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# Manchester Herald

Thursday, June 1, 1989 Manchester, Conn. — A City of Village Charm Newsstand Price: 35 Cents

## Cops comb Canada for Merrill after rooftop escape

By Maureen Leavitt  
Manchester Herald

The "peanut butter bandit" has done it again.

Former Tolland resident Frederick Rodney Merrill, once a suspect in a yet unsolved Manchester murder, completed his fourth escape Wednesday when he escaped from a prison in Canada.

Merrill escaped from an exercise yard on the roof of the Don

Jail in the east end of Toronto around 4:30 p.m. Wednesday and remained on the lam early today, Metropolitan Toronto police Inspector D.A. Walker said.

Walker said Merrill apparently scaled a 12-foot high barbed-wire fence, ran across a roof and then climbed down a drain pipe 50 feet to the ground.

Merrill, 42, who has a long history of violent crimes, was awaiting sentencing July 27 in connection with a string of violent

crimes, including the rape of a 15-year-old girl. Merrill pleaded guilty on May 15 to charges stemming from the rape, the beating of a woman with a cable and several burglaries in the Toronto area. Merrill could receive a maximum of three life terms for the burglaries and 28 years for the assaults.

"I think we've got just about every Toronto policeman out there, but I doubt he's still in Toronto," Staff Sgt. Dave Lott, of

the Toronto police 55th Investigative Unit, said today.

Merrill earned the nickname the "peanut butter bandit" after he escaped from a Connecticut prison in 1968 by using a gun his mother hid in a peanut butter jar. She also provided a handcuff key and money.

A spokeswoman with the Connecticut state police said today that troopers will be "keeping an eye out for him" in case he decides to return to the state.

Merrill's mother, Gladys Merrill, of Tolland, declined comment on her son's latest escape today.

Merrill is accused of committing the crimes in Toronto after he escaped from the Somers State Prison Aug. 23, 1987. He was being held at Somers awaiting trial on assault and burglary charges stemming from the 1987 rape and beating of a South Windsor woman.

Merrill is considered to be

extremely dangerous, and pictures of him are being circulated throughout Canada, Lott said.

Police had no reason to believe Merrill had any outside help in the escape, he added.

Last spring, Merrill was questioned in connection with the murder of 88-year-old Bernice Martin of Manchester, which occurred four days after the sexual assault in South Windsor.

See MERRILL, page 10

## Manager gets praise from EDC

By Rick Santos  
Manchester Herald

Past and present Economic Development Commission members and community business leaders had nothing but praise for retiring Town Manager Bob Weiss at a breakfast meeting today.

Weiss, 66, will leave the position June 30 after 23 years of service to the town.

"He's been the sparkplug for all economic development in the town," said Commission Chairman Al Werberner during the meeting at Adams Mill Restaurant on Adams Street. "He's been our mentor, our guide, our counselor."

Werberner lauded Weiss for his business sense.

"He has an innate grasp of what can be done and what can't be done," the chairman said.

See WEISS, page 10



REMEMBERING — Aaron Cook, left, at a breakfast meeting held by the EDC at the Adams Mill Restaurant. Weiss had just come in out of a rainstorm.

## Push begins for stronger death penalty

By Judd Everhart  
The Associated Press

HARTFORD — Proponents of a stronger death penalty called on the state Senate to allow a full debate and vote on a bill designed to make capital punishment easier to impose.

One of the bill's most outspoken opponents, Sen. Anthony V. Avallone, D-New Haven, co-chairman of the Judiciary Committee declared Wednesday that he had the votes to kill the bill by sending it back to committee, a procedure known as recommittal.

Proponents said Avallone was using parliamentary maneuvering to avoid having to vote on the issue.

Sen. Thomas Scott, R-Milford, told reporters at a news conference this morning that the state's current death penalty statute is a "bogus" law crafted by lawyers who oppose capital punishment.

Claudia Wasson, mother of slain Milford Police Officer Dany Wasson, said the current law "is just not workable."

The man who shot her son to death "has his life. I go visit a grave every day," she said.

"Avallone said he had 19 votes in favor of recommittal. Nineteen is the minimum needed in the 36-member Senate to approve anything."

He rejected the proponents' claim, saying a vote to recommittal would be the same as a vote against the bill. "I really don't believe this is an issue that people can hide from," he said.

Those sentiments were echoed by Senate President Pro Tem John B. Larson, D-East Hartford, who said that "recommittal sends the same message."

Further, with the session required to adjourn by June 7,

debate time is becoming increasingly precious and a lengthy debate wouldn't likely change any minds on the issue, Avallone said.

He said he expects the Senate to vote on recommittal today.

Larson said he would prefer to debate the bill and then vote against it.

Rep. Peter A. Nystrom, R-Norwich, a staunch supporter of the bill, said he was outraged at the plan to kill the bill and blamed Larson.

"That's what they did last time," Nystrom said. "It's clear Larson is afraid to stand up and be counted. He's trying to hide under procedural maneuvers. He's going to anger a lot of people."

He predicted the debate on recommittal would last as long, if not longer, than a debate on the bill itself.

Sen. Michael P. Meotti, D-Glastonbury, who opposes the bill, said recommittal should not be interpreted as an attempt to avoid the issue. "That is absolute, total crap," he said.

Recommittal of the bill would allow the Senate to avoid "two hours of grandstanding," he said.

Scott said there was no valid reason not to go forward with a full debate.

"The public supports it," Scott said of the death penalty. "For that reason alone, we should debate it. (The death penalty) is a deterrent and, to the extent that it's not, it's justice."

"We want to send a clear message to the (Senate Democratic) leadership: this bill deserves consideration, not sleight of hand," Scott said.

Avallone said that if the bill is

See DEATH, page 10

## Jim Wright's gone but not the issue

By Jim Drinkard  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The resignation of House Speaker Jim Wright removes a heavy political weight from Democrats, but also leaves open the question of whether the "mindless cannibalism" he warned against may consume others in an era of heightened public concern over ethics.

Majority Democrats may have cause for concern, too, with a newly aggressive Republican minority hoping to parlay the ethics issue into success at the polls.

A sense of unease lingered in the Capitol even after the widespread relief over the Texan's announcement Wednesday, a decision everyone had known for weeks was coming.

### News Analysis

Wright's supporters were bitter, and some vowed revenge on the Republicans.

One obvious potential target is Rep. Newt Gingrich of Georgia, who some Democrats say skirted ethical standards with publication of his own book, Gingrich, Wright's earliest and most vocal accuser, slipped out of the Capitol without talking to reporters after the speaker's resignation speech.

Wright himself called for a truce in the ethics war that has claimed him and the No. 3 House Democratic leadership official, Rep. Tony Coelho of California, and holds the potential for wound-

ing a number of others. Coelho stunned the House last week with his announcement that he would resign rather than face an ethics investigation into his own personal finances.

Democratic Rep. Robert Torricelli, D-N.J., summed up Wright's parting words this way: "a warning, stop attempting to get each other, stop looking for retribution and vengeance."

Wright also said it is time to change the rules and procedures that led to his political demise before his case ever went to trial.

"Maybe the whole process needs some change and clarification," he said.

But so far, the victims have all been Democrats, and Republicans may be forgiven if they have trouble understanding why they

should agree to a cease-fire in a war they are winning.

After all, Democratic caucus chairman William Gray of Pennsylvania, hoping to move up on the leadership ladder, has been told that investigators are looking into questions about the running of his office. He insists he is not a target of any investigation and is cooperating with officials. But his irate complaint over news leaks of the inquiry are eloquent testimony to his fears of becoming a political casualty.

Government sources also say a grand jury in Washington, D.C. is beginning to look into the hiring practices in the office of Walter Fautroy, a non-voting delegate for the District of Columbia. And

See WRIGHT, page 10

### TODAY

**Abortion funding**  
The state House, considering an abortion bill for the first and probably last time this year, rejected a measure that would have sharply limited state-funded abortions for poor women who don't qualify for Medicaid. Story on page 5.

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KENNETH N. TEDFORD wants time with family

## Tedford won't seek seat in November

### Democrat says director's work much more now

By Alex Girelli  
Manchester Herald

Democratic Town Director Kenneth N. Tedford said Wednesday he will not run for re-election in November.

Tedford announced his decision at a meeting of the Democratic Town Committee. He said his decision was based on personal and business reasons.

Tedford said today he wants to spend more time with his family.

He said the amount of time required by the position has increased greatly since he first became a director in 1982. Then, he said, a director was out three or four nights a month. Now the job requires being out two or

### Howroyd seeks support in race to replace 'boss'

By Alex Girelli  
Manchester Herald

three times a week.

Mayor Peter P. DiRosa Jr. said today that being a town director requires a lot of time and it has been a particularly time-consuming job for Tedford because he has been his party's leader on budget matters for the past few years.

It was at the close of a brief talk on the current budget that Tedford told Democratic Town Committee members of his decision.

Tedford said he will not drop out of politics entirely.

"I'll continue to work for the candidates," he said.

Today, Tedford said he will be available to serve on special committees he thinks the directors will have to appoint to take up specific questions like the future of the town golf course and of solid waste disposal.

He said directors in the future will not be able to handle those

See TEDFORD, page 10

### Howroyd seeks support in race to replace 'boss'

By Alex Girelli  
Manchester Herald

Josh M. Howroyd, who served as campaign manager for Democrat Kenneth N. Tedford in Tedford's three campaigns for the town Board of Directors, is interested in succeeding Tedford on the board.

Tedford announced Wednesday that he will not seek re-election.

Howroyd, 36, said this morning he will seek the nomination from the Democratic Town Committee, but he will not force a primary if someone else is chosen instead.

"I'm very interested in running," Howroyd said.

Howroyd said he will seek support from town committee members.

Howroyd, who is an executive

### assistant in the state Department of Administrative Services, is a former member of the town Zoning Board of Appeals and an alternate member of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

He has long been active in the Democratic Party.

Howroyd said he was interested in running for the Board of Directors in 1987, but the town committee nominated Mary Ann Handley instead and he would not force a primary election.

He said primaries "are not viable alternatives in Manchester politics."

Theodore T. Cummings said today that while he is very interested in being a town director, he will not be a candidate this year. He said his wife will have a baby and he does not want to commit the time it would take to be a director.

Cummings is the son of Theodore R. Cummings, Democratic town chairman.



















SCIENCE & HEALTH

Microsurgery technique helps infertile men

ATLANTA (AP) — A new surgical technique that opens the human egg to create a microscopic passageway for sperm has led to seven pregnancies and raised the odds for infertile men, researchers say. The method is so new that fertility experts aren't certain of its benefits. But they agree it has wide-ranging implications for thousands.

AIDS-infected people may elude blood screening

BOSTON (AP) — Some people infected with the AIDS virus may elude screening tests intended to protect blood banks because they produce no telltale antibodies against the lethal virus for years, researchers reported today. Widely used screening tests cannot see the AIDS virus directly. Instead, they search for antibodies that people produce as part of their immune system.

breakthrough." The procedure, called partial zona dissection, or PZD, involves extracting eggs from a woman and making a tiny incision to help the sperm enter. It has been attempted at 12 infertility clinics worldwide, but the only documented success has occurred at Reproductive Biology Associates of Atlanta, a private company working with the Emory University Medical School Center for Infertility. Dr. Jacques Cohen, the company's scientific director, said of the 27 women he has treated during the past year, seven became pregnant and

IN BRIEF

Warning on contact lens

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Food and Drug Administration is asking contact lens manufacturers to warn people who wear soft contact lenses for more than a week without cleaning them that they risk eye disease. Certified letters mailed Wednesday by the FDA asked the manufacturers to prepare labels instructing patients not to wear the soft extended-wear or disposable lenses for more than seven days because of an increased risk of developing ulcerative keratitis, a disease that can cause blindness.

Polio vaccine fights AIDS

NEW YORK (AP) — An altered polio virus displaying part of an AIDS virus protein may one day work as an AIDS vaccine, researchers reported today. When such a polio virus was created and injected into rabbits, the animals made blood proteins that stopped AIDS virus infection in the test tube, scientists reported. The study is among several papers on acquired immune deficiency syndrome research published in today's issue of the British Journal of Nature. Vaccines spur the body's immune system into creating proteins called antibodies that later can attack particular germs. Several AIDS vaccine strategies are being tried in humans, including the use of a genetically altered simian virus.

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The Quiz

Worldscope (10 points for each question answered correctly)

- 1. These Chinese students in Paris, France, recently demonstrated their support for students protesting in Beijing and elsewhere throughout China. The student uprising in China has focused anger on Prime Minister Li Peng and... China's top leader.
2. The Dow Jones surged above 2,500 points a few days ago, a level it had not attained since falling about a few points in one day in October 1987.
3. Lesteonel Colonel Mengistu has apparently executed nine generals and regained authority in the wake of a failed coup attempt against him in (CHOOSE ONE): Sudan, Ethiopia).
4. Murder charges against Rudy Linarez were recently dropped. Mr. Linarez had (CHOOSE ONE): disconnected a life-support system from, refused to seek medical help for his comatose son.
5. "Towashuh" is the name San Diego Wild Animal Park officials gave the second California grizzly bear, which was captured and kept recently hatched at that park. The chick brings the world population of that species to 30.
6. The CHOOSE ONE: Sacramento Kings, Charlotte Hornets) won the NBA draft lottery and the right to make a first pick in the June 27th draft.
7. Tony Mandarich, the top draft pick of the Green Bay Packers, says he will go ahead with plans to fight... if the Packers do not offer him enough money.

ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ
1. CHINA
2. 1987
3. ETHIOPIA
4. DISCONNECTED A LIFE-SUPPORT SYSTEM FROM
5. 30
6. SACRAMENTO KINGS
7. 100,000

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24th year
1989 successful for scholarships /3

Bats fail
St. Joe ousts East Catholic in Class L baseball tourney /11

Spoliator
Practice aided spelling champ /6

Manchester Herald

Friday, June 2, 1989
Manchester, Conn. — A City of Village Charm
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Merrill eludes manhunt



TORONTO (AP) — As police continue a massive manhunt for Frederick Merrill near the jail he escaped from Toronto's Don Jail on Wednesday, he is less likely to be recognized.

Vote valid, 8th counsel tells board

The election of Thomas E. Landers as president of the Eighth Utilities District was valid despite a discrepancy between the number of votes cast and the number of voters checked on a voter list, the district's legal counsel says.

Garden arts

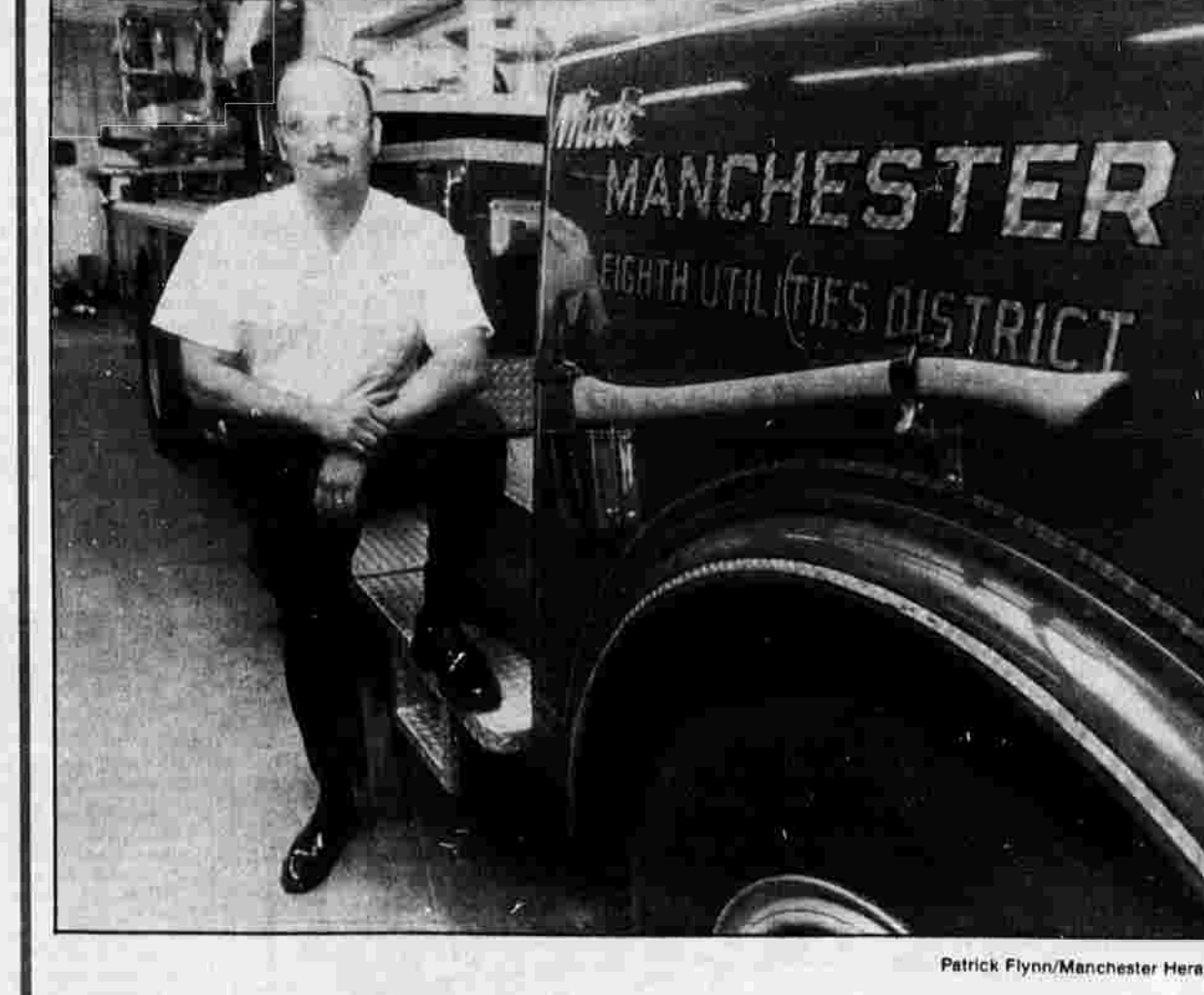
GARDEN ARTS — Kimberly Raymond and Heather Whitford, students in the Connecticut Concert Ballet, rehearse a dance they will perform at Saturday's Arts in the Garden, a festival to be held at the corner of Porter Street and Westminster Road. Story on page 17.

O'Neill defends tax increase, calls it 'thing we had to do'

HARTFORD — A day after he signed a \$694 million tax increase, Gov. William A. O'Neill defended the unprecedented tax hike as "one of the things we had to do" and talked confidently about running for re-election.

Unemployment rate dips; job growth falls

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation's unemployment rate dipped to 5.2 percent in May but — in a signal of a slowing economy — job growth fell to its lowest level in more than three years, the government said today.



HE LIKES THE CHALLENGE — John Mace has been chief of the Eighth Utilities District Fire Department since Jan. 1. He took over at a time when the commercial development in the Buckland area will mean expanded responsibilities for the department.

Challenges confront Chief Mace and his firefighting 'family'

Soon after John Mace and his wife, Ginette, bought their house at 104 Irving St. and moved from the south to Manchester, a friend approached Mace with an application to join the Eighth Utilities District Fire Department.

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