

Clark Patriot

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Clark Fire Chief: "We're dedicated."

by Pat DiMaggio
They are dragged out of bed in the middle of the night. They are called away from their families during meal times. They are out in spite of the weather or the season. And they don't even receive a salary. Why would someone want to volunteer their time to such an occupation?

"We are dedicated," said Donald Kellerman, Chief of Clark's Volunteer Fire Department. "It's also the excitement. We put our lives on the line everytime we're called out of the house."

The volunteer Fire Department has been operating in Clark for about 70 years, said Kellerman. There are currently 42 firemen on the roster and five more were just appointed by the Municipal Council last week.

Each fireman has to undergo rigid training programs to qualify. "An applicant must be a resident of Clark for at least six months and wish to volunteer their time for worthwhile service," said Kellerman. "They must undergo monthly company training and must complete a county-wide fireman course, sponsored by the Union County Fire Chiefs Association; they must report on Sunday mornings for driver and pump training, complete a CPR course and make assigned maintenance duties."

"To advance to officer, they must complete basic pump and ladder courses," Kellerman added. "Then every two years there is prescribed special training to advance further."

Firemen advance from second lieutenant to first lieutenant, to captain, to assistant chief and finally, to chief.

What's the difference between a volunteer fire department and other fire departments? "We like to think we are more dedicated," said Kellerman. "For us, it's not just a job. They are called professional fire fighters; we are called career fire fighters. It's the same thing, but we receive no salary."

The fire department's equipment includes an 85-foot snorkel, a heavy duty rescue truck, three main line pumps and one reserve pumper.

"Each fireman has to be able to drive and pump each pumper and drive and operate the snorkel," Kellerman pointed out. "Every two years each individual must requalify in order to remain in the department."

Kellerman noted that the average fire fighter stays in the department from 15 to 20 years.

Fire headquarters are on Broadway, with a sub-station located on Westfield Avenue in the police building. Fire department officials are fighting for a new sub-station, to be located on Raritan Road. It was approved by voters in a 1986 referendum.

The Township of Clark owns the buildings and pur-

chases the equipment. The fire department maintains the buildings and grounds, Kellerman noted, and has an annual fund drive to promote sponsorship in Little League, Pop Warner and Babe Ruth organizations.

"We are fortunate that alarms for house fires are minimal," said Kellerman. "Grass and brush fires have

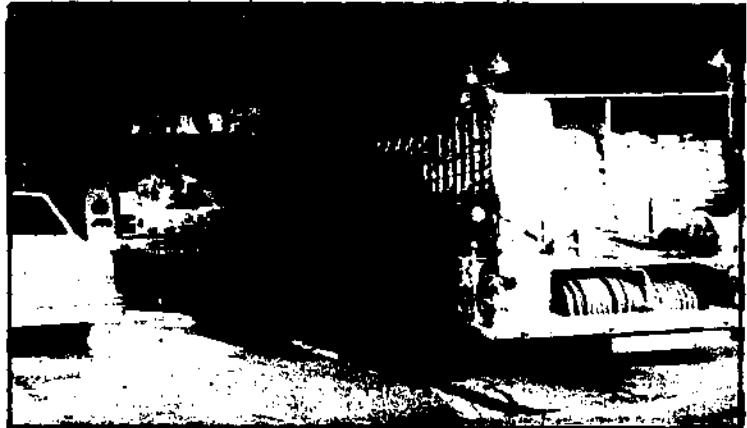
diminished because of the expansion of the town. There are many car fires and we get a lot of calls for commercial and industrial buildings, mostly for the alarms going off."

Fire fighters are dispatched through the police department by an alerting system.

A volunteer fire department is often taken for

granted by residents, who forget that it takes a special type of person to make that commitment.

"It makes life an experience," Kellerman observed. "We are not like the average guy sitting home reading or watching television. There is always something going on and we are right in the middle of it."



READY TO ROLL... Some of the township-owned fire equipment maintained by Clark's volunteer fire department.



NOT JUST A JOB... Clark volunteer fire chief Donald Kellerman is justifiably proud of his department's dedication.



DAY CREW... Clark volunteer fire fighters gear up for the start of a shift.



CHRISTMAS CHEER... Anna Hiatt of Iselin shared the top prize jackpot of \$5,239,281 won in the New Jersey Lottery's "Pick-6 Lotto" drawing held December 17 with family members. Shown from left to right: Barbara A. Marrow, Lottery Director who presented the winning checks to daughter Nancy Rokose of Edison, husband Warren Hiatt, Anna Hiatt and Mrs. Hiatt's sister Barbara Jean Disette of Clark.

Clark woman shares \$5 million jackpot

Five members of a family from Middlesex and Union counties will share the top prize jackpot of \$5,239,281, payable over 20 years, from the New Jersey Lottery's "Pick-6 Lotto" drawing held Thursday evening, December 17.

Lottery Executive Director Barbara A. Marrow announced that the winners are Anna Hiatt, 71, and her husband Warren, 82, of Iselin; the Hiatt's daughter and son-in-law, Nancy Rokose, 39, and her husband, Edward, 44 of Edison; and Mrs. Hiatt's sister, Barbara Jean Disette, 48, of Clark.

The lucky ticket was purchased by Mrs. Hiatt. In the spirit of the Christmas season, she decided to share her good fortune with her

family "because they always have been good to me."

Marrow reported that the ticket was the only one of the more than 5.6 million tickets sold for the drawing that picked all six numbers. They were 01, 02, 21, 27, 28 and 30. Mrs. Hiatt bought the ticket at the ShopRite on Oak Tree Road in Edison, letting the "Quick-Pick" computer select her numbers.

Mrs. Hiatt retired nine years ago after working on the production line for 16

years for the Metex Corporation in Edison. Her husband retired in 1972 after working as a cabinet maker for the Magnus Organ Company in Linden.

Their only child, Mrs. Rokose, is employed as a cashier at the Foodtown warehouse in Edison. Her husband is a welder. The couple has two sons and a daughter.

Disette is employed as a saleswoman for a bakery in Clark.

Mrs. Hiatt learned she was a big winner at 5:45

a.m. on Friday when the announcer on a local radio station reported the winning numbers and she checked her ticket. Among the things she said she wants to do with her share is to fix up her house or, perhaps, buy a new one and to treat a grandson to a new bike for Christmas because "that's what he told me he wanted if I won the lottery."

The Hiatts, Mrs. Rokose and Disette each received initial payments of \$69,675 after the mandatory 20 percent withholding for Fed-

eral income tax. For the next 19 years the annual payments to them or their heirs will be \$69,866 after the Federal tax deductions. New Jersey does not tax lottery winnings.

Although there was only one top prize winner, Marrow reported that approximately 9,400 other players won nearly \$1.7 million in cash prizes in the drawing. Prizes of \$3,555 each were won by 199 players who picked five numbers and 9,219 persons won \$107 for selecting four numbers.



ATHLETIC HONOR... Pictured is Arthur L. Johnson High School's varsity football team which was commended by Clark's Municipal Council at a meeting last week. The team finished the 1987 season with a record of nine victories and two losses, the most wins in

the 31-year history of the school. Five shutouts were compiled as part of the nine victories which contributed towards the team's sharing first place in the Mountain Division of the Mountain Valley Conference.

Assessment information available

Clark Tax Assessor Eldo Magnani, Jr., C.T.A. announces that the Tax Assessment Book will be open to the public for inspection at the Clark Municipal Building, Brewer School, 430 Westfield Avenue on Thursday, January 7 between the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Happy New Year

Fire station costs still in negotiation

by Pat DiMaggio
Officials in Clark are still trying to "work out the numbers" for the construction of a new fire sub-station on Raritan Road. "I am sure that we can get the numbers down," said Council President

Joseph Pozniak of an estimate of \$650,900 from Berrone Associates, the architectural and planning firm hired by the township to provide a cost estimate for construction of the project.

Residents approved a

figure of \$500,000 in a November 1986 referendum approving construction of the fire station.

A suggestion to make up the difference from the township's capital improvement account was negated by Township Attorney

Stanley Fink. "The council at this time is prohibited from allocating additional funds for the completion of this project, even under the guise of a capital expenditure for such items as site work, paving, fencing, landscaping and the like," said

Fink in a letter to the council dated December 15.

Ronald Bertone, of Bertone Associates, said between \$30,000 and \$50,000 could be reduced from his original estimate by making changes in finished materials and plumbing and electrical equipment.

Fire Department Chief Donald Kellerman said ad-

ditional cost saving measures could be employed. "We are getting a second opinion on the attorney's opinion," he said.

The square footage of the building could be decreased, said Kellerman, and the size of the apparatus room and office could be trimmed.

"We are locked into a referendum," said Kellerman. "Some of our town fathers didn't think the new station was necessary."

Right now, we are locked into a dollar amount and it is increasingly difficult to trim that amount of money without severely hampering the size and quality of the station. But we will not be denied that building. We need it and the people in

town need it. Every two to four minutes saved in response time is a matter of life and death."

A committee composed of council members, fire officials and representatives of the adjacent Little League and First Aid Squad organizations will continue to meet and discuss alternatives to continue with the proposed construction.