



Coventry Village News

JANUARY, 1984

NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC.

VOL 9, NO. 1

NEW PIZZA PARLOR IS PROPOSED

The owners of DiBella's Pizza Bazaar, on Woodland near Shaker Square, want to put a 76-seat restaurant in the now-vacant building at 1827 Coventry Road. That building once housed Coventry Bike and Ski.

The new restaurant would be called "Pizza Bazaar and Family Restaurant." In addition to restaurant service, carry-out sales and home delivery are planned. A liquor license, allowing carry-out sales of beer and wine and service in the restaurant until 2:30 AM, has been applied for.

The City's Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the proposal in February; citizen comments on the proposal will be invited at that time. The basic question before the Commission will be whether economic development of this nature is worth the added demand it implies for an already insufficient supply of parking. The Commission will probably determine that this restaurant would require 66 parking spaces under Cleveland Heights' Zoning Code. Landlord Ken Ross has promised that the business may use 13 spaces he controls. The Commission will be asked to waive the remaining 53 spaces required by law.

The Commission approved a similar proposal, made by Daffy Dan Gray, last spring. Mr. Gray, after encountering difficulties, scraped those plans.

Drawings of the facade and sign for the newly-proposed restaurant were reviewed recently by the Cleveland Heights Local Development Corporation, a City program that helps pay for the fix-up of commercial facades. These drawings showed substantial landscaping, new large planters, and a thorough re-design of the building's front.

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIPS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Coventry Neighbors, Inc., operates on a fiscal year that matches the calendar year exactly. Policy holds that all Memberships in CNI and paid Subscriptions to the *Coventry Village News* expire in the last day of each year.

We hope that you share our belief that CNI serves a valuable purpose the Coventry and in all of Cleveland Heights. We hope that you enjoy reading the *CVN*.

Old and new members can use the form provided on the last page of this newsletter to ensure prompt and proper credit.

Four hundred fifty-two people and organizations now receive the *CVN* each month purely as a courtesy of CNI. We intend to revise this list significantly, keeping some names and dropping others. You can ensure that you remain on our mailing list by joining CNI, or by simply subscribing to the *CVN*. Regular memberships cost \$5.00; family memberships are \$7.00; and senior citizens pay just 3.00. All memberships include a subscription to the *CVN*; a subscription alone--no membership--costs \$5.00. We welcome larger contributions and promise that they will be used productively.

--Bruce Hennes, President of CNI

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PERSONS wishing to submit copy for the February 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 February 16. While no unsigned items will be published, your name may be withheld on request. Phone 371-6095.

MEETING NOTES

December Regular Meeting

Carol Gibson, reporting for the Environmental Concerns Committee, described a recent meeting of the Committee with City officials at which the neighborhood's trash problem was discussed. The Committee suggested some solutions to the problem.

No date has yet been set for the 1984 Coventry Village Street Fair; setting of that date must await further information about the timing of the planned paving of Coventry Road. The Street Fair Committee has filled most of its volunteer positions, but still seeks people for some key roles.

Joyce Braverman, a member of the City's Planning staff, presented preliminary plans for a parking lot proposed for the northeast corner of Lancashire and Euclid Heights.

CNI's efforts to obtain 501 C (3) tax status, allowing contributors to deduct contributions, is making progress.

CVN SEEKS ART

The *CVN* would like very much to start using some drawings. Art would help give this newsletter a livelier look, while allowing greater freedom in page composition. While we cannot pay for contributions, this could be a valuable opportunity to gain exposure.

Anyone interested in contributing should contact the *CVN* at 371-6095.

Our slightly-revised mast head, used for the first time this month, is the work of Edmund (Crudley) Ritz, creator of Tommy's menus.

CNI COMMITTEE TARGETS TRASH VIOLATIONS

The neighborhood that many wrote off ten years ago as Cleveland Heights' first slum has turned itself around and has become an attractive place to live, work, and shop. Yet a serious trash problem remains in the apartment district, probably the worst such problem in Cleveland Heights. Trash begins to appear on the tree lawns of many buildings several days before collection. Bags break---or ripped open by dogs---and trash gets spread about. Pick up of such items as stoves and refrigerators is slow because the people who put these things on the tree lawns don't bother to call the City to request that they be picked up. The situation is at its worst on weekends, just when the the largest numbers of people come here to shop, dine, visit or seek apartments.

In an effort to discover what could be done to make the neighborhood look better, and to minimize hazards to public health, CNI's Environmental Concerns Committee met with Vice-Mayor Robert Arnold, Public Service Director Dominic Tomaro, and Recycling Coordinator Lorie Rosenberg. Committee members and City officials agreed that the situation could be significantly improved by stricter enforcement of the City's present laws governing trash pick-up.

Because trash problems are most severe on Hampshire Road between Coventry and Overlook, that area was selected for more rigorous enforcement. Beginning in early 1984, the Committee will monitor the problem portion of Hampshire, and compile a list of property owners who are violating the Code. Records will be kept of violation notices and of the Court's handling of these cases.

Mr. Arnold agreed to discuss with his colleagues on City Council the suggestion that the City require the posting in all apartment buildings an easily-understandable version of the City codes governing solid waste disposal. The Committee will conduct a door-to-door campaign, before any penalties are handed out, reminding residents of their responsibilities. Finally, an effort will be made to identify the legally-required "resident agents" who are ineffective or non-existent.

The Committee is committed to making Coventry a better and more attractive place. Ultimately, though, it is the individual initiative and commitment of the area's residents that will make the real difference.

--Carol Gibson and Charles Owen

FUNDS SOUGHT FOR REDESIGN OF OPEN PANTRY/REVCO LOT

The Coventry Merchants Association has asked the City to allocate \$30,000 from its Commercial Area Improvement Fund for improvements to the southwest corner of Coventry and Mayfield. The parking lot on that corner now serves the Open Pantry and Revco stores. It is regarded as unattractive, presents traffic problems, and does not meet Zoning Code standards.

The proposed changes would re-direct traffic using the lot so as to reduce traffic problems. Three benches and other amenities would be provided in a tiny park next to Grum's Sub Shoppe. Planters and trees would be installed around the lot. Total project costs are estimated at \$90,000.

ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURAL WORK TO GO AHEAD FOR "CRAZY SUZIE" PARKING LOT

by Larry Beam

Cleveland Heights City Council has given City Manager Richard Robinson authority to proceed with the next steps in planning the parking lot proposed for the northeast corner of Lancashire and Euclid Heights. The site is popularly known as Crazy Suzie's, in honor of the owner of an apartment building that once stood there.

Preliminary plans for the proposed parking lot were presented to the December 13 meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. The 56-space lot would be surrounded by a belt of grass, shrubs and trees. These plantings are located so as to minimize the extent to which car headlights from the lot trespass on neighboring buildings, while providing an aesthetic buffer around the lot. Plans to construct a foundation under this lot, so that a second level could be added later, have been dropped.

Much remains to be worked out before the project can be built. An agreement must be reached with the Unitarian Society for the use of land, now the church's own parking lot, just to the west of its building at 2728 Lancashire Road. No talks had yet been held with the Society, and the necessary arrangements are somewhat complex, involving, probably, a zoning variance for the Society, and possibly for the new public parking lot itself. Substitute parking for those now parking in the Society's west lot must be found and agreed upon. The process by which zoning variances are granted takes at least two-months, and allows for public input.

Little is known of just how the basement of the building that once stood on the site was filled when that building was razed. Engineering studies will reveal whether that foundation must be removed, or whether less drastic techniques can provide a sufficiently sturdy base for the parking lot.

Actual construction drawings of the new lot must be prepared; the drawings shown to CNI were merely preliminary studies. The City plans to hire an outside architectural firm to produce these drawings and the detailed specifications for the project.

CNI had hoped, and for a while believed, that the City would discuss other possible sites for parking in the Coventry area. But Joyce Braverman, the Planning Department designer who presented the plans to CNI, was instructed to discuss *only* the Crazy Suzie site. The City's refusal to discuss other sites with CNI, and the increasing momentum of planning for the project, seem to indicate that Coventry's promised parking will indeed be built at Crazy Suzie. Yet one top City official says that the decision "is not yet cast in stone." CNI's Planning and Zoning committee intends to pursue the question of site selection. Anyone interested in participating in these discussions should call the CVN at 371-6095.

PTA PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAM

A special children's feature movie and cartoons will be shown on Friday, January 20, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. in the All-Purpose Room of Coventry Elementary School. A fifty-cent admission is charged for children 2 to 5; parents will be admitted free. Popcorn will be available.

AROUND COVENTRY

DINEWITZ . . . The jail sentence imposed on Coventry landlord Isaac Dinewitz has been lifted. Dinewitz was the first Cleveland Heights property owner actually jailed, at least by the present Court, for violations of the housing or building codes. The City's Division of Inspectional Services told the Court that Mr. Dinewitz building at 2749 Hampshire Road is now "meets the minimum standards" of the Code. One prominent observer called the matter a "text-book study in minimum Code compliance." A resident of a neighboring building says, "Yea, they painted it. But some of the windows were open when the the painters came, and they never bothered to close 'em. Now those windows are closed, and you can see that only part of the window got painted. The paint they used was the thinnest I've ever seen. When they painted the rear fire escape, they splattered paint on several cars parked behind the building next door. The place still *looks* like a dump." A tenant of the building was outraged when she learned, third hand, that Dinewitz had identified her as the buildings "resident agent" in an official document sent to the City.

SITTING . . . Several rather old and elegant wooden benches that once graced the front lobby area of Coventryard are gone. Their removal has rekindled the tired controversy about sitting in Coventry. The most popular speculation holds that the new management of the building removed them in an effort to lessen the comfort of a few apparent vagrants who sometimes spend much of the day on them. Another vein of speculation held that the benches were the personal property of the old owners, who took the benches when they sold the place. Either way the benches are gone, and with them an important place for neighbors to relax, talk and read.

MIDNIGHTS . . . *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* continues to to draw enough folks to warrant its continued showing on Saturdays at midnight at the Heights Art Theater. But *Fame*, a film about life at the New York School of the Performing Arts, drew only about thirty folks on the Friday a week before Christmas. The box office performance of other offerings on Fridays at midnight has been equally dismal. The theater's management blames partly an inadequate advertising budget, dictated by higher-ups in a large and monolithic organization headquartered in Arizona, and partly a general decline in the popularity of late-night theatre-going. Managers of the theater had hoped that this series of straight films might, if financially successful, help them persuade their bosses to offer more non-pornographic films. But so long as the out-of-state management continues to be motivated rigorously by considerations of the bottom line, and so long as straight films don't make money, any clearing-up of the theater's late rooms far off.

TREES . . . The City of Cleveland Heights recently placed several new planters in the business district, put in some new trees, installed wrought iron tree protectors, and planted evergreens in the old and new planters. It will be possible, in the spring, to add flowers to the planters. The new trees are larger than those usually planted by the City in its commercial areas, and so will have a better chance of survival.

POPCORN . . . The Popcorn Palace, a boutique specializing in popcorn in many flavors and related paraphernalia, apparently still plans to move into the former location of Bill Jones Leather Shop, at 1860 Coventry Road. A plan for the facade and sign was recently approved by the Cleveland Heights Local Development Corporation, which will help pay some of the costs of the new facade and sign.

STREET FAIR PLANNING

by Kathryn Young, Street Fair Chair

Uncertainty about the completion date for the paving of Coventry Road, planned for this summer, makes the setting of a date for the Street Fair impossible just now. The two dates now being seriously considered are the second weekend in July (the traditional date) and a weekend early in August. The Fair Committee hopes that planning of the paving job has progressed sufficiently by next month so that a date can be announced in the February *CVN*.

Several key positions in the Fair's organization remain open. Anyone interested in becoming involved in the Fair should call me, the Fair Committee Chair, at 321-3413.

Numerous new people have joined the fair effort this year. Even key roles require no experience. Many of those who joined the effort in past years to find out what it's all about have returned again and again. CNI President Bruce Hennes has worked on six Fairs. Tom Lee has also worked on six. Gary Wells has worked on four. We have lost count with Alan Rapoport and Larry Beam.

The next meeting of the Fair Committee will be held Wednesday, January 18, at the home of Diana Cyganovich, 3081 East Derbyshire. We hope you join us in the fun.

Sub-committee heads named so far are: Diana Cyganovich and Bob Shields, Assistants to the Chair; Ann Siclare, Secretary; Diana Cyganovich, Finance; Lonnie Hennes, Appreciation; Bob Shields, Banners; Vicky Hunt and Sue Haders, Booth Allocation; Jean Harper, City Liaison; Bob Shields, Communications; Saul Isler, Fair Guide; Edna and Bob Lemmers, Fair Guide Distribution; Lonnie Hennes and Diana Cyganovich, Information Booth; Tom Lee, Legal Support; Phil Imperi, Merchant Liaison; Gary Wells, Music; Ann Siclare, Operations; Darlene Barker, Public Relations; Kathryn Young and David Stokes, Safety; Barry Bennett and Mike Borkan, Technical Support; Dennis Coughlin and Peter Goldsmith, Aides.

The positions remaining unfilled: Family Programs, Fine Arts, Outreach, PTA Liaison, Sanitation, and Traffic Control.

SERVICE IMPROVING AT PICK-N-PAY

The Coventry Village Pick-n-Pay has a new manager, Ross Croucher, who has been on the job for a couple of months now. Even in that short time, several improvements are noticeable.

The management is much more sensitive to the Shopper's Curse---checkout lines that extend all the way back into the shelf lanes---and puts more cashiers at empty registers when that happens. Management has gotten more assertive against smoking in the store, with plainly posted signs invoking the Fire Marshall's authority, and voice-overs on the PA. Staff generally shows more work-oriented movement, more alertness to customers' needs, and less on-the-job chit-chat.

Croucher is friendly and personally attentive to customers. He is obviously trying to improve operations, and merits the support and suggestions of his customers.

---Dave Burwasser

IDENTIFY REALITY, EXPAND HORIZONS, SCHLATTER TELLS SINGLES

By David R. Burwasser

The Coventry Library Singles Forum heard Plain Dealer singles columnist Tina Schlatter share some advice on getting through the holidays, at the December meeting of the Forum. Schlatter's talk was the first program meeting of the Forum, which was formed barely three months ago. An audience of twenty-some single adults was present.

When we spend the holidays alone and are unhappy on that account, we may be placing unrealistic demands on the season, Schlatter suggested. We may be comparing our real situation with an fantasy of ideal family life that few real families would recognize. Or we may be remembering the best Christmases of our childhood and using them as a standard; or editing our memories even of the best--remembering the bicycle a relative gave us, but forgetting the guilt trip that came with it. We would be happier, Schlatter said, if we compared our real situation to other real situations, not ideal ones.

In suggesting alternative ways to observe the holidays, Schlatter included singles organizations' holiday affairs, but with a warning: every organization has its up days and its off days, so don't be crushed when XYZ Singles' Club doesn't live up to someone else's glowing reports.

Schlatter admonished her audience to overcome the characteristic provincialism of Greater Clevelanders. She has found, she says, that single people all over the county have very much the same concerns, and could benefit from programs of organizations in other suburbs. Singles in Cleveland Heights only deprive themselves when they view an activity in Parma as being off the edge of the known world, and vice versa.

The Singles Forum is sponsored by the Coventry Village Branch Library. Ms. Schlatter's appearance was made possible by the Friends of the Library. The Forum will hold a planning meeting in January and program meetings in February and March.

YOUTH CENTER DIRECTOR IS NAMED

By Kathryn J. Young

Anthony (Tony) Rushin, the new executive Director of the Coventry Youth Center, says that he would like to see the Center provide "service to the community as well as recreation for youth."

Plans call for the re-opening of the Center in mid-January.

Rushin, who began work on December 12, is a former Superintendent of the Cuyahoga Hills Boys School, where he spent fourteen years in a variety of direct service and administrative positions. He holds a B.S. in Social Administration from The Ohio State University, and an M.S. from the School of Applied Social Science of Case Western Reserve University.

Funding of the Center through the City's Community Development Block Grant program recently received approval from City Council.

Persons interested in volunteering at the Center should call Mr. Rushin at the Youth Center office, 932-9785. The Center is located Coventry Village Library, 1825 Coventry Road.

LIBRARY GOINGS-ON

Coventry Village Library is beginning the new year with several new programs while continuing some of its "golden oldies."

"A New You in '84," a special program for teens, will begin on January 9 at 7:30 PM. Ms. Cynthia Petrus, Fashion Director and Coordinator of Special Affairs for Saks 5th Avenue will discuss the new teen fashions. On January 23, 7:30 PM, Angelica from Design Lines will discuss "Make-up and the New You." The final program in this series, on February 6, will be a discussion of the book *Color Me Beautiful*, with Mrs. Shoup and friends.

On January 17, at 2:30 PM, children from the Coventry Elementary School will be dancing on their toes with Ms. Mary Jane Heppner. It's a great way to warm up, tone up, and have a lot of fun.

Pre-school story times begin the first week in January with stories and games for three- to five-year-old children. Pre-school evening story times begin January 3 at 6:45 PM. Regular pre-school story times begin January 4 at either 10:30 PM or 2:30 PM.

Stories Galore and More, for school-age children, begins January 10 at 2:30 PM, and continues on Tuesdays through April.

Poetry Readings begin on January 8 at 2:30 with Joan Benson reading her poetry and Alan Zimmerman reading his Chinese poetry.

On January 7 at 4:00 PM David Kister will conduct a discussion of political biographies.

Be sure to see the wonderful collection of glass, from the Cleveland Museum of Art, presently on display at the Library.

---Debbie Graves Shoup

CRIMESTOPPERS NOTEBOOK

We've written before about how to avoid attack, but what do you do if you are faced with a life-or-death situation in which you must fight back?

Keep one thing uppermost in your mind: you must incapacitate your attacker.

Most law enforcement officials discourage carrying a gun or knife. Unless you are properly trained and licensed, an attacker can use your weapons against you--on the street and in a court of law.

Other weapons used successfully by some people include hat pins, small spray containers filled with ammonia, pens and pencils, corkscrews, keys (hold the ring and most of the keys in your hand, with a few keys sticking between your fingers), and even a newspaper or magazine (roll it tightly and use it to jab). You might even consider getting one of the hand-held, battery-powered sirens now available.

Obviously, none of the things mentioned above will help if they're at the bottom of your purse or pocket. Keep them handy, and be mentally prepared to use them if the situation warrant.

Next month we will discuss some basic defense techniques using weapons you always carry with you: the different parts of your body.

One more oft-repeated note: If you see criminal activity, or suspicious behavior, call the cops. Do not wait for someone else to do it.

---Bruce Hennes, Crime Prevention Task Force

COUNCIL ENDS YEAR WITH NEW HOUSING CODE

by Mayor Alan J. Rapoport

City Council ended its year with legislation designed for the future: a revised Housing Code. Changes were contained in eight separate pieces of legislation. These ordinances were the result of more than a year of study, debate and public input. They mark the first comprehensive review of the Housing Code in the twenty years since its adoption.

In most respects, Council chose to retain the former Code. Many provisions, however, were changed to add clarity or to eliminate ambiguity. For instance, lists of specific items subject to inspection were added in the Code itself so that those lists will be readily available. Definitions were changed, and, in some cases, added. The result is a more readable Code.

Council did make some important revisions to the Code. It enacted new provisions for the systematic interior inspection of single-family rental property. It established explicit policy on inspections, and stated formally that courtesy and respect for the public are important City objectives which must be realized. Property owners subject to re-inspection of current violations will be given the benefit of these revisions. Some old standards have been relaxed; common complaints about citations for hair-line cracks should cease.

It is difficult to summarize the new Code. Most residents will not be aware of the changes because it is hard to see what is *not* being cited. However, Council feels that people will see a real difference in the administration of the Code. Council hopes that it has enacted a firm and fair system, one that will encourage the preservation of the City's housing stock in a realistic, professional, and polite manner.

OCLAC PLANS DISCUSSION ON AGING

The Coventry Community Library Advisory Committee (OCLAC) and the Coventry Village Library are planning a discussion on the problems of aging and caring for the aging on Tuesday, January 17, 7:30 PM, at the Library, 1825 Coventry Road. This is a follow-up to a four-session workshop held earlier. Focus will be on the problems of those who provide care.

GIRL SCOUT COOKIES

Girl Scouts will be taking orders for cookies between January 13 and 30. Place an order for your favorite, and don't forget to check out the new cookie for this year--the Medallions. The other kinds available are Samoas, Thin Mints, Do-Si-Dos, Tagalongs, Trefoils, and Chocolate Chunks. To place orders, call Kathryn Young at 321-3413.

The senior Scouts of Troop #25 wish to thank the many people in Coventry who supported their candy sales in December. Thank you very much. [Somehow, in last month's *CVN*, we substituted the word "cookies" for "candy" in the announcement of this sale. Sorry. ---Ed.]

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TIME VALUE -- PLEASE DELIVER BY FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 1984

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. General Meeting, Tuesday, January 10, 7:30 PM in the Community Room of the Coventry Village Library. The public is invited.

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. Trustees Meeting, Thursday, February 9, 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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