



Coventry Village News

The Newsletter of Coventry Neighbors Inc.

November, 1993



From the President's Pen

I spent the weekend of the 16th and 17th of October at the 3rd Annual Traditional Fall Pow Wow (sponsored by the Lake Erie Native American Council). A tiny, tiny, tiny part of me (1/32nd; a scant teaspoon of flavoring) hails back to an Indigenous American... my great, great, great grandmother, on my mothers' fathers' side.

Somewhere in my maternal grandmothers' cedar chest, among a jumble of mostly unidentified pictures, there is one old photo of a sod house on the northern prairie. This is where my great, great, great grandmother raised 10 children. Looking at the picture, I'm not at all inclined to idealize that sod house - pioneer existence. It looks like a damn hard life (I'm glad I live here -- and now).

So I didn't go to the Pow Wow seeking ties to a romanticized past. And I didn't go, either, because I romanticize Native Americans, or Native American Cultures. I know that among Native Americans there are good people and bad people... just as can be found among any people. As for the culture, I am by nature skeptical, and doubly so where I don't know enough to separate myths, or wishful thinking, from reality.

I went seeking neither identity (a little ridiculous at 1/32nd), nostalgia, nor enlightenment. I went to see what there was to see, out of open curiosity.

What there was to see... was plenty: strong, vital tolerance, civility, support, humor, and mutual respect. A sense of community. The Real Thing. And it was not exclusive.

For one thing, it is the indigenous peoples of this continent who have both embraced and, at times endured, being the real melting pot. They have intermarried (and do so still) with all of us, white and black. One saw all peoples in the dance circle -- strikingly handsome full blooded native Americans (prominent cheekbones, warm tan skin, coal black hair), and others less-to-more diluted, including people with obvious African American or Caucasian blood. Black hair, curly hair, blonde hair... , tan skin, brown skin, pale skin..., all danced together joyously.



During certain dances, anyone could dance (I did). Anyone could belong to this community of dancers. Even toddlers with bottles and babies in diapers danced. No one was made unwelcome on the dance floor.

In today's world, where it seems (to me) that the word "polarization" best names the politically correct trend in identities and ideologies, this model of active, and interactive, community was inspiration. Perhaps when the Pow Wow is over, these celebrants go back to their own homes, and fall back into or advocate more polarized worlds. But for the Pow Wow's duration they wholeheartedly participate in the creation of a powerful, throbbing unity, around and through the brotherhood of the drum and the pounding marriage of many moving feet. This is essence of community.

Coventry, too, has precedents of activism for community. Most recently we saw hundreds of people of all races, ideologies, and ages come together to build the most amazing playground for all our children; a kind of interpeople's Pow Wow, with a tangible goal.

In the past Coventry has achieved Community most often by joining together against something. As the new president of Coventry Neighbors, let me suggest that coming together for things builds more enduring Community.

Volunteers Came from Everywhere!

The staff from school provided a tremendous work crew. Mrs. Gay, with her calm and soothing smile, kept all motivated during the cold, rainy Saturday. Teachers traded chalk and pencils for a stretch of hard labor in mud. Some even brought their significant others and put them to work as team leaders or laborers.

Our community provided us with fantastic support, also. Tod Morgan, proprietor of Millgate Tree service who was working in the neighborhood, brought his rented Bobcat frontloader over to spend the afternoon assisting with the moving of rain soaked dirt piles. At the end of the day, he loaded up the Bobcat onto it's trailer and drove home to Newbury. The next day he drove it back to the playground, unloaded the Bobcat and spent the rest of the day helping again.

There was also a young teacher from the Cleveland school system with a long history in our community. When her grandparents came to this country, they settled into an apartment near Coventry and Mayfield and opened a shop on Coventry Road. Her parents raised their family here. Now her siblings are raising families here also. She has just purchased a home on Washington Boulevard herself. This tradition compelled

her to be a part of the playground efforts. Thanks Linda.

Well over 500 volunteers contributed. How can we possibly thank all these people? Driving by the playground and seeing all the happy children, hearing all the positive comments from business people and parents, sharing in the pleasure this has brought all of us, makes us aware of how indebted we are to all the people who joined in on this momentous project.

by Trish Stephenson

Coventry PEACE Playground

Heard on the Playground

Patience Cameron interviewed children at the new Coventry Peace Playground. Here's what they like. Other comments will follow in future editions:

Julie, age 8: "...the tire swing...you can swing with ten or twelve kids on...two push and ten ride or ten push and two ride...you can't fall off."

Damonique, age 6: "...the clubhouse, because..."

Caroline, age 6: "...it's under the tower..."
Nicolaya, age 6: "and it's private... and secret... and fun..."
Jill, age 7: "...and you can hear them stomping above your head."



Summary of 10/12/93 Meeting and Neighborhood News

Coventry Neighbors

Twenty people attended, giving us a quorum for elections. The nominees ran unopposed. The following slate of offices was unanimously elected:

- Elsa Johnson, President
- Bob Klemenc, Vice President
- Maryanne Rodewald, Treasurer
- Laura Hong and Steve Cochran, Co-Secretaries.

Since November was to be a newsletter month, some amount of time was spent discussing newsletter content. Bruce Biddle was appointed editor. The newsletter you hold in your hands and are reading hopefully is more interesting than it has been in the past. Let us know what you think of content and format. We are trying hard to make the newsletter a reflection of the diversity of Coventry, so it is our intent to focus the newsletter on people. Do you know someone interesting? Let us know. Newsletters come out bimonthly. We need writers; a cartoonist; fresh points of view.

Library

The Library has new outside lighting which highlights the building. A ceremony was held October 26th.

The Library has a new Mac LC3 computer available for public use. Sign up is recommended. A library card or drivers' license is required to use it. The maximum user time is two hours.

City at Large

When Mayfield is finished up to Maple that's it for this year, folks, for street improvements.

There was a reception the 21st of October at City Hall for Recipients of Community Improvement Awards. Congratulations, all.

There was a candidate's night at Heights High Auditorium on October 28th, to help voters understand issues and candidates.

There will be an evening ceremony to light the flag at City Hall at 7:00 PM on November the 11th.

There will be an Ice Show December 3rd, 4th, and 5th at the Cleveland Heights Recreation Pavilion. for further information call the Pavilion.

CVDC

Coventry Lighting Ceremony sponsored by the Coventry Village Development Corporation, will be Saturday December 4th at Coventryyard Park, beginning at one o'clock with the usual great entertainment and ending with the lighting of the trees at 5:15.

Irv's will soon become a Pizzeria Uno.

Next Meeting -- Coventry Neighbors

Will be held November 9th. This will be a community-building meeting, meaning cookies and beverage will be served and a 15 to 20 minute get-together will precede business.

Items to be discussed at the next meeting include:

1. the adoption of a concrete project, toward tangible community improvements.
2. fundraising projects to support the newsletter and to allow us to undertake the above.

Come, join us.

Coventry Treasures

Geoff Pankhurst, Photographer

Geoff Pankhurst, who is originally from Bath, England, came to this country seventeen years ago in pursuit of "true love." He is a self employed advertising photographer with his own studio at 2044 Euclid Avenue. Geoff likes what he does and "can't picture doing anything else." He says that advertising photography gives him "a very unusual viewpoint for life in general; (I)

get to see behind the scenes ... and tend to know how a lot of things really work."

Geoff has lived in the Coventry area for 15 years, both as a tenant and as a home owner. Slim, and blonde, with his hair worn in a ponytail, Geoff has that look of individualism Coventry is known for.

Geoff likes this area because "I like being a pedestrian ... (to) do things on foot in the neighborhood ... gives you a sense of community that you really don't get anywhere else." Over the years Geoff has seen many changes on Coventry. He evaluates Coventry today as "actually pretty healthy at the moment" ... but feels that having a food store within walking distance will "make a tremendous difference; you can find most things you need on foot, which is just perfect."

Geoff lives with his wife Catherine and two at-home children, Seth and Julia, close by the new parking deck and playground. When asked how the deck will affect them, Geoff replied, "It is going to be a really dominant feature (for us) once the leaves fall ... but I'm resigned to the fact that it is a positive development for the commercial district." He is not looking forward to car alarms going off. "That will affect us personally more than others."

As for the new playground ... "I have always considered having kids a good excuse to go to the playground". Geoff thinks the lighting needs to be improved, and he hopes the police are going to be "keeping an eye on it to some extent. "There's something for everybody ... a range of ages." He also stated, "It seems like its always been there."

When asked if he's ever considered living somewhere else, Geoff replies ... "Only in other countries."

Thanks Geoff! Glad you like it here, and best wishes with your business.



by Elsa Johnson

Meet Deborah Wells, New resident

Deborah Wells introduces herself as being from Texas, but that was a stop on the way from Rochester, NY, via Stevens College and Cincinnati. She was brought here from Dallas by Society National Bank, who bought the Dallas bank where she worked. For Society, she works in the Trust Department downtown. Besides renovating a house they still own in Cincinnati, Deborah is a golf enthusiast, and at home works with fiber: weaving on a large loom on a large third-floor loom, sewing and crewel work, all learned as a child. She is also in the MBA Program of Baldwin Wallace.

Deborah's husband, Wayne (Chip) was with General Electric for 15 years before changing careers to enter the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY., where he is completing the two year course at the end of this year. He is a "good" as well as enthusiastic golfer.

Why did they pick Coventry? They walked by Arabica during the summer and saw people reading the New York Times and doing cross-word puzzles in ink! They also like the restaurants, the near-by laundromat, and the good public transportation to downtown. A flyer left at their door brought Deborah to Coventry Neighbors meetings. This high-energy, creative and community-oriented couple are new jewels in Coventry's crown of wonderful residents.

by June Wortman

On the Street

Mac's Paperbacks has recently relocated to 1820 Coventry next to Tommy's (from their previous location across the street). In fact, one can pass directly from Tommy's to the bookstore through an inside passageway.

Mac's is an attractive three story bookstore, with mixed new and used books, mainly paperbacks of all sorts. The used books came in mostly through a "trade you used books" policy.

The ground floor contains mostly, though not all, new books, the second story is the mystery floor and the basement has all the other used books and magazines. The bookshelves on all floors are identified with the kind of books they hold. This includes the used bookshelves in the basement. That makes it easy to browse when you are looking for a specific topic.



Mac's came to Coventry in 1984, having stores in Kent and Chagrin Falls; moved across the street in 1987, and to its present location this past May.

Suzanne owns the business jointly with Jim McSherry. She grew up in Cleveland Heights. She is happy with her business on Coventry. "I am always stimulated by the diversity on Coventry" she told me. Like everyone else on the street, she is looking forward to an early completion of the parking structure.

By Harry Cameron

Coventry Village News is published by Coventry Neighbors, Inc. The newsletter is distributed free throughout Coventry Village. Mailed subscriptions are available (see last page).

Editor: Bruce Biddle

Editorial Board: Elsa Johnson, Bob Klemenc, Mary Ann Rodewald, Geoffrey Pankhurst

Editorial Policy: It is our intent to make *Coventry Village News* a reflection of the diversity of Coventry with a focus on people. We hope that our editorials foster discussion of important community issues. Our editorials represent the consensus of our editorial board and are intended to represent the views of Coventry Neighbors.

CNI exists for the residents of Coventry Village. It needs your involvement and input. If there are neighborhood issues that concern you we urge you to bring them to CNI. We welcome your input. CNI can serve as a social, political, or community action organization. It's up to you! This is your neighborhood, get involved.

How to reach us: If you can't come to the monthly meetings send a letter to:

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c/o Elsa Johnson, President
2753 Hampshire Rd # 1
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106

or

Coventry Village News
Bruce Biddle, Editor
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Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118

Regular meetings of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. are held on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:40 p.m. at the Coventry Village Library, Euclid Heights Blvd. & Coventry Rd. When you join Coventry Neighbors, Inc. you can be sure of having a voice in shaping your neighborhood's future. Membership includes a subscription to the Coventry Village News.

Indicate the kind of membership you desire and complete the form:

Individual (\$7.50) Family (\$10.00) Senior Citizen (\$5.00)

NAME _____ Phone _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP CODE _____

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