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Committee kills bill on duckpin bowling

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ANNAPOLIS

Duckpin bowlers rolled a gutter ball in the House of Delegates yesterday when a committee lanced their effort to replace jousting as the official state sport.

The Constitutional and Administrative Law Committee voted quickly and overwhelmingly against the bowling bill, with no discussion.

The lone vote for the duckpins came from Del. Joan Cadden, D-Anne Arundel, who lives in the same district as the bill's sponsor, Del. Charles W. Kolodziejewski, and many bowlers.

As it has done for years, the committee also killed a bill that would have designated English as the official language of Maryland.

Small blaze causes evacuation of courthouse
BALTIMORE

A minor blaze caused by a careless smoker yesterday forced the evacuation of the Clarence M. Mitchell Jr. Courthouse yesterday, city fire officials reported.

Capt. Patrick P. Flynn, a Fire Department spokesman, said someone discarded a lighted cigarette in a trash receptacle in a fourth-floor ladies' room of the courthouse, located at North Calvert and Fayette streets.

Thick smoke began pouring through the building about 1:30 p.m., forcing the evacuation of everyone and disrupting the many criminal and civil trials.

The fire was quickly extinguished, and everyone was allowed to return within a half hour after firefighters ventilated the building, Captain Flynn said. There were no injuries.

U.S. DISTRICT COURT

Catonsville man gets 3 years for tax evasion

A 69-year-old Catonsville man was sentenced in federal court yesterday to three years in prison and fined \$75,000 for tax invasion.

It was the second conviction for John Sasscer of the first block of Delray Avenue. The retired used-car salesman was sentenced in December 1982 to one year in prison and fined \$10,000 for not filing income tax returns in 1976 and 1977.

During the trial, Assistant U.S. Attorney Beth P. Gesner presented evidence that Sasscer had not paid income tax since 1976. He was convicted last October of failing to file returns in 1984,

1985 and 1986.

Ms. Gesner said Sasscer failed to report income of between \$30,000 and \$42,000 he received annually from dividends and interest on Consolidated Edison stock. Sasscer sold the stock in 1989 for approximately \$700,000, which he transferred to a bank account in Nassau, Bahamas.

FOR THE RECORD

* The Lombard Street bridge in Southeast Baltimore will reopen to motor vehicle traffic on Monday. The 47-year-old bridge has been closed since August 1990 while undergoing \$5 million in repair work. The bridge spans a rail line and is bounded by Ponca Street to the east and Kresson Street to the west.

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