

AFTER THOUGHTS ON THE TAX ISSUE

"We seem to have a winner." With those words, Cleveland Heights Finance Director James Tierney claimed victory for the special-election payroll tax issue that boosts the city's rate to 2%. Final count (unofficial) was 6106 pro, 3981 con.

About as many residents voted for the issue as in the November election in which it lost 3-2, but only half as many turned out to vote against it. This was no accident; the issue committee's strategy was to concentrate upon those precincts where the November issue ran 40% or better. (Ward 1, covering 3/4 of Coventry, supported the issue by 50.7% in November and 70.7% in March.) This is possible, of course, only when such an issue is the only item on the ballot. The campaign managers can select their targets and be confident that no other election item will draw voters generally to the polls. The same strategy was successful with the streets and sewers bond issues in 1977, when only benefiting precincts were leafleted.

The four income tax issues that have faced Cleveland Heights voters have, in order, failed, passed, failed and passed--an intriguing pattern. The first time out the campaign is understaffed and underfinanced, and the voters see no immediacy; the issue flops. Two consequences follow.

One is an immediate service cutback to match anticipated income. The electorate thus experiences personally the cut-budget environment that had hitherto been only theoretical. They don't like it, and particularly don't like any suggestion that they collectively asked for it, but they can't avoid it.

The second consequence is that the reserve troops marshal themselves for the try-again campaign. People get involved who merely voted for it the first time. Neighborhood leaders on the outs with City Hall leaders shelve their differences for the duration (an essential element in broadening the base of the campaign). The second try succeeds.

The stage is then set for the first-round defeat of the next cycle, because a lot of voters feel bullied and coerced by the service cutbacks. Their consequent anger expresses itself as "no" votes the next time the City asks for operating money, and the cycle turns again. Neither Council nor staff seem able to find the key to diverting or defusing this carry over anger.

Council's finance committee figures that a 3% income tax would carry the city indefinitely; besides raising sufficient revenue it would track inflation adequately, which millage does not. If this is so, we can expect two more cycles, probably in 1982 and 1985.

Dave Burwasser

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STREET WALKING. . .

Rejoice! Rejoice! We've made it! Another winter has moved on leaving its usual clutter of salt soaked gloves, flat beer cans and milk shake containers. Nowhere is spring more noticeable than on the street. There are bunnies in the window of Coventry Optical, old friends are taking time to chat in the sun, baby carriages appear and the village quickens with life. There's lots to do and see.

Dobama is opening its final show, a Cleveland premier of Stanley Eveling's "Dear Janet Rosenberg, Dear Mr. Kooning". It will run until April 22. It sounds like a goodie, all about an aging author and an impressionable admirer - "a man who has been and a girl who would be." First produced in Scotland it has been called one of the "best shows written and produced in 1968" in that country. Liz Farwell will star as Janet and Ron Newill as Mr. Kooning. Don Bianchi directs. Early reports say it is hilariously funny/touchingly sad. Curtain is 8:30 Thursday and Saturdays 9:00 on Friday and 7:30 Sunday evenings. Call now before you forget 932-6838.

There's a rumor that High Tide Rock Bottom is moving so I went to see Marcia Colevoi, the boss lady who confirmed it. For the second time in six years they are moving to larger quarters - the original Water Bed location at 1816 Coventry between Daffy Dan's and Coventry Art Gallery (almost across the street from where they first started). The move is scheduled to take place sometime in June but the way these things go Marcia is hoping that it doesn't conflict with the Coventry Street Fair. They are planning to increase their customary stock of unusual gift and jewelry items and hope to expand to include more of the kinds of decorative accessories we in Coventry love to fill our apartments with (anyone for Dinosaur Dung?).

Speaking of fair's - mark your calendar now for the Fairmount Fair scheduled for Sunday, April 29th at the Cleveland Heights Recreation Pavilion from noon till 8:00 PM. If you were one of the more than 4,000 who went last year you'll know what fun it was and will look forward to going back.

Come fall you will be asked to vote for people to represent you in city government. During the heat of the campaign you will hear so much about what's going on that it will be hard to know what to believe. Remember some of your present council members will be up for re-election. One of these evenings when you're tired of TV re-runs you might find it interesting to go up to City Hall and see city council in action before they get caught up in campaign rhetoric. It's what they do that counts, not what they say they'll do. Who knows, you, too, may get hooked. Council meetings are held on the first and third Monday's of the month in the second floor Council Chamber/Court Room at 7:30 PM. It may be a bit cynical of me but I think politicians (like children) are entitled to get away with what they are allowed to.

Coventry Art Gallery's next exhibit, opening Sunday, April 8 from 6-9 PM will feature the works of two Cleveland Heights artists, Joyce Porcelli, potter and Mirjana, soft reliefs (also owner). If you haven't yet seen them, try to get a look at the metal sculpture of Fred Schmidt and the photographs of Bill Braden before they close. There is some really neat stuff. One photo I particularly like, I thought was an unusual seascape. It turned out to be reflections on a wet sidewalk.

If you want second hand psychology, a sign says you can buy it by the book at Coventry Books for 99¢ each. During April there will be 50% off on all used books. The list is much too long to publish, besides most of us already know the kinds of things they have. The sale includes both paperback and hard covers; fiction, non-fiction and children's books.

I understand there is a new studio opening over the pet shop called "Cloud 10" an interesting name - hope to have more about it next month.

Bobbie Littell

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN SAVE TIME AND MONEY, IMPROVE YOUR
LAWN, AND HELP THE ENVIRONMENT BY SIMPLY LETTING YOUR GRASS
CLIPPINGS STAY ON THE LAWN?

Here are some interesting and surprising facts:

1. Nationally known independent lawn experts as well as local noncommercial horticulturalists all agree that returning clippings is better for your home lawn than the common practice of removing clippings.
2. In Cleveland Heights, clippings alone make up some 10% of our total garbage, and cost you, the taxpayer, about \$50,000 a year in collection and disposal costs. This is literally thrown out money, since the clippings go with the rest of your garbage to a distant landfill.
3. Dumping clippings in plastic bags is laborious and time-consuming. Costs of plastic bags for clippings (at least 7¢ each) add up.
4. Research has now shown that roots and stems, NOT grass clippings, are the major contributor to lawn "thatch." Clippings decompose rapidly, adding to the nutrient and organic matter of your lawn.
5. Research has also shown that you can reduce fertilizer requirements (and save money) by some 25% by returning clippings to the lawn. This is because you are replacing both the nutrients in the grass clippings and some of the fertilizer still stuck to the clippings in the weeks following application. The 25% figure will go higher or lower depending on your current practice.

PRECAUTIONS: Heavily matted clippings should be raked out so they don't block air, sun and water from your grass. Also, shorter clippings will decompose better and faster than long ones, so you may have to increase your mowing frequency during the fast growing season or go over very long clippings a second time. This is especially important if you have a dense type turf. Clippings will fade as they decompose, but their color will disappear as they fall between the blades of growing grass.

PLEASE--HELP YOURSELF, YOUR CITY AND YOUR ENVIRONMENT BY
RECYCLING GRASS CLIPPINGS

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU CAN GET FREE UNBIASED INFO FROM:

The Garden Center of Greater Cleveland (721-0400) or
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Cuyahoga County
Cooperative Extension Service (631-1890)

ED.NOTE: This article was researched and prepared by Heights
Citizens for Recycling, an independent citizen's
group. If you would like to help them, call 291-0843.

IN CASE YOU MISSED OUR LAST CNI MEETING ...

The usual hundreds of thousands of vital and pressing community concerns were raised at the March 13 meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. The membership heard from Councilman Richard Weigand and City Service Director Dominic Tomaro, who spoke on many subjects ranging from the proposed increase in the City Payroll Tax to proposed repaving of Euclid Heights Boulevard by the City and the County.

Actions taken by the membership included the following:

- By a vote of 15-3-2, CNI voted to endorse the Proposed Increase in the City Payroll Tax.
- Without opposition, the membership voted to express its support to the City of Cleveland Heights in the event a decision is made to demolish Coventryard after April 1, 1979.
- CNI unanimously voted to confer honorary membership in the organization upon Jennifer Lassic, a newly born resident of the City, and to authorize the President to communicate its resolution to Lee and Beatrice Lassic.
- By a vote of 15-4-0, CNI voted a resolution in support of the position of the Coventry PTA and others that the City should restore the number of school crossing guards to an appropriate level no matter what the outcome of the vote on the Payroll Tax increase.

... AND IF YOU COME TO OUR NEXT CNI MEETING ...

The next general meeting of The Coventry Neighbors, Inc. will be held at the Unitarian Society on Lancashire Road on Tuesday, April 10, 1979 at 7:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public and visitors are most welcome.

Items to be included on the agenda are:

- Euclid Heights Boulevard repaving. An invitation was sent to County Engineer Ronald Stackhouse's office to send a spokesperson, and we are hopeful one will attend.
- City Parking Plans in Coventry. Representatives of the Planning Department of the City of Cleveland Heights have requested an opportunity to discuss many different options with interested residents and merchants.
- Open Housing Task Force. Members of a Heights Community Congress committee have a presentation which has been given before many other neighborhood groups about the role of the HCC in the fair housing area.

Hope to see you there!

HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CONGRESS SPONSORS TOWN MEETING

As a culmination of its recent Community Problem Survey, the Heights Community Congress is sponsoring an open Town Meeting at the Forest Hill Presbyterian Church (Lee and Monticello) on Sunday, April 22 at 7:30 P.M.

During the Town Meeting, there will be a presentation of the Community Problem Survey, an explanation of the development of many task forces and committees, and workshops on various subjects. The topics will include Schools, Commercial Revitalization, Safety and Security, Housing Code Enforcement, Insurance Practices, Open Housing, and V.A. Foreclosures.

The public is cordially invited to attend. For more details, contact the Heights Community Congress at 321-6775.

ITEMS OF INTEREST IN APRIL

-- Coventry School is sponsoring a Coventry International Fair on Tuesday, April 24 and Thursday, April 26. This is planned as a family activity, and parents are being asked not to merely "send" the children. It will be held from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the school gym. Admission is \$1.00 for adults and 50¢ for children; food will be 10¢ per sample. Contact the school for more details.

-- The Fairmount Center For The Creative and Performing Arts will be sponsoring a repeat of last year's highly successful Fairmount Fair at the Cleveland Heights Pavilion on Sunday, April 29. Potential volunteers to help out are urged to call the Center at 932-2000.

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POINTED QUESTION OF THE MONTH: Why is the front of Pick-N-Pay allowed to look as if the building had a bad case of skin disease?