

# The EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association



## Old Folks At Home

by Rick Thomas

After the turn of the century, the United States changed from a rural to an urban society. This fact, coupled with advancements in medical science, has led to a modification in the age structure of the American people. The number of "elderly" has grown to unheard of proportions, the life span has increased, and more and more people are living past retirement age. This group has grown so that in 1970 there were two million people in the U.S. 65 years old and older. This accounted for nearly 10% of the population.

In traditional American society few problems existed for the elderly. A rural society with three or more generations living under the same roof provided physical care and psychological reward for its senior citizens. But as we became a country of city-dwellers and the nuclear family became the rule, the "golden years" for many senior citizens lost their glow. Because this group is rather unobtrusive, it was a long time before their plight was recognized and only in this decade was this group declared a target population for government-sponsored health and welfare programs.

For many the retirement years had become a period of isolation and loneliness. Often trapped by fixed incomes and changing neighborhoods the senior citizen's long-awaited golden years often became unbearable and there seemed to be no place for the elderly in modern industrial society.

### V/E Senior Citizens

By all rights this should be a problem for the Vollintine/Evergreen community. No other neighborhood in the city has as high a proportion of elderly as ours. Of the approximately 12,000 residents within VECAA boundaries about 3,000 people

are 65 years of age or older. If the age limit is dropped to 60 years, the cut-off point used by some senior citizens agencies, the number of "elderly" in our community would jump to over 5,000.

These thousands of VECAA senior citizens do not appear to suffer from the more extreme problems faced by most people of retirement age. In fact, one gets the impression from talking with them that life is quite pleasant and, although boredom admittedly exists to a certain degree, VECAA's are by and large not experiencing the feelings of loneliness and despair characteristic of this age group.

### Activities and Interests

The reasons for this are many. Some residents, although past retirement age, are still active in their businesses. Herman Lazarov of 1011 Monticello Drive wouldn't miss a day at Lazarov Brothers Tin Compress Company, and John Semos is always there to oversee operations at the Southwestern Grill. Also active in their businesses are Mary Hsley who manages Walter's Sundry on McLean and M.M. Stainbrook who runs DeLuxe Shoe Shop down the street from it. Sixty-six-year-old Mr. Stainbrook even walks from 724 Hawthorne to his shop and home again every day, rain or shine.

The fact that most are life-long residents and still have many friends within the community helps. Get togethers are frequent, and card playing is a popular past-time. Examples of those active in bridge and canasta circles are Mrs. Paul Kanodle of 971 Sheridan, Mrs. B.L. Kanable of 850 Beveledere and Miss Sarah Keefe of 856 No. Evergreen. Martha Brown is also a bridge player and, like many VECAA's, enjoys the concerts presented throughout the year. Many senior citizens are also bingo enthusiasts and are fortunate in having access to two tournaments weekly.

Many are active in more solitary activities. Among these are Mrs. Louis O'Hara of 1961 Snowden whose rock collection is well-known to all her neighbors and Mrs. W.S. Keesling of 1703 Tutwiler who regularly turns out work in ceramics. Keeping up life-long activities in music are Mrs. Marie Cooper and Ella Wells Awsumb. Mrs. Cooper provides violin music for her church, while 83-year-old Mrs. Awsumb, a graduate of the Chicago Conservatory of Music, spends hours listening to classical music.

Other popular activities are knitting, crocheting and needlepoint. Perhaps one of the most active in this field is Mrs. Fred Thomas of 865 No. Evergreen who now turns out about a dozen afghans a year. And for outdoor types there is always gardening. Those who perennially till the soil include Olive Jordan, Claire Dorman and Grace Schiebler.

Some with more unusual hobbies are Orin C. Core who since retirement has become a bicycle rebuilder, doing a brisk business out of his garage and Jimmy Wilder of 1916 Mignon who was actively building a replica of the Grotto of Lourdes in his backyard until illness limited his activity. Mary Wilkins Riley of 875 No. Evergreen, after teaching for decades, keeps busy by visiting with children and grandchildren of students she formerly taught.



You are invited to the VECAA meeting to be held Monday, October 16, at 8 p.m. in the Chapel of McLean Baptist Church. Candidates in the November election will appear and speak.

OLD FOLKS continued

And one person who has a hobby that's only unusual in the manner in which she pursues it is Mrs. Sam Goldstein of the Parkway House who walks several miles a day, every day. She strolls four miles daily with a neighbor and another mile every night with her husband.

New Service Offered

Although our elderly seem to be fairly well-off, their situation will be greatly improved when a new service becomes available on October 16. This is the date of the formal opening of the Josephine K. Lewis Center for Senior Citizens at 1188 No. Parkway. The opening ceremony will begin at 3 p. m. and mark the official start of the center's many activities. Because the establishment of a senior citizens center is such a rare occasion, many notable speakers will take part in the ceremonies. Among them will be Senator Howard Baker, Mayor Wyeth Chandler, former Mayor Henry Loeb, Hal Lewis, Bert Ferguson and Jane Hardaway representing Governor Dunn. A choral group from CBC will perform, and Mrs. David B. Martin and several other board members will be recognized for their efforts. At the reception that follows music will be provided by the Dave Wells Senior Citizens Band.

This new facility for senior citizens is the completely remodeled Anshei Sphard Synagogue and has been made possible by funds provided by the Tennessee Commission on Aging and individual contributors. Support in the form of maintenance will be provided by the Memphis Park Commission.

The Center is designed for those 60 years of age and older and will offer numerous activities enjoyed by this age group. Formal activities will include arts and crafts courses, such as painting and ceramics, and even weekly dances will be sponsored. In addition, it is hoped that one problem facing many elderly will be solved by the provision of hot meals daily, Monday through Friday, in the Center's dining room. The meals will be quite inexpensive, and it is hoped that eventually a food delivery program for the homebound can be instituted.

Besides the structured activities there will be a library, an auditorium and some card rooms for the use of elderly citizens. Other services will be employment counselors for those who seek work and a health center at least once a week staffed by a public health nurse and a doctor. Case work service will be provided in conjunction with Senior Citizens Services, another organization designed for this age group.

When it opens officially, there will be four full-time staff members operating the Center. Ed Pulik will be executive director, and Ann Griffin will be program director. Regular hours will be from 9 to 5, Monday through Friday, with special activities scheduled at night or on weekends. For further information call 272-7408.

# Cornelia Morris

We note with sadness and hope the death September 25 of MRS. CORNELIA MORRIS. The sadness comes because we miss her fervent interest in the Evergreen News and her dedicated attention to the matter of enlisting people to deliver over 5000 papers, block by block, house by house, each month. The hope comes from reflecting on the faith and courage that Cornelia Morris showed. She became interested in VECOA following her retirement from Family Service in 1970 and, in 1971, though suffering from emphysema, took on the responsibility for the circulation of the paper. She worked at this faithfully and competently in the face of increasing disability until this past July when she entered the hospital. Grateful for her work, we are even more grateful for her example.

## VECOA NEWS

MRS. ROSE BROWN of the Central Area Office and MR. JOE TAYLOR, principal at Snowden, were guests at the September 18 meeting of VECOA. They discussed the various changes in transfer rules which have taken place in the last six months. Two enrollment issues came to light, first, that some 60 - 70 white students have left Snowden this year, presumably for private schools (and an equivalent number were lost due to a boundary change with Bellevue). It was proposed that this group of students and their parents be interviewed to find out why they left and that they be encouraged to return.

The second issue raised was the large number of transfers to Snowden Junior High from Cypress. These transfers, approved by the Pupil Services Office, had the effect of "tilting" Snowden from majority-white to majority-black. While apparently there is no way to "tilt" back at this date, the implementation of Plan A now scheduled for January 22 will cause Cypress students now attending Snowden to return to the Cypress-Trezevant pairing.

Other enrollment items noted at the meeting were: Vollentine enrollment this year is 535 of which 452 are black and 83 are white. A second kindergarten class has been added at Vollentine, bringing the total enrollment to 48.

Several questions were raised about the safety provisions for students walking to Snowden. The policeman formerly assigned to the Tutwiler-McLean intersection has been moved to Parkway-McLean, leaving the children crossing at Tutwiler corner without protection. In addition, it was reported that Kiwanis sponsorship of the safety patrol was withdrawn this year and for this reason, plus Mr. Taylor's concern for safety of the patrol boys, the patrol was not organized this year.

At press time it was learned that a policewoman has been assigned to Tutwiler and McLean and that the PTA may consider sponsorship of the patrol. Mr. Robert Glisson, safety director for city schools, will be on a question-and-answer panel at the PTA meeting October 10.

If you see someone without a smile,  
give him one of yours.  
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YOUR PARENTS USED TO VOTE FOR

# And If Elected . . .

by Bernice Williams

In a series of telephone interviews, candidates for state office in the 28th, 89th, and 97th districts expressed their understanding of the issues most directly affecting the VECAA neighborhood. A summary of their comments follows:

Mr. Edward Bousson, Jr., running for the House in the 97th district, was unwilling to comment because he felt that he was not well enough acquainted with the neighborhood to make pertinent observations.

Mr. Doy L. Daniels, Democrat, running for the House in the 89th district, observed that he sees "a real need for" action in the area of providing mass transit facilities, not only for the V/E area, but for all of Shelby County: "we have a lot of opportunity" to bring about a solution to this crucial problem. Mr. Daniels observed that the concerns of the V/E area were those of Shelby County as a whole: there is a "crucial need in the area of race relations," especially in that "interim" in a changing neighborhood "when people are kind of suspicious of each other." Further, poverty conditions in the Klondike area have an effect on the "total environment", as do the related questions of housing and the space required for it. Mr. Daniels favors a state-supported kindergarten system and the "revamping" of the whole educational structure in the direction of ungraded schools, which he believes offer improved education for both the slower and the brighter child.

Mr. Chris T. Ellis, Republican, running for the State Senate in the 28th district, commended VECAA's efforts in achieving a stabilized neighborhood. He pointed out that, as a member of the Community Relations Committee, he voted in favor of the expressway through Overton Park as opposed to rerouting it through the V/E area because he felt that the neighborhood should not be sacrificed to the interstate system. He also urged anyone who knows of ways in which he can help to let him know.

State Senator Edgar H. Gillock, Democrat, running for re-election in the 28th district, felt that a primary problem here was busing; he noted that he was opposed on the grounds that "they might bus and break up the neighborhood." He also observed that such day-to-day matters as zoning, drainage ditch maintenance, street-cleaning, and grass-cutting on vacant lots were of concern to the community. On a larger scale, he felt, his "pet project", the development of the Wolf River as a recreational area, was of considerable importance, partly for reasons of conservation, and partly as an aid to improving race relations through sportsmanship and the out-of-doors.

Mr. Claud Haire, Jr., Republican, running for the House in the 89th district, has been campaigning actively in the area on a door-to-door basis. He said that he discovered that people here are distrustful of politicians on the basis of past performance; that they are distressed by the lack of governmental concern for the elderly; that busing, although it does not affect the el-

derly, is still a "Very, very inflationary, very emotional" issue: that people are incensed over the \$50,000 allocated for the investigation of police corruption; and that there is a good deal of bitterness over the apparently one-sided distribution of welfare in the area: of people having the same income, "one group is solicited, and another group is just ignored."

Dr. John D. Peeples, running for the State Senate in the 89th district, said that he believed the issue most directly affecting the V/E area is busing, to which he is opposed on both educational and financial grounds: he maintained that it is a "waste of money to haul people around all over town just to mix up the people they sit beside." The money could be better spent improving education for everyone.

As this article went to the typist, Mr. Bob Hawks, Democrat, the incumbent running for the House in the 97th district, had not returned the reporter's call, nor had Mr. James H. White, Democrat, running for the State Senate in the 89th district.

## Alterations

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## Art Lessons

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## Needed

Needed: Paid nursery attendant for Sunday morning church hour, Springdale United Methodist Church, 324-5812.

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TRICK OR TREAT — Get your Halloween candy and help a worthy cause by purchasing it from the Kidney Foundation. Individually-wrapped candies at \$1 per bag. Please contact Karen Haas at 725-0680.

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## Wanted

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**B I N G O**



## Meet The Neighbors

### For Your Dining Pleasure

by Rick Thomas

Nearly everyone is able to master the fundamentals of cooking and many become renowned for some special dish, but few have raised the art of cooking to the level that Mamie R. Gammon has. Over a period of years Mamie, who now lives at 791 Dickinson, has become one of the best-known chefs in Memphis and built up a following usually reserved for celebrities.

Mamie presently serves as the food service manager for the Wolf River Society, a luncheon club for Memphis professionals. Here she supervises the preparation of daily meals with a flare that makes "food service manager" a rather unbecoming title.

Unlike the traditional black cook Mamie does not specialize in Southern cooking or soul food. Her forte is gourmet cooking. Although she is well-versed in European cookery and can create authentic French, Italian or Kosher dishes, so much of her personal touch goes into each preparation that it transcends cultural boundaries. For example, where one chef would settle for potato soup Mamie's menu might call for an indescribable blend of potato, onion and spinach soups.

In addition to her regular job, Mamie operates a catering service with five employees. In fact, she is the only licensed black caterer in Memphis. Switching chef's hats she handles weddings, conventions, parties and almost any event that requires good food. One of her biggest assignments came last month when she managed the food service for 1800 Jaycees meeting here.

As a caterer Mamie's services are so sought after that she has to turn down many jobs. Although she sometimes caters three events in a day, one almost has to be an established customer or a good friend to be worked into this busy schedule. Amazingly enough, Mamie has built up this business with virtually no advertising. On top of all this, she still finds time to donate her services to various organizations.

Although a native Memphian, Mamie did a one-year stint at California State College at Hayward as a buffet chef. There she handled special events for the president serving, among others, the governor of California. She returned to Memphis to serve as a buffet chef at the Top of the Hundred Club before going to the Wolf River Society.

Mamie's philosophy of cooking calls for enthusiastic involvement in all phases of the art. Without formal training

herself, Mamie feels anyone can become a gourmet cook with a little guidance and a lot of kitchen-time. She finds fault with many popular cookbooks, pointing to their lack of background information on the dishes. Not only do they fail to explain the reasoning for the inclusion of various ingredients, but include recipes that vary widely from one source to another.

In order to rectify this situation Mamie has been writing her own cookbook for over a year. It will be more than a collection of her recipes, emphasizing the art of cooking and incorporating her kitchen philosophy. Other spare-time activities include church work at Mt. Moriah Baptist and reading. Mamie enjoys novels but also keeps up with her field by subscribing to *Gourmet* and reading the food sections of various popular magazines.

Mamie has two children who find it advantageous to have a chef for a mother. Her daughter Ruth has just taken a job with the Internal Revenue Service in Los Angeles while son Charles is staying around to follow in his mother's footsteps. He has served as food manager for McDonald's and Delmonco's Steak House.

Mamie Gammon is a pleasant change in a world of quick-service restaurants and pre-packaged foods and, if letters she has received from people like Albert Gore and George Grider are any indication, she has a large enough following to outlast any fried chicken or hamburger chain that can be built.

## Happenings

### OCTOBER

- 8 - 12-----Gospel Meeting at Jackson Avenue Church of Christ. Dewey Shaw of Kansas City will preach.
- 9-----Senator Howard Baker speaks at Evergreen Presbyterian Church men's dinner, 6 p.m. Phone 274-3740 for reservations.
- 10-----Snowden PTA, 7:30 p.m. Question-and-Answer panel.
- 11-----"Psychological Implications of ESP." Talk by William Walker at Main Library, 1 p.m.
- 13-----Rep. Dan Kuykendall, Mike Cody and others will appear at the American Association of University Women meeting at Brooks Gallery at 10:15 a.m.
- 14-----Saturday Seminar at Southwestern, "The Alienated" 9:30 to 3, fee \$6. Register in advance at 274-6606.
- 14-----Saturday School classes for young people begin at Memphis Academy of Arts.
- 18-----VECAA meeting at 8 p.m., McLean Baptist Church Chapel. Election candidates will speak.
- 24-----Vollentine PTA, 7:30 p.m. Live demonstrations of the new individualized reading program.
- 27-28-----Homecoming at Southwestern at Memphis.

### NOVEMBER

- 5-----Religious rock musical "Natural High" at Snowden School auditorium at 7:30 p.m. Presented by McLean Baptist Church youth choir, directed by Ken Brixey.

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