

The EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine - Evergreen Community Action Association

Golden Jubilee



One of the "grand old men" of the neighborhood - and one who has contributed much to its character over the past quarter century-is being honored this month with a variety of celebrations. This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of Monsignor JOSEPH E. LEPPERT as a priest in the Catholic Church. His friends at Little Flower Catholic Church where he spent his last years as pastor - and across the city have made elaborate plans by which to honor him.

As one of his parishoners describes him, "Monsignor Leppert is one of the most influential citizens in the Memphis and Mid-South community. He is a man small of stature with a big heart of gold; soft spoken with deep concern for the poor; a kind countenance with a sincerity of purpose; interested in all, but a champion of youth; serene and dignified, but adamant in sacrificing for others. He has touched the lives of so many varied groups in this community that there are very few causes that have not felt his influence both within and without the realms of the Catholic Church. His good works occur and succeed through his quiet manner without fanfare or publicity, as long as the hungry are fed, the naked are clothed, the homeless are sheltered promptly and the children are encouraged to learn and have fun."

In all major crises occurring in this city early in the civil rights movement, the then "Father" Leppert was always there ready and willing to lend a hand in whatever way he could, quietly counseling, suggesting, speaking on radio or television. He was present at City Hall, court houses,

boards of education, churches, hospitals, in public parks, on streets and sidewalks, steps of public buildings--where--ever concerned groups gathered to voice their opinions about injustices heaped upon the less fortunate.

Ten or fifteen years ago when blacks did not by custom enter the front doors of whites' homes, Father Leppert was holding racially mixed discussion meetings in his home including refreshments for one and all. Such meetings laid the groundwork for many friendly and genuine relationships existing today which did not just spring up over night. More than 12 years ago Little Flower Church and School, under his leadership, was integrated without incident or fanfare. Today, this institution continues to be one of the best examples of such a parish and school in the City of Memphis.

Some of the many groups with which he has been directly or indirectly involved include Memphis Community Council on Human Relations, Catholic Human Relations Council of Memphis, Memphis Urban League, University (Tennessee) Interfaith Association, Ministerial Alliance, Cuban Refugee Group, Allateens (Teens with Alcoholic Parents), Board of St. Peter Home for Children, Legion of Mary, NAACP, Memphis Literacy Council.

The Evergreen News best remembers Monsignor Leppert for his part in the creation of the Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association. In 1969 and 1970 the problem of city-wide racial turnover was becoming more obvious and, at the neighborhood level, ministers who were community-conscious and fortunately there were several, became aware of declining memberships and shifting congregation composition. As these ministers looked at the community, they saw a frightening number of For Sale signs and, an atmosphere of apprehension developing into one of fear.

Little Flower had earlier been integrated but some other churches in the neighborhood thought this was not the path for them. Monsignor Leppert was instrumental in establishing an organization that would attempt to "maintain and enhance a stable bi-racial community." Monsignor was active in VECAA until his retirement in 1973.

Joseph Ellsworth Leppert, Jr. was born on September 3, 1901 and reared in Greenville, Mississippi. He attended Southwestern College for a year while it was still in Clarksville, Tennessee. He later studied at Little Rock College in Arkansas and St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Maryland. Monsignor Leppert was ordained a priest at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Memphis on February 2, 1926 when his family resided at 493 North McNeil. His or-

Election Meeting



The next meeting of VECAA will be held on Monday, January 19, at 8 p. m. at McLean Baptist Church. It is important that all members and friends attend, as the officers for 1976 will be elected and programs will be discussed for the coming year.

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NOT TO BE PLACED IN MAILBOXES

dination was the first for a Catholic priest in Memphis.

The first 27 years of his ministry occurred in the Nashville area and the other 23 years in Memphis. He was first stationed at Father Ryan High School in Nashville as teacher and moderator of athletics. He then served as pastor of Christ the King Church.

Monsignor Leppert has traveled extensively, leading pilgrimages to holy shrines in Europe, the Holy Land and Mexico. Among the shrines visited were Our Lady of Guadalupe, in Mexico, Fatima in Portugal, Lourdes in France, and in Rome, Germany and Switzerland. On one of these pilgrimages, he accompanied his parents who were observing their 50th wedding anniversary. In 1974, he led a pilgrimage in April to Washington, D. C. for the Holy Year.

Monsignor Leppert has received numerous awards for his work in behalf of the Church and mankind.

His Golden Jubilee will be celebrated on January 30 with a testimonial dinner to be held at the Pipkin Building at the Fairgrounds. On the 31st there will be Mass and a reception at Little Flower Church in his honor.

Time To Kill

by Jeff Mermelstein

I've got a lot of time to kill
that time's called my lifetime
I wish I had some way to do it
'cause killin's a crime

All I do is wait
by the door or by the phone
I really don't mind waiting
I just hate waiting alone.

Somebody help me kill my time
help me find my way
Somebody help me, please
make the night flow into day.

I've got a lot of time to kill
that time's called a lifetime
I gotta find some way to do it
'cause killing is a crime
such a crime.

Occasionally the News publishes literary works submitted by neighborhood residents. The above poem is one of several submitted by JEFF MERMELSTEIN. Jeff grew up in the neighborhood and now lives at 1860 Tutwiler.

McLean Interim

JESSE H. NEWTON has joined McLean Baptist Church as interim pastor. Reverend Newton will lead the services on Sunday morning and evening and Wednesday evening until a permanent pastor is called.

Rev. and Mrs. Newton live at 139 Mockingbird Lane in Collierville where Rev. Newton was pastor for 12 years before his retirement in 1973. He was born in Hickman, Kentucky and is a graduate of Union University and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He served several churches in west Tennessee and since his retirement he has filled interim-pastor posts at Charjean, LaBelle Place and Glen Parks Churches.

In addition to his 10:30 Sunday morning sermons at McLean, Rev. Newton is leading a series of sermons on the person, work and gifts of the Holy Spirit at the 7 p.m. service. On Wednesday nights in January he is directing a study of the prophet Hosea and in February will take up the book of Revelations.

Rev. Newton says that his interim pastorates have been an interesting ministry, but that he misses the in-depth fellowship with the congregation and community that he enjoyed before his retirement. He says he is gratified by the recent response to his Bible teaching and preaching and offers to all in the neighborhood his personal welcome to the church services during his tenure at McLean.



Left, Jesse Newton, interim pastor and right, Lando Lee, director of the Singin' Bunch, McLean Baptist Church.

Porteous Garage

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CLOSED MONDAYS

FINE BAKERY GOODS

John's Bakery

1688 Jackson 276-8431

Around The Neighborhood

If you see a new cat in the neighborhood who answers to "Ras" it probably belongs to ELLIOT and SHIRLEY FRANKLIN. The Franklins have just moved to 789 N. Willett. Elliot is employed in the audio-visual department of U. T. Center for the Health Sciences and Shirley is a secretary at the U. T. School of Nursing.

A V/E resident has published a new book which is now available. Dr. JAMES E. ROPER, professor of English at Southwestern, has written a book on that institution entitled Southwestern at Memphis: 1918-1975. It traces the recent history of an academic Mighty Mouse that managed to achieve national leadership and international recognition in several fields. It is Professor Roper's fourth book.

The 1974 - 75 figures for the racial distribution in the area's schools are now available. All four of them remain predominantly black this school year. The total enrollment and the racial distribution are listed below:

| School | Total Enrollment | White | Black |
|------------------|------------------|-------|-------|
| Cypress Jr. High | 1,125 | 12.9% | 87.8% |
| Northside High | 1,572 | 3% | 94.7% |
| Snowden | 1,153 | 23.4% | 76.4% |
| Vollenwee Elem. | 665 | 24.5% | 75.5% |

FOUR CEMETERY LOTS. Mount Vernon Gardens. Choice location, bargain price. 274-6731.

DIRECTORY OF NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

VECAA - Irvin Sachritz at 276-6216 or 761-1810.
The Evergreen News - Rick Thomas at 278-2210 or 725-0680.

Real Estate - Joe Hough at 274-5551 or 396-3130.
Social Services - Kathryn Baker, MSW, at 276-2970 or 725-0680.

Schools - David Vincent at 275-0248.
Services for Senior Citizens - Marlin Landers at 272-7408.

The Reverend LLOYD O. BARKER, who recently left McLean Baptist Church after fifteen years as minister, has completed work on his Doctor of Ministries degree. The Reverend Barker was one of the founding fathers of VECAA and his dissertation is based on his experiences in the neighborhood.

ED and ROSALIND KALLAHER of 884 North Barksdale celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on December 26. A party for the couple was given by BILL and DELORES KALLAHER of 1042 North Willett. Ed and Rosalind with their four children have lived in the neighborhood for eleven years.

Dr. LEE HOLDER of 2274 North Drive in Hein Park has recently been elected national chairman of the Association of the council of educational institutions within the Association of Allied Health Colleges. Dr. Holder is dean of U. T.'s College of Community and Allied Health Professions.

Activities of interest this month at the Brooks Memorial Art Gallery include a classical guitar concert by Donald Frost (Jan. 11), the film "Jane Eyre" (Jan. 18), a bring-your-own-poem Poetry Reading (Jan. 25) and the film "The Twelve Chairs." All are at 2:30 on Sunday afternoons and all are free.

Southwestern's campus will be the home of the Bartok Quartet, one of the world's leading string ensembles, during the month of January. The Hungarian group will give four public concerts at the school during the month in addition to informal performing, lecture and discussion sessions with the students and faculty.

Southwestern's Urban Policy Institute has been chosen for inclusion in the national "Horizons on Display" program sponsored by the national bicentennial organization and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, each site will serve as an example of innovative approaches to community development. Citizens will be encouraged to visit the sites during the bicentennial celebration.

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Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd

1971 Jackson (at University)

SUNDAY SERVICES

7:30 A.M. - Mass

9:30 A.M. - Church School

10:30 A.M. - Choral Communion

WEDNESDAY SERVICE

10:00 A.M. - Mass and Bible Study

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 you want The Bible Church!"

Shoppers' Choice

The News periodically brings articles on the neighborhood's established businesses or on new ones that have been opened. This month this section features two recently opened shops both on the same street.

Porteous Garage

In the past three issues of the News you may have noticed a new ad concerning one Porteous Garage. This ad represents a new business begun in early September in the V/E area by 21-year-old JOHN PORTEOUS of 1743 Glenwood.

With one other mechanic, John is doing a thriving business performing general maintenance work and repairs on all domestic and foreign cars at his 1553 Overton Park Avenue location. He says he chose that location because he has always liked the midtown area and the space was available at a reasonable price. Also, the fact that he spent the better part of his life growing up at 1669 Forrest with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. CLARK PORTEOUS, may have affected his preference for the midtown area.

John, a young man of apparent honesty and genuine interest in his client's problems, has always worked on automobiles. He has had training from the General Motors Training Center and also at the Sun Tune-up School.

With him at the Glenwood address live his wife, MARY SUZANNE, a dental assistant and also a native mid-towner, and their 4 year old daughter, PATRICIA, who attends the McLean Nursery School.

Arts, Crafts & Frames

Down the street from Porteous Garage another new shop opened about six months ago. Arts, Crafts and Frames, owned by RON JAMES, is located at 1378 Overton Park Avenue (just around the corner from the Crosstown Theatre.)

NEEDED. Individual or family to distribute the Evergreen News in the University Cabana Apartments. Requires about five hours a month. Call George Bradfute at 272-2668.

Mr. James offers all types of custom framing, shadow box framing, custom needle art framing, and the popular weathered molding. The shop is a one-man operation and all work is done entirely on the premises. Your pictures will not be forwarded elsewhere.

Ron, his wife BETTY, and four year old daughter, LORI ANN have lived at 705 Hawthorne for about four years. They chose this neighborhood because they found a relatively new house (30 years old) in an older, well-kept area.

Ron grew up working with his hands and has always enjoyed it. Even employed as an internal auditor for a financial company, he hoped someday to return to a hand craft.

Arts, Crafts and Frames is open six days a week from 10:00 - 5:30. It is a delightful shop and easily accessible next time you are in the Sears-Crosstown area. (See ad this issue for discount coupon.)


The Veollintine-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.

Veollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association
1976 NEW AND RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP 1976

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Membership \$2.50 - Individual, Family, Business
 Make checks payable to VECAA.
 Send to: Mrs. Janet Leonard
 1729 Tutwiler Avenue
 Memphis, TN 38107



B I N G O

8 P.M. EVFRY MONDAY
 16 Games-\$75 Min. Prize
 3 Cards \$5, 4th Card FREE
Jackpot

\$1500 - 50 Numbers or Less
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