



# COVENTRY

## VILLAGE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY VILLAGE NEIGHBORS INC.

September 1999

### *From the President's Den*

Since getting connected to the Internet and playing around with the different features in this exciting new "toy", I have found one thing that has especially intrigued me, Opinion Postings. Whether it is political, movies, music or food, many sites ask, "Would you like to post your opinion?" As you may be aware, I have lots of opinions. "Sure, I'll tell you what I think!"

My journey to Internet opinions came somewhat innocently. Michele and I were eating at our new favorite spot, Harry Corvair's (downtown at East 9<sup>th</sup> and Bolivar) and the waiter asked us if we had read the reviews of the restaurant at [www.cleveland.com](http://www.cleveland.com). We hadn't. Our connection was only a few weeks old. We didn't even know there was such a thing. After returning home from another great meal, we looked at the list of glowing reviews written by others that were as taken by this restaurant as we. We didn't want to be left out. We added our opinion to the list.

The itch started. A friend sent me a link to a movie site. Reviews were requested and I obliged. Likewise, for a music site he sent. Before we took our last trip to New Orleans, we did some research on the Internet. We found a site mastered by a longtime food critic in the city, complete with his top 100 favorite restaurants. Because we'd eaten at about 20% of them, we immediately had a bit of respect for his opinions. When we ran into trouble at one of the best places in the city, we asked for his advice. He provided sound direction. We have been reading and contributing to the chat since then. Politics? Lots of talk forums exist. Many have a few lines of opinions stuffed into them. A food forum also located at the "cleveland.com" site provides an avenue for my thoughts on the local food scene. Regardless of the subject, there is some place to plant an idea. Fertilization or exhumation is in reasonable supply from others like me. Sometime in the same posting commentary.

I started thinking about commentary and opinions after the last issue of this newsletter was published. The article for the July issue was written as a clarification of the May

### OCTOBER CANDIDATES NIGHT

During the last municipal elections, Coventry Neighbors held a Candidates Night for the community. All of the candidates attended and most of the guests agreed that it was a valuable tool in helping them make an electoral decision. This year, a candidate's night will be held on **Tuesday October 12, 1999**. This is the normal time for the Coventry Neighbors meeting, but we intend on starting at 7:00 PM to insure that all your questions are answered and that a proper forum can be conducted. More information will follow, but please mark your calendars now to reserve the date. Tell your neighbors and friends. It may be the most important two hours we spend this year.

feature. From the comments I received after each was published, most people that read them agreed with me, but that same group was also surprised by their frankness. I guess I became curious why someone would have the same opinion, but felt uncomfortable expressing it. Opinions make your personality complete. They define your life and your being. My name is proudly featured below each of the commentaries I authored. While others use strange illusive monikers, I simply sign mine "Jeff". It is only I. My opinions are proudly mine. If I didn't intend to defend them, I wouldn't print them here or post them on the various websites.

Either due to converging thoughts or reluctance to express an opinion that is knowingly against the grain. We are living in a time where alternate opinions are becoming extremely rare. It has led to the homogenization of our culture. Democrats sound like Republicans, Conservatives sound like liberals and Eastsiders sound like Westsiders.

Cleveland radio is a perfect example. Earlier this summer, WENZ 107.9 FM home of alternative, contemporary music was sold to a consortium that plays primarily hip-hop music. This means that no commercial station in the area is playing new music. With the exception of classical mu-

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sic at WCLV and washed out jazz at WNWV, every other station is playing the same format. Classic hits of the 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's. This can be interpreted to read the same 75 records. Pick a station, with the exception of the call letters and the level of inspidness in the DJs, you can't tell the difference. People's opinions on music have metamorphosed into this narrow slice of music. The extreme and the fringe are ignored. As the years pass, the slice becomes less and less narrow.

Music is just one of many areas where limited opinions are changing what we are exposed to. Movies are becoming more formula driven. Television tries, but can't find an audience for shows that attempt something different. It was recently reported that with the closing of the restaurant, Corks on the westside, there were only two independently run dining rooms now on that side of the river. All the others have ties to sister establishments on the eastside or were corporate chains. Little by little, the consolidation of opinions has ignored alternate thoughts and has provided a, more boring world for all of us.

The few listeners with alternate sensibilities, need to seek out the afore mentioned classical music, lite jazz or the non-profit college stations to the left of 92.0 FM. People looking for alternate cinematic fare need to pay attention to the offerings at the Cedar-Lee or the Centrum. Finding quality television takes hard work. With just a little experimentation, you might find some enjoyment. Westsiders and food. Well, since The Garland moved East and Players was taken over by a chain many years ago, that has always been an oxymoronic statement. Go East gourmand, go east.

In recent articles I talked about the city's ability to survive in the coming, ultra competitive housing market. I also discussed some issues that trouble me about our "award winning" police department. Most of the remaining commentaries have been reserved for discussions on housing police inequities. I have never read Dick Feagler's point of view on these issues. Judd or Tim or Ted (or Rommona or Denise) never talks about these things. These are opinions that do not command the ear of the majority. They are not top-40, box office. They are non-the less real.

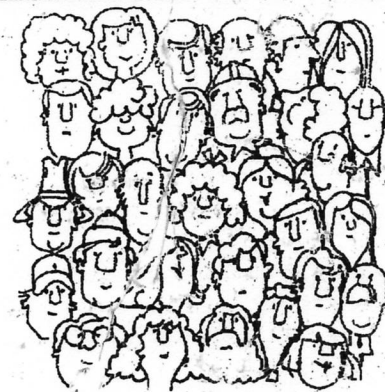
The funny thing about minority opinions is that they may grow in popularity, when the me-too crowd least expects it. Burt Reynolds went from a Cosmo centerfold to the longest-running box office champion in the history of film to a regional theatre director to an Emmy Award winning actor to an Oscar nominee. Opinions of his value as a performer have bounced like a Ping-Pong ball. Did Helen Gurley Brown have the right opinion when she decided to use him as her first centerfold? Was the ticket-buying pub-

lic right when they (despite the critic alternate opinion) continued to pour into his movies? Were the visitors to the Florida playhouse he started right when they began attending his theatre productions. Were the critics right (and the audience NOW wrong) when he started to win awards by delivering solid performances to shrinking audiences and rave reviews? Probably, everyone have valid point. If you divide the wheat from the chaff in all of these steps of his career you will find a kernel of reality. He was considered a sexy personality, not much else when he did the centerfold. His acting was poor, but his presence appealed to men and women on many levels. When he realized youth had passed, he sought the nurturing environment of the theatre to learn the craft he had to this point abused. Finally, he received the respect of peers even after the masses moved on to the latest trendsetter. (Perhaps you have a different read on his string of life, why not!)

Opinions about Burt Reynolds, like so many other things are a constantly changing and growing thing. They may be positioned to become the majority or they might remain in the minority. The idea may quickly become prophetic or appear stale. Each however, continues to serve a purpose. Despite the outward appearances, alternate thought still exists. It is featured on the Internet, in the brains of many people, too shy to come-out and in the few places mentioned above. And of course, it might find a place here from time to time.

*Jeffrey R. Dross*

*President, Coventry Neighbors*



### **CELEBRATE COVENTRY DAY**

On Sunday September 26<sup>th</sup>, 1999, the Coventry SID will hold Celebrate Coventry Day. The merchants on Coventry will have a sidewalk sale and a number of other exciting events going on throughout the day. After you've spent the day touring the homes and gardens featured as part of the Heights Heritage House Tour, come to Coventry Road and complete your day of fun in Cleveland Heights.



## WASHINGTON BOULEVARD SEWER CONSTRUCTION COMING

On Wednesday evening August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1999 officials from the city of Cleveland Heights held an informative meeting for the residents of Washington Boulevard and its adjoining streets. Carl Czaga, Director of public works explained that the existing sewage line is no longer effective. It can not handle the capacity of waste currently produced. The diminishing effectiveness has even resulted in some wet basements over the past few years. A new sewage line will be constructed.

The plan is to dig a trench down the south side of Washington Boulevard (even address numbers,) about six feet from the curb, starting at the library and moving east toward Lee Road. To minimize inconvenience to the residents, work will progress from manhole to manhole; finishing one section before starting the next. Residents who live on the south side will have some treelawn excavation in order to arrange connection to the new line. Those living on the north side will be connected in the trench; their existing line cut and re-routed to the new line. The construction firm will provide the residents with the appropriate notices of road closure, driveway access issues and temporary (2 to 3 hours) discontinuation of sanitation service during the work. No driveway aprons or curbs will be destroyed in the process. The existing line will be capped and closed.

The new line will range in size from 10" at the Lee Road end to 24" at the library. This constant increase in size insures proper flow. Those who live on Overlook Road will be happy to learn that the line under their street will also be connected to this line. Over the years, this has been a problematic area. Once it gets to the end of Washington it will be connected to the huge 10'-0" interceptor line that was recently built under Coventry Road.

Work will begin in November and take about 120 days. Landscape repairs and final hot asphalt road repair will be done as weather permits sometime in March or April. The job was originally scheduled for the fall, but an excessive amount of cross-connections (sanitary sewage lines mixed with storm sewer lines) in the area needed to be repaired first. Because the work can be safely done in the winter and because that is a historically slow time for contractors, the city was able to negotiate a cost far lower than originally estimated, somewhere over \$100,000.

Council member, Bonnie Caplan, Chairman of the Public Works Committee of Council started the meeting. Based on questions and concerns from the audience she will be discussing traffic and parking issues with Chief of Police Martin Lentz. The meeting concluded with a number of the attending residents thanking the presenters for developing a plan that will have minimal effect on the residents.

## COVENTRY COMMUNITY ART SHOW

To fund the creation and construction of Public Art in the newly rehabilitated area at the corner of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry Road a Coventry Community Art Show will be held from November 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> at the Coventry Branch of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library. The non-juried show will be open to artists living in the Coventry School District. The theme will be "**Birds and Birdhouses**". The show will also include art by Coventry Elementary School students. Work by adult artists will be for sale, with 25% of the proceeds benefiting the Coventry PEACE Public Art Project. Debbie Apple Presser (371-4386) will be coordinating the art show.

The Kick-off will be held Friday from 7:30 to 9:00 PM. The exhibit will be available for viewing and sale on Saturday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM and on Sunday from 1:00 to 4:30 PM. Plan on stopping in to see (and purchase) the assortment of flying creatures and their homes.

Volunteers are needed to provide refreshments and music for the gala Friday night opening. Others are also needed to help with publicity; to hang and dismantle the show; to assist at the library for a 2-hr. shift the previous week during delivery of artwork; and to work a shift during the weekend. We are also looking for display stands for the show. If you can help, please call Peggy Spaeth at 932-5392 (email [spaethcoburn@juno.com](mailto:spaethcoburn@juno.com))

## COVENTRY GARDENS CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

Someone recently asked, "What has happened with the sewer that they have to dig it up again?" The answer is nothing. Instead of creating another ugly mess in our neighborhood, the Coventry PEACE garden has started to take shape. Thanks to a Community Action Block Grant, lighting will be added, garden beds will be created and assorted plantings will be added. The entire area will begin to take on a new and exciting look. This has always been the most neglected quadrant of the crossroads of our neighborhood. That will not be the case for long. An exciting area of flowers and art will soon emerge. Stay tuned. If you'd like to get involved with this project, call Jeff Dross at 321-0206.

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.

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c/o Jeff Dross, President c/o Bruce Biddle, Editor

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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

**[Redacted]**

**COVENTRY Village News**

c/o Bruce Biddle, Editor

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