# THE NEWS BEHIND THE NEWS

## Elderly won't pay deposits

The state Public Service Commission Wednesday adopted a new rule to exempt elderly residential utility and telephone customers from making cash security depositis.

Under the new regulation, people 60 years or older who have accounts for telephone, gas and electric services need not make security deposits if the customers present proof of their age and do not have overdue accounts.

The PSC said senior citizens who qualify can obtain a refund of their security deposits by contacting the company involved.

## Customers pay for utility ads

There is nothing wrong with giving money to charities or advertising, but when a public utility does it and charges the expenses to customers — there are questions that must be answered.

The state Public Service Commission, the body that seems to forget about Marylanders when Baltimore Gas and Electric asks for a raise, said it will forbid gas and electric utilities to continue charging customers for their charitable donations and advertising expenses.

The proposed ban must be advertised publicly before it can become final, possibly in February, according to Thomas J. Hatem, head of the five - member commission.

Maryland utilities have been allowed to include advertising expenses and charitable donations in their accounting procedures when making requests for rate increases.

The proposed ban would affect all gas and electric companies in the state.

Instead of charging customers, the utilities' stockholders would pay for the advertising and charitable donations.

Recently, the commission limited the amount of advertising and public relations costs that could be charged to utility customers through higher bills in cases involving Baltimore Gas and Electric Company and Delmarva Power and Light Company.

But until the rule goes into effect in February, Maryland consumers will continue to pay for utility advertising and charitable contributions in the form of higher bills.

## Law forces taxes up for citizens

Del. John Douglass, D-Balt., who recently announced his intentions to run for Baltimore city comptroller in 1978, is beginning to publicize his knowledge of financial decisions affecting Baltimoreans.

The state delegate says increased costs in Social Security brought on by changes in a law recently passed by Congress and signed by the President will add $16 million in costs to Maryland state government.

Those costs will continue to skyrocket until 1982 when the major impact is felt, Douglass said.

Maryland taxpayers will be hit by a double whammy, he adds, for not only will they have to cough up the higher rate on the higher taxable base, but they will also have to pay additional tax dollars in Maryland to pay for the state's share of the increased cost.

Douglass accused Congress of playing a cruel hoax on America's middle class, by first deceiving them by delaying the date of the increases until after the '78 elections, and secondly, leading them to believe that they were actually contributing toward their own retirement with those increases.

Douglass did not say in his statement what he would do to change the problems he mentioned.

## Another UMES fiasco

The predominantly black campus of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore UMES may lose its present status if a recommendation by Delegate Robert H. Neall, R-Anne Arundel is successful.

Neall is recommending that UMES be taken over by an existing vocational community college. He said the college is under - utilized and costs the state $3,746 per student, the highest per student cost at a Maryland state school.

The future of UMES has been the subject of a year - long study by a task force of the State Board of Higher Education. The group recommended investing more money in the school to make it more attractive to students.

Neall pointed out the campus has only 900 students enrolled for fiscal 1979, despite efforts to recruit students to the school.

"I have found that schools that do not operate at capacity or near capacity have a higher per pupil operating cost than those that are fully utilized," said Neall.

Where will the latest UMES fiasco lead?

## What is MAIF up to now?

Keep an eye out for a bill proposed for the 1978 General Assembly to make motorists ineligible for Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund (MAIF) coverage until they have repaid the money owed the fund.

Speculators say the bill would alleviate only a portion of the problem, since 1,100 people out of 43,000 people with cancelled policies still owe MAIF money on the policies.

MAIF officials will attempt to fight the current state law which says MAIF may cancel policies, but it may not refuse to provide new coverage for any licensed driver.

John J. Corbley, executive director of MAIF, said the administrative costs of cancelling and issuing the new policies was about $258,000.

Since the state insurance agency handles most of the high risk drivers that are refused by other insurance agencies, many feel those drivers will not have anywhere to turn if MAIF is successful.

Meanwhile, insurance companies that insure the less risky automobile drivers are predicting lower rates for 1978.

State Farm, the largest car insurer in Maryland earned a $128 million profit nationwide compared to a $35 million loss in the first six months of 1976.

If you are older than 25 and have had very few automobile accidents, switch to an insurance agency that will offer the lowest rates.

## City gets special housing $

Baltimore will receive $4.15 million in federal subsidies for low income housing under a new ruling by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The new system announced Wednesday outlines the maximum amount of federal money 23 "hard - pressed" cities can use to subsidize construction, renovation and rents for low income families.

Under the old program, money was allocated to standard metropolitan statistical areas and Baltimore had to compete with its own suburbs for its proportion of the funds. Now, money will be allocated directly to the city.

Baltimore Housing Commissioner M. Jay Brodie said the new system means Baltimore "will get special, unarguable, undebatable money that we won't have to go to Annanpolis and fight for."

## CITY STATISTICS

### Court Docket

Rape — William S. Hayes Jr., plea of guilty, sub curia pending pre-sentence report.

Embezzlement — John R. Diegelman, verdict stayed section 641. 1 year probation.

Robbery With A Deadly Weapon —Darrell White, guilty 1st and 8th counts, 15 years imprisonment, as to 1st, 5 years imprisonment as to 8th.

Robbery — John M. Prince, plea of guilty, sub curia pending pre-sentence report.

Robbery With Ad Deadly Weapon — Barbara Ebanks, Spencer W. Boyer, plea of guilty 4th count, sub curia pending pre-sentence report as to each.

Forgery — Colette Y. Jetter, plea of guilty, 3 years imprisonment, suspended, 3 years probation.

Assault With Intent To Murder — William Jones, plea of guilty, 8 years imprisonment.

Burglary — Walter J. Clary, motion to dismiss for lack of speedy trial, pending.

### Divorces filed

Robert James vs. Elzine James; Geraldine Mackall vs. Samual Mackall.

### Divorces granted

Harvey Caplan from Gail Caplan; Joyce Livingstone from James Livingstone; Milton Ross from Anne Marie Ross; Mary Davison from Edward Davison.

Beatrice Opal Denton from William Denton; James Kirby from Mary Kirby; James Smith from Thelma Smith; Anthoney Warnell from Janet Warnell; Ruth Wood from William Wood.

Claire Fuller from Samuel Fuller; Stanley Patterson from Ivy Patterson; Charlene Griffin from Stanley Griffin; Mary Fields from Paul Fields; Elizabeth West from James West.

## MPA seminars

The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) will present a three-part seminar entitled "How to Bid Successfully and Make a Profit."

The seminar will be held the first three consecutive Tuesdays in January from 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. in the Constellation Room, 16th floor of the World Trade Center Baltimore.

The purpose of the seminar is to provide information to minority contractors so they might successfully compete for contracts of governmental and private business on a competitive bid basis.

The final session on Tuesday, Jan. 17 will be "Profit — How to Budget for and Measure It" presented by the Louis L. Goldstein, comptroller of the state of Maryland.


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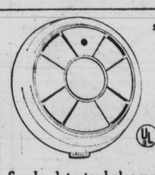

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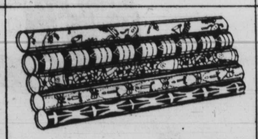

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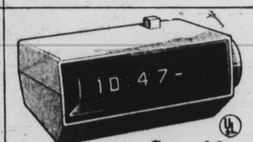

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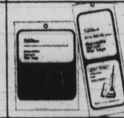

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GLEN BURNIE 761-6000 Glen Burnie Mall Mon.-Sat.: 9:30-9:30 p.m.
ROSEDALE 574-6500 Golden Ring Mall 6400 Rosedale Blvd. Mon.-Sat.: 9:30-9:30 p.m.
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