



# Coventry Village News

MARCH, 1984

NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC.

VOL 8, NO. 3

## CITY BOARDS APPROVE PIZZA BAZAAR AND TURKEY RIDGE CONDOMINIUMS

*by Larry Beam*

The City's Planning Commission has given its unanimous support to the pizza restaurant proposed for the former location of Coventry Bike and Ski, at 1823 Coventry Road. The action came at the Commission's meeting of February 8. The matter will be sent to City Council, which still has the authority to deny the request.

The Coventry Merchants Association, which had supported a similar proposal made by "Daffy Dan" Gray a year ago, asked the Commission to deny this request. Merchant spokesman Tommy Felio, proprietor of Tommy's Restaurant, 1820 Coventry, based his opposition on the neighborhood's shortage of parking. Coventry Neighbors, Inc., will communicate its organizational support for the project to City Council.

The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) has approved an increase in the number of condominium apartment units to be allowed in a proposed development known as Turkey Ridge. It is to be built on a narrow and steep bit of vacant, City-owned land on the north side of Edgehill Road, just west its intersection with Overlook Road.

When first approved by the BZA in 1982, the project was to have contained sixteen apartments. About one year later, the developers were granted permission to increase the number of apartments in the building from sixteen to eighteen. On February 15 the BZA allowed a second increase--this time to twenty-eight--in the number of apartments in the proposed building.

Attorney Arthur Brooks, representing the developers of Turkey Ridge, told the Board that his clients no longer believe that a sufficient market exists for large apartments, priced at more than \$200,000, as first proposed. The changes have not affected the exterior dimensions of the building; the apartment units are just smaller and less costly.

Mr. Brooks, seeking speed approval of the project by avoiding a complete re-doing of the several-month BZA hearing process, convinced the Board that the 75% increase in the number of apartments does not cause the project to "differ substantially" from what was originally approved.

Construction is planned for this summer.

In another matter in the Coventry area, the BZA allowed Arthur and Frances Wincek, who own and live in a four-suit building at 2420 Overlook Road, to use a large third-floor area as an extension of one of the second-floor suites.

## JUDGE, COMMISSIONER AT MARCH MEETING

Cleveland Heights Municipal Court Judge Sara Hunter and Inspectional Services Commissioner Robert Wilkinson will speak and answer questions at the March meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. Housing code enforcement is the subject. The meeting will be on Tuesday, March 13, 7:30 pm at the Coventry Community Library. All are welcome.

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**ALL** opinions and statements are strictly those of the respective writers, except when clearly identified as formal positions of CNI, CVN, or HCC. Circulation: 2000.

**PERSONS** wishing to submit copy for the April issue may do so by sending it to the Editor, *Coventry Village News*, 1811 1/2 Coventry Road, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118, no later than March 16. While no unsigned items will be published, your name may be withheld on request. Phone 371-6095.

**COVENTRY VILLAGE . . .  
WE WATCH OUT FOR EACH OTHER**

## MEETING NOTES

### February Regular Meeting

President Bruce Hennes reported that CNI has filed with the Internal Revenue Service an application for standing as a 501 (c) 3 tax-exempt organization.

David Burwasser objected to the failure of the CNI Board to act on the membership application of M. A. Swinarski, a Cleveland resident.

Jay Gardner of City Staff reported on the plans for the razing of the Hampshire Garage. Considerable discussion of those plans followed. A straw vote was taken on the question of whether a fee ought to be charged for use of Garden space; the voting members overwhelmingly opposed such fees.

Dorothy Embry has resigned from the Heights Community Congress.

Mayor Rapoport said that Council has allocated funds for signs identifying the Coventry commercial area, and for the remodeling of the Open Pantry-Revco parking lot.

CNI will communicate to City Council its support of the Pizza Bazaar proposal.

## STREET FAIR MEETING

The next meeting of the Street Fair Committee will be held on March 21, 7:00 pm, at the home of Diana Cyganovich, 3081 East Derbyshire Road. All who are interested in becoming involved in the event are welcome.

## DUES, SUBSCRIPTIONS

All CNI memberships and subscriptions to the *CVN* expired at the end of the year. We hope you will support CNI and the *CVN* by paying this year's dues as soon as possible. A form for this purpose may be found on the last page of this newsletter.

## FIRE SAFETY, BURN PREVENTION

by Diana Cyganovich

I represented CNI at the National Conference on Fire Safety and Burn Prevention in Washington, D.C., February 2 through 5. The Conference, called "Strategies for Success," was sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the International Society of Fire Safety Instructors. The conference focused on successful community-based fire safety and burn prevention programs, implemented by the private and public sectors.

The United States leads the world in per capita fire deaths, eighty per cent of which happen in the home. Each year over 6,000 people die, and over 250,000 people are injured by fire. Property damage exceeds six billion dollars each year. The federal government is making its first major effort to merge governmental resources at all levels—federal, state and local—with resources of the private sector to supplement community-based fire safety programs. These programs address serious problems of loss of life and property to fire.

In response to community groups, the federal government has earmarked one million dollars over a three year period for the National Community Volunteer Fire Prevention Program. Ten states, one in each of the FEMA's regions, will be offered funds in the first year. The goal is to fund twenty more states in the second year, and twenty more in the third year. Ohio is not among the first ten states.

The conference covered a wide range of current programs and recent technological advancements. Fire safety and burn prevention educators from around the country presented information about their programs. Included were "Sesame

## JEWISH HISTORY SHOW TO OPEN AT CIVIC

An exhibition documenting the American Jewish experience from 1654 to the present will open on March 4 at the Civic, 3130 Mayfield Road, just east of Lee. The exhibit, entitled "Jewish Life in America: Fulfilling the American Dream," reflects upon the history and contributions of Jews in America, and includes a special section on the history of Jews in northeastern Ohio.

The exhibition was assembled by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to commemorate its seventieth anniversary, and by the American Jewish Historical Society on the occasion of its ninetieth anniversary. The exhibition opened in Washington, D.C., and is now on a coast-to-coast tour. The showing at the Civic will be its only Ohio appearance.

The exhibit is free and open to the public.

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Street" programs and other children's series, fire safety for mentally retarded adults, and programs for high school and elementary school students. Examples were also given of programs for the identification and treatment of juvenile fire-setters.

Educational programs like these have had an immense effect; witness the success of programs begun in 1974 aimed at getting people to use smoke detectors. Statistics show a fifty per cent reduction in the chance of fire death where smoke detectors are used. Similar programs are now aimed at getting people to accept and use residential sprinkler systems and fire-safe cigarettes. Cigarettes are the leading cause of fire deaths, but not of fires. Discussion of possible legislation in this area is increasing, and appears to be a major issue at present.

## NOTICE TO PARENTS

If you are the parent of a small child and have wanted to get more involved in your community, we invite you to attend the next meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc.

While it wouldn't be fair for the children to disrupt the meeting, a moderate amount of fussing is acceptable to everyone.

There is a child's playhouse next to our meeting room in the Coventry Library. You can easily sit next to the door of the meeting room, participate fully in the meeting, and still supervise your child from six feet away.

Don't let your kids be an excuse for not joining us. Our meeting dates are always listed on the back page of this newsletter.

--Bruce Hennes, President of CNI  
and parent of two

## KIDS' PLAYWRITING FESTIVAL AT DOBAMA

All children enrolled in grades 1 through 12 in schools in Cuyahoga County are invited to participate in the Sixth Annual Marilyn Bianchi Kids' Playwriting festival. There are three categories of entries: Elementary, Junior High, and Senior High. Prizes include U.S. Savings Bonds, script publication and script production at Dobama Theatre.

Application forms may be obtained by writing The Marilyn Bianchi Kids' Playwriting Festival, c/o 80 West Washington, Magnin Falls, Ohio 44022. Scripts should not be sent to this address; information about their submission is included on the application form.

## FOOD FOR NEEDY: THANKS, COVENTRY

Several bags full of canned goods and other non-perishable food items were donated to help feed the hungry at holiday time. All donated items were taken to the Euclid Avenue Christian Church, where the Inter-Faith Council distributes food through its Hunger Center.

Thanks are in order to all those who gave. A special word of thanks goes to Hy Herman, of Quality Quilts, 1811 Coventry, who provided a window display and a convenient place for drop-off.

A reminder: Hunger continues long after the holidays are over. The Hunger Center is happy to receive donations throughout the year.

## AN OBITUARY

We were saddened by the loss of long-time Coventry resident Arlene Pinkus, 31, who was found dead in her Hampshire Road Apartment on Christmas Day. She was the victim of suicide. Relatives say Arlene was depressed after losing her job as a computer operator. A 1970 graduate of Shaker Heights High, Arlene was a former employee of Bobbie Brooks, Inc., the Light of Yoga Society, Cargo, and earth by april. In the last decade Arlene had become involved in feminism, progressive politics, and religious study.

Suicide, always regrettable, is particularly distressing when the loss is of a bright, intelligent, witty, and aware young woman like Arlene. Those of who knew her feel the frustration that a helping hand can only come too late to our friend.

--Janice Gline

## AROUND COVENTRY . . .

**EXPANDING . . .** Allen Sherwin, owner of bliss, the restaurant at 1876 Coventry, plans an expansion. He hopes to turn the area under his restaurant into a bar, with seating for about 150. This lower level, once a basement storage area, was converted into usable commercial space by developer Roger Rilley several years ago. Though there have been several serious proposals for the space, it has never been occupied. A front portion of the lower level, visible from the shop windows in the building's front, has for years been decorated as a bar—complete with beer signs. The whole development was the subject several years ago of a unusual zoning variance agreement which may permit Sherwin to proceed without going through the usual zoning hearings at City Hall. Sherwin says he plans to "compete head-to-head with Turkey Ridge Tavern." He has hired architect Tom Ziska, who was responsible for much of Coventryard, to design the bar.

**MARRIED . . .** Phil "The Drill" Imperi, proprietor of the Saloon, 1765 Coventry, and of a dental practice at 1810 Coventry, was married on February 16 to Marcy James. The couple plan a honeymoon next summer.

**BUSTED . . .** A police officer's casual observation led to the arrest, on February 17, of Hemant Mathur, an employee of Coventry Mart, the food, beer, and wine shop at 2802 Mayfield, just around the corner from the Taj Mahal Restaurant. She was charged with selling alcoholic beverages to a minor. Police began watching the shop more closely, and the next day another employee, Irshab Rizvi, was arrested and charged with the same offense.

**POPCORN . . .** Work has begun on the Popcorn Palace, a gourmet popcorn shop that's moving into 1860 Coventry

Road, the former location of Bill Jones Leather. Interior decor will include lots of mirrors, and apparently some stained glass.

**FOOD PROJECT . . .** A "For Rent" sign appeared a few months ago in the window of Jeanne & Lorraine's Food Project, at 1807 Coventry Road. The business, originally owned by Leonard Horowitz, now a member of Cleveland Heights City Council, has been open only intermittently lately.

**SEVERANCE . . .** Plans for a major redevelopment of Severance Center will be announced on March 13. Though details of the plans are still a closely-guarded secret, they are clearly of very large scale. In cost and in impact on the community, the proposal will apparently rival the building of the original Severance Center. A thorough re-writing of the basic plan for the area may be involved.

**OPENING AT DOBAMA . . .** *Good*, by C. T. Taylor, will open at Dobama Theatre, 1846 Coventry, on March 22, and will continue through April 14. *Good* is a tragedy, written as a comedy with music, about a decent man who gets caught up in Hitler's Third Reich. The cast will include Richard Howey, Tony Walsh, Kathleen Miller, Maria Amorocho, Larry Miller, Peg Buerkei, Pat Casey, Ron Newell, and Don Bianki.

**FAREWELL . . .** Dorothy Embry, the Heights Community Congress staffer who represented the HCC to CNI has resigned to take a full-time job. Among Dorothy's responsibilities at HCC was the printing of this newsletter. We will miss her.

**FORMAT . . .** We invite readers comment on the two-column format used in the *CVN* for the first time this month.



## BAR MILL FUNDING FOR THE HEIGHTS

*by David R. Burwasser*

What a crazy idea, you might say: Inviting something like the Bar Mill Group to Cleveland Heights. We are a residential community, and the controversial bar mill was an attempt to revive the wounded industry of a dying urban core. No connection!

Alas, there is a connection. The federal money offer used to pull private money to the bar mill--the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG)--is the proposed bait for two major improvements in Cleveland Heights: revitalizing the Coventry Pick-N-Pay, and the Top of the Hill project at Cedar-Fairmount.

Economic development of Cleveland Heights has been put at the top of the new Council's priority list this year, with excellent reason. Yet important projects are mired in UDAGgery, which in today's environment is official unreality at its worst.

A funding mechanism aimed at the level of hopelessness found in the steel neighborhoods downtown, is going to run out of bucks before it runs out of Greater Cleveland targets far more desperate than Coventry or Cedar-Fairmount. The chances of UDAG approval for Cleveland Heights have hardly been helped by the nitwittery exhibited in Cleveland over their UDAG; remember what happened to Cleveland Heights' bond rating after Cleveland defaulted! Cleveland itself may have trouble securing more UDAGs; our neighbors Toledo and Lorain have shown far greater redevelopment intelligence.

If more UDAG money does come to our area, the downtown competition includes Ohio City, the entertainment renaissance in Playhouse Square and the Flats, spinoffs from the Clinic expansion, the exciting efforts of the Ware-

house District to legalize loft living, and dozens of decrepit neighborhoods ripe for gentrification. Cleveland Heights will wait in a long line.

It is unfortunate for Coventry that planning for the most important single development site on our strip hangs on a UDAG proposal unlikely ever to materialize.

As noted, the downtown competition may not secure further UDAGs if Cleveland fails to get its act together; but that is no cause for hope in Coventry. Cleveland Heights has no economic future to develop if Cleveland snuffs. Cleveland Heights--by usage and by law--makes nothing, grows nothing, processes nothing, exports nothing; it cannot live in a vacuum.

How do we beat the downtown competition for UDAGs? Best is not to try. Let's look instead for development ideas of local folks who know the local economy through previous involvement and investment. If public help is needed, let's consider local tax abatements. We pride ourselves on being a resourceful suburb; why run out of town to solve our most pressing problems?

This month's column is dedicated to Councilmember Lenny Horowitz, in whose area of responsibility its subject falls. It's not Lenny's fault, but it is his responsibility, because he chairs the Planning & Development Committee of Council, which is accountable for the economic development priority. What this man needs to do, above all else, is remember that he was a merchant before he was a Councilmember. He needs to accept the City Staff version of reality as a counterpoint, not a substitute, to his business sense; and to deal in the same spirit with fellow merchants whose experiences may differ from his own.

## COMMUNITY WATCH-DOG: Zoning Administration

Here is another example of the process that so frustrates and enrages citizens, and damages City Hall's image:

Ivan Bezugloff, my neighbor, has for years written and assembled at his home, but published elsewhere, *Dressage*, a magazine about horsemanship. A prestigious magazine that covers Olympic horsemanship trials and other such important events, the magazine is economically marginal—it's just making it, with costs pared to the bone. Mr. Bezugloff employs two people—they provide editing, lay-out, and artistic assistance. Although he has made no secret of the business, it is so unobtrusive that most neighbors were hardly aware of its existence. The presence of two dependable staff people during Mr. Bezugloff's trips assured that the house would not be empty and unattended.

When Mr. Bezugloff became aware that that the employment of non-family members in his home business was a violation of Code, he requested a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). He paid a \$50 fee, and was scheduled for the various hearings, a two- or three-month process. Sixteen neighbors attended the December BZA meeting, intending to speak on his behalf. These neighbors had risked life and limb on icy streets only to learn that his business was not permitted in a residentially-zoned area, and that the BZA had no authority to grant a variance. No public hearing was held. No one could support Mr. Bezugloff's appeal, or make a comment. We all went home.

We are still smoldering over the treatment that Mr. Bezugloff received. We believe that after more than six years at City Hall, the Zoning Administrator must by now have some awareness of what is and is not within the BZA's jurisdiction. Mr. Bezugloff's \$50 should

not have been accepted. He should not have been led even to hope, to endure the energy-consuming suspense, to expend the time-consuming effort to rally his friends, and ultimately to endure the terrible let-down. What results is bitterness and depression for him and his sixteen neighbors, whose report of the episode is, no doubt, spreading far and wide. The response from listeners is, "That's Cleveland Heights for you. They give you as hard a time as possible."

Yet the *Sun Press* of January 25 reports that the City is trying to smooth the permit process for *developers*! How about a similar effort to smooth the process for *citizens*? We live here; developers often don't. While developers do take large risks and make large financial commitments, so do the citizens. We risk our all. By helping citizens I don't mean just providing a pamphlet of instructions. Bureaucratic non-speak is often impossible for even Ph.D.'s to decipher.

I suggest that the City hire a human being to help citizens through the permit maze. If the Zoning Administrator's job is to represent the City by asking questions, not by answering them, then hire someone else. Or, perhaps, the job of someone else on the City staff could be redefined to represent the citizens and provide answers. Call the position "Ombudsman," or "Citizen Facilitator," or "Citizens' Advocate." The City should get someone to help citizens who invest their hopes, lives, families, homes and money in our city. The resulting good will would be worth the cost. The resulting elimination of wasted time and motion might even save money.

—June C. Wortman

[A City response to Mrs. Wortman appears on page 8.—Ed.]

## LIBRARY GOINGS-ON

The Coventry Community Library will begin using an automated circulation control system on March 5. All Library users should apply for new library cards as soon as possible.

The new cards will allow computers to do the large amounts of clerical work necessary to keeping track of the circulation of library materials. Staff members freed of that work will be able to provide better service to the public.

This automated record-keeping system will allow the present computerized catalog system to provide library users with information about the availability of books and other circulating library materials.

Coventry Library is delighted to have the Volunteers for Income Tax Assistance at the Library each Thursday until mid-April. This service is available to the elderly by appointment between 1:00 and 5:00 pm. Call the Library at 321-3400 for further information.

Coventry Library needs volunteers for a couple of hours on March 10 and 12. If you can help, please call Debbie Shoup at the Library, or leave a message, before March 10.

The discussion group on aging meets the fourth Monday of each month--the 26th of March--at 7:30 pm. The group discusses the care of elderly, and the concerns of caretakers.

"Creative Living for Singles" is the topic of the next Singles Forum on Monday, March 12, at 7:30 pm. There will be no speaker this month; we hope this will give everyone a chance to express their views.

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library Board of Trustees will meet at the Coventry Library on March 19 at 7:45 pm. The public is welcome.

A poetry reading on Sunday March 4 will feature Cy Doetal and Barbara

## RICOCHET

Edward "Ricochet" Mickshaw, a die-hard Coventry hanger-out, isn't on the street anymore. The 40-year-old Derbyshire Road resident is in the Cleveland House of Correction--the old Warrensville Workhouse.

Mickshaw pleaded no contest in Cleveland Heights Municipal Court to several misdemeanor charges and was sentenced to three months in the Workhouse by Judge Sarah Hunter.

The sentence was added to another three-month penalty Mickshaw received in January.

In total, Mickshaw has six months to do in the Workhouse; he won't be out until July.

Cleveland Heights Police Lt. Michael Cannon, head of the Detective Bureau, said, "Nuisance-wise, in recent memory, Mickshaw was one of the worst. He got drunk all up and down the street--from Turkey Ridge to Irvs."

Mickshaw was arrested more than ten times in two years.

Mickshaw has undergone alcoholic rehabilitation, and is scheduled for more of the same. His crimes have included telephone harassment, carrying a knife, drunkenness, and flooding the toilet in his jail cell--all misdemeanors.

A Workhouse physician said Mickshaw is mentally ill and needs treatment. She said she wasn't sure whether Mickshaw was "theatrical" or "dangerous."

Angell reading their poetry.

A special program for school-age children will be a wrestling demonstration by the YMCA on March 6 at 2:30 pm.

The regular "Stories Galore and More" program will continue every Thursday at 2:30 pm for school-age children.

--Debbie Shoup



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TIME VALUE -- PLEASE DELIVER BY FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 1984

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. General Meeting, Tuesday, March 13, 7:30 PM in the Community Room of the Coventry Village Library. The public is invited.

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. Trustees Meeting, Thursday, April 5, 7:30 PM at 2910 Hampshire Road. Committee Chairpersons are asked to attend. The Trustees meeting is open to all dues-paid members of CNI.

NOW is the time to join COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. Membership includes a subscription to the *Coventry Village News*. All memberships expire on December 31 of each year. The form below may be used for renewals.

Please check one of the following:

Class of membership: .....Individual (\$5.00) .....Family (\$7.00) .....Senior (\$3.00)  
.....Just a subscription to the *Coventry Village News*--no membership.  
(\$5 for 11 months; the *CVN* is not published in August.)

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