

Crusaders draw
first blood: Inside

Clark Patriot

'A Voice for All, an Echo for None'

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20 CENTS

Kumpf becomes middle school under new plan

By R. R. Faszczewski
The concept of a middle school system in Clark's elementary schools took a step forward on Oct. 12 when the Board of Education adopted a re-districting plan which will have all sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students in the township attending the Carl H. Kumpf School beginning with the 1983-1984 school year.

Currently, the Valley Road and the Hehny Schools house kindergartners to fifth graders; the Kumpf School houses kindergartners to eighth graders, and the Brewer School, from sixth to eighth graders.

Saying the re-organization plan, adopted after a year-long study of 13 options originally presented, took a good deal of planning, the Superintendent of Schools Dr. John T. Farinella noted hopefully the re-organization decision would be made for the good of the majority of the community.

A resident, Richard Bennett, of 94 Jupiter St., asked, with three fifth grades anticipated at the Hehny School under the new plan, how could the Board be sure an overcrowding at the Kumpf School this year would not happen at Hehny next year.

The Board president, Mrs. Elise Mezzo, replied if the number of students in one class was to reach above that number would probably be placed in another school.

Asked what effect a possible loss of state minimum aid would have on the re-organization plan, Mrs. Mezzo said if the district was to lose the aid, of about \$300,000, no matter which plan was adopted the school system would be in trouble.

Another parent, Mrs. Anita Altman, referring to a notice she said was sent to all parents about the re-organization, wanted to know what was meant by a statement in the notice that test scores had improved recently.

Dr. Farinella replied in the sixth to eighth grades scores in the Iowa Test of Basic Skills had recently gone from the 80's to the 90's in composite.

All for the reason for the changeover, Mrs. Mezzo said the course offerings were the most important consideration. The new system would allow for greater flexibility in the use of staff because all the teachers in sixth to eighth grades would be in a single school.

She added the Oct. 12 action was only for adoption of a re-organization plan for the schools. It did not involve staffing, budgeting or anything beyond the changes in the districts.

When Mrs. Mezzo mentioned the present system might mean the loss of a class in advanced composition, a resident, Charles Bovlin of Fairview Rd., said he couldn't see how the school body could justify uprooting students based on the single course.

The Board president replied the school system is also losing about 100 students every year, and many junior high school teachers, and this was another reason for adopting the Kumpf School middle school plan.



HOT OFF THE PRESS - Rep. Matthew J. Rinaldo, whose district includes Clark, receives one of the first copies of the "Consumer's Resource Handbook" from Virginia Knauer, the special assistant to the President and the director of the United States Office of Consumer Affairs. The handbook tells consumers how to

contact over 2,000 sources in government and in the private sector to resolve a problem or obtain information. Consumers may obtain free copies from the representative's district office at 1981 Morris Ave., Union, or by telephoning 687-4235. (Please see a story inside.)



CHURCH'S GOOD WORKS - Mrs. Lucille Taylor, center, of the Clark Ocoola Presbyterian Church, presents hand-made layettes to Eve Svartvaen, left, and Victoria Brown of the Rahway Hospital's Social Services Dept. The layettes, which include a blanket, short gown and long gown were made by Circle No. 3 of the Ocoola Women's Assn. during the summer.

Regional unit ponders fate of future setup

By R. R. Faszczewski
The continuing problem of declining enrollment in the Union County Regional High School District No. 1, which includes Clark, may eventually force the district to consider closing schools or going to de-regionalization, under which the district's four high schools would be placed back under the control of the municipalities now sending students to the facilities operated by the regional body, it was pointed out earlier this month.

Responding to a charge by a resident of the district, the Board President, Stephen Marcinak of Clark, at the first meeting of its Future Planning Committee, had no pre-conceived ideas or specific plans for dealing with the continuing problem of declining enrollment.

At Mr. Marcinak's request, the Superintendent of Schools Dr. Donald Merachnik outlined four possible options for restructuring the district, where enrollment has dropped from a 1971 high of nearly 5,700 to approximately 3,700 this year.

Projections indicate by 1990 there may be fewer than 2,000 students enrolled in the six-community district, which currently serves ninth to 12 graders from Clark, Berkeley Heights, Garwood, Kenilworth, Mountainside and Springfield.

The regional would become a seventh-to-12th-grade district or a large kindergarten-to-12th-grade district.

On the other hand, the schools head noted, the Board could consider an interim re-organization that would retain all four high schools, although the students would be regularly enrolled in only three.

For instance, Berkeley Heights and Mountainside students might again attend one high school, Springfield and Kenilworth another, and Clark and Garwood the third, or there could be other combinations.

The fourth high school could continue to operate, offering specialized courses to district students, and serving as a full daytime adult learning center—an expansion of the district's existing adult education program.

Because of the difficulty in closing a high school facility, as opposed to an elementary-school one, Dr. Merachnik said he couldn't recommend that course of action.

Hopefuls told release dates

ATTENTION: ALL CANDIDATES IN THE TUESDAY, NOV. 2, GENERAL ELECTIONS.
The Rahway News-Record and The Clark Patriot will publish their pre-election advance issues on Thursday, Oct. 28.

All biographies and/or pictures of the candidates which they would like to appear in the advance issues should be in the hands of the editor at 219 Central Ave., Rahway, N.J., 07065 NO LATER THAN 5 P.M. ON THURSDAY, OCT. 21.

There will be absolutely no exceptions to this deadline, except in the case of an election cancellation, in which case the editor will have complete discretion as to which deadlines to impose and his usual discretion as to the material to be used.

Clark homeowners form organization

The Clark Homeowners Assn. is a new organization in Clark. A group of homeowners have gotten together for the purpose of informing and protecting the interests of the homeowner in Clark, reports John Amato, the group's president.

The population of Clark is 92% homeowners, and it seems as though they have been given the least consideration from the administration and Governing Body of this town. It's about time the homeowners have a voice," Mr. Amato reported.

The bi-partisan organization in three weeks, acquired over 400 members from all over the township. Very soon, when the developmental stage is over, committees can be set up and spokesmen assigned, the group's president explained.

Mr. Amato resides on Emerson Rd. "Too many homeowners are unaware of what's going on in this township—we're all so busy working to keep up our homes, and we have very little time to become involved. Our membership will receive information about important issues that affect our homes and our taxes. One of our first concerns will be to inform our members about the Rent Control Issue that we are going to vote on in November," concluded Mr. Amato.



READY TO ROLL - The March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation sponsored an assembly at the Charles H. Brewer School in Clark on Oct. 8. The program was presented by Victoria L. Margolis, a community relations representative, and Ken Sloan, the executive director of the Essex-Union Chapter of the March of Dimes and a long-distance cyclist. The assembly focused on bicycle safety, and included the specifics in the upcoming Super-Ride Bike-A-Thon of 50 kilometers in Union County. The Bike-A-Thon will be held on Saturday, Oct. 23, at the Rahway River Park starting at the restaurant stand at the Valley Road School in Clark and will proceed as scheduled rain or shine. Registration will take place between 8:30 and 11:30 a.m. and the official start will be at 9 a.m. The Super-Ride will conclude at 4 p.m., and prizes will be awarded according to the dollar amounts of the pledges. After the assembly, shown left to right, are: David M. Hart, the principal of the Charles H. Brewer School in Clark; an eighth-grade student, Joseph Colombo, and Mr. Sloan.