

The EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association

Homework

by George Bradfute and Karin Tynes

One amenity that the Vollintine/Evergreen community offers is the opportunity to purchase an old home and fix it up. And hundreds of families have done just that. This month the News features two homes that required major remodeling and that indicate just what a little hard work and imagination can accomplish. One of the homes, which the reader will quickly recognize, has been mentioned frequently in this paper.

About this time last year HERMAN and RAYE LAUE (pronounced Law-wee) were moving into their newly-acquired home at 1465 North Parkway. Their goal was to restore the sixty-year old structure to a condition something like livable for themselves and their four children.



The task would have been overwhelming to many of lesser determination. Several years ago the previous owner had given up salvaging the home and was planning to tear it down and build townhouses there. The building was in such bad shape Mr. Laue couldn't get a loan, and shortly thereafter his insurance policy on the home was cancelled for the same reason. "It scared you when you looked at it," the Laues said. Real estate experts in the neighborhood had even declared it "beyond help".

Beginning in January they went to work. Mr. Laue, whose business is painting and carpentry, took on the heavy jobs. Their son, JOE, a Memphis State student, steamed old wallpaper. Mrs. Laue, who works at Sears, with daughters LAURA and CONNIE, students at Central, and son TONY, a student at Snowden, helped with the painting.

The basic structure was sound and needed no work. But the roof had to be replaced together with rotten wood in the cornices. New aluminum screens were added. Inside, the floors were refinished. The walls and ceilings got a variety of treatments: new sheetrock, paneling, stippled plaster, or,

occasionally, just paint. The home's three upstairs bath rooms required minor plumbing repairs. The kitchen was completely remodeled with new cabinets, walls, ceiling and floor.

The work was done mostly by the Laues themselves with only occasional help from outside craftsmen. By May, the job was complete. A mortgage loan was available, and they could enjoy the fruits of their labor. "It might have cost \$25,000 to have all this work done. Doing most of the work ourselves, we spent only a third of that," Mr. Laue said.

The Laues like this neighborhood: their previous homes have been on Snowden and Avalon within a few blocks of their present location. In the successful completion of this project they have not only made a fine home for themselves, they have contributed greatly to their neighborhood and their work stands as an inspiration to everyone who takes on the challenge of home improvement.

The Galloway Mansion at 1822 Overton Park is finally getting the loving care and attention it deserves. F.L. BILLINGS, owner of the property for the last three years, has been forced to undertake the renovations himself. He and his family have moved into the historic home and will live there while the work is being done. This is a necessity. Mr. Billings says, because of the terrific amount of vandalism that takes place when no one is on the property. So much was being destroyed that if he had waited any longer to begin repairs there wouldn't have been anything left to repair.



The Billings started work the first of November, using about a dozen men a day and already there are tremendous changes. The ballroom on the top floor has been completely redone. The leaks in the roof have been fixed and new ceilings put in. The classroom partitions that had been put in are now gone and it is once more a large and lovely room painted pale blue and off-white. The curved double stair leading up to the ballroom is partially finished already.

Downstairs, the work on the beautiful, carved woodwork

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There will be no general meeting of the Vollintine/Evergreen Community Action Association in Dec. Watch the News for notice of the next meeting.

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and solid walnut panels really is splendid. Mr. Billings says the wood was first robbed with lemon oil and then finished with tung oil. This is a rather expensive treatment but is the very best and the results proved his point. The massive carved fireplace in the living room and its surrounding panels just glowed. The walls between the woodwork have been hung with a heavy upholstery-weight velvet with a geometric pattern in chocolate and cream that blends well with the dark wood.

In the foyer hangs a solid, machined brass chandelier that came out of Union Station. Mr. Billings also owns matching wall lamps that he is considering using in the foyer to replace the wooden sconces that are there now. These are lovely old pieces but vandals have stolen several of the bottom finials and these can't be replaced. He has a desk and another box full of brass and copper wall lamps that were to be repaired and refurbished. Mr. Billings has purchased two other chandeliers for the dining room and the music room. They were purchased at an auction and are antiques from Spain. Measuring about three feet across, they are formed in tiers of hundreds of crystal tear drops.

The Billings owned no antiques when they bought the house but have acquired some fine pieces since. Mr. Billings, who is in the demolition business, said that for years he had hauled many such pieces to the dump and just didn't let himself think about it now when he was buying antiques.

All of the work on the house will be finished by Christmas except for the kitchen, which won't be finished until Spring. Here, of course, is where the greatest amount of structural change will be made. When completed, the kitchen will resemble a Tudor-style kitchen with dark exposed beams. He has already taken out two doors to make a solid wall for a huge walnut cabinet, now in the breakfast room, that he plans to move into the kitchen. This is a handsome piece about nine feet long with beveled glass doors. With this piece, the beams and the old brick hearth, it should be the kind of kitchen any woman would love.

Although all of this is taking a great deal of money, it isn't costing anything near the six-figure estimates that many decorators gave to the prospective buyers to whom he had shown the house. After being told by so many people how much money it was going to cost, he thought he would show how it could be done, and done well, with the right know-how. He is very pragmatic about his reasons though and his intent is strictly to make it more salable. With the work he is doing, it would be the guess, and hope, of this writer that some family will buy it for their personal use. When asked if he had any inside information on the expressway, he only shrugged his shoulders and said, though he stood to make

more money if it didn't go through, he supposed it would. Mr. Billings also owns the surrounding lots that are for sale with townhouse zoning.

Finish Line

by Rick Thomas

The final tallies are now available for the October 9 general election and the November 6 run-off election. Although the turnout was somewhat lower than usual, V/E residents voted generally as expected. The predominantly white precincts (36-1, 36-2, and 36-3) tended to vote for the "conservative" candidate in most contests and the racially-mixed precincts (40-2 and 41-2) the "liberal."

General Election

In the general election the white precincts supported Wyceth Chandler with 55-70% of their vote although Otis Higgs received numerous white votes in precincts 36-1 and 36-2. Higgs received over two-thirds of the votes in the mixed areas. For county mayor, John Ford Canale received over 45% of the votes in the white precincts (compared to 33% citywide). Roy Nixon received over one-third and Jim White about 16%. The two mixed precincts generally split their vote between these three candidates and Teddy Withers, the lone black candidate.

As in years past, Ward 36 gave a majority of its votes to Bob James in the District 5 councilmanic race. About one-third (near the city average) went to Jack Gibson, while this candidate received 57% from precinct 40-2. Precinct 41-2 voted in the District 7 councilmanic race and awarded J.O. Patterson 73% of its votes.

In the Position 1 contest for a large councilman, over half the voters supported Pat Vander Schaaf with Glisson being a very distant second. The mixed precincts voted strongly for Rosecoe Dixon, the black candidate. Vander Schaaf was second in those areas. For Position 2 the vote was again split along racial lines with Tom Todd getting about two-thirds from the white precincts but only one-third from the mixed. The latter supported Dattel by a similar margin over Todd and Ken Thomas.

In the Position 3 race there was no clear choice. Precincts 36-2 and 36-3 split between Oscar Edmonds and Ed Williams, while 36-1 gave Williams a clear majority. The mixed precincts supported Edmonds by a slight margin with the rest of their vote split between Williams and McWilliams.

Pat Halloran held a clear majority throughout the neighborhood in the Position 4 contest. For Position 5 Andy Alisandratos also won easily, receiving nearly 75% of the vote.

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Joyner was a distant second with about 20%. The other at-large position was also no contest with Mike Cody receiving 60% of the vote in the white precincts and over 80% in the mixed.

In the contests for city judge (Division 3), Ward 36 split between the three candidates — Boyd, Churchill and Darden. The mixed precincts, however, overwhelmingly supported Churchill. McCartie won handily the Division 4 judgeship and Pierotti (Division 6) received 60% of the vote from the white precincts. Johnson, however, beat the latter by a fair margin in the mixed areas.

In the Division 7 judgeship race, Alissandratos held an edge throughout the V/E community, with Boupt placing second in the white precincts and Hackel in the mixed.

Frances Coe, a perennial neighborhood favorite, won easily over Doy Daniels in the Board of Education District 5 race. Barbara Sonnenburg received two-thirds of the vote in Ward 36 for School Board at-large Position 1 and White was second with about 20%. Sonnenburg had to settle for a split with Peters in the mixed precincts. James Blackburn was a solid leader throughout the community in the race for at-large

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Position 2. George Brown won by a fair margin in Precinct 41-2 for the School Board District 7 seat.

Run-Off Election

In the run-off election for city mayor, Chandler received about 80% of the votes in the white precincts and Higgs a similar proportion from the mixed.

The run-off for councilman saw Vander Schaaf win handily in the neighborhood in the Position 1 race. Williams was a favorite in Ward 36 for the Position 3 slot, while Edmonds took 70% of the vote in precincts 40-2 and 41-2.

For the Division 3 judgeship, Ward 36 again supported Boyd and the mixed precincts again supported Churchill. Similarly, Pierotti won big in the Division 6 run-off in the white precincts while Johnson took the mixed. In the Division 7 judge's race, Alissandratos was favored throughout the neighborhood.

Blackburn easily won a neighborhood majority in his bid for election to Position 2 on the Board of Education.

Although only 57% of the voters in Ward 36 and 49% in the mixed precincts turned out for the general election, this was better than the city average. The 61% Ward 36 turnout and the 55% from the mixed areas for the run-off were also slightly better than the city average.

The Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association (VECAA) is a non-profit neighborhood organization founded in 1970. Its boundaries are roughly Watkins, Cypress Creek, Trezevant and Overton Park Avenue. VECAA's initial goal was to enhance and maintain a stable biracial community with quality housing, services and facilities. It has been active in promoting stability, assisting in school desegregation, opposing commercial rezoning and in general promoting those activities that serve to create a viable mid-town community.

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The Second 40

by Kris Menard

The idea that life begins at 40 may seem like an unattainable dream to many people. But our new neighbor, The Reverend CHARLES SYKES, can tell you from experience that this is not an empty phrase.

At the age of 40 with a wife, five children, and an established business career, Father Sykes felt the call of the ministry. It was a call he obeyed by attending seminary school and on Oct. 15 it led him to become the new rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Episcopal.

The comfortable, easy manner Father Sykes quickly establishes with people could possibly be attributed to his unusual background. It reads something like a travel brochure.

Originally from Dixon, Illinois, Father Sykes received a degree in business administration from Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana. In 1951 he became a sales representative with Link Belt Corporation. In 1962 after working for several years in St. Louis, his company transferred him to Memphis. He and his wife, ROSEMARY, liked Memphis from the beginning and quickly became active members of Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal Church. The Rev. Sykes was president of the Crossmen's Club and director of the junior choir. Rosemary was active in the Mother's Club of the Day School at Grace-St. Luke's and three of her children were enrolled there. The Sykes family was becoming so involved with the Church, they moved from Whitehaven to the mid-

town area so they could be closer to its facilities. In 1966 Father Sykes was again transferred. This time he went to Louisville, Kentucky.

Two years later with the support of Rosemary, the family began sending Dad to the seminary in Lexington, Ky. It was not a job for an ordinary man to tackle—to work, go to school and be the father to five children. But when one meets Father Sykes, one senses the quiet determination and courage he possesses.

After seminary school, the Reverend Sykes became Vicar of two churches—St. Albans in Olney, Ill., and St. John's in Albion, Ill. It was here that the Screening Committee of Good Shepherd Church contacted him and asked him to return to Memphis as their rector.

There are several areas within the Church that are of particular interest to Father Sykes. With the help of NORMAN BARRETT (church organist and choir director) Father Sykes plans to strengthen the music program at Good Shepherd. He believes that music is a fundamental expression of spiritual ideas. As part of the advent Season, a Festival of Lessons and Carols will be presented on Dec. 21 at 4 p.m. and the public is welcome.

In the past the Church was a triumphant participant in the Episcopal Athletic League. Father Sykes hopes to increase participation in this area. His oldest son, GEORGE, who attended the University of Tennessee on a baseball scholarship, is currently the baseball coach at Messick High School and should lend support in this endeavor.

The Episcopal Young Churchmen is a group Father Sykes wants to strengthen at Good Shepherd. Interest in the future of young people naturally leads Father Sykes to comment on the ability of Good Shepherd to serve the students of Southwestern. Because of the location of the College, he feels the Church has an automatic responsibility to seek ways of being of service to the student body, as well as to the whole community.


Although Father Sykes has chosen for his family's home a ten-acre lot "way out east" his interest in the community is encouraging. The Search Committee of the Church of the Good Shepherd, it appears, has brought us all a fine new "neighbor."

Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association
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