

# The Calvert Recorder

Friday, March 24, 2006

*Southern Maryland Newspapers – A Washington Post Company Publication*

---

## He rocked a bit too hard

### Band leader is sentenced for 'near riot' at skating rink

By Steve Schuster  
Staff Writer

A 25-year-old rock band member was sentenced earlier this week for his participation in what police described as nearly a riot at the Calvert Roller Skating Center in February.

William Joseph Romeo, 25, of Bronx, N.Y., the singer for the band Aiden, pleaded guilty to the charge of disorderly conduct Wednesday before Judge Stephen Clagett in the Calvert County District Court.

Near riot conditions broke out at a rock concert at the rink in Owings Feb 4., after a New York City band member shouted profanity at law enforcement officials and refused to leave the stage. Romeo was placed under arrest for disorderly conduct and failure to obey a law enforcement officer.

Lt. Dave McDowell of the Calvert County Sheriff's Office, who was working off duty security at the skating center the evening of the incident, and Deputy Bortchevsky quickly responded after Jack Becker, the skating center owner, told them that a live band concert event for that evening was over and that the band on stage needed to stop playing and leave the building, according to court documents.

Police told the band that they needed to stop playing, pack up their equipment and leave the building. Several members of the band began to complain about being unable to play and began using profanity.

"The behavior of the band began to influence the behavior of the crowd, and several juveniles in the audience began banging on the tables, shouting profanities and chanting 'let the band play,' " McDowell wrote in court documents.

In the crowd of more than 50 people, the two police deputies on the scene were outnumbered. After the crowd continued to be out of control, Bortchevsky had the drummer of the band, Phillip Waisonovtz, up against the wall. It was at this time that Romeo rushed toward the

# The Calvert Recorder

Friday, March 24, 2006

*Southern Maryland Newspapers – A Washington Post Company Publication*

---

deputy and said, “Get your [expletive] hands off my drummer,” according to court documents.

Police advised Romeo to leave the area. Romeo continued to refuse to leave and swear at the officers. Romeo’s actions caused the crowd, which was leaving the area, to come back onto the stage area, police reported. Romeo then aggressively approached the police, continued to use obscenities and was then placed under arrest. He was charged with failure to obey a law enforcement officer and disorderly conduct. He pleaded guilty to the disorderly conduct charge in exchange for the state dropping the other charge, according to Erik Yoder, the deputy state’s attorney handling the case. Romeo was given a 30-day jail sentence, but Clagett suspended 29 days of his sentence.

Since Romeo had already served one day, he walked away after paying \$250 in criminal fines and court costs, and was placed on one year of unsupervised probation, according to court documents.

Romeo’s hearing was originally supposed to be held on the 1 p.m. docket, but because he had to fly across the country for his next gig, his trial was moved up to 10:30 a.m. Although Romeo didn’t have to serve 29 out of the 30 days of his sentence, Clagett said he was outraged by the situation.

“It sounds like you [Romeo] caused a near riot ... that may be good for L.A. but it’s not good for Calvert County,” Clagett said during the hearing.

After the defense argued that Romeo should not serve jail time for the crimes he committed, Clagett responded, “What, you don’t want a criminal record? I thought that would be a badge of honor since you’re in a band.”

After the hearing was over, Romeo said he was very pleased with the judge’s ruling.

“Clagett is really a nice guy,” Romeo said.