Mr. Winegrad said she would be the strong voice for the environment to succeed him in the legislature.

Term limits made Ms. Clagett ineligible to run for the council again.

District 30 leaves big shoes to fill The Baltimore Sun August 15, 1994, Monday,

"I decided maybe it would be worthwhile for me and my constituents to work on the state level," she said.

Ms. Clagett, a longtime member of the County Council, stressed her name recognition and a built-in constituency. She has spent much of her political career concentrating on agricultural preservation and environmental issues.

"We need to make sure there are no attacks on the eroding of the environmental laws," she said.

Mr. Busch and Ms. Clagett, who expect to get past the primary, have left open the third slot on their ticket in the general election for the other Democratic winner.

That spot is likely to go either to Stephen Carr, an environmental consultant, or John C. Eldridge Jr., a party insider and son of Judge John C. Eldridge of the Maryland Court of Appeals.

Mr. Carr, who managed Annapolis Mayor Alfred A. Hopkins' successful re-election bid last year, also has Mr. Winegrad's support as an environmentalist.

A native of Annapolis, Mr. Carr spent most of his career working for the U.S. Forest Service in Arizona.

Several years ago, he began returning to Maryland in the winter to work as an unpaid lobbyist for the Severn River Association, championing "critical areas" legislation, a phosphate ban, agriculture preservation and wetlands protection.

"We need to have the environment put back on the front burner," said Mr. Carr.

But his environmental credentials drew criticism last month when he worked as a paid consultant for an Annapolis land developer. Mr. Carr said his work was consistent with his belief that growth should be restricted to areas where there are adequate roads and facilities.

The bearded Mr. Carr, whose hair falls to his shoulders and who tends to wear casual clothes, stands in contrast to Mr. Eldridge, a lawyer who usually wears suits and has spent 10 years working in political campaigns. He is a legislative aide to the county delegation.

When he announced his candidacy, Mr. Eldridge promised to be a leader on environmental issues and seek appointment to the Environmental Matters Committee. He is a member of the Sierra Club and the Severn River Association.

Mr. Eldridge also supports stricter sentences for violent and repeat criminal offenders. He favors registration and licensing of handguns.

Also running in the Democratic primary is Larry Johnson, a lifelong

District 30 leaves big shoes to fill The Baltimore Sun August 15, 1994, Monday,

Annapolis resident and educator who heads the city's Democratic Central Committee. Mr. Johnson said he decided to run because he felt the other candidates didn't represent the people.

He said he is concerned about the environment and the crime, but he is especially interested in improving the district's schools.

The sixth Democrat in the race is Charles Ross, a political and communications consultant who is running on the theme of "Unity in the Community."

Mr. Ross, who lives in Chesapeake Harbour, said he wants to increase awareness of how people can find solutions to problems without government.

"I've seen a gap between the solutions community groups can come up with and putting these into practice. That's why I decided to run," he said.

In the Republican primary, Del. Phillip Bissett of Mayo has the incumbent's advantage even though he never has won an election. He was appointed to the House of Delegates in 1991 to complete Dr. Allen's unexpired term, but he has been more conservative than Dr. Allen.

He has emphasized law enforcement during his term, backing victims' rights legislation and sponsoring a bill to make blood alcohol testing mandatory in traffic accidents where there is a life-threatening injury.

A member of the House Judiciary Committee, he says he wants to continue working to reduce juvenile crime and decrease business regulations.

A former supermarket warehouse employee who owns a high-pressure-water cleaning business, Mr. Bissett says he speaks with the voice of the common man.

"I'm just a regular person. I bring that perspective to the job and I think that's important," he said.

But Michael T. Brown, an Annapolis probation officer, claims to be the true heir to Dr. Allen's legacy.

Mr. Brown, who twice sought seats on the Annapolis city council and ran in 1990 for the House of Delegates as a Democrat, said he switched to the GOP this year because he admired Dr. Allen.

"I've elected myself to follow Aris Allen," he said.

Mr. Brown supports the creation of a youth services bureau and more programs to reach youngsters before they turn to crime. "We're putting more money into prisons construction than school construction, and that's crazy," he said.

He said the proposed county jail near Glen Burnie is a mistake. He favors increased use of at-home detention programs, but tougher prison sentences for criminals who use guns.

District 30 leaves big shoes to fill The Baltimore Sun August 15, 1994, Monday,

While Mr. Brown is a newcomer to the Republican Party, Joan Beck has been an active Republican for more than 30 years.

She is a legislative analyst for House Minority Leader Ellen Sauerbrey and prepares briefing documents for the Republican caucus.

Ms. Beck is calling for a four-year moratorium on new taxes and new government spending.

She is a death penalty proponent who wants tougher sentences for criminals, more prison construction and an overhaul of the welfare system.

Ralph "Rocky" Rosacker, a former marine and a project management consultant, is the fourth Republican candidate.

An Annapolis resident since 1980, he is focusing on issues of crime, education and taxes.

He favors tougher prison sentences, an expansion of the boot camp for nonviolent offenders and improved education.

Mr. Rosacker said he was inspired to run for office after he worked for U.S. Sens. John McCain and William Brock.

"If we don't run for office, we have no one to blame but ourselves," he said.

LOAD-DATE: September 29, 1994