



COVENTRY

VILLAGE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY VILLAGE NEIGHBORS INC.

September 1996

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Many people are unaware that Cleveland hosts the largest festival of Performance Art in the United States. For the last six years I have been attending the performances of various pieces at these festivals. When friends ask me, "What the heck is performance art?" (No one ever asks the easy questions like how diamonds are made.) I swallow hard and try to educate them. "Many creative people cannot fulfill their artistic urges using traditional mediums of expression such as painting, dance, sculpture or acting."

Their eyes start to stare and water-over.

"Some people need to create a piece which spans both the aural and visual, something which is not confined by previously erected barriers. Performance artists explore these alternate paths of expression and present to the audience a much deeper place in their soul than "traditional" artists."

My friends are now nervously twitching. "Sounds interesting! (Don't call us the next time they're in town.)"

The nervous reaction is exactly what draws me to each performance. I don't know what to expect, there is not much media coverage, I obviously can't ask my friends if it's worth seeing, the catalog of events are vague; "With honey, feathers and eggs, Cleveland performance artist Melissa Mance transforms and recreates herself in her ethereal performance." The artists exploration becomes mine, their creativity forces me to place my life on hold to digest what is being explored, I become as emotionally naked as they.

After an evening of performance art the right side of my brain is energized and ready to assist the left side with the clinical tasks at hand. My brain is exercised and ready to formulate inventive solutions to difficult problems.

The problem that has been occupying my thoughts recently is the upcoming levy vote for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school system. In the past, even though I don't have children I have faithfully supported the school's request for additional funds. I felt a good school system was good for the community and a good community is good for me. But now, for the first time in thirteen years of living in Cleveland Heights I feel I may have been disillusioned. I have become upset with reports which state that our school

system is simply NOT performing. Many of our 12th graders barely pass a 9th grade proficiency test, petty infighting has prevented new approaches to education and dissident voices on the school board have distracted it from its real work.



Why have I spent all this money? Providing the Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Board with some of the largest per student budgets in the state has produced passing proficiency rates of a little over 60% of the student population. In a published report, the Plain Dealer alleges this is well below the average in Northeastern Ohio. So why vote to spend more money when it hasn't proved to be a tool for better results? Can the school perform worse than 60% passage, or is the issue more basic? Are we faced with students more stupid than those in Beachwood? Is our school board and administration more inept than their counterparts in Solon? Do we have less involved parents than those in Hudson? Are the teachers we pay worse than others around the country? I suspect none of these are true, but somewhere there is a reason. What do I do?

As with my performance art attendance, I have the same nervous feelings inside contemplating a NO vote against the schools.

I suspect I will vote for our schools but I don't know why. I guess I'm frightened at what might happen, at what the community might lose, by how much farther they might slip. These are not reasons to vote for a school levy, but this is the only rationale the schools have given me.

Money well spent provides a return. The schools are not providing a return, but threatening a more dismal present if not passed. Voting for a school issue should be an action for the good of the future, you should see the positive results.

When I spend ten dollars to see an evening of performance art, the artists are challenged to explore the depths of their talent and give pieces to the audience. When I spend ten mils of property tax dollars I now receive a half-hearted attempt from a school system that challenges few. I'll vote now on the schools terms, but from this point I want results on mine.

Jeffrey R. Dross

Reprinted from our last newsletter:

Coventry Neighbors has been around for over twenty-five years. The last time our constitution was reviewed and updated was fifteen years ago. The constitution states this should be done every five years. For the last few months we have been trying to rectify this fifteen-year oversight. As the residents need change, so have the reasons for our existence. At the next meeting we will propose changes to our constitution that more clearly define the organization we have become.

Currently, our mission statement or "reason for being" is vague and poorly defined. After careful consideration we propose to outline our goals as follows:

1. *To be the civic, community organization which acts as a voice representing residents of the Coventry area in any matter that impacts that community.*
2. *To provide a forum for Coventry area residents to learn about issues that may affect them and/or their neighborhood and to allow said residents an arena to voice their opinions on those issues.*
3. *To work as a group in any way possible with the goal of improving the Coventry area for the social welfare of residents and visitors.*

Because of the advances in home computer technology, the arcane method of dues collection can, and has been simplified as follows:

Annual dues shall be set by resolution of the membership. The membership year shall start with the month dues are paid. Only members whose initial dues payments have been accepted and, if necessary ratified at least thirty (30) days prior to a meeting may vote at that meeting. Continuing members whose dues have not been received within three (3) months of their membership anniversary shall be deemed to have lapsed, and renewal of said membership shall be processed as a new membership.

In the past, Coventry Neighbors has been responsible for organizing and presenting the Coventry Street Fair. As you know, the street fair has gone by the way of hip hugging, bell-bottomed jeans. Constitutional paragraphs concerning this event will be omitted.

Our membership is now much smaller than in the past. We currently do not have anyone serving in the office of vice-president. Due to our leaner operation, monetary responsibility and Coventry Village News oversight needs to be altered to reflect these changes. Below are those paragraphs.

Disbursement of CNI funds shall be valid only if signed by two of the officers or trustees.

The trustees shall appoint the Editorial Board of the Coventry Village News (CVN). The Editorial Board shall establish the editorial policy and select the

Editor(s) of the CVN. Editor(s) of the CVN shall be seated on the Editorial Board and shall serve at the discretion of the Editorial Board. Chair of the Editorial Board shall be selected from and by the Editorial Board.

Finally, the lines that define Coventry Village as a neighborhood in our constitution need to be revised. In the past, a portion of East Cleveland had been included in our constitutional confines. We are proposing a change to end Coventry at the Cleveland Heights boarder.

The changes are relatively minor but necessary to keep us moving forward in our goals as a community of neighbors while maintaining a balance. If you object to these changes or if you want to voice your opinion, please attend the September 10, 1996 meeting. We will have a final discussion and vote to ratify the new constitution.



Jeffrey R. Dross
President

Left Turn Lanes

The following request for left turn lanes on Coventry and Cedar, and on Euclid Heights Blvd. and Lee Roads was submitted to Philmore Hart, Cleveland Heights Councilman:

Dear Phil,

I am writing this letter in behalf of Coventry Neighbors Inc. We are requesting that left turn lanes be established on Coventry at the intersection of Coventry and Cedar Roads. The traffic often backs up there because of left turners. Coventry is wide enough as demonstrated by the fact that a left turn lane is already in existence on Coventry and E. Overlook. No change in traffic signals is required, just a partial lane for left turners to make room for through traffic. One can no longer use Mornington Lane to Cedar as it has been made one way south. Soon the truck traffic resulting from the sewer improvement project will add to the problem.

We are also requesting a left turn lane on Euclid Heights Blvd. where it intersects Lee Road. There the problem is aggravated by parking meters very close to the corner. The traffic department should also consider removing the meter closest to Lee on Euclid Heights Blvd. There are lots of meters and I have never seen them all occupied.

At a meeting several months ago the membership agreed to these requests. Julia Alandt was present and promised to relay them to the responsible department. However no action has been taken.

We would appreciate immediate action on this request.

Thanks.

Harry Cameron,
Board Member, Coventry Neighbors Inc.

TOWARD A BETTER BUILDING

An oft-asked question of me is, "are you still planning to build a building over the city-owned parking lot on the east side of Coventry Road, between Medic Discount Drugs and Heights Cleaners, that will house a restaurant and retail stores?"

The answer is a definitive, "yes." So what's taking so long?

In order to build this building, certain easements for delivery, emergency exits, and trash removal are necessary. My original plan is to do much of that toward the rear of the building, necessitating easements from a number of entities.

The large, surface parking lot that surrounds Medic Discount Drugs, runs behind Heights Cleaners, and loops around toward Coventry Elementary School with an exit on Euclid Heights Boulevard, was owned by First National Supermarkets, leased to Medic Discount Drugs, and released to The City of Cleveland Heights. Medic and the City had already given a provisional O.K. for the plan and a similar O.K. was expected from first National Supermarkets.

However, the property was recently sold by first National to Michael Montlack. It appears that Mr. Montlack purchased the building and property as a long-term investment and Medic remains as his tenant under lease.

While I haven't had to start from scratch, I have been attempting to negotiate with Mr. Montlack. Unfortunately, we are currently at an impasse, although negotiations continue.

I would like to tell the residents of Coventry Village what I have told Mr. Montlack: I can build a good building without his easements. But, I can build a better building *with* his easements.

I appreciate everyone's continuing patience and support for my project. And if anyone has any questions, I hope they'll call me at 229-6800.

Bruce M. Hennes

1997 CALENDARS COMING

Last year Coventry Neighbors sold calendars which featured some of the homes in our neighborhood. They were an immediate success and disappeared almost as quickly as we created them. For 1997 we are creating an all new calendar featuring the homes located in the Calhoun area of our community. We will again be including important dates which will help you through the year. **DON'T GET SHUT OUT!** Reserve your copy(ies) now (many people bought them as gifts for friends and former Cleveland Heights residents.) Call Robin Vandevender at 321-1178 and tell her how many you'll need.

CHANGES ON COVENTRY

Summer has not meant a season of rest for Coventry. Many new and exciting things have been occurring which will keep our neighborhood vibrant and interesting.

Irv's abandoned building has finally found a tenant! Ken Montlack promised at a recent meeting of Coventry Neighbors that he could now find a respectable tenant for the space. He has been true to his word and **THE WILDERNESS SHOP** will soon occupy this long-empty storefront. Friends who are familiar with this retailer tell me that it is a great store and will be a wonderful addition to our neighborhood.

QUE-TAL a new Mexican restaurant has taken over the former Bagel Bros. store. They offer a complete collection of standard Mexican fare, with a twist all their own. The staff is friendly, the food is fresh and the view of the street is incomparable from their great big windows. Check it out mon!

CAPT'N TONY'S is serving up pizza in the former Condomnation store front. They feature pizza in a thousand different variations (I recommend the whole wheat pesto with sausage-UMM!)

The recently remodeled **TAJ MAHAL** restaurant look open and clean-nice job!

If you have not yet stopped in the **DAILY PLANET NEWS** you should. They offer a world of news and magazines, whatever your interests. It can be fun to look for your favorite subject matter and see what the other side of the world has to say about it.

The hole is no more! The **ZIPKIN BUILDING** is progressing nicely after a number of false starts. Walk by and look at the progress at this too long blighted corner, you'll be surprised.

On a more clinical note, work has started on the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District **INTERCEPTOR PROJECT** in the library's front yard. The blasting will soon start, we'll have lots of noise, dust and action for about three years but afterwards, relief should be felt in our area's sewer system.

The northeast corner of the Coventry Road-Euclid Heights Boulevard intersection has been cleaned up. At a recent **COVENTRY NEIGHBORS** meeting a few attendees complained about what they felt was dangerous overgrowth and a perfect hiding place for criminals. The city's representatives at the meeting took that information back to city hall and shortly thereafter the changes were made. See, government can work!

Many of these achievements had been discussed at past **COVENTRY NEIGHBORS** monthly meetings. If you don't usually attend out monthly meetings stop in this month and get a preview of coming events.

Coventry Village News is published by Coventry Neighbors, Inc. The newsletter is distributed free throughout Coventry Village. Mailed subscriptions are available. Meetings 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.

Editor: Bruce Biddle

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Individual \$7.50 Family \$10 Senior Citizen \$5

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

ZIP CODE _____ PHONE _____

CNI needs street representatives to communicate with the local neighborhoods and assist with the delivery of the newsletter.

YES! I would like to assist CNI by becoming a CNI representative for my street.

Please return this form with your check to:

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC.
C/O Bob Klemenc
██████████
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118

GET ON YOUR MARCHING SHOES

Coventry Neighbors will be in the **CLEVELAND HEIGHTS 75TH ANNIVERSARY PARADE**. We've made a great banner and it should be lots of fun. If you haven't been asked and you'd like to march, just show up **SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 1996 at 1:00 P.M.** in the Lutheran East school parking lot (across from Severance Center.) We'll be wearing our "cool" Coventry Neighbors tee-shirts. If you don't have one, try to wear black and white, or if you need one call us! Even though our organization is small, it would be nice to have a large turnout to celebrate our community.

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS ELECTIONS

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS elections are just around the corner. During the October 8, 1996 meeting we will accept nominations for President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and members of the board. If you feel you know someone who would serve our neighborhood well or if you think you're the right person, come to that meeting and get involved. At our November 12, 1996 meeting a vote will be taken to elect these officers for the coming year.

Coventry Village News

c/o Bruce Biddle, Editor

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Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

DON'T FORGET TO ORDER YOUR T-SHIRT!

- THE COOL T-SHIRT \$15.00
Specify: Black or Gray
- THE COMBO PACK:
T-SHIRT & MEMBERSHIP \$20.00

All memberships come with a subscription to The Coventry Village News.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip _____

Phone _____



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