

The EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association

It Was A Very Good Year

January, whether we like it or not, usually finds us making plans or resolutions, for the year ahead, as well as looking back over the year still warm, wondering what we've done, if anything, how well we've done it, or why not. We, the editors of the Evergreen News who a year ago announced grandly we would serve the community in the spirit of the Vollintine/Evergreen Community Action Association (VECAA), believe we owe you a review of some of the things we have done, or attempted to do in order to live up to our commitment. We would also like to tell you about some of the changes we are contemplating for the year ahead.

For those of you who did not read or even receive the first issue of the Evergreen News last January, let us quickly review what VECAA is, stands for, and how this paper got started. The Vollintine/Evergreen Community Action Association started about a year and half ago as a loosely structured monthly get-together of a handful of men and women who were trying to halt the hasty departure of many long-time neighbors because black families were moving into some of the streets in the northern half of the community. When upon decentralization of the school system with half of our high school children being assigned to black Northside High School these departures threatened to become a panicky mass exodus, VECAA members decided more effective measures had to be taken. One of these measures was the creation of a "newsletter" with which they hoped they would stand a better chance of persuading some of the residents not to leave, or at least not to panic, and, instead, to accept a black neighbor as just another neighbor. And almost overnight -- once the editors had been appointed -- the Evergreen News came into being. 3,000 copies were printed, defining the "Vollintine/Evergreen Community", pointing out the advantages of living in this neighborhood, and informing the residents about VECAA and its purpose and objectives. This purpose was "to cooperatively maintain and enhance a healthy, bi-racial community", and the objectives were "to foster a community that will include excellent schools, parks, shopping facilities, adequate and effective city services, and to provide for improved communication among residents."

Following these statements, the editors went on to say they would serve the community in this spirit, provide news about events and activities, write features on residents, churches, and schools, help promote business (and subsidize the cost of producing the paper) by printing ads, and listen to suggestions and consider literary contributions from anyone who cared to submit them.

The paper, being amateur, at first had to feel its way but gradually took firmer steps and soon managed to do most of the communicating it set out to. The "spirit" in which it set out to do its communicating, on the other hand, is another story. Although the editors made an effort not to be spokesmen for VECAA but to publish a



THE BURROW LIBRARY
Southwestern at Memphis
Memphis, Tennessee 38112

paper serving the entire community, discriminating against nobody and "attacking" those only who were a threat to the good health of the neighborhood, such as unscrupulous real estate agents, we soon managed to offend the sensibilities not only of blockbusters, but just about everybody, young and old, black and white, VECAA members not excluded. To be sure, no crosses were burned on lawns, few anonymous letters were acrimonious, and anonymous phone calls were more troubled than malicious; and the most serious threat, that of a lawsuit, became a positive factor, it prompted VECAA to become a corporation, extending legal protection to the Evergreen News as well.

In the end, it turned out 1971 was in fact a very good year. Considering that only a few months ago a reader of the Evergreen News in Tanzania observed we apparently lived "on the fringe of civilization", the V/E community has come a long way. It has settled down to the tranquil community it used to be, with one difference: two races now live, if not with one another, next to one another, and although many still harbor hostilities toward their neighbors, others have come to accept members of another race simply as humans who, as today even first graders know, are complex beings.

We hope it has also been recognized by perceptive residents that the editors of the Evergreen News are neither racists appealing to whites to stay put and thus keep blacks out, nor bleeding hearts proposing a community love-in. We believe we acknowledged the existence of

The next VECAA meeting will take place Monday, January 17, 8:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall, McLean Baptist Church. Program will be "Goals and Emphasis for '72" and will include a review of the new VECAA by-laws.



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GOOD YEAR continued

fear, prejudice, traditional hang-ups and what have you, but we tried to neither yield to them nor to condemn them. We believe we treated the Vollintine/Evergreen community as the unique neighborhood its location, tradition and diversity of its people have made it, but above all as a place where reason rules, and we shall continue to do so in the year ahead.

In 1972, we will try to have more social items; we would like to receive literary and artistic contributions, such as poems and cartoons, for instance; we will run a series of articles acquainting you better with our neighborhood businesses; there will be more business ads this year, to help us meet the expenses incurred by higher production costs, which are partially due to a bigger edition (5500) to meet an increase in the size of the V/E community which now includes several streets south of North Parkway.

On page 3 of this issue you will find a questionnaire. Please fill it out and send it in. The information it conveys to us will help us to give you the kind of neighborhood newspaper you want. Happy New Year!

Roman Aroma

by Rick Thomas

Late one night as I lay sleeping I was awakened from time to time by a mysterious odor. As it was quite faint I could not identify the exotic, spicy aroma. Every once in a while, perhaps due to shifting winds, I would receive a stronger whiff, almost strong enough to betray its origin. As I was about to dismiss the whole affair as a dream, the winds shifted again and brought thoughts of a land I visited many years ago. I almost had it! Was it pollo cacciatore? Was it veal parmigiana? No! Finally I realized--the subtle but at the same time forceful smell belonged to linguini with clam sauce.

But how could this be? Surely the VECAA neighborhood had its share of French chefs and savory dishes--but in the middle of the night? It was too much. I had to get up and go outside. It came from the north, and nothing would do until I tracked it down. I jumped into my car and, although it was quite cold, rolled the window down in order to keep in touch with my linguini. Relentlessly I pursued it, up McLean, turning on Crump, going down alleys to Evergreen, north on Evergreen across Jackson. I knew I was close now, but was somewhat at a loss as the trail took a left on Vollintine. Could there be linguini on Vollintine?

My question was answered as I missed the driveway, jumped the curb and bounced to a stop feet away from a shiny new storefront numbered 1580. Visions of red, white and green, fast talking and Sophia Loren flashed across my mind as I saw it: LITTLE ITALY! Yes! In the dark of night, without so much as a word, an Italian restaurant had crept into the Vollintine/Evergreen community.

Little Italy, which opened in October with seven employees, is run by Mrs. Eula Murray, who has thirteen years experience preparing Italian cuisine. Everything from antipasto to spumoni is available and the dinner entrees include such dishes as scallopini, lasagne and spaghetti with meat balls. The nicely furnished main room seats 60 and there is a party room to accommodate 25 more.

Mrs. Murray, who lives in Frayser, is quite familiar with the neighborhood and feels it has great poten-

AROMA continued

tial for an Italian restaurant. Even without the aid of advertising, business is already quite good, and should pick up as more and more residents--like myself--"discover" Little Italy. Hours are from 4 p.m. to 1 a.m., except Monday, when it is closed, and everything can be prepared to go.

Park Yet Alive

In a decision registered January 5, Judge Bailey Brown ruled that the U.S. Secretary of Transportation had failed to make a determination of the lack of alternatives to the I-40 route through Overton Park. The ruling means that Secretary Volpe of the Department of Transportation will have to reevaluate the alternate routes and the effects of the park route.

Some V/E neighborhood residents were concerned when plaintiffs in the case proposed a route along the L & N railroad as an alternate to the park route. According to Channel 5 News, this was ruled out by Judge Brown, and anti-expressway attorney Charles F. Newman stated that the L & N route had been selected from several possible routes for the purposes of argument, and that one of the best alternates is the northern circumferential.

Newman said, "Now that the court has made its decision and the matter is before Volpe, it is important that the opposition make itself known. Volpe may think the opposition is smaller and less diverse than it is." He added that objections to other parts of the expressway, such as those raised by the Mid-Memphis Improvement Association concerning effects of the Claybrook-to-McLean leg and the Avalon interchange, if voiced at this time, could influence the decision in favor of an alternate route.

Midtown Action

MID-MEMPHIS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION at City Council last month successfully opposed rezoning to commercial of the northeast corner of Poplar and Angelus. The MMIA also successfully opposed before the Board of Adjustment a petition to permit a gas station at the northwest corner of Poplar and Avalon. MMIA was represented by attorney Roane Waring, Jr. who lives at 253 North McLean. Paul Welsh, Frank Jordan and Thomas Marshall have spoken at these hearings in behalf of their neighbors.

Start Planning Ahead Now

Students in two of the V/E community schools (Cypress Jr. High and Northside High) have been participating in a vocational program called the SPAN Project. The educational goal of the project is to provide motivation and training which will prepare the student to realize the importance of obtaining employment, as well as provide him with the basic skills necessary to obtain a position in his field of interest.

Part-time jobs are needed for the students who are now participating in the SPAN Project. Anyone who needs a part-time employee should consider this source. Businessmen or householders with part-time work available should contact the SPAN Office at Northside High School (274-1351) or Miss Minetta Hill, Teacher Coordinator at Cypress Jr. High School (274-2456).



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Happenings

January

- 21 -----School holiday to enable teachers to complete their grades.
- 23 -----"Cantata Misericordium" by Benjamin Britten to be presented at Evergreen Presbyterian. The music program will be presented by the Southwestern Singers and Evergreen Chancel Choir at 4 p.m. Tony Garner will conduct the Cantata and the Memphis State Brass Choir will also perform.
- 23-26--Bible Study Week at McLean Baptist Church. The topic will be the Book of Job. The program lasts from 7 - 8:30 p.m. and is open to the public.
- 24-----The Environmental Action Council of Memphis will meet at Southwestern in the Frazier-Jelke Science Building. The speaker will be Lee Russell of Oak Ridge, the author of the Save the Rivers Act. EAC of Memphis meets on the fourth Monday of every month.
- 25-----Vollentine P.T.A. will meet at 7 p.m. The topic will be "The School and Community Involvement".
- 27-----XYZ Club (senior citizens) to meet at 11 a.m. at Springdale Methodist Church. There will be the regular covered-dish lunch and the program will consist of a film taken on a recent trip to Ecuador.
- 30-----Film to be shown at Open Door Bible Church at 6 p.m. The movie, entitled "Israel: Twentieth Century Miracle", traces the growth and development of this new nation.
- 30-----Concert series continues at Baron Hirsch Synagogue. Metropolitan Opera Company tenor John Alexander will perform at 8 p.m. Tickets can be purchased for \$5.00.

Gossip

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Turley, Jr. of 889 Maury who were married during the holidays. Mrs. Turley is the former Ellen Federline and Mr. Turley is United States attorney for the Western District of Tennessee.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Jerry LaRue who were married December 18. Mrs. LaRue is the former Melanie Scott, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J.O. Scott of 1921 Mignon.

Welcome to Ellen Carol Patterson who was born December 26 to Mr. and Mrs. Gene Patterson of 689 N. Belvedere.

Dr. N. Unsinn, associate professor at the State Research Center and one of the first (and last) contributors to the Evergreen News last year, informs us that he is training his Spitz, Merriwether, to retrieve Canada geese. He promises that, as soon as Merriwether has reached his potential as a goose hound, he once again will make an effort to donate some of his precious time to the Evergreen News.

Readers are asked to phone or write in items of social interest. Gossip editors are Mrs. Warren Lowry, 913 Dickinson, Memphis, Tennessee 38107, Telephone 278-5997 and Mrs. Cornelia Morris, 987 Barksdale, Memphis, Tennessee 38107, Telephone 274-1278.

I Thought You'd Never Ask

Help the Evergreen News publish the kind of neighborhood newspaper you want by expressing your opinion:

1. How well is your paper delivered?
Every month _____ Occasionally _____ Seldom _____

2. Do you enjoy reading the paper?
Very much _____ Some _____ Not much _____ Not at all _____

3. How do you like the cover pictures?
Very much _____ Some _____ Not much _____ Not at all _____

4. Would you like to see more graphics? Yes ___ No ___

5. How would you describe the quality of the newsletter?
Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

6.	Do you read it?	Would you like to see more?
Happenings	_____	_____
Sports	_____	_____
Meet the Neighbors	_____	_____
VECAA News	_____	_____
Feature stories	_____	_____
New neighbors	_____	_____
School news	_____	_____
Church news	_____	_____
Social news	_____	_____

7. Is there anything else you would like to see? _____

8. Have you become aware of any new businesses because of advertising in the newsletter? Yes ___ No ___

Optional: I would like to deliver the Evergreen News on my block.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Optional: In order to determine the location and characteristics of our readers, we would appreciate your supplying the following facts. This section is optional but your answers would let us know the opinions of the various groups in our neighborhood.

Name _____
Address _____
Age _____
Number of people in family _____
Number of years in neighborhood _____

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Meet The Neighbors

Urban Ecologist

by John Bruhwiler

Herman Lazarov, orthodox descendant of the tribe of Judah, rules the "junk yard" on North Seventh Street, the smaller of two family businesses. His yard is dominated by half a dozen cranes with grapple buckets and magnets plucking at mountains of jagged iron, much as prehistoric Brontosaurus might have plucked volcanic outcrops. However, Lazarov Brothers Tin Compress Co. Inc. is neither a junk yard nor a Mesozoic idyll. It is an automobile recycling plant with some sophisticated and powerful machinery that crushes the equivalent of 150 cars a day into bales half the size of a bale of hay. These, along with 300 bales a day from the plant on Thomas Street, are moved by rail and river to steel mills where they are melted down and more than likely turned into automobiles again.

Herman, though as Treasurer a big cog in the corporation, is only one of four Lazarov brothers. Jack, a former Bantam Weight boxing champion of the South, is Secretary; Bennie serves as Head Buyer and President; the original driving force in the enterprise and the man who had kept the family together is Sam, now 70, a former concert violinist and conductor with an orchestra of his own that counted among its musicians former Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas. Two of Herman's nephews, David Lazarov and Jerry Keslensky, represent the second generation in the business. Another executive and long-time associate is Carl Epstein. All of these men grew up in North Memphis and all but Bennie and son David still live in the V/E community, Herman at 1011 Monticello Drive, Jack and Sam at 899 University Street, Jerry Keslensky and Carl Epstein at 1629 and 1040 Michelle Circle.

The one serious rival for Mr. Lazarov and the family business is probably Baron Hirsch Synagogue, to which he is deeply devoted. Mr. Lazarov believes Bible study and faith in God, or the lack thereof, are at the root of young people's as well as the nation's troubles. This is one of the reasons he takes an active interest in Hebrew Academy and Yeshiva School and also supports LeMoyné Owen College.

This devotion to religion may explain Mr. Lazarov's two trips to Israel where, according to him, you are set back into the time of Jesus and even the Old Testament just a few miles from the superstructures of its modern cities. Of the holy places Mr. Lazarov visited he was perhaps most impressed by the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, the last remnant of Solomon's Temple. Unforgettable

ECOLOGIST continued

also was his meeting with famed Israelite leader Ben Gurion. The culmination of his latest trip, however, was the fourteen hour bus adventure through the Sinai desert and the long climb on foot to the peak of rugged 7200 foot Mount Sinai.

Herman Lazarov has an attractive wife, Reva, who runs a model home, and two pretty daughters, a medical technologist and a special education teacher who are both married to college professors. He loves Memphis and takes great pride in it. He believes it is truly on its way to becoming the city of good abode. And riding the environment of 450 junked automobiles a day is no small contribution toward that goal.

Dr. Dichtel!

Miss Margaret Dichtel, one of the leading figures in the organization of VECAA and currently chairman of its Steering Committee, was honored December 11 with the degree of Doctor of Letters conferred by her alma mater. Siena College, holding its last graduation ceremony before closing its doors, was in turn honored by Miss Dichtel's delivery of the commencement address.

Miss Dichtel, a self-described "neighborhood busybody" (see the August issue of this paper), was acclaimed a "Socratic gadfly" in a recitation of her accomplishments. She is a social worker with Family Service and lives at 893 Oakmont.

The Razor's Edge

If a traditional haircut with a little dab won't do you, get a razor cut from Jim Starnes, the new owner of the Southwestern Barbershop at 649 N. McLean. Mr. Starnes is a graduate of the Men's Hairstyling School and has five years of hairstyling experience in Parkway Village. Working with him are Tommy Edwards and Jess Dodson who had worked 15 years for the previous owner. Mr. Starnes says they naturally give traditional haircuts and also serve children. He takes a certain pride in running a "union shop" and plans to completely remodel his establishment.

Wanted


Unfurnished two- or three-bedroom home in Snowden School area. Young architect and family want in-town location available for June occupancy. Price range \$125-150. Call Gerald Dunn evenings at 452-0212.

STAFF: editors: john bruhwiler, george bradfute, rick thomas/copy: nancy lowe, golden shumaker/cover picture: lawrence anthony/typing: cathe barnes, judy johnson, sallee bruhwiler/business: tom hines/circulation: cornelia morris/printing: wayne bean, courtesy southwestern at memphis.

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