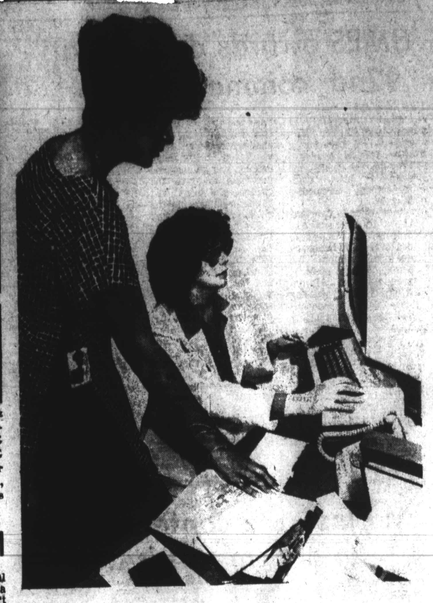

AFRO photo by Roman Hankewyc

NEW OFFICE OPENS — Baltimore Gas and Electric Co. (BG and E) recently dedicated a new business office at 2002 Mondawmin Mall. Services offered at the new outlet include information, bill paying and appliance sales. In the photo above, BG and E officials and city dignitaries attend the ribbon cutting ceremony. Shown are (L to R): Fourth District Councilwoman Victorine Q. Adams; Delegate Frank Conaway, D-40th; Delegate Isiaah "Ike" Dixon, (D-38th); John Hargrove, community relations representative from BG and E; R. C. Bryant, vice president, BG and E, and Edward Uttermole, chairman of the board, BG and E. In photo at left, Mrs. Florine Cook, (L), senior customer service representative and Mrs. Ellen Schline, principal service representative, check out a customer's records on the computer.

Hughes vetoes bill placing juveniles in adult jail

Among the many bills voted by Gov. Harry Hughes this week was a bill that would have allowed juveniles in Prince George's County to be detained in adult prison facilities.

The controversial measure caused quite a stir during the 1978 General Assembly and witnessed the Prince George's County delegation split over the decision as it come on both the House and Senate floors.

Hughes, who was required by the state constitution to decide by today on the 658 bills passed by the 1979 General Assembly, signed 329 bills and vetoed another 110, including 61 that duplicated other bills. He had previously signed 419 bills.

The vetoes were Hughes' first since taking office in January.

Perhaps the biggest surprise was Hughes' signing of a bill that will permit adults to go without protective helmets on motorcycles beginning July 1 — a bill Hughes said he agonized over longer than any other.

"The right to choose is not to say that anyone should not wear a helmet," he said. "I would certainly hope that people will continue to wear them."

Hughes said he would not have signed the bill if it had not contained requirement for riders 17 or younger to wear helmets. An identical bill was vetoed last year by then-acting Gov. Blair Lee III.

Hughes vetoed a bill that would have relaxed the requirements for converting rental apartments into condominiums, an action sure to please elderly Montgomery County residents who testified at a special hearing that rapid conversions to condominiums were forcing them out of their homes.

Both the Montgomery County Council and county executive had opposed the bill.

Hughes also sided with Anne Arundel County officials in vetoing a bill that would have required the county school board to gain the approval of both the council and the county executive before closing or recommending the closing of any schools.

"I felt it set a precedent we shouldn't follow," Hughes said.

Environmentalists won a hard-fought struggle when Hughes vetoed a bill that would have prohibited the state from banning the use of lead shot by waterfowl hunters.

Hughes said he vetoed the bill because of statistics that showed that ducks and geese have been killed by lead poisoning from inadvertently eating spent lead shot.

Among the long list of bills he signed into law, almost of all which will go into effect July 1, was the a comprehensive ethics bill. Also signed were bills to:

— Create new Circuit Judgeships in Anne Arundel, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's and Worcester Counties and Baltimore City.

— Alter the distribution of race track revenue so more money will be diverted to harness and thoroughbred tracks.

— Require certain information to be given to women before they receive abortions.

— Grant $1 million to Baltimore [illegible] continued renova[illegible] [illegible]orial Stadium.

Among the bills vetoed by Hughes were measures to:

— Transfer from retailers to wholesalers the obligation to pay the sales tax on cigarettes, a measure Hughes said he supported but had to veto for technical reasons.

— Impose stricter standards on fuel rate adjustments by electric utilities.

— Set up a new written procedure that state employees would have been required to follow when responding to communications from the public.

— Increase the Maryland Veterans Commission from nine to 15 members.

— Make it a criminal offense to wear to a polling place any T-shirt or other clothing, badge or pin that contains political advertising.

Auto mechanics offered at Catonsville College

The division of Community Services at Catonsville Community College is offering three sections of the credit-free course "Basic auto mechanics." This course will aid participants in understanding a car's mechanical system and learning simple repairs.

At the Social Security Administration in Woodlawn, the course begins June 7 and runs through July 26 and class times are 9:30 to 9:00 p.m. A registration fee of $15 will be charged.

A class held at the YMCA in Towson will begin on June 26 and run on Thursday evenings through Aug. 16. The class will meet from 7 to 9:30 p.m. and the fee is $25.

On the CCC main campus, 800 South Rolling Road, the basic auto mechanics class begins on July 10 and lasts until Aug. 28. The class will meet from 7 to 9:30 p.m. and the cost is $15.

For those who have completed the above course, an intermediate class will run for four weeks beginning June 12. The cost is $20 and the class will meet on the CCC main campus from 7 to 9:30 p.m. each Tuesday.

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Pension system to fall short of promised payments

ANNAPOLIS — A report by legislative auditors predicts the state's financially-troubled pension system will fall short in the fiscal year ending June 30 by $435 million of the amount it is committed to pay future retirees.

Robert Dorsey, of the auditor's office, said the report found that last year's drop increased the system's debt to $2.95 billion.

But Dorsey said the financial picture of the system would significantly improve when a new pension plan takes effect in January.

He said legislation passed by the general assembly this year completely revamps the debt-ridden system and replaces it with one that will be fully funded within 40 years.

Dorsey said the $435 million deficit was forecast based on the current pension system continuing. He said the actual amount could change after the new pension system goes into effect.

Under the new legislation, state employees can choose to enter the new plan, which combines state and social security benefits, or remain in the old system.

In the new system, most participants will not have to contribute 5 percent of their pay each week as is the current procedure. The absence of such contributions should reduce the state's liability over the long term, state auditors said.

Dorsey said a 3 percent cap on cost of living increases outlined in the new program would also account for a reduction in the state's liability. Under the current plan, the state guarantees to pay the actual cost of living increases.

The current debt of $2.95 billion for fiscal 1978 compares with $2.5 billion logged in fiscal year 1977. About 160,000 people are enrolled in the state pension plan.

University College holds commencement

Commencement ceremonies for 1,073 University of Maryland University College graduates were held May 19 in the Cole Activities Building in College Park.

University College, the continuing education campus of the University of Maryland, has more than 20,000 students in Maryland and in the metro-Washington, D.C. area, plus more than 48,000 students in 17 nations around the world.

Graduates attending the May 19 ceremony represented only the University College centers locally. Approximately 300 others received their diplomas in Europe and in the Far East.

William Donald Schaefer, mayor of Baltimore and Dr. Wilson H. Elkins, former president of the University of Maryland, delivered the commencement addresses and were presented with honorary doctorates by University College.

Also, Lieutenant Colonel Yvonne C. Pateman (USAF Ret), class of 1962, was honored as a University College Distinguished Alumna. She was among the first woman pilots in the military and holds numerous awards.

University College is unusual in that most students hold a full-time job while going to college and many have already made their mark in life as authors or experts in their professional field.

The average graduate attending this ceremony is 35 years old and has more than one child. The oldest graduate is 60 and youngest is 20. One perservering student has received a degree after 25 years of part-time studies.

In addition to the 190 Bachelor of Arts and 883 Bachelor of Sciene degrees conferred, 256 students completed their Associate in Arts degree during the academic year.

Vanessa Johnson to choreograph

Vanessa Johnson, dancer-choreographer for the Wally Saunders Company, has been chosen to choreograph two pieces for the Miss Black Universe Beauty Pageant.

Ms. Johnson has choreographed a chorus line routine to Barry Manilow's arrangement of "Copacabana," and a funky and energetic number to Linda Clifford's "If My Friends Could See Me Now" for the 28 beauty contestants.

Ms. Johnson, a 22-year-old native Baltimorean, has been with the Wally Saunders Dance troup as a dancer and instructor for 13 years. She teaches jazz, tap and ballet at the Saunders studio as well as at the YWCA on Franklin Street.

The Miss Black Universe Beauty Pageant will takpe lace on Sunday June 10 in the McKeldin Ballroom at Morgan State University.

GOING ABROAD — Sherri Alicia Ellerbe of Seat Pleasant, Md., has been selected by the Experiment in International Living to reside for six weeks with a family in France. A junior at N.C. State University at Raleigh, she is working on a degree in French. She has been awarded a $1,500 scholarship

Neal now faces kidnapping charge

Kenneth Howard Neal, charged in the murder of a 3-year-old boy, was indicted May 28 on related charges of kidnapping Ms. Donzella Peters, his former girlfriend and her 3-year-old daughter, Danielle.

Neal, 22, of the 3000 block Woodridge Ave., was indicted by a federal grand jury on two counts of Kidnapping Ms. Peters and her daughter and taking them from Maryland to Virginia.

Their bodies were found May 1 floating in the Occoquan River near Manassas, Va. Neal is being held at City Jail without bail. He had pleaded not guilty to murder in the stabbing of 3-year-old Dominick Peters. He is also under investigation for the death of 17-year-old George Peters, whose body was found by joggers at a wooded site near Fort Meade, Md. on April 21.

Neal is charged in Dominick's death in Federal Court because the killing allegedly occurred on federal property. The death of George Peters has been turned over to the Anne Arundel County State's Attorney because that allegedly occurred on private property.

The indictment charged that Neal kidnapped Ms. Peters and her daughter on April 21." For the purpose of making threats and doing bodily harm" to the two and to prevent them from reporting to law enforcement authorities an assault committed by Kenneth Howard Neal upon George Peters."

Michael A. Spratt, 21, has told the FBI that George Peters was stabbed to death during a car ride from Baltimore to Annapolis. Spratt was a passenger in the car. Ms. Peters and her daughter were also in the car.

Prior to the suspect's arrest, he lived with his mother and two sisters. He had been employed since January 1977 with Highways Incorporated as a truck driver earning $11,000 a year, according to court records.

Dr. Jonas Rappaport recommended that Neal be held without bail because he is a danger to society. Dr. Rappaport stated in court that Neal was probably suffering "rom paranoid schizophrenia at the time of the killings and is not criminally liable for his actions.

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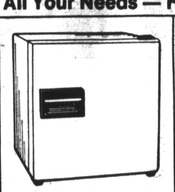

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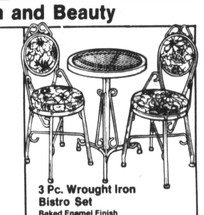

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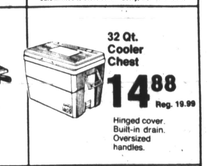

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