



Judge cries, jails 2 cops

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'JFK' Boothwyn resident Robert J. Groden, standing at right, is seen on the set of Oliver Stone's upcoming film, 'JFK.' Groden, an expert on the Kennedy assassination, acted as a consultant as well as taking several roles in the film. He has strong views about who killed the president. See PAGE 4.



Nation: Bush waffles

■ President Bush yesterday signed the civil rights bill, but not before backtracking on its language. See PAGE 3.

Delco: Chester axes cops

■ Chester's new budget, unveiled yesterday, means layoffs for police and firemen and a tax hike. See PAGE 6.

Movies: 'Addams Family'

■ Morticia and Gomez are back as 'The Addams Family' hits movie screens this weekend. See PAGE 33.

Sports: Cooper's ready

■ Darby Township's Bert Cooper has a puncher's chance as he stalks Evander Holyfield Saturday night. See BACK PAGE.



IN THE COUNTY

County Editor Bonnie Healy — 622-8811

BRIEFLY

Victory parade set

CHESTER — Supporters of Mayor-elect Barbara Bohannon-Sheppard will hold a victory parade Saturday, starting at noon from Democratic Headquarters, Eighth and Avenue of the States.

The parade will wind through the city down Seventh Street and end at Memorial Park in the West End. Bohannon-Sheppard will be in the parade with her running mates, Councilmembers-elect Annette Burton and Chuck McLaughlin.

The Democrats shocked the county when they won control of city government on Election Day, the first time in nearly a century.

No to sabbaticals?

ASTON — At last night's work session, the Penn-Delco School Board asked its solicitor to look into whether recent requests for teacher sabbaticals can be denied, due to insufficient funds in the budget. While on sabbatical, a teacher is paid approximately half his working salary.

Superintendent Harry M. Hill said five teachers recently requested sabbaticals to begin this January, which is expected to cost the district approximately \$140,000. The district is operating with a no fund balance.

"The money was in there at 116 mills," Hill said, referring to his originally proposed budget. The final budget was trimmed to 63 mills.

The board will vote on the sabbaticals at Monday's school board meeting, which was moved up two days due to Thanksgiving.

'Blue' maps for asking

RADNOR — PennDOT is offering free to the public a new Interstate 476 (Blue Route) color brochure which illustrates the 21.5-mile long highway and its nine interchanges.

Copies may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: I-476 Brochure, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, 200 Radnor-Chester Road, St. Davids, Pa. 19087.

Copies may also be obtained from state legislators, businesses, government agencies, non-profit organizations and institutions which have requested brochures for distribution to their constituents, employees or members.

Thou shalt not steal

CLIFTON HEIGHTS — Anyone caught stealing aluminum cans from residents recycling containers will be fined \$600 for every offense — every household that the cans are taken from, said council president Joseph Kelly Monday night.

Kelly said that council will strictly enforce the \$600 penalty for stealing recyclable materials under the borough's new recycling ordinance, after Mayor Mary Natale informed council that someone has been stealing aluminum cans from recycling containers in the borough.

If residents see anyone taking recyclable materials they should contact the police or their council representative, said Kelly.

2 quit in Upper Chi

UPPER CHICHESTER — Commissioners accepted "with regret" the resignation of Angie Mann and Hal Franz from the Civil Service Commission at last week's board meeting.

Donnie Zoladkiewicz was appointed to the commission and the board is seeking candidates for two remaining vacancies.

'JFK'

Delco writer acted, assisted assassination film project

By KELVYN ANDERSON
Of the Times Staff

BOOTHWYN — When Oliver Stone's movie "JFK" hits the theaters in December, Upper Chichester resident Robert Groden probably won't be mobbed at the malls for the three minor roles he plays in the film.

But if the movie successfully raises the consciousness of movie-goers, causing them to ask more questions about what happened in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, fame will be the least of his rewards.

As one of the foremost experts on the tangle of evidence and conjecture surrounding President John F. Kennedy's death, Groden has tasted popularity, most recently when his book, "High Treason," went to number two on the New York Times' bestseller list.

Groden and many others reject Sen. Arlen Specter's single bullet theory. They believe Kennedy was the victim of an assassination plot launched by the CIA, and covered up by the Warren Commission, and, to a lesser extent, by the House Assassination Committee.

So when he got a call from Stone's California office in August 1990, Groden took the next plane to Dallas to talk with the director of "Platoon" and "Born on the Fourth of July."

Stone and Groden have much in common. Both are the same age. Both found themselves in a moral quandary after Kennedy was killed, searching for answers from a government they once trusted.

"This is in fact, although I don't know if it was meant to be or not, part three of a trilogy on the Vietnam War," Groden said of "JFK," during a recent interview at his Boothwyn home. "Now we're going back to the beginning and see what caused the war."

Groden, whose 1975 enhancement of the Abraham Zapruder film of the assassination led to convening of the House Assassination Committee, served as a technical consultant to "JFK," directing the assassination scene.

"I handled the timing, the reactions of the crowd," said Groden. "The production went very well. Oliver is a very professional person, a true artist."

"The angles, the feel of the movie, every aspect of the film is marvelous," he said.

In addition to his role behind the camera, Groden plays three bit parts: Dr. Malcolm Perry, the doctor who performed the emergency tracheotomy on Kennedy; an unscrupulous photo retoucher; and the courtroom projectionist in the trial of Clay Shaw.

"I walked on the set one day and found Tommy Lee Jones, who plays Clay Shaw, reading my book," Groden said. "He'd already read it and he was just boning up on it again."

"The most commonly asked question is what's Kevin Costner like," Groden laughed. "He's very patient, open and unassuming."

Before the first scene were shot, Stone's film was subjected to criticism from writers opposed to conspiracy theories, Groden said.

"I see the nervousness on the part of



President Kennedy is slumped in left rear seat as his wife helps a Secret Service agent into the speeding car seconds after the shooting in this file photo.

the establishment, because the film is being attacked months and months before its been released," he said. "The Washington Post and Newsweek have attacked the film with absolutely no idea what it's about except that one of the central characters is Jim Garrison (played by Costner)."

Stone paid meticulous attention to detail in "JFK." He re-built the extension of the Texas School Book Depository, planted shrubbery, moved streetlamps.

"It will raise the public's consciousness tremendously," he said. "It is far more fact than fiction."

As a veteran of the Kennedy assassination circuit, Groden is all too aware of the many fictions accompanying one of the greatest unsolved mysteries of the 20th Century.

The internal politics of life as assassination expert often wears him down, Groden said. "Josiah Thompson, Sylvia Marr and Harold Weisberg have had their work ripped off for years, and I know what it's like."

"I went public with this in '73, and again in '75, when it took off," he said. There were three people taking credit for his discoveries less than three months after Groden made his findings public.

It was a disgruntled and discredited charlatan, who, rebuffed by Stone, leaked a copy of the "JFK" script to Washington Post writer George Lardner, Groden said.

"This so-called critic leaked it because he was convinced Stone was going to do his story," Groden said. "Oliver saw through him at the very beginning, and wouldn't deal with him. His revenge was leaking the script."

Controversy and the credentials of critics aside, Groden hopes JFK will do



ROBERT GRODEN

what 19 years of agitation have failed to accomplish: A proper siring of the facts.

"I was at Villanova two weeks ago, and I was told it was the largest single crowd they've ever had for a lecture," said Groden. "That's a good sign. Very few of the people there were alive when it happened."

"You can kill the dreamer, but you can't kill the dream," he said, quoting a statement often attached to another famous assassination, that of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.