



# Coventry Village News

May, 1988

The Newsletter of Coventry Neighbors, Inc.

Volume 12 No.5

## City's designer to share revised parking lot plan with CNI on May 10, 7:30, at the Coventry Library

John Spoden, a designer and planner with the City's Department of Planning and Development, will share revised plans for the parking lot across from Tommy's Restaurant with the community at the membership meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. (CNI) on May 10. Of greatest interest to most neighbors is the character of the landscaped area to be provided as a buffer, along the Coventry Road side of the project. Initial plans called for the replacement of the bench that's there now; several neighborhood leaders want to save the old bench. Plans for a new retaining wall, to replace the deteriorated one at the rear of the lot, will also be reviewed.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 PM on May 10 at the Library, 1925 Coventry Road. Everyone is welcome, but only paid members may vote.

At the March meeting, J. Barry Barker, an executive with the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) presented tentative plans for a new loop bus line linking Coventry Village with the institutions of University Circle. [See page 3]

Anne Cook, from Friends of the Library, presented the case for the Library levy. She was accompanied by Rachel Nelson, the Library's Executive Director. CNI resolved to support the levy, and to contribute \$25 to the campaign fund.

Gary Peters, from the City of Cleveland Heights, discussed the City's anti-littering educational efforts, the recycling program, and a program that measures radon levels in the home.

CNI resolved to allocate not more than \$1,000 from its Reserve Fund for the purchase of a new gas-powered vacuum cleaner, and related equipment; CNI's contribution is not to exceed half the cost of such equipment. CNI's Reserve Fund contains profits from many years of the defunct

Street Fair. The Fund may be spent for capital purposes only. This allocation represents the first time that resources from the Reserve Fund have been spent. Numerous suggestions have been made over the years for spending the Fund, but no final consensus could be found for any of these.

The post of Vice President of CNI remains vacant. Nominations will again be solicited at the May meeting.

## Clean-up effort gets going again with broad cooperation and some new equipment

### Neighbors, merchants, City join forces to keep Coventry clean

The sidewalk clean-up effort that was suspended last fall when a key piece of equipment failed will soon be back in business. The new program will have a far wider base of support, which should make it a significantly more effective program. Two merchant groups, a neighborhood group, and the municipal government will all contribute, working as a sort of partnership.

Until recently, the effort was supported entirely by the Coventry Merchants Association (CMA), whose resources, from dues payments and other voluntary contributions from merchants, were not adequate to the doing of a really thorough job. Last year the program operated on a budget of less than \$1,500, and still managed to have a

*continued on page 4*

## Mimes, jugglers, clowns are sought for Art Fest

Street performers willing to work on July 23, the day of an Arts Festival sponsored by Coventry Neighbors, should contact David O'Konski at 932-0018. We won't be able to pay, but performers may pass a hat. The Primavera Consort will perform that day.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir:

Your coverage of the parklands discussion at the March Coventry Neighbors meeting contains a mis-statement of fact that must be corrected.

The report indicated that one "outspoken" opponent of sacrificing any parkland to the project reversed that position at the meeting. No such person present underwent any such change of orientation.

The undersigned was, and still is, outspokenly opposed to any diminution of parkland. At the meeting I was favorably impressed with the quality of thinking and planning of the project itself, and had not expected to be. This I openly acknowledged in the discussion.

Such was in connection, however, with some close questioning I conducted of

the staff present. This elicited from staff an admission that the *fil-de-sac* proposed for the park could indeed be absorbed entirely onto the private-land portion of the project without legal impediment. To staff doubts of economic feasibility, I responded that the (to me unanticipated) intelligence shown in the planning suggested the developer could cope.

This was, of course, before it became public knowledge that the developer lacked ownership of one house in the center of the Superior Road extension of the development.

—David Burwasser  
East Cleveland

## Hunger Center needs help all year long

The problems of poverty and hunger receive more attention in the holiday season, but they continue all year long.

Contributions to the Hunger Center (an effort of the Greater Cleveland Interfaith Council) may be left at Mac's Back Books, 1785 Coventry Road, or at Metropolitan Savings, 1865 Coventry Road. Canned goods other non-perishable foods only.

## Free loans can help with home repairs

Homeowners with low and moderate income (*i.e.*, less than \$26,000 for a family of four) may qualify for zero-interest loans from the Forest Hill Church Housing Corporation.

Under this program, called ASSIST, one might borrow \$3,000 for five years. This would be paid back in sixty monthly payments of \$50.

Other programs of the FHC Housing Corporation include the Challenger Fund, which helps folks who don't qualify for bank loans, and the Project Repair, which offers educational workshops on home repairs.

If you are delaying home repairs because you think you cannot afford them, contact the FHC at 321-3920. You may be able to save yourself a huge amount of money by doing the work now, before things get worse. Not to mention all you'll save by participating in one of these programs.

Support your  
neighborhood.  
Shop in Coventry  
Village.

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Larry Beam

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Phone: 371-6995.

Coventry Village . . .  
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## RTA studies new service linking Coventry Village and University Circle

Planners at the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) have developed a plan that would provide substantially-increased bus service between Coventry Village and University Circle.

According to RTA official J. Barry Barker, one of the several proposed lines would run up Edgemoor Road, east along Hampshire to Coventry.

Similar new lines are proposed for the Cedar-Fairmount area, and several Cleveland neighborhoods. All these routes would serve the major institutions of University Circle and the Cleveland Clinic.

If all goes well, the service will begin in September.

The new loop service would use smaller busses, probably modified vans like those used by University Circle Incorporated for its own "greenie" service.

The fare now most frequently being discussed is fifty cents.

The new loop buses would connect to the other services of RTA, including the Rapid.

The added loop service will probably not be provided by RTA itself, but instead by a private contractor. The use of such contractors is favored by the Federal Government, which picks up many of the costs of such services through its Urban Mass Transit Authority (UMTA).

## HCC Auction on May 7 at Sts. Constantine & Helen

The Heights Community Congress will hold its annual auction on Saturday, May 7, 7:00 PM to midnight, in the Cathedral Hall of Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church, 3352 Mayfield Road.

The theme is a Fifties sock hop. Auctioneer will be Evelyn Hayes. DJ will be Ron Barnett. The food: pizza and beer.

Tickets are \$8, or two for \$15. Call 321-6775 for reservations.

Here is a small sample of the many things that have been contributed by Heights merchants, which will be auctioned:

Four days in a golf and tennis resort in the Dominican Republic; a week in a condo in Fort Myers, Florida; three months membership in the Jewish Community Center; visits to the Severance Athletic Club; a car wash; applied sweat shirts; stained glass;

restaurant lunches, brunches, and dinners; two eight-ounce lobster tails; a six-foot submarine sandwich (enough for thirty-five people); hand-painted china; a beveled wall mirror; and a gourmet cheesecake.

## City prepares to offer painting, landscaping help north of Mayfield

A new program, likely to be adopted in early May, will offer strong economic incentives to encourage painting and landscaping improvements in the part of Coventry Village north of Mayfield Road. City officials regard the area, developed almost entirely with two-family houses, as one of the community's most troubled.

Under the proposed program, the City would offer to pay half the cost of a paint job, but not more than \$1,500. The City would also offer up to \$500 for landscaping.

The City will control landscaping design and the colors used on each house. Part of the aim is to reintroduce to the area the sorts of color schemes used on those houses when they were new.

Jay Gardner, who will administer the program from the Department of Planning and Development, argues that substantial economies can be achieved through a process of competitive bidding, and by offering contractors a minimum of five projects in the same relatively small area.

The project has an initial budget of \$45,000, from the Community Development Block Grant, a federal program. Mr. Gardner hopes that the program will assist twenty to twenty-five houses this summer.

The program will be available to owners of two-family houses only, and owner-occupants would be given preference.



## Cleaning up . . . from page 1

huge impact on the appearance of the Coventry business district. But, because of its inability to raise additional funds, CMA couldn't hope to replace an essential gas-powered vacuum cleaner when it wore out.

A new gas-powered vacuum cleaner (Giant-Vac®) and a hand-held blower (Echo® Power-blower) were purchased on April 29. Half the \$1068.95 purchase price will come from the Reserve Fund of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. (CNI). Another \$300 will be contributed by the Coventry Village Development Corporation (CVDC). The balance will come from the CMA, which will continue to pay for the operation of the equipment.

In a few hours of trial operation, the new vacuum cleaner was found far more effective than the one it replaced. The blower does in a few minutes work a someone using a broom and a rake might spend an hour on. The new equipment will drastically increase worker productivity.

Cleveland Heights City Manager Bob Downey is formulating a program under which much of the basic labor for the effort may be supplied by the local government, at least through the summer months. And there is some possibility that the City might help by loaning some specialized equipment. Until recently, the City had held firmly to the position that such clean-up must be privately provided.

This new spirit of cooperation among business groups, neighbors, and the local government is sure to mean far better maintenance of Coventry's commercial area. It is also likely that the residential parking lots—which in the past got only cursory attention—will be taken care of as they should be.

The CVDC hopes to begin soon to raise funds through a sort of "assessment" on merchants. Most recent commercial leases in the area give the CVDC the power to levy fees on commercial tenants. These fees, or assessments, are in addition to rents, and parallel the common areas maintenance fees found in most shopping center leases. They are expected to raise within a few years enough money to do not just the clean-up work, but advertising and promotion as well.

—Larry Beam

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*Coventry Village . . .  
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pretty well.*

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## *New name for Irv's suggested by Thompson, with a poem*

*[This poem helped its author, the poet laureate of Coventry Village, win a contest—worth a \$25 gift certificate—to rename Irv's Deli.]*

### *C Street*

Driven into the street  
By what? Inexorable grief  
The moon of hunger  
Boredom, my dog . . .  
This life on the high wire  
Life in midair, life fallen  
Between the cracks into the heartless dark  
Blindly I tap, tap, tap  
Like some desperate telegrapher  
A message to the world  
I want light  
I want a shining path  
I want flowers of illumination  
I want lighting and thunder  
I want a cornucopia of light  
I want a clean, well-lighted place  
I want a wall of light  
Where the cool meet the hot  
Where the underground  
Rubs shoulders with the underworld  
I want a neon Trotsky  
I want C Street to be alive with light  
I want the cornbeef conspirators to lighten up  
I want the wall of light to be a wall of art  
Where the hipsters and the tipsters  
And the junkies for all seasons wail and reason  
Those with a Dow Jones Jones  
Those with a nose for news, reading the Times  
Those poets of the night, versed in survival and  
crime  
Those who joke and smoke cigars  
While under the stars their cars are ticketed  
Listen to the heartbreak now  
To the ticker-tape tales of emotional meltdown  
Of lives turned into chopped liver  
To beef after beef, to a knock worse than death  
To the baloney of the lonely  
Were the years with Irv the wilderness?  
Will C Street lead to the promised land?  
Ask Sheldon. Ask Dianne  
Ask the weekend bar-trekkers pumped up on  
twilight ozone  
Ask the old-timers: Ben, Harry, Sid, Seymour,  
Jerry  
Go deep. Go below the ego. Go sub Irv  
And say to the id, here's looking at you, kid  
It's not hunger or boredom but loneliness  
That makes each face a mirror . . .

—Daniel Thompson

## Around Coventry . . .

**Business Person of the Year . . .**  
The Heights Area Chamber of Commerce has identified Marcia Polevoi, President of the Coventry Merchants Association, as its Cleveland Heights Business Person of the Year. Ms. Polevoi operates High Tide/Rock Bottom, a gift shop at 1814 Coventry Road.

Ms. Polevoi opened the shop in September, 1973, after a few years of selling similar wares in flea markets and craft shows. From meager beginnings, the shop grew quickly, moving three times in its first several years. Six years ago, it doubled its size at its present location. It is now clearly one of the most attractive and successful businesses in Coventry Village.

From the day her shop opened, Ms. Polevoi has been deeply involved in the civic affairs of Coventry Village. She was a key to the formation of the neighborhood's first merchants group, and her energy was essential to the first Street Fair here. She has kept the present Coventry Merchants Association viable and active through periods when no one else was able or willing to provide the necessary leadership or other organizational effort.

Ms. Polevoi spent childhood years on Edgemoor Road, and attended Coventry Elementary School. She credits her husband, Joe, with providing "heavy-duty moral support." They have three children, all of them married.

**Coventry Cats . . .** A new shop specializing in things for cats, and the people who love them, will open in early May at 1812 Coventry Road. Offerings will range from special foods, litter, cards, and books, through cat toys and art. A grand opening promotion is set for June.

Proprietor of the business is Sheila Bleckman, a Cleveland Heights resident who spent the past six years working at High Tide/Rock Bottom—and learning retail business. For twelve years before that, she taught junior high-school. Ms. Bleckman says that her shop will be the first in the Cleveland region dedicated entirely to cats.

The interior of the shop, a bit drab and worn when it was Daffy Dan's T-shirt Shop, has been thoroughly remodeled. The classy woodwork was built by John Hovekamp and Ken Szoka.

The exterior of the shop will get a thorough renovation along with all the other storefronts in the building, which fills the west side of Coventry from Hampshire to Lancashire. Work on that project is expected to begin in mid-May.

**A new bar . . .** A grand opening for the bar at C Street Café (that's the new name of Irv's Deli, 1798 Coventry Road at Hampshire) is set for May 13 and 14. John Bassette will perform.

At first, at least, only beer will be served—no wine or distilled spirits. A license allowing the sale of higher-powered drinks is held up pending the resolution of tax problems attributed to the former ownership.

**For sale, still . . .** Forty thousand dollars cash will buy the Saloon, 1765 Coventry Road, according to its proprietor, Phil Imperi. The business has been for sale for more than a year.

Dr. Imperi—who operates a dental practice at 1810 Coventry Road—no longer finds the bar business nearly so much fun as he once did. Nor does he have so much time for it: his wife, Marcy, gave birth last December 16 to a daughter, Miranda.

The business, open only in the evenings until recently, is now open beginning at 11:00 AM, except on Sundays. The grill, which once produced some of the best burgers hereabouts, is set to get going again within the next few weeks.

**A kids-hanging-out problem . . .** Arabica, the coffee house in Coventry Yard, along with the other tenants of that building, has an awful problem with loitering young folk. Management of Arabica has posted and distributed a flier from which the following was excerpted:

"Everyone is welcome at Arabica . . . Since seating is limited, we ask that you limit your stay during busy periods to allow other guests an equal opportunity to enjoy the facilities. Management reserves the right to ask you to make seating available . . . and can't permit the playing of board games or card games after 7:30 PM on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday. . . Please also remember that the City of Cleveland Heights has ordinances regarding smoking, loitering, and curfews. Arabica will co-operate with the enforcement of these laws."

## Join Coventry Neighbors Today

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DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE DELIVER BEFORE MAY 7

The next regular meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. will be held on Tuesday, May 10, 7:45 PM, at the Coventry Village Library.

The next meeting of the Trustees of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. will be held on Thursday, June 9, 8:00 PM, at 1641 Hillcrest Road. The meeting is open to all dues-paid members.

Join Coventry Neighbors, Inc. Today! You must be a member for at least 30 days to vote at our meetings

Please indicate the class of membership you want:

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