

Clark Patriot

'A Voice for All, an Echo for None'

VOL. 20 NO. 23

CLARK, NEW JERSEY, THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 1986

USPS 115-760

10 CENTS

Township resident remembers POWs-MIAs

"The truth should be told"

by Pat DiMaggio

For some the war never ends. Hopes and dreams never die. The fight for information goes on long after the books are officially closed.

For Walter Wojcicki, of Maurice Ave., Clark, his personal crusade on behalf of the Prisoners of War (POWs) and those Missing in Action (MIAs) in the Vietnam War has lasted for 16 years.

Wojcicki, founder of the FREE OUR POWS Committee of Clark, dates his involvement to December 1969. "People were not even aware that we had troops in Vietnam as far back as 1961," explained Wojcicki. "My purpose at that time was three-fold. First, a lot of people didn't even know what the word POW meant. Secondly, we had to identify those prisoners. They were not only service men who were professionals, but they were also draftees, people from all walks of life. Third, the families were going it alone. Here we were after 8 years of escalating conflict and no one made a mention of those people missing. Families didn't know who to turn to for information."

At last, Walter was told that there were only 29 per-

sons listed as missing. After questioning the government on their information, he learned the tally was as high as 1,500. The military would not release a list of names to concerned citizens, so Walter made an attempt to go public with his Committee. Formally organized in February of 1970, the FREE OUR POWS Committee sent a telegram to then President Nixon and to various press organizations stating their purpose of freedom of information.

"When we started out," said Wojcicki, "we couldn't find one agency who was responsible for the prisoners of war." Between February and May of that year, Walter estimates that over 150,000 hand bills proclaiming the problems of the POWs and MIAs were handed out in New York City.

The first time those missing in Vietnam were mentioned nationwide was in May of 1970 in a speech by President Nixon. The involvement of Sweden's Prime Minister, Olof Palme, was sought. He agreed to intervene in a prisoner exchange if requested to do so by the government.

"We then got into the flyer business," said Wojcicki. "Over 100,000 were sent out asking the United States and the North and South Vietnamese to start a dialogue."

In April of 1971, Palme went before the United Nations to say Sweden was willing to take the POWS into its country. Nixon agreed. Hanoi rejected the plan.

During the 1972 Presidential elections the question of the POWS and MIAs became a "hot issue." With George McGovern and Nixon making various promises on how they would deal with the situation.

"Nobody was really concerned with the prisoners," said Wojcicki. "It was just a political stand-off. We went to the federal courts to try to take them out of the political arena and the 72nd election and make these people wards of the court." Walter's efforts were not successful, the courts took the petitions but refused to hear them.

A cease fire was declared in 1973. During his speech President Nixon professed his concern with the prisoners. "He said they

would never be forgotten and never left behind," said Wojcicki.

Henry Kissinger was the prime mover behind the Paris Peace Talks between the United States and North Vietnam. A treaty was signed and between February and April of 1973, 599 people were returned. "Kissinger carried with him 80 files of individuals that were not included on any list up to this point," explained Wojcicki. "Nothing ever came out of these 80 files. Through the Freedom of Information Act, I eventually got those names."

Although many people rejoiced over the release of almost 600 prisoners, Walter is quick to point out that a treaty was never signed with Laos or Cambodia. He sent telegrams to Nixon, Kissinger and to the American Legion. "No provision was given to servicemen in Laos and Cambodia," said Wojcicki. "How can you take people into conflict and then forget they are there? He received no reply. He believes that up to five years ago, there were 40 prisoners still alive in Laos and Cambodia. And up to 400 bodies."

On December 13, 1976,

according to Walter, an interesting thing happened. Congress closed the book on the prisoners of war. "They officially sent out a report that the book was closed," said Wojcicki.

For 10 years the United States had no active committee or organization formally working on the release of prisoners or for the return of their bodies.

In 1984, a new committee was formed, and there was a reawakening of public concern for those still held in Southeast Asia. A joint military organization with family representation, the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, is working to resolve the problems inherent in returning servicemen to the country.

Walter thinks it is important to remember the lessons learned and the problems faced by the families and by the POWS and MIAs. "It is a tragic situation," said Wojcicki. "And it can happen again. In the beginning, there were no groups set up to deal with prisoners or hostages. There were no organizations set up to deal with these problems. People should not have to go it alone. The truth should be told."

Chen and Canada selected to attend Legion State Program

Clark American Legion Post 328 spokesman Joseph Rybak has reported the selection of delegates to the Legion State Program.

Clark Boys' State Delegates Christopher Canada of 24 Armstrong Dr., and Philip Chen Jr. of 41 Sweet Briar Drive, information. Mr. and Mrs. P. Chen, will leave on Sunday, June 15, for Rider College in Lawrenceville, Trenton to attend the American Legion Jersey Boys' State Program. Chris and Philip are sponsored by Clark Post No. 328. Alternates for the program are Vincent Gagliardi of 4 Rolling Hill Way and Andrej's Delle of 51 Wendell Place, Clark.

Chris, a student at Arthur L. Johnson High School, is an honor roll student. President of the Junior Class and plays Lacrosse. Philip, also a student in the Clark High School, is one of the top students in his class. He belongs to the Spanish Club and the Science Club.

The Boys' State Program was begun "to develop good citizens in the United States of America by inspiring the youth of New Jersey to take a more active and intelli-

gent interest in the operation of our State and Nation and in the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship. The boys, selected for their scholarship and leadership abilities by their schools in conjunction with local American Legion officials, will participate in a full week schedule of activities including politics, sports, music, educational programs and lectures.

While at Rider College, the young men participating in the program will learn of the machinery of govern-

ment by participating in it. They will hear lectures on the Legislative, Executive and Judicial branches of government, conduct campaigns and elections in the democratic processes.

The inauguration of the Boys' State governor and the band concert will be held on Friday evening, June 20, at 7:30 p.m., in Rider College Gym. All Legionnaires, Auxiliary members, co-sponsors, friends and guests are invited to attend, Rybak reports.



INTRODUCING PHILIP CHEN... Clark Post 328 Commander John Specht is seen at a recent meeting introducing Philip Chen, Jr. Philip is one of two candidates scheduled to attend N.J. Boys State at Rider College.

Kumpf's Lacrosse team goes undefeated

Jim Carovillano's Kumpf Lacrosse Team has gone undefeated with a perfect 14-0 record, for the second time in the school's history.

Tony Calandra, Kumpf's leading scorer, helped his team by breaking the school scoring record by scoring 61 goals. Calandra also had 17 assists to his credit. In addition, Calandra also broke the single game scoring record by scoring 8 goals against Westfield.

Also helping the team go undefeated was John Heller. Mr. Carovillano said that John was the best face-off man the Cougars have ever had. John had 10 goals and 15 assists to his credit.

Another standout player was Colin Wills. Colin played attack and played his position with "reckless abandon," according to Carovillano. Colin's plays accounted for 26 goals and 29 assists. Calandra credits Wills for many of his goals.

Anne Spiewak graduates from Babson College

Clark resident Anne R. Spiewak received a bachelor of science degree at the 67th annual Commencement of Babson College.

Spiewak graduated with distinction. Babson is a school of management education located in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

The commencement address was delivered by

Other standouts were Jason Pressman, Chris Anderson, Bob Guarino, Mark Navarro, Mike Grossman, Bert Inzone, Mike Chin, John Lee, Jim Hudak, and Nick Medvedich.

The goalie was Bob Harper only allowing 3.2 goals per game.

Bobby Firestone and Matt Pertera were outstanding, anchoring the defense and solidifying it.

Carovillano noted. Other standouts were Pat Slowey, Lou Van Bergen, and Nick Kjeska.

A school spokesperson stated, "The Township of Clark should be proud to have a teacher, not only a coach in Jim Carovillano, who builds character and helps students become fine outstanding citizens. To his credit Jim had over 60 boys come out and participate in Lacrosse. Congratulations Jim, the Township of Clark salutes you."

"Government rules and regulations often create costly and unnecessary burdens on business and individuals," said Franks. "My bill seeks to control the rule-making process by insuring that rules are necessary, straightforward,



ON TO COUNTY COMPETITION... Virginia R. Muskas, Clark Board Member to the Union County Regional High School District #1, congratulates David Broatley teacher Donald Logan, District "Teacher of the Year" as Principal Joseph Malt looks on.

Dorald Logan named district "Teacher of the Year"

Dorald Logan, a teacher at the David Brearley Regional High School, has been selected as Union County Regional High School District #1 "Teacher of the Year."

Donald Morachnik, chief school administrator announced.

In making his announcement, Dr. Morachnik described the English teacher and advisor to the literary magazine, who has been with the district for 18 years, as an exceptional teacher who consistently displays a love of literature and serious interest in the personal development of her students. She typifies the born teacher, a scholar and a counselor of students.

An active member of the school, Logan participates in English and journalism activities with the Bearprint and Parish, Student Government Association, curricular workshops and assists in preparing students in basic skill development.

A native of Ohio, Logan was educated at Mt. Union College, where she received her BA degree in English. She also holds a master's

Kennedy wins Democratic nod for Council seat

by Pat DiMaggio

The nomination for the Fourth Ward Democratic Council candidate was decided in the Clark Primary Election on June 3. Ronald Kennedy garnered a total of 109 votes to his opponent John A. Cui's total of 60. Mr. Cui was an off-line candidate for the seat being vacated by Councilman Brian Toul. The Republican nominee for the Fourth Ward seat is Carmine E. Cristiani who received 61 votes.

Democratic candidates swept the other primary nominations. First Ward candidate Robert Elknerp tallied 56 votes to Republican candidate John Dillon's 44 votes. Second Ward incumbent William Caruso received 155 votes to his Republican opponent Ralph S. Whittle. He's total of 50. Third Ward candidate Joseph A. Conarata garnered 96 votes while

Republican candidate Carol Pluta received 44 votes.

Tom Dunn, of Clark, received 425 votes to his Democratic nomination for County Clerk. Walter G. Halpin tallied 210.

Democratic candidates for the House of Representatives were June S. Fisher and James J. Cleary, who received 361 and 99 votes respectively. Matthew J. Rinaldi, Republican Representative, tallied 271 votes in Clark.

Sheriff Ralph Fasolich received 445 votes to his Republican opponent John A. Tritle's 203 votes.

Candidates for the Board of Chosen Freeholders on the Democratic side were Michael J. Iapolla, Brian W. Falley, and Gerald Greco who received 426, 414 and 311 votes respectively. Republicans Paul O'Keefe, Janet Whinnam and Edmund Palmieri tallied 205, 306 and 304 votes.



A LIVING REMINDER... In a recent planting ceremony at Frank K. Hahnly School in Clark, a park dedicated to the memory of Christa McAuliffe. Shown participating in the event are Mrs. Linda Montgomery, P.T.A. President, Mrs. Rachel Alonzo, Vice President, Mr. John Gamba, Principal and representatives from each of the school's classes.

Franks' bill selected as model legislation

A bill sponsored by Assemblyman Bob Franks, who represents Clark in the New Jersey General Assembly, has been selected by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) as an example of innovative legislation to be included in the ALEC 1986 Source Book of American State Legislation.

Franks' bill, A-2082, proposes the creation of a Regulatory Efficiency Commission to develop improved rule-making procedures.

"Government rules and regulations often create costly and unnecessary burdens on business and individuals," said Franks. "My bill seeks to control the rule-making process by insuring that rules are necessary, straightforward,

nonmultiplicative and require minimal compliance cost."

The American Legislative Exchange Council, headquartered in Washington, D.C., is a non-partisan, nonprofit, public affairs and research organization for state legislators from across the country. Its primary purpose is to help elected officials share ideas and legislative proposals in all areas of public policy and to provide a forum for the exchange of sound, imaginative ideas on reducing bureaucracy and improving government processes.

The ALEC selection committee reviews state legislation from around the country and selects the best examples of innovative legislation for inclusion in their annual source book.

Franks' bill on regulatory efficiency was chosen as one of the twenty six bills from around the nation to be included in the 1986 ALEC Source Book.



STALY RECOGNITION... Out of about 6,000 entrants in the 37th Annual Safety Poster Contest sponsored by the N.J. State Police, Craig Mathon was one of 30 finalists. Trooper Robert Runion visited Frank Hahnly School to present Craig with his Certificate of Recognition. During his visit to Mrs. Vojnyck's fifth grade class, Trooper Runion took time out to speak to the student about the importance of safety and the role of the State Police.

POISON HOTLINE
1-800-962-1253