



# Coventry Village News

November, 1986

The Newsletter of Coventry Neighbors, Inc.

Volume 10, No. 10

## CNI faces a busy agenda in November: meeting at Library Tues. November 11

More than 130 people turned out on October 14 to give the leadership of Coventry Neighbors, Inc., a clear mandate to continue in the directions established in the past year.

A new Board, reflecting continuity of leadership and an infusion of talented new blood, will guide CNI in the coming very busy year.

CNI has pledged to deliver several special events in place of a Street Fair next summer. Numerous attractive ideas have been suggested for these events. None, though, has received the sort of careful study that rational planning demands. A committee to do that planning will be created on November 11.

A review of the Constitution of CNI is past due. Several changes in that document are absolutely necessary, and others may be appropriate. A committee charged with that review will be created.

CNI began as an organization of, mostly, unmarried apartment-dwellers. That has changed; home-owning families are now a substantial proportion of the membership roll. The interests of this growing element must be better reflected in the activities of CNI.

(Continued on Page 4)

JOIN  
COVENTRY  
NEIGHBORS  
TODAY!

## Series of events to replace Street Fair

by Larry Bean

Coventry Neighbors, Inc., is committed to producing some number of special events in the summer of 1987. These relatively small-scale events will replace the traditional Coventry Village Street Fair.

We hope with these events to bring added excitement and vitality on a continuing basis to Coventry Village.

In this direction, we hope also to sponsor street performers--mimes, jugglers, and street musicians--to show their charming and entertaining talents here all summer long.

Much help from volunteers will be necessary to make these dreams a reality. CNI will solicit donations from merchants and the community to help pay the costs of these events. The City of Cleveland Heights has pledged its assistance and cooperation, but control and production of these events will be entirely the responsibility of Coventry Neighbors, Inc.

A committee will be appointed at the November 11 meeting and charged with developing preliminary plans for the events. That committee will develop a marketing strategy plan, of which the events will be essential parts. Marcia Nolan, who headed some early Street Fairs, is a leading candidate for the temporary chair of the committee. Nolan lives on Hampshire Road, and has remained involved in recent Fairs through her position as Administrative Assistant to the Cleveland Heights City Manager. She left that post on October 10.

The idea of replacing the Fair with a series of smaller events arose from a mediation session called to resolve conflict between supporters and opponents of the Fair. This mediation session was conducted by John Aram, Associate Dean of the CWRU Weatherhead School of Business.

(Continued on Page 4)

*Coventry Village News* is published monthly, except in August, by Coventry Neighbors, Inc., in cooperation with the Heights Community Congress.

**Editor:**

Larry Beam

**Editorial Board:**

Larry Beam, Charles Owen, Jeff Solomon-Hess, Marion Pryor, Bruce Hennes and Julie Washington.

**Editorial staff:**

Bruce Hennes and F. David Gill

**Production Staff:**

Manasses Polaski, Joe Bunda, F. David Gill, Bruce Hennes, and the staff of the Heights Community Congress.

All opinions and statements are strictly those of the respective writers, except where clearly identified as positions of CNI, CVN, or HCC.

Circulation: 2,000.

**Submissions:** Anyone wishing to submit copy for the December issue may do so by sending it to the Editor, *Coventry Village News*, 2776 Hampshire Road, Apartment 1-B, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106. The deadline is November 16. No unsigned copy will be used, but names may generally be withheld from publication at the writers request.

Phone: 371-6095

*Coventry Village . . .  
where we all get along together  
pretty well.*

## Meeting notes

regular meeting of October 14

Treasurer Marion Fisher reported that the independent audit mandated at last month's meeting was not complete.

CNI resolved to support the school levy.

Larry Beam was elected to a second term as President of CNI; the vote count was 86 for Beam and 23 for challenger Kathryn Young.

Charles Owen was elected Vice President; Owen got 81 votes against 35 for Tim Smith. David Burwasser, nominated for Vice President last month, asked that his name be withdrawn from consideration.

Jeff Solomon-Hess was elected as Treasurer by a vote of 66 to 36 over incumbent Marion Fisher.

Marilyn Pryor was elected Secretary, 52 to 46 over incumbent F. David Gill.

Bruce Hennes and Julie Washington were elected to the two trusteeships.

Mr. Owen was selected to serve as a Trustee of the Heights Community Congress.

## Dobama offers world premier

*It's Your Move, Mr. Blue*, by Kent R. Brown, opened on October 25 at Dobama Theatre, 1846 Coventry Road. This world-premier production is directed by Donald A. Bianchi.

The drama examines the relationships among five older people living in a retirement hotel. The characters relive fantasies in an exercise of disclosure about compulsions and obsessions that consume the individual.

The playwright is Chairman of the Drama Department at the University of Arkansas. He received a Drama-Logue Award in playwrighting in 1985. Mr. Brown's productions have been staged at the Quai Theatre in New York, the National Theatre in Washington, DC; and in several West Coast theatres.

The cast includes Norm Berman, Jean Colerier, Eleen Darling, Ron Cross, and Ron Newell.

Curtain times are 8:30 PM on Thursdays and Saturdays; 9:00 PM on Fridays; and 7:30 PM on Sundays. Call the box office at 932-6838 for further information.

## Letter to the Editor

### To the Editor:

When I was a resident of Coventry Village, I had to endure the influx of a horde of strangers who relieved themselves on my yard, walked all over my lawn, parked their cars blocking my driveway, and generally inconvenienced me with their noise and presence for the two days of the Street Fair.

During the other 363 days of the year, I enjoyed living with the unique people of Coventry. Going to the corner store for a loaf of bread, one hardly noticed things that amaze people outside of Coventry. A ferret on a leash, a man with eye shadow, a monkey running loose (that one drove the Animal Warden crazy for weeks!), the middle-aged hippies trapped in the '60, the class on the Coventry School playground, the Russian grandma, the Indian in her sari--all these were part of Coventry.

Despite these problems--or maybe because of them, I joined the Street Fair Committee. Why, with all the aggravation it caused me, did I choose to work on it? I hated most of the music, didn't support many of the causes or political ideologies espoused by the non-profit groups; most of the food was garbage, and a good part of the merchandise was schlock.

I worked on the Fair because it was Coventry Village, where different wasn't wrong, just different.

This not in defense of the Street Fair. There is nothing wrong with change for the right reasons, and done in the right way. This is in defense of Coventry Village. My last Fair--and my last year living in Coventry--was 1983. So why write this letter? I was concerned about one phrase in the September CVN, "more focused on the values and character of Coventry Village."

Let me tell you about the community I live in now. The big community celebration takes place on July 4. There is a big parade, but only units that reflect the values and character of the community can march. That means that only incumbents (by virtue of their offices) can participate. If they let challengers march, there might be controversy. Anything that might be "disruptive" is not allowed. The values and character argument is used to remove books from high school reading lists, close abortion clinics, and censure local merchants who sell *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. It's a place where any deviation from the norm (white, born-again, working man/housewife woman, conservative, Republican) is odd at least.

October's CVN gave me hope. A mediator will help all factions seek resolution to the problem. As all of you work together pretty well, remember why you chose to live in

### A CVN Editorial . . .

## Council should support parking funding

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) recommended on November 3 that that City Council allocate \$40,000 for added parking in Coventry's business district. The CAC makes recommendations to Council about the spending of Community Development Block Grant funds.

CNI wholeheartedly endorses that recommendation, and urges its adoption by City Council.

The money would be used to redesign and reorganize the municipal parking lot next to Coventry Beverage and Pizza, across from Tommy's Restaurant. Dozens of spaces could be added just by using the land more efficiently.

As welcome as this progress toward added parking is, it remains a small, first step in providing commercial-area parking here. More land must be acquired. At the same time, more efficient use must be made of all parking, public and private, in the commercial area.

We recognize the finite character of public funds that might be available for parking in Coventry. Yet the allocation of substantially larger sums to Coventry would be rational and wise.

A strong, fresh entrepreneurial spirit has spread through all of American culture. It is more manifest on Coventry than in other places--just as other cultural vogues expressed themselves so loudly here.

One new restaurant is under construction here, in the lower level of Coventryard. Plans for three more new restaurants are moving swiftly and confidently along. All four seem likely to be open within a year. Several new retail businesses are likely by that time.

If this developmental pace is to be sustained, plans must be formulated *now* for more substantial additions to the parking supply.

Coventry rather than Lakewood, Chagrin Falls, or Medina. Beware of the speculators who want to buy low and sell high. Remember K. and his compassionate neighbor; remember all the other resident eccentrics of the past and present. Remember the three-legged cat, the ferret, and the monkey.

Take away the Fair and you still have Coventry. But take away the Coventry's tolerance, diversity, and eccentrics--and you're left with just another suburban subdivision.

--- Kathy Hannen  
Rickford, Illinois

## AGENDA...Continued from Page 1

Coventry's senior citizens have also grown as a proportion of the total membership. Their special needs and interests deserve a formal place in the structure of the organization.

Rapidly-increasing private sector interest in the development and improvement of Coventry Village mean that there'll be much more work for the committees that lobby with the various boards and commissions of the City, seeking rational and reasonable regulatory decisions in the best interest of this neighborhood.

All these things mean a lot of work for CNI.

We hope you will attend our meetings, become active in these matters, and so help shape the future of Coventry Village.

--Larry Beam, President of CNI

## EVENTS...Continued from Page 1

None of the events contemplated for next summer is so large as to require the closing of Coventry Road to traffic. The activities will be designed to provide pride and fun for community residents, and to bring others into the neighborhood. The events will be designed to build upon widely-shared community values.

Events will be held on the elementary school and library grounds, in commercial area parking lots, or spread out on the sidewalks of the business district.

Our aim is to hold at least three one-day events, and more if the supplies of volunteer energy and other resources allow.

All these events will be carefully promoted, and all could be coordinated with marketing efforts and strategies of area businesses and the Coventry Merchants Association.

Here are a few examples of the sorts of things so far suggested:

**A crafts festival.** Artists could be invited to set up booths, on the school grounds, or maybe in one of the commercial parking lots.

**Various concerts.** School or Library grounds could be the site for performances by local groups. Such concerts have been held in the past, but attendance has been disappointing. More energetic, carefully-planned promotion could turn these into the success they deserve to be.

**A restaurant festival.** Cleveland Heights restaurants could be invited to set up booths, probably in one of the commercial parking lots. A competition for waiters and waitresses might be included. Much fun was had in the Cedar-Lee area some years ago when Au Provence sponsored a "Bastille Day" competition. Waiters and waitresses carried trays, with a glass of water and a fresh egg, through an obstical course. Prizes were offered.

**Neighborhood tour.** An event modeled after the very popular Heights Heritage Tour, or perhaps after CNI's own "Lanes of Coventry," which was a stunning success several years ago.

**Dancing Under the Stars.** The City may be willing to bring its this popular program, now housed at Severance Center, to Coventry for a session or three.

All the events will be carefully coordinated, with a marketing strategy in mind. The consistent aim is to instill greater vitality into the neighborhood while having fun.

--Larry Beam

## Investment seminar offered by City's Office on Aging

In cooperation with Prudential-Bache Securities, the City's Office on Aging is sponsoring a seminar on conservative investibg.

Speakers on Thursday, November 13, 1:30 to 2:30 PM, will be Vince Ruma and Susan Galaska. The seminar will be held at Cleveland Heights City Hall, 40 Severance Circle.

Called "Investing For the Highest Return," the seminar will have strongest appeal to older investors, but all are welcome.

## Give to the Hunger Center

Donations to the Hunger Center are especially timely now, as the holidays approach.

Two Coventry Village businesses, Mac's Backs Paperbacks (1785 Coventry Road) and Metropolitan Savings (1865 Coventry Road), accept donations, which then are passed along to the Hunger Center at Euclid Avenue Christian Church for distribution to the needy.

Gifts of money may be sent to the Hunger Center care of Euclid Avenue Christian Church, 3663 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118.

## Around Coventry . . .

**Old City Hall . . .** One of the most prominent landmarks of Coventry Village is gone. It was unceremoniously knocked down with a wrecking ball attached to a crane and hauled away in trucks.

Well, mostly gone: its front entrance way remains, and will become part of the Honda dealership to be built there. More of the old building would have remained, but the Board of Architectural Review ruled against keeping the clock tower. That was a silly decision.

The remaining entrance was looked more than a bit forlorn when we walked by recently. The doorway, with the windows above it and just enough of the rest of the building to keep these things standing, stood in the midst of awful rubble.

On the door there were three signs. The largest said "Welcome." The second, smaller but in brighter colors, said "No trespassing." The third read, "Motorcars Honda."

Work on the \$2,000,000 project will begin in mid-November. Completion is expected by the middle of next summer.

**Sign of change . . .** Channel 5 newscaster Fred Griffith, in a commentary at the end of the night news on October 15, spoke very clearly and accurately about the end of the Street Fair here.

Griffith described Coventry as a "live-and-let-live" sort of neighborhood, "a symbol of American cultural diversity." He spoke of Coventry's past, with hippies, motorcycle gangs, and cops poised to write parking tickets.

Griffith said the killing of the Fair was a reflection of new elements here--young families and professional people.

**Cowboy fence . . .** Thomas Frate, owner of apartment buildings at 2757 and 2765 Euclid Heights Boulevard, just west of the Coventry Cinema, early this summer installed cow-boy style split-rail fences in front of his buildings. These fences might be all right in front of a ranch house in Beachwood, but they are an insult to architectural character and quality here.

The City of Cleveland Heights cited Frate for failure to obtain the required permits before installing the fence, and for allowing a prominent sign advertising the firm that installed the sign. According to Joyce Braverman of the City's Planning Department, Frate is fighting the citations in court. Had Frate sought the required permit, the fence plan would have been subject to review by the City's Board of Architectural Review (ABR).

We trust that the ABR would have required a more appropriate design.

A few months later, Frate replaced a light fixture on his building at 2765 Euclid Heights Boulevard. The replacement, again, might look fine on a Beachwood house, but it's awful here. The replacement is purely decorative, and provides no light to the doorway. It has been connected with exposed conduit that should never be allowed.

This issue has led the City to study carefully its list of just what sorts of changes must go to the ABR. The present situation apparently gives the City no control over those lights, or over such things as the public phone installed this summer on the south side of Irv's Deli.

**Irv's . . .** The kitchens at Irv's Deli and the connected Fat Choy Chinese Restaurant (1798 Coventry Road) were closed by Cleveland Heights Fire Warden Robert Maver on Thursday, October 23.

The Fire Department had been called there that evening when smoke filled the dining room. An investigation showed that the fire had been contained entirely within a device intended for cooking ribs. A defective ventilating system conveyed the smoke into the dining room, rather than venting it outside. Maver's investigation also found that a fire suppression system and a vent over a stove were not working.

Maver ordered that kitchens not be used--except for boiling corned beef--until repairs were made, and until accumulations of grease, which presented a fire hazard, were cleaned up.

Maver lifted his order in the evening of Monday, October 27. The deli counter and pizza-making operations of the business were not affected.

### Library goings-on

National Childrens Book Week is Saturday, November 15, through Sunday, November 23. A half-day workshop for adults on November 15 at Coventry School will study ways of stimulating childrens' imagination with books. Registration is required; call 932-3600 for information.

"Molly's Pilgrim," winner of the 1985 Academy Award for best short film, will be shown twice at Coventry Library: Tuesday, November 18, 2:30 PM; and again at 3:30 PM on Wednesday, November 19.

Coffee hours are held on the first Thursday of each month. These thought-filled social events are sponsored by Friends of the Library.



Coventry Neighbors, Inc.  
c/o The Heights Community Congress  
2163 Lee Road  
Cleveland Heights OH 44118

Non-Profit Org.  
U. S. Postage  
PAID  
Cleveland, Ohio  
Permit No. 1441

ADDRESS  
CORRECTION  
REQUESTED

Time Value--please deliver before Friday November 7

Coventry Neighbors, Inc. General Meeting, Tuesday November 11,  
7:30 PM, at Coventry Village Library. Everyone is welcome.

Coventry Neighbors, Inc. Trustees meeting, Thursday, December  
4, 8:00 PM at 2754 Hampshire Road The meeting is open to all  
dues-paid members of CNI.

JOIN Coventry Neighbors, Inc., NOW. You must be a member to  
vote on the issues decided at our meetings. Join now for 1987,  
and get December of this year free. All memberships expire at  
the end of each year.

Please indicate the class of membership you want:

\_\_\_ Individual (\$5.00) \_\_\_ Family (\$7.00) \_\_\_\_ Senior (\$3.00)  
\_\_\_\_ Just a Subscription to the Coventry Village News (\$5.00)  
I would like to make an additional tax-free donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Are you now receiving the CYN by mail? \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your check to  
Coventry Neighbors, Inc.  
2776 Hampshire Road, #1-B  
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106