

Readers' views

War on cancer

On July 3, I attended the "town meeting" held by Rep. Wayne Gilchrest, R-Kent, at Maryland Hall. I went on behalf of the millions of people who have no voice, to ask him to set aside the numbers and statistics, see them as people, and recognize their anguish.

I made the statement: "There is one issue that is the most feared and the most forgotten — cancer." Sadly it seems that your reporter, Bart Jansen, illustrated that point in his article on the town meeting (*The Capital*, July 5). Tuna importation and dolphin safety was the issue that stood out in his mind. Though this is important to me, cancer and the people who are suffering and dying from it come first. Without our health, nothing else matters.

I asked — begged — Mr. Gilchrest to read "Embrace the Angel," a book about my daughter Amber's journey through cancer. She puts the focus where it should be: on the people. He agreed.

I also asked him two questions:

■ Where exactly do we stand on the issue of cancer — in layman's terms?

■ If the government is truly seeking a cure, is there a plan in place to re-train and re-employ the thousands, perhaps millions, of people who are working in the cancer community? He promised to respond to me within two weeks.

After the meeting, he stayed to discuss these issues with his constituents. He promised me that "not only will I read Amber's book, but I plan to see President Clinton next week and will hand him a copy, as well as Mr. Dole."

Your readers are concerned about cancer, since one in three will get it and all of them have been touched in one way or another. But, I wonder, in this presidential election year, do we have leaders who are brave enough to go to battle for us, to save our lives in the "war on cancer"?

PATTI STIEWING
Annapolis

meeting school needs and facing budget realities.

More than ever, our county needs a unified school board that can establish, articulate and execute public education policy in this difficult environment. I see Mr. Rudolph's appointment as a valuable contribution to that effort.

Mr. Rudolph was one of three able candidates evaluated by delegates from 76 nonprofit organizations in Anne Arundel County during the annual School Board Nominating Convention conducted this past May. It is noteworthy that he won the support not only of the convention, but also of County Executive John G. Gary Jr. and Mr. Glendening. With such wide acclaim as the most qualified candidate, Mr. Rudolph is well-positioned to join the dedicated volunteers already serving on the board.

The challenges to our school system will not end this year. Our county needs to continue to improve its process of public debate on emerging issues and the screening by delegates of qualified candidates. This process worked well and produced sound results this year. I hope that more of our best citizens will be encouraged to come forward as school board candidates and convention delegates in the future.

The Rev. DAVID G. BERG
Chair
School Board
Nominating Convention
Committee
Annapolis

Forest Drive

The conventional wisdom is that what ails the south side of Annapolis is overburdened roads. So let's widen Forest Drive and, if that will not turn the trick, build a parallel road.

Fine and dandy, perhaps, until the city of Annapolis annexes more county land and constructs several hundred additional housing units on it. Then we will need another parallel road, which will bring more development which —

their lawyers, such dreams are shared by the property owners along the river and its tributary creeks.

Chances are that with galloping uncontrolled development transportation problems will continue to exist but many of the things that assure a good quality of life will have vanished: open spaces, good air and water quality, low noise levels, swimmable creeks, abundant wildlife, and low crime, to name only a few.

So please, stop annexation, stop development, stop road construction until, with full input from several civic organizations representing the citizens of the Annapolis Neck Peninsula, the city of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County have fully studied all problems in the Forest Drive corridor and developed a comprehensive plan on how these problems can best be solved.

MANFRED LECKS
Annapolis

Smith column

Eric Smith is a gifted cartoonist. His pen can inform; it can amuse; it can mobilize; it can give forth what we know but cannot express in words. His cartoons can infuriate.

A recent column by Mr. Smith (*The Capital*, June 24) left me with a tinge of wonder and an edge of sadness. Could it be this last possibility — that is, that there may be those so offended by him that they are nearly infuriated — leaves him living in fear?

I felt quite sad on reading this major contributor to the sport art form in our community that he must have guns to protect his life.

LELAND WILSON
Annapolis