

The EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association

VECAA Elects

On January 19 the Vollintine/Evergreen Community Action Association held its annual election and officers for 1976 were selected. The nominating committee presented one candidate each for the two elected offices (chairman and secretary). There being no other nominees, the two candidates were accepted by acclamation.

Dr. MICHAEL P. KIRBY of 683 N. Idlewild was elected chairman while HAROLD CHANDLER of 785 N. Garland was elected secretary. Mike is a political science professor at Southwestern where he has an interest in local government, especially as it affects neighborhoods. Mike also heads up the school's Policy Research Institute which provides agencies with policy analysis expertise. Harold is a research bibliographer with the University of Tennessee Center for Health Sciences Library. He came to Memphis three years ago from Washington, D.C.

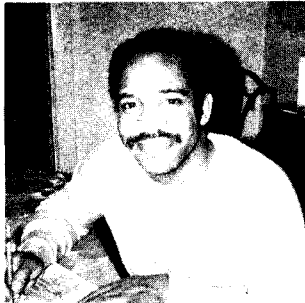


Mike Kirby

where he worked in the public library system.

Mike and his family moved to Memphis and the neighborhood from Wisconsin in 1970. He likes the convenience of the neighborhood and the opportunity to walk to work. He has been active on VECAA's long-range planning committee and has done much to bring about a working relationship between VECAA and Southwestern.

After being elected chairman, Mike outlined his plans for the year (see following article) and made the following statement: "This is, I believe, a proper time to recognize the dedicated people who have made VECAA the strong organization it is. Certainly Rick Thomas deserves recognition for his work as the editor and guiding light of the Evergreen News. The News serves as an anchor providing information and giving a sense of identification to our community. Irv Sachritz and Joe Sohm should be recognized for the fine job they did as chairmen during the past year. Joe Hough, George Bradfute, and Margaret Ditchel have been a source of inspiration and have worked long hours for our community. We, in the community, owe these people a bit of gratitude for their dedication in making this a better neighborhood in which to live."



Harold Chandler

The appointment of the remaining officers (treasurer and

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program chairman) and the various committee chairmen will be announced in the next issue of the News.

In other developments, KAREN TYNES of 1607 Jackson will serve as a co-editor of the News for 1976. Karen joined the staff last year and has since written several timely articles. We look forward to her tenure in this new position.

State of the Neighborhood.

by Mike Kirby

I have asked the editor of the Evergreen News to allow me to use this issue to discuss what I see to be the problems of the neighborhood. And to suggest policies and new programs which will help us cope with these problems in the coming year. I promise that my administration will be an especially aggressive one, attempting to deal with these problems as realistically as possible. However, in pursuing these goals and policies, it seems to me that no one person or one small group can accomplish these ends. Therefore, I am asking that people from the neighborhood come forward and offer their time and services for the organization. It is quite fitting that this is the Bicentennial year, a year in which we the people want to gain greater control over our environment. With the Bicentennial in mind, let's make this coming year one in which VECAA makes great strides in establishing this neighborhood as the model for the entire city.

In the following sections, I would like to outline some of the major problems of this neighborhood and suggest some policies for dealing with them.

Problem 1. Meeting Attendance

I will appoint a program chairman whose responsibility it will be to develop particular themes and speakers that would attract people to VECAA meetings who do not normally come. Past programs featuring political candidates and presentations by the Planning Commission have drawn large crowds. Two types of programs are envisioned; one type of community interest like those mentioned above and another featuring entertainment or social activities. The program chairman will also be asked to reevaluate the time and place of the meeting; and he will be asked if support services such as baby sitting would increase attendance.

Problem 2. Manpower Shortage

Although many VECAA residents have worked hard to further the aims of the organization, they have only scratched the surface with regard to what could be done. I have asked Southwestern College to sign a contract with the VECAA organization to provide a work - study student to the organization for ten hours a week. The community's contribution to this student's pay would be approximately \$.40 per hour. This student, who would be a major in Urban Studies or some related area, would provide a continuing presence for the organization. He could



The next VECAA meeting will be held in March. Watch the News for time and place.

NOT TO BE PLACED IN MAILBOXES

do the day-to-day work of the organization, perform needed research, represent the organization at various city meetings, establish contact with various city officials on a continuing basis.

Problem 3. Lack of Funds

A treasurer will be appointed to handle the bookkeeping of the organization. However, in addition, I will appoint a finance chairman whose job it will be to aggressively pursue additional funds for the VECAA organization. Unfortunately, during the last year we had not made an attempt to gather membership dues from people living in the VECAA area. Though the organization is presently solvent, it does not have the funds to pursue some of the necessary activities outlined in this policy statement. The officers in the organization have given their services to this area. The Evergreen News has been distributed monthly without cost. The VECAA organization has increased property values by its activities in relationship to landlords, the city, and the real estate industry. FINALLY NOW, IT IS THE COMMUNITY'S TURN. Money is needed to pay for services such as work-study students, postage, issuing reports, etc. The finance chairman will devise a system by which everyone in the community will be contacted for the membership fee. Since the cost of membership is only \$2.50, we ask your help.

Problem 4. Publicity

The publicity chairman will be asked to design bumper stickers to be provided to residents. These stickers will hopefully indicate that we as a neighborhood are concerned about preserving our community and want to make it a better place in which to live. In addition, various types of functional materials will be created such as garbage disposal cans, benches, etc. on which the VECAA logo will appear.

Problem 5. Monitoring of Zoning Decisions

Recently, the Central Gardens Association submitted a plan to the Planning Commission so that the area would be rezoned for single family dwellings, and that the single family character of the area would be preserved. In our task force activities, which took place in the last year, much of the work was done by a zoning committee to prepare such a report for our VECAA area. I will have this committee immediately reconstitute itself; and that within a month it is to prepare this report. This report will be publicized in the next issue of the Evergreen News and a hearing will be held in the neighborhood for everyone to comment on its content. Based upon these hearings, the report will be revised and issued to the Planning Commission for its consideration. In addition to this report, I will have the work-study student immediately contact the Planning Commission to make sure that we obtain information on every single rezoning which is proposed in this neighbor-

hood. If there are situations that you, the residents know about, please bring it to my attention and the organization will look at the proposed rezoning and, if desirable, will lobby against it.

Problem 6. Redlining by Insurance Companies and Mortgage Companies.

There seems to be some indication that insurance companies are cancelling insurance or increasing deductibles in this area. Furthermore, it appears that some of the mortgage companies are less willing to provide funds for conventional loans in the central city area. This problem of redlining involves both legal and political questions. I am going to appoint a committee to investigate this question of redlining, with the work-study student providing data and information to the committee. Recently, a federal law was passed which requires mortgage institutions to make available information as to which parts of the city they are making loans. It is my hope that we can also find out where the savings for these institutions are coming from. If we find that a particular institution has a large percentage of our residents who have savings accounts and yet issues no loans in this area, perhaps there is a possibility that we may be able to exert pressure against those institutions. It is important that we move aggressively in this area of making sure that mortgage money is available for those families who want to move into the VECAA area.

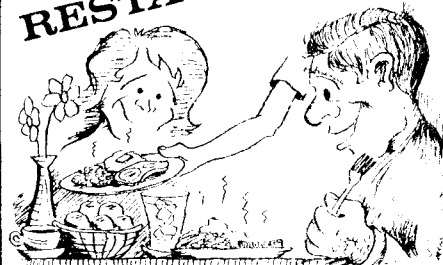
Problem 7. Housing Deterioration

My feeling is that the major problem in the neighborhood at this time, is the selective deterioration of housing which is taking place along our northern and western periphery, though we find it throughout the neighborhood. Finding houses with peeling paint, rotting wood, and cracked chimneys is not unusual. There are even some houses in the neighborhood which have been abandoned. The last issue of the Evergreen News indicated that a house along North Parkway, which is a magnificent structure, had been literally allowed to deteriorate and rot. Fortunately, this beautiful home was purchased by a concerned resident who fixed it up. These types of situations ought not to be allowed in our neighborhood. Therefore, I propose to do a survey of the neighborhood to indicate the houses which have external problems which might be violations of a code. We will then meet with each of these residents and landlords to find out if the outside of the structure might be improved. The aim of this program is to obtain voluntary compliance with the standards of the neighborhood. Where we are not able to obtain voluntary compliance, we will work closely with the city code enforcement officials to obtain legal actions against the offending households. If we find that the city codes are not strong enough to obtain this compliance, we will then approach City Council for their examination of this particular problem.

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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CHARLES H. SYKES
RECTOR

WILSON'S RESTAURANT



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Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Service - 10:45 a.m.
Evening Service - 7:00 p.m.

*"It's the Bible you want,
you want The Bible Church!"*

Problem 8. Concern with Beautification

It is my attempt to, in the following year, create pride in the neighborhood. Ours is a beautiful neighborhood, let's not let a few people ruin it. Businesses must clean up their trash and litter; citizens should be more concerned about making sure that their houses are painted and their falling garages are dismantled; abandoned cars should not appear on our front lawns. I am therefore going to appoint a chairman of a beautification committee who will work on creating pride in this neighborhood. For example, we might work in obtaining trash baskets in front of VECAA businesses which have a problem with trash and litter. We might give awards to people for planting especially beautiful flower gardens. We might work to eliminate sources of noise pollution in the area. Further, we might be able to work to establish closer relationships with the City Beautiful Commission.

Problem 9. Little Knowledge of the Community Development Program

I am going to take immediate action to establish a closer relationship with the committee which is involved in the Community Development Program in the northern portion of our neighborhood. I am willing to offer the technical expertise of the neighborhood if it becomes necessary in evaluating the plan which is going to be proposed in that portion of the neighborhood. The chairman of the citizen group in that area will be asked to serve as a member of the VECAA steering committee. We are pleased that the residents in the area north of Vollintine, east of Evergreen, and west of University are working so diligently in making this a better neighborhood.

Problem 10. Problems of the Retired and Elderly

This neighborhood is extremely proud of the quality of the elderly and retired people who live in the area, some of whom are lifelong residents. Unfortunately there are those who do not have the financial capabilities for dealing with their own personal problems or for keeping their properties up to the standard level. It is my proposal to develop a committee dealing with the problems of these residents. This committee will develop a plan to clean, paint, and fix up properties of the elderly unable to afford it. The Kinney Program at Southwestern will be asked to provide their voluntary services for certain elderly people who have this problem. Furthermore,

contact will be made with social service agencies and perhaps funds can be solicited.

Problem 11. Rental Property

It is my proposal to get landlords in the area to fix up their properties and to rent to more stable families and individuals. Furthermore, VECAA is willing to develop a listing of people looking for housing and apartments in the VECAA area. We will also develop a listing of landlords who are trying to rent their properties.

There are other problems which have been outlined by the various task forces which operated last year, including transportation and education. I will address myself to those issues in the coming months. I would urge any member of the community who has a problem or is willing to offer their help to call me or write at the numbers and addresses listed elsewhere in this issue of the Evergreen News. If I am not available, please leave your number with either the operator at Southwestern or with my family and I will call you back as quickly as possible.

I have enclosed the following short questionnaire. I would appreciate it very much if as many residents in the neighborhood as possible would respond to this survey and return it to me in care of Southwestern.

Thank you very much for your cooperation; I am indeed honored to serve as the chairman of this organization. I sincerely hope and feel that this will be an extremely productive year for VECAA.

PIANO LESSONS for beginners, \$2 per lesson, Call Julie at 276-7176.

PART-TIME TYPIST NEEDED. Lawyer's office, flexible hours, no legal experience necessary. Call or see Richard W. Foster, 2206 Jackson, 278-7641.

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Porteous Garage

FREE Lube with purchase of oil change and filter

Tune-Up (Parts & Labor)--\$26

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276-1489

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To be filled out and returned to:

Mike Kirby
% Southwestern at Memphis
2000 N. Parkway
Memphis, TN 38112

Name _____

Address _____

1) Do you have any problem in your part of the neighborhood that VECAA should deal with?

Explain _____

2) Are you willing to pay the \$2.50 that VECAA charges for annual family dues? _____

3) Would you be willing to work on any of the problems or committees discussed in this issue?

Explain _____

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.

Around The Neighborhood

A free income tax counseling service will be available this year to senior citizens at Lewis Center for Senior Citizens. The service, sponsored by the National Retired Teachers Association in cooperation with the Internal Revenue Service, will be offered from Feb. 2 to April 15. Appointments can be made by calling 272-7408.

Welcome to one of our newest neighbors. REBECCA LEIGH was born last month to CHARLES and ANN GOFORTH of 1867 Monticello Drive. Charles is a planner for Colorado, Inc., while Ann recently "retired" from the nursing profession. The Goforths also have a six-year-old daughter, LESLIE.

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.

Vollintine-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



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8P.M. EVERY MONDAY
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3 Cards \$5, 4th Card FREE

Jackpot

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\$1000 Min.—51 Numbers and Up
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