



COVENTRY

VILLAGE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY VILLAGE NEIGHBORS INC.

March 1998

From the President's Pen

In the midst of the Coventry renaissance I see each day from my front window, the uncontrolled deterioration of its housing stock is evident from my back window. That sad degeneration has allowed pessimism to possess my thoughts of our neighborhood.

I usually use this column to contemplate and commiserate about some state of affair that has affected me. I try to tie these mind wanderings back to Coventry or Cleveland Heights as a way of stirring thoughts and insights. But not this month. Houses in Cleveland Heights are dying. My neighbors and I have lived with one such crumbling building. The "Beirut" style yard and unfinished attempts at repair are an unsightly wart on our life. After almost two years of fighting this problem I've grown weary and frustrated with Cleveland Heights' ability to stop the deterioration of our city. Unless the problem can be solved, we are bound to become the next East Cleveland.

We live in a city with high income tax and high real estate taxes balanced by exemplary community services, that is why we live here. We rightfully expect more. So why is this happening? From the conversations I've had, I believe the city is doing what it can. It appears that either the laws and ordinances which dictate this process or the courts, which police these issues, are inadequate. Housing officials try. The owner is summoned to appear in court time and again.

He, too poor to repair the crumbling house marches into court with lawyers and fights for the right to crap in my back yard. He always has a good excuse. His charming personality wins him judicial forgiveness. My neighbors and I suffer. The laws and court do not protect us. They do not balance the needs of both of us.

A few block away from my house a single person has held his neighborhood hostage for over twenty years. He owns

Continued on next page

MARCH MEETING

During the March meeting we will be discussing the Coventry Gardens project and what we can do to fight the deteriorating properties in our neighborhood. Please join us at 7:45 PM in the meeting room at the Coventry Branch of the CH-UH Library. We look forward to seeing you.



IS THERE A HOUSE ON YOUR BLOCK THAT NEEDS HELP?????

A house in my block is a disgrace to the city:

Please help me help my neighborhood.

Your name (optional)

Mail to:

Jeff Dross, President
Coventry Neighbors

Cleveland, Heights, OH 44118

Continued from first page

three houses on the street. Each an offense to his community. The city has tried, but he is a smart, resourceful man who can only mean to hurt his neighbors. His continual court appearances prove that the justice system is not protecting the innocent, just processing the offenders. If he is charged a fine, he simply pays. The money is not the object. This offender treats it like a game. Obviously, you can not sentence an ordinance offender to death, but there must be a better way.

I would like Coventry Neighbors to become more involved in watching out for the eyesores in our neighborhood. I believe if we collectively approach the city with complaints about residences, it may be more affective than an individual phone call made in a heated moment. It may also be beneficial to try and influence court decisions organizationally, rather than individually. I don't really know what can be done, but I believe we must try something.

If you have a crumbling house in your neighborhood, let us know. If you've called and complained about a neighbor's "shack", please tell us. If you think collective litigation will protect our investments, we want to know that as well. I want to find out what kind of impact we can have. I'd like to learn what good could be done.

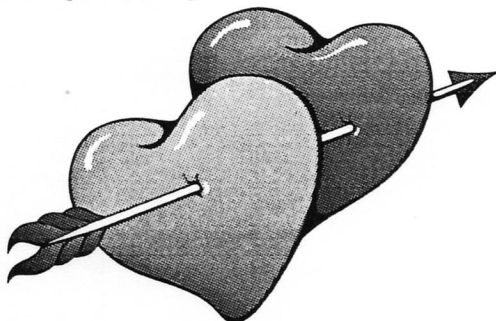
Please help and lend your support. Give us addresses. We'll see what can be done. Ultimately, we may not have a choice.

Jeffrey R. Dross
President, Coventry Neighbors



MY GRANDFATHER ALWAYS SAID

Love is a pleonastic sequel of oratorical sonority, circumscribed by an anthem of ideality and lost in the verbal profundity.



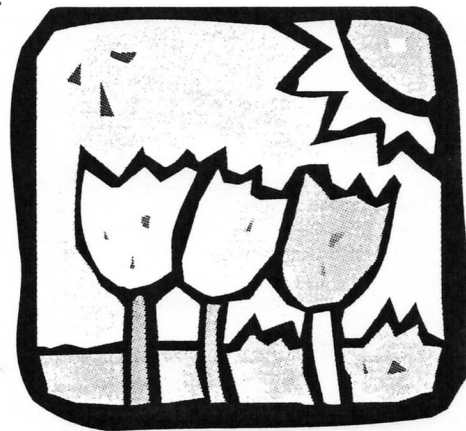
**THE HOLE IS GOING,
THE GARDENS ARE COMING**

Work on the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District "hole" at the corner of Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard is nearing completion. Construction was supposed to extend into 1999 but the contractor is almost finished. With the mud, noise and commotion on its way out, the opportunity to create "a nice place" in its place is now possible.

For the benefit of some of you, two years ago Coventry Neighbors and Coventry P.E.A.C.E. were working together to turn the rundown corner of this intersection into a more usable, comfortable "nice place." We were about to work out the method for funding, implementation and maintenance when the sewer district announced their intentions. We obviously suspended the project until the sewer work was complete. We thought we had three years to plan, instead now we have three months to try and co-ordinate and complete our desires.

Jeff Dross and Elsa Johnson of Coventry Neighbors have met with Paul Lauritzen and Andy Sinclair of Coventry P.E.A.C.E. and Tommy Fello President of the Coventry Village Special Investment District to start the process. We've notified all the affected parties and we hope this will lead to the start of a successful project.

If we want to take advantage of the closing of the sewer hole we must work quickly. We must also work cheaply. This project will take a considerable amount of money, time and commitment. We need help. Even if you've never been involve with Coventry Neighbors before, please stop in a one of our meeting or call. This property reconditioning will make an amazing impact on our community and you owe it to yourself to help. You won't be sorry.



SUBURBAN SPRAWL IS AT YOUR EXPENSE

At the February meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Lee Batdorff of the Ohio Sierra Club Suburban Sprawl Education Project presented a history and explanation of how the inner circle suburbs came to be faced with the situation in which they now find themselves. He also shows how rural areas are being turned into urban oasis with the help of your tax money, money that could be spent to benefit your life and surroundings.

This is a valuable presentation that clearly points out the frailties of our governmental systems. Mr. Batdorff will be giving this talk around town during the next few months. Look for it and attend. It will be worth your time and it may save us all tax money.



DON'T FORGET TO ORDER YOUR T-SHIRT!

- THE *BNNK* T-SHIRT \$15.00
- THE COMBO PACK: T-SHIRT & MEMBERSHIP \$20.00

Specify: Black or Gray

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip _____

Phone _____



MAIL TO : BOB KLEMENC
c/o COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, [REDACTED]
CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO 44118

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I write in response to the concerns raised in the last newsletter. I really want Coventry Neighbors to work, but I find getting involved a bit frustrating. The small announcement of meeting dates in the newsletter is easy to overlook. I went to a couple of meetings where I received a phone call with a warm invitation to participate, but it would help to have the upcoming meeting dates with topics right on the first page. When I've participated, the agenda is less than clear. I remember a delightful meeting where the new building was unveiled with stimulating discussion and presentation. Jeff Dross was disappointed at the turnout for candidate's night, but I received my announcement of that important meeting that very morning! I had a free night so I was able to participate, but it was obvious that announcements did not go out far enough ahead of time to get the response that the meeting deserved.

We moved to Cadwell in 1980. In those days the Coventry Village News caught us up to date on everything going on in the neighborhood. It was small town activism at its best. Over the past few years I don't get much news from the newsletter. This includes a president's column that focuses on personal reflections rather than on how to engage the concerns around Coventry. Though I hate to criticize the work you are doing, I want to be helpful in giving feedback. I think if the newsletter focused on one aspect of Coventry life and the issues that need to be addressed, it would draw people to meetings that were geared to the same issues discussed in the newsletter. "I want to learn more about housing stock in this area. I think I'll go to the meeting and may even get involved." That's the kind of thinking that I'd want to encourage.

Sincerely
Joseph P. Russell

JUST A REMINDER

Margery Ross, the recycling coordinator for Cleveland Heights would like you to know that newspapers will no longer be picked up for recycling if placed in plastic bags. Newspapers intended for recycling must be placed in paper bags or tied.

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 Boulevard. & Coventry Road.

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

Editorial Board: Jeff Dross, Elsa Johnson, Bob Klemenc

How to reach us: You may contact us by mail at:

Coventry Neighbors Inc.	or	Coventry Village News
c/o Jeff Dross, President		c/o Bruce Biddle, Editor
[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]
Cleveland Hts., Ohio 44118		Cleveland Hts., OH 44118

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
[REDACTED]
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118

COVENTRY Village News

c/o Bruce Biddle, Editor

[REDACTED]
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118