



COVENTRY

VILLAGE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY VILLAGE NEIGHBORS INC.

May 1999

From the President's Den

Shortly after graduating from nursing school, my wife decided she wanted to move to the Cleveland area to practice in her chosen profession. She decided to work at Sunny Acres Hospital (*now Metro Health Skilled Nursing Center*) in Warrensville Township (*now Highland Hills*). There were many reasons for the choice, a country setting close to shopping and amenities located on a bus route, but most importantly, the ability to recoup from the costs incurred by a college education by taking advantage of the subsidized housing and board they provided. During her time in Warrensville Township, Michele developed into a whole person. She purchased her first car, moved into her own townhouse, developed friendships that continue today and even met her future husband (me) through our mutual friend. When we first married, I moved into her Sunny Acres townhouse that rested in the shadows of the abandoned Highland View Hospital. It was a wonderful place for her to start a life and a great place for us to begin our life together. The paradise of memory is now literally crumbling each time we pass the area. The Figg headquarters project is tearing down the development she called home. The country place where her maturity blossomed is slowly becoming the parking lot and foundation of the next Rockside Road/Chagrin Boulevard office park. Each time we drive through the area a small piece of her history is removed and she asks, "Why do they need this land? Isn't there enough downtown? Why destroy such a pleasant area?" Unfortunately I don't have many answers for her. People with a much better education don't have good ones either.

In a world of people that are frightened by people different than themselves, suburban office complexes are becoming the favorite locale for non-pervasive corporations. If your

MAY 11TH MEETING AGENDA

- The Coventry Gardens Project
- Incorporation of the North Coventry Landlords Association into Coventry Neighbors
- Regular City Reports

office is located "downtown" your employees and customers might need to interact with all sorts of people. They might need to take public transportation, they might have to walk down crowded sidewalks, they might need to experience a full spectrum of humanity. Offices in the burbs insulate us from the reality of the human condition. We no longer need to experience that which we don't understand. That is why it is so refreshing to see the vitality left in Coventry. That is why it is so important to understand the delicate balance that exists with the residents of Cleveland Heights.

Our backyard neighbors moved recently. My wife marveled at the fact that the house sold so quickly. Especially in light of the fact that the house was situated next door to one that has been the root of our Cleveland Heights contention "Why would anyone buy that house, next to that dump?" I told her, I felt people buy the house because of the house; the neighbors are of tertiary importance. The feel, the proximity to what you do, the look of the building all amount to more than your neighbor's decoration ability. Discontent with neighbors comes after the excitement of the new experience wears off.

When I arrived home, late one night and noticed huge bags of waste in their backyard, I was elated. Obviously, someone interested enough to tear away a good portion

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of the inside of the house will not put-up with sloppy neighbors for very long. Another ally in our fight against a neighbor that doesn't take home ownership seriously.

Michel has grown tired with Coventry and our house here in Cleveland Heights. The deteriorating neighbor building, the endless struggle of city officials to solve the problem, the much-heralded police force disappearing whenever we need them. The charm of a city that lives on the edge is fading in the memory of the country home she once inhabited during an innocent part of her history.

Michele is probably not alone. At least one couple that visits the Coventry Neighbors meetings is equally disturbed. They have battled endlessly with the city and their neighbors to live in a decent place. Their patience is growing as thin as Michele's. Good people like these are going to leave. The city, the community, the neighborhoods must realize that only so much nonsense will be tolerated. To keep people, giant steps must be taken and only baby steps are being considered.

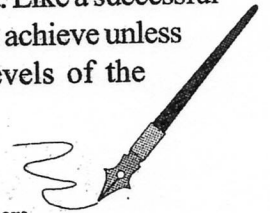
Luckily, the reputation of Cleveland Heights shines like a marquee on a Las Vegas hotel. The city is known as a place where acceptance is a way of life, diversity is celebrated and quirky is a badge of honor. New people will continue to flow in our direction. A faction of the population needs to feel at home with others that are "different". That is where my wife and I differ. I require an environment where others might be as peculiar as me. Michele does not need that. She is here because of me. She wants a city with responsive police, neat streets and quiet evenings. As is always the case in marriage, she is the one that concedes. She gives while I take; she bends because I need.

Each day I drive to work "against the traffic". At 7:00AM, commuters lineup across from me for almost my entire route to the suburban comfort zone the company I work for has selected. I live close to the center-city, but the company moved away six years ago. While I buzz to work in record time, the snail paced lemmings that look across the median barrier each morning have moved so far away that they now spend more time with John Lanigan than their own kids. People build houses far away to "get away" from the bustle. Instead of enjoying the neighbor they

thought lived too close to their inner-city home, they now spend time sitting ten feet away from a virtual neighbor, but are unable to communicate through the layers of steel.

If every neighborhood were perfect, if our neighbors all took care of their property the way we think they should, if employers didn't move, if we accepted our fellow humans at whatever level they exist, life would be so much simpler. Route 77 would be empty; the people driving that street would be earning a living at the building I visit every day. I would still be driving the short fifteen minutes downtown to my job. The guy behind me would have a neat and orderly home and yard that does not interfere with his neighbor. People wouldn't be frightened by someone unlike themselves and suburban office areas would never have found a need to be created. Highland View Hospital would still be in operation and a visit to Richmond Road would still be a pleasant memory for my wife. Too much to ask? Probably not, if everyone responds like a well-adjusted marriage. Someone gives one time, the opposite bend next. Like a successful marriage, this is very difficult to achieve unless there is commitment at all levels of the community.

Jeffrey R. Dross
President, Coventry Neighbors



OUR PARTNERS, NORTH COVENTRY LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION?

Last month I received a call from Paul Lammermeier, President of North Coventry Landlords Association. He explained to me that his organization has dwindling down to a small group of active participants. Like Coventry Neighbors, as times and situations improve, activity in the organization that helped provide the change suffers from lack of interest. He wondered if it was possible to combine the two organizations and work on the issues of our neighborhood collectively. I explained that our charter covers the North Coventry area and that we not only represent the landlords, but the homeowners and tenants. I did agree to bring this up at the next meeting for discussion. If you have an opinion about their inclusion, attend the May meeting. We want to know your thoughts.

HEIGHTS YOUTH CENTER REPORT

The Heights Youth Center is working at a fevered pace to prepare for the opening of their new day care school located in the education wing of Hope Lutheran Church. The classrooms have been painted, supplies have been ordered and received instructors have been hired. There is a high demand for day care across the state. The Youth Center recognized this deficiency and set about trying to remedy the situation. Luckily, they found a motivated landlord in the Hope Church Board. Their previous daycare tenant had recently departed. With the exception of a few upgrades to meet new codes, the building was ready to go. After a fiery Architectural Board of Review meeting, Hope Lutheran was given temporary approval (30 months) to construct and keep the code required play area. Residents in the area objected to its placement, but agreed to the temporary status. This way, if any problems occur during the next two and one-half years, they have the option of objecting at renewal time. The day care has facilities to care and school about forty youngsters up to the age of five years old.

Along with the task of starting this major endeavor, the staff is also seeking an expert to develop a program dealing with AIDS awareness. Especially targeting women of color. This is a new program and direction that has just gotten started. More information will be available soon.

Summer day care for young people who typically spend their days in school is also getting under way for this year. The available openings are quickly filling. This is a popular program that serves a capacity group of youngsters every summer season.

If you feel you could benefit from any of these programs or if you would like to help serve the community, call the Heights Youth Center at, 932-9785.

DON'T FORGET TO ORDER YOUR T-SHIRT!
MAIL \$15 TO : BOB KLEMENC
c/o COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, [REDACTED]
CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO 44118

PUBLIC ART IS A GOAL FOR COVENTRY

At the March meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Peggy Spath talked about what it would take to include public art in the redevelopment of the area at the intersection of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry Road.

Ms. Spath was instrumental in bringing art to the Canterbury School redevelopment project and has volunteered her time to the Coventry PEACE group to do the same. She explained the process that she incorporated in the past and felt it could work for us. Her multi-step approach starts with the possibilities of what public art can be. Examples of this type art are reviewed and digested. This is followed by a series of public forums where selected artists present their vision of public art. Scattered throughout the process is fund-raising designed to be both fun as well as profitable.

Coventry Neighbors intends on playing an active role, specifically as host of the various artist talks. We will also be actively involved in the landscape design. Laura Dempsey, Elsa Johnson and Sandy Jaffe have volunteered to represent Coventry Neighbors in this process. If this is a project that peaks your interest, let us know. We'd love to have your help.

WELCOME CAFÉ 56

Café 56, a restaurant that offers 56 different varieties of salads, along with great sandwiches and soup, is about to open on Coventry. For those of you that miss the recently departed "Wrap n Roll," this should take their place rather nicely. If anyone has been at their other locations in Eastgate and downtown, you know that we are in for a treat.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES?

Check your mailing address label. Your membership expiration date appears on the label next to your name. We have a lot of important work to do this year. We need your continued commitment and you can only benefit from the information provided in this newsletter. It's a win-win situation. If you're not a member, why not consider signing up with your support. We appreciate it!

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.

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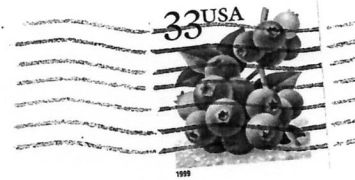
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CNI needs street representatives to communicate with the local neighborhoods and assist with the delivery of the newsletter.

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



Michele J. Ladouceur Expires: 9/8/1999

Jeffrey R. Dross
[REDACTED]

Cleveland Heights, OH 44118