

# Clark Patriot

'A Voice for All, an Echo for None'

VOL. 19 NO. 42

CLARK, NEW JERSEY, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1985

USPS 115-760

20 CENTS

## Tenants, landlords told: Work out rent pact

By RR. Faszczewski  
Clark's tenants and landlords Oct. 10 were told by Township Council to go back to negotiations and try to reach an agreement on fair rent increases by Township Council at a special executive session the Council held to discuss a rent stabilization law.

Since the township's voters three years ago defeated rent control in a referendum tenants have often complained about what they call "unconscionable" rent increases and landlords in the township's apartment complexes have responded they are doing only what is necessary to properly maintain the buildings and realize a fair return on their investments.

After some research and a tenant proposal for a rent-stabilization law, which would set up a township body to monitor rent increases, Councilman Caruso asked for the Oct. 10 session to present his findings and explore the Governing Body's options.

According to figures supplied by Councilman Caruso at the executive session rents for 1985-1986 one and two bedroom apartments have been increased by from 26 to 31 percent for a one-bedroom apartment for 1985-1986 from 18.5 to 22 percent for 1985-1986 for a two-bedroom apartment.

Monthly rentals, again citing the Caruso statistics in one example of a one-bedroom apartment, went from \$300 in 1982 to \$330 six months later, to \$396 six months after that, to \$416 six months after that to the present level of \$525.

Monthly rentals of a two-bedroom apartment cited went from \$380 in 1982 to \$625 in 1985-1986 in six-month intervals of increase.

The addition of the percentage increases in each of these six-month increases resulted in overall boosts of 61 and 53.6 percent, respectively, according to the Caruso figures.

He added the agreement first signed had been tried for three years but he understood... it had been violated and neither side was willing to concede because the landlords wanted to terminate the present agreement on Tuesday, Dec. 31 of this year, while the tenants wanted to terminate it when their individual leases ran out.

He put up for the Council's consideration an ordinance which is in effect in Freehold Borough in which there is a municipal review board, composed of tenants, landlords, homeowners and a councilman, which is empowered to resolve disputes about rents.

Some of the factors which could be built into such a contract, according to Mr. Fink, were: Month-to-month leases could have the same conditions as a one-year lease, landlords could be obligated to comply with the "Truth in Renting Law," increases in taxes to the landlords could be passed on to tenants sometimes, and not passed on at others, capital improvements might be added to rental rates, vacancy of an apartment could allow the landlord to raise the rent on that apartment to competitive prices, landlords could agree to repair items complained about, and the Governing Body could be an appeal board for any items either

County towns might have in disputes brought before a rent-stabilization board.

Calling the rent-increase figures presented by Councilman Caruso "way out of line" with what levels rents should be at, Councilman-at-Large Bernard Hayden, who said he was against the re-imposition of rent leveling, asked Mr. Fink to explain the implications of rent-stabilization laws which had been researched.

The attorney replied the Freehold ordinance could not really be applied in Clark until a formal agreement had been signed between the township and the landlords, as in Spring Lake Heights, where a one-year agreement is in effect.

However, Mr. Fink noted, the Spring Lake Heights law doesn't say what happens if the contract is not re-negotiated after the year.

Councilman Hayden said he would like to see Clark check on rents for apartments in neighboring communities, just as the township does when it checks on salaries in neighboring municipalities when negotiating with township employees.

Saying other Union officials, as well as private investigators, will be used to ensure all students enrolled in the regional district are bona fide residents, he said.

The regional district includes David Grearley Regional High School in Kenilworth, Jonathan Dayton Regional High School in Springfield, Arthur T. Johnson Regional High School in Clark and Gov. Livingston Regional High School in Berkeley Heights.

Participants will discuss "Stress: Coping Effectively with the Tensions, Pressures and Anxiety of Living," Oct. 23; "Assertiveness: Saying No, Meaningful and Learning to Live with It," Nov. 6; "Reti-

ation. The whole series of workshops will cost \$5. The fee to each individual workshop is \$2. Union County College students may attend free of charge.

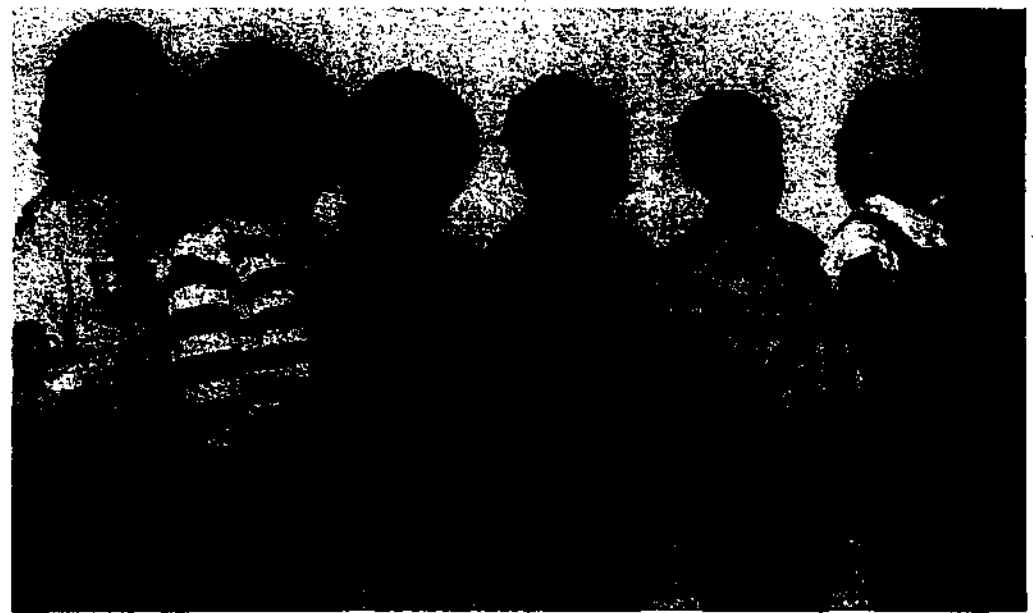
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KUMPF STUDENT COUNCIL TAKES SHAPE... Winners of the Student Council election at the Clark Kumpf School in Clark, shown, left to right, are: President, Shannon Grady; secretary, Sherril Olsen; eighth-grade vice president, Carla Brennan; seventh-grade vice president, Stephanie Cannone; sixth-grade vice presi-

dent, Brian Paris, and treasurer, Maureen Green. This group constitutes the nucleus of the student government at the school. Faculty advisor, James Carollo, works closely with this executive board to formulate plans for the year, which include fundraising events and student social activities.

### Clark to give flu immunizations

Personnel for the Township of Clark today announced a series of health immunization clinics during the afternoon hours for senior citizens of Clark and of chronically-ill citizens of any age on Wednesday, Oct. 30 between 1 and 2:30 p.m. at the Clark Senior Citizen Center, located at the Clark municipal complex, the former Charles Brewer-School, at 430 Westfield Ave.

### Clark Pop Warner stays unbeaten

David Bierstein had another big day as the Clark Junior Pop Warner Football Team defeated St. John's, 12-6, Clark, now 4-0, is promised a play-off berth.

### Regional district checks residency

Dr. Donald Merachnik, superintendent of the schools for the Union County Regional High School District No. 1, which includes Clark, announced today the school administration has intensified its efforts to identify and remove students who are illegally enrolled in the four regional high schools.

### Lunchtime groups explore stress

A series of four lunchtime group workshops dealing with stress, assertiveness, relationships and feelings will be held at Union County College on Wednesday afternoons beginning Oct. 23.

### Hopefuls told release dates

ATTENTION: ALL CANDIDATES IN THE TUESDAY, NOV. 5, GENERAL ELECTION AND THOSE WISHING TO COMMENT ON CANDIDATES AND ISSUES.

### HELP US CELEBRATE OUR BIRTHDAY

Clark's own hometown newspaper, The Clark Patriot, is 20 years young.



GIFT FOR THE SUPER... Clark Superintendent of Schools Dr. Paul Orsenzo displays the sweatshirt he received from the Frank Henchy School Parent-Teacher Assn.