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Magazine investigates World Wide Church of God officials

By RUTH VINCE

MOUNT POCONO — A 52-page magazine, critical of the Worldwide Church of God, which meets annually in Coolbaugh Township, has caused bad vibrations and may embroil the organization in a lawsuit with the publication, according to Stanley Rader, general counsel for the church.

The magazine, *Ambassador Report*, was published by six former students of Ambassador College, an institution connected with the 500,000-member church, which has campuses in Pasadena, Calif., and Big Sandy, Texas.

Charges made in articles range from squandering funds to the alleged sex escapades of Garner Ted Armstrong, president of Ambassador College and son of Herbert W. Armstrong, church founder.

Titles include "Financing the Church — An Inside View," "In Bed With Garner Ted" and "Home-breaking — Armstrong Style."

Rader, who is also vice-president of financial affairs for the church, called the articles "scurrilous, outrageously untrue, distorted, and highly exaggerated."

"We are going on notice that we will not turn the other cheek this time," Rader said.

Rader added until all allegations are reviewed and further action taken, a temporary restraining order will be sought against those publishing the charges.

Margaret Zela, one of the publishers of the magazine, said all information contained in the publication has been supplied from people still working within the organization as well as from those who have left. The people, she said, have documents.

Two local members of the organization had no comment regarding the magazine. Jack Patterson, manager at the church-owned festival site in Coolbaugh Township, and Oswald Engelbart, local pastor, both said they had heard about the magazine but had not seen it, therefore could make no comment on its content.

Rader, commenting on the reported sex life of Garner Ted Armstrong, a nationally-known radio and TV commentator, pointed out this matter happened "a long time ago. He (Ted) was sent away for six months and then reinstated in accordance with the doctrines of the church."

Also featured in the magazine is an interview with Bobby Fischer, world champion

chess player, who reportedly gave \$94,315 to the church from 1967 to 1974.

Fischer speaks about his 15 years of "Armstrongism," and how he was "able to be out-psyched and manipulated by the Armstrongs through long-term exposure to subtle religious mind-control techniques."

He said members' lives are ruined because they follow the teachings of the church. "Those guys will ruin your life in five minutes flat. They tell you to move, change jobs, not to have an operation, and tell you to marry this person, and people do it."

Fischer admits all church doctrines are "not necessarily bad" and that members "should not reject everything." His point, he told publishers is that members "should be thinking for themselves."

Rader said he is now representing Fischer, who is "looking for prosecution and possibly a civil suit," because the publishers "surreptitiously recorded" the interview with Fischer.

The publication features several articles on fishing, entitled "Fishing Pays Off." It is complete with photos of what is reported to be the homes and grounds of the two Armstrongs, Rader and Robert Kuhn, assistant to the younger Armstrong. It is reported that the es-

timated value of the estates ranges from \$300,000 to \$2 million.

For the past 11 years, church members have been meeting at the local site in September or October for the annual Fall Festival, known to members as the Feast of Tabernacles.

In 1966 approximately 12,500 members from the eastern part of the United States and Canada met in a large tent. The following year the convention center and auditorium, with a seating capacity up to 15,000, was completed.

Over the years more sites have opened both in the United States and Canada, with the attendance, locally, dwindling to approximately 5,000.

The local site is one of 12 in the United States, with six in Canada. International sites number 93.

The Fall Festival is a time for members all over the world to gather for prayer and recreation and to hear key church speakers — among them, Garner Ted Armstrong and Herbert W. Armstrong.

Church members from the surrounding area also meet at the local site on Saturdays for church services, conducted by the local pastor.



Garner Ted Armstrong

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