



COVENTRY

VILLAGE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY VILLAGE NEIGHBORS INC.

July 2000

From the President's Den

Two months ago, after finishing the writing chores required creating this newsletter, I decided that a number of household chores needed to be done around the house. It was a HOT, HUMID Saturday. Exactly the kind of weather I thrive upon. I washed the car, weeded the gardens and cleaned the yard. My wife was laying in the sun on a chaise lounge and I couldn't help but join her. After a few hours, the uncompleted work got the better of me and I went into the garage to continue my work. While moving some things, I bent over, stood-up quickly and "blacked-out" momentarily. I immediately flashed back to my school years and a reoccurring problem I had at that time. During those episodes I experienced multiple blackouts and an accelerated heart rate, solved after a trial-and-error run, through a number of medications. It was back.

My wife, a surgical nurse was not around during my teens and she did not know what to make of my problem. She saw me sitting on the garage floor, ran inside for her stethoscope and listened to my heart. "You're going to the hospital!"

"Relax, this is exactly what happened to me twenty-five years ago." She didn't buy it and neither did I when I was later relaxing in my den and I experienced another "black-out." I finally agreed with her and we drove to the Cleveland Clinic. After a quick pulse check, they rushed me into an emergency suite, started an EKG, panicked, cardio-converted me and eventually admitted me into the hospital. Fifteen hours and lots of medication later, my heart spontaneously returned to a normal sinus rhythm. I remained in the hospital for two additional days while the staff worried about me and tried to prevent what they thought would be an eventual stroke. After returning home, I took the rest of the week off of work and rested. A month after my incident, the doctors told me I have a minor "electrical" malfunction in my heart. Nothing serious.

After a week off, I returned to work. Lots of concern and well wishing was expressed. Unfortunately, I also

learned that Louise White had passed away. As many of you know, I have been working 65-75 hours per weeks on a corporate software implementation project for almost eighteen months. During that time, I inadvertently lost track of a few things. One thing I never noticed was that during my now infrequent walks through the factory, Louise was not there.

Louise and I started at the company at the same time, twenty-six years ago. We couldn't have been of greater difference. I was a single, lower-middle class white kid from Maple Heights started my third job (not counting the paper route.) Louise was a mature, married black woman from Shaker Heights who had raised her children and was looking to supplement her family's income. I worked in the office as a drafter; she worked in the factory as an assembler. Under usual circumstances, we would have had very little in common. The realities however, are that Louise was a very engaging person. At her funeral service, her Pastor talked about her constant smile and the deep-felt Christian values Louise held, but never blatantly advertised. Her personality drew others to her. During my frequent visits to the factory to solve line issue, I enjoyed my time with Louise and her workstation mate Sandy (also black.) During the subsequent twenty-five years, we talked often. Work, family, goals and just about anything else. She may never have known, but she taught me much about the breathe of humankind and my understanding of others.

From my cloistered white upbringing, It was time to begin a journey to learn about all kinds of people.

Continued on page 2

REMEMBER!

Regardless of the outcome of the bi-monthly meeting vote, there will be no meeting held in August. This has traditionally been our month to rest and enjoy the summer sun. So, sit back and relax and prepare to come to the September 12th meeting and learn what the candidates for the Ohio House of Representatives are planning for our neighborhood.

Continued from page 1

I summarized that we are all planted on this planet with the same raw materiel and that our environment, our families, our friends, our experiences and ourselves create the humans we become. I then realized that the nunnery in which I had found myself was not allowing for MY growth as a human.

At that time, other people of African-American descent started to have an effect on me and began a personal transformation. Don, the silk-screen Foreman at my first job was a happily married, family man, not what a prejudice world told me to expect. Mr. Cheeks was a registered Architect and my instructor during a portion of my Architectural Engineering training. I was not told to expect a regarded Black professional to be my superior. These three people and a host of others forced me to relearn what my childhood had falsely presented as fact. In that educational process, Don and Louise and Mr. Cheeks may have also helped lead me to Cleveland Heights and Coventry. My good friend at the time was on a similar quest searching for answers. Together, we began to learn about the opportunities and benefits of living in a more diverse community. Before leaving the area, he moved to Cleveland Heights. I followed a few years later.

In Maple Heights, I was a minority of-sorts. I wasn't Catholic. If I were a typical Pollack I could have easily fit in, but my Polish father abandoned his (weak) Catholic faith and acquiesced to my German-Polish mother's stronger Lutheran roots. (Her Polish mother did the same thing and my father and his mother-in-law shared an uncommon, understanding and close bond.) Because of my parents' mixed nationality and religious backgrounds, I turned into a unique oddity, a Polish-Lutheran. Ask around; see how many you can find. I wonder if Martin Luther knew what he was creating when he nailed his 95 theses to the castle church door in Wittenberg, Germany.

A community filled with white people, black people, people of Asian and Indian descent, Catholics, Jews, Buddhists and Polish Lutherans certainly make for a more interesting environment than the mostly monotone neighborhood where I was raised. It may be the single reason I stay in Cleveland Heights. It should be the reason you consider this city as home.

According to the World Health Organization, 56 million people died in the world over the past twelve months. Louise White was one of them, I wasn't. Louise spent her time on earth, unaware of the fact that she was a scholarly professor of life, people and humankind. As a diligent surviving student, it is now my responsibility to carry her message. In fact it is everyone's job to teach and learn life-lessons. Louise

White, Martin Luther and I have experienced and created different impacts on our world due to them.

"Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise; God help me; Amen." - Martin Luther at the 1521 Diet of Worms, when forced to recant his beliefs.

Jeffrey R. Dross
President, Coventry Neighbors



COVENTRY NEIGHBORS MEETING CHANGES

A number of years ago, Bob Hoskins came to the recognition of the public starred in a movie about the British Underworld. In "The Long Good Friday", he played the de-facto leader of all the various unsavory elements in the London area. The movie told the story of an attempt to undermine Hoskins' authority in an effort to grab hold of his power. Without any other way to deal with this unseen force, he gathered up all his collaborators and enemies and hung each one up side down on a meat hook in a meat locker. Hoskins walked into the cooler and addressed his co-conspirators. "For fifteen years, we've had peace and have prospered together. And now this!"

I don't suspect that the best way to understand why things change would be to hang the members of our community from meat hooks in the back room of Zagarra's and poke them for an answer. Nonetheless, things have changed. This newsletter continues to be popular, but the value of our monthly meetings seems to be waning. They don't seem to provide the service they once did. Because of this obvious trend, at our next gathering, we are going to vote on making a change to bi-monthly meeting. As with the newsletter publication, meetings would be held in January, March, May, July, September and November. The hope is that less frequent meetings would be filled with more valuable information. What's more, if neighborhood problems or events should arise, monthly meeting could always be reinstated. Those that attend each month, think this is the way to go. If you disagree, come to the next meeting on Tuesday July 11, 2000 at 7:45PM in the meeting room at the Coventry branch library. Even if you agree, stop-in, we'd love to see you! After all, it is more neighborly than hanging up side down in a meat cooler!

**UPDATE FROM THE
COVENTRY PEACE PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE**

The Coventry PEACE Public Art Committee is currently raising funds to commission Gambier, Ohio, artist Barry Gunderson to construct and install "Coventry Arch" as an entryway to Coventry Commons. The abstract figurative piece is proposed to arch over the walk from two bases immediately behind the concrete landscaping walls recently installed by the city at the corner of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry Road.

The Committee, which has been working on the project since January 1999, has members from Coventry Neighbors, Inc., Coventry PEACE, Inc., Coventry PTA, Coventry Village Special Improvement District, Inc., Coventry Village Branch Library, as well as at large members.

The budget of \$33,000 includes an artist residency at Coventry Elementary School to ensure student involvement and investment. The teachers initiated integrating arts into the curriculum last year, and art teacher Joan Levin has already brainstormed with Gunderson about yearlong projects which will include classroom teachers as well as music and gym teachers.

About one third of the budget has been raised from the generosity of the Cleveland Foundation, PTA, and PEACE. Requests are currently pending with the Ohio Arts Council and other organizations. Fundraising will continue through the year with installation in May 2001.

Upcoming events include a "Wacky Wednesday" evening in August for the community sponsored by PEACE at Coventry Commons and another Birdhouse Art Show (or some other kind of art show) in November.

Mr. Gunderson has proposed a Road Trip to the Ohio State Fairgrounds and his home in Gambier, Ohio, to see his sculpture up close. He will be contacting us soon with possible weekend dates. If you would like to come along for this day (or you could make it a weekend) trip, or if you would like to be involved in the Committee and its activities in any way, please call or email Peggy Spaeth at 932-5392

spaethcoburn@stratos.net

HAVE YOU NOTICED?

Construction on Chipotle's has begun. The Mexican "fast-food" restaurant that will occupy the place formerly used by the Royal Dragon Chinese restaurant is moving toward completion. Unconfirmed reports suggest they will be open in August. Those that have not yet tried the food at other Chipotle's around town are in for a treat. This place takes "fast-food" and raises it to a new level. While it has some connection to the MacDonald's corporation, it is miles from the grease and grizzle made

PEACE "GARDEN PARTIES" SCHEDULED

Coventry People Enhancing A Child's Environment (a.k.a. PEACE) has scheduled a series of Garden Parties. It's an opportunity to socialize over the summer and at the same time maintain the proliferating gardens on the Coventry school grounds. If you have a favorite garden implement, bring it along. Gloves and hand tools for those who aren't attached or very particular will be available.

Dates for the remaining Garden Parties are as follows:

Saturday,	July 8	9	am
Tuesday,	July 18	7	pm
Saturday,	July 29	9	am
Tuesday,	Aug. 8	7	pm
Saturday,	Aug. 19	9	am
Tuesday,	Aug. 29	7	pm

People usually work 2 hours, or as much time they can spare. Every pair of hands, no matter how little time, helps.

AND, if you've got lots of reasons why you can't be there on any of these six dates, there is also the option of 'adopting' a single bed and being responsible for keeping it weeded and watered whenever they can.

For additional information you can call (or e-mail) Mark Chupp at 321-8918 marksharon@juno.com or (Diane Mogren at 795-0089 dmogren@zdnetwork.com

OHIO HOUSE CANDIDATES ARE INVITED

As mentioned in previous newsletters, candidates for the open seat in the Ohio House of Representatives have been invited to speak and meet the Coventry neighbors. As of the writing of this article, Independent, Alan Rapaport has agreed to come to the September 12, 2000 meeting. Democratic hopeful, Claudette Woodard and Republican candidate Theodore Guerry have been sent invitations, but have not yet accepted. Our hope is that they will find time in their busy campaign schedule to spend a few hours with us during that meeting.

Remember, this meeting will start at 7:30PM to allow each candidate adequate time to express their opinions and desires for our community.

famous by the king of burgers. Fresh vegetables, WONDERFUL lime-seasoned rice and well-prepared meats make this a unique quick meal.

It appears that the city has given approval for the transformation of the Centrum Theatre into a second-run movie theater that serves snack foods like pizza and burgers along with typical bar drinks. While it will never be a reincarnation of the New Mayfield Repertoire Theatre, the Cinema Grille may turn into an interesting addition to the neighborhood.

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

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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:

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