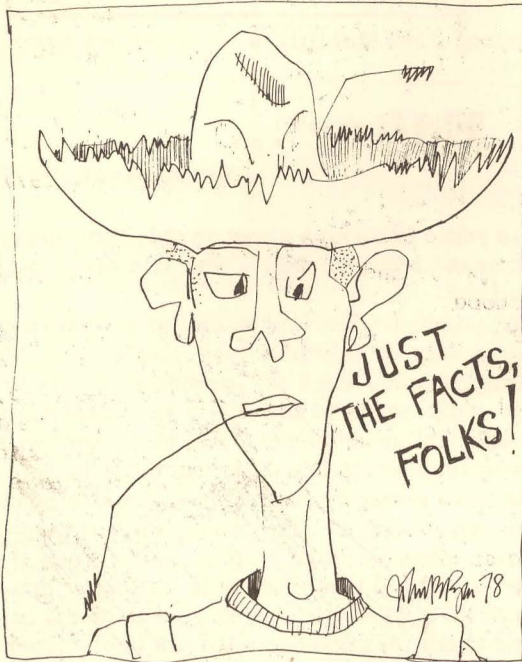


The EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association



State of the ...etc.

At a meeting last week of E/NEWS staff and other interested parties, it was decided this editor should write a review of last year's VECAA activities and a "state of the organization" report. Then everyone complained that the paper was really a pretty boring rag sheet and should have more humor and warmth. So here it is, your first humorous and warm VECAA report. (Mike Kirby would turn over in his grave if he were in one.)

What has been done? Well, to tell you the truth, it's been a quiet year. When we ceased to have monthly meetings (so that those who said that they wouldn't join because they couldn't attend wouldn't have an excuse), probably some people thought that other things stopped too! Not so! Here's a run-down on what VECAA did, and forgive me if I leave something out.

First, a comprehensive housing survey was conducted in January with a follow-up survey in April. The Housing Committee was happy to report that 75-80% of the property owners had corrected the deficiencies noted in the original survey. This committee is mostly Joe Sohm and Carl Holmes who have done a great job handling all kinds of complaints. This kind of work calls for the tact of a saint, the wisdom of Solomon, and the tenacity of a bulldog. I'm not sure who's the saint and who's the bulldog, but they continue to work and love people to tell them about their problems.

Memphis, Tennessee
Volume VIII, No. 1

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Jan/Feb, 1978

Well, maybe not, but they do want to know about property neglect and abuse in order to keep our neighborhood in fine fettle.

In May, Germantown Investment Inc. distributed leaflets to several streets soliciting the sale of homes for rental purposes. VECAA viewed the prospect of several whole blocks becoming all rental property with horror and promptly contacted the U.S. Justice Dept. An investigator was sent to Memphis for the purpose of determining if a concerted effort at blockbusting existed. Since that time there has been no further solicitation from GII in this area to the best of our knowledge.

Now some good news. FANNIE MAE is here! If you're not acquainted with the lady, she is FNMA -- Federal National Mortgage Association. VECAA, in cooperation with the Mid-Town Council participated in a presentation to get our neighborhood approved for this program. The effort was successful and several properties in our area have already obtained Fannie Mae financing. It says a lot for the stability and life of both our area and the groups that applied that we qualified.

This summer, residents on Auburndale were very concerned about the opening of Arlington House at Auburndale and Jackson. This is a half-way house for adolescents with special problems. VECAA set up a meeting with the residents on the street and the house director where a lot of fears were allayed and a lot of information was exchanged.

On the financial front, always a bleak prospect, VECAA held its first annual Flea Market at St. Teresa Church on Jackson last September. VECAA made \$150, the exhibitors made a profit, and all the customers enjoyed seeing their neighbors. We hope our next one will be even better!

So much for the year end report. What about '78? On FEBRUARY 26, 2 p.m. there will be a general planning meeting in Room 301 of the Southwestern Student Center. Everyone is begged to come. Right now VECAA needs a transfusion of new, eager, and energetic sorts who would like to maintain and improve our neighborhood. Do you have some ideas about how to make our neighborhood even more charming? Got a gripe? Come tell it. For those new to the area, this is a great way to get to know your neighbors. Now, y'all com', ya heah!

VECAA News

(The following is a presentation made to the Memphis Board of Education, January 23, 1978, about overcrowding at Vollentine School. It was made by JOE HOUGH, member of the VECAA Steering Committee.)

"The public schools serving the children of our neighborhood (especially Vollentine and Snowden) have been a primary concern of VECAA since we organized in the Fall of 1970. The formation of an effective Edu-

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cation Committee was one of our highest priorities at the outset. Since then, when called upon, members of this committee have played active roles in the various schools as involved parents as well as act as liasons to Dr. Westbrook, the Central Area Superintendent, and the various principals' community committees."

"Overcrowding at Vollentine is not an entirely new issue nor one which we have been apathetic about in the past. In 1970-71, while still a Kindergarten through Grade 6 School, enrollment soared to an alarming 606 students; whereas, in the preceding year it had been a more typical 429. Investigation by the VECAA Education Committee at that time revealed virtually all of the dramatic increase was attributable to massive transfers into Vollentine of children who actually resided north of Cypress Creek. The following year, after Mr. Neely petitioned the School Board to stop all transfers from outside the district, enrollment receded back to a more normal level at 460 students and remained at approximately that figure until it swelled to 539 in the Fall of 1974 and finally back to 606 students in the Fall of 1975."

"Presently we are not knowledgeable of the composition of the present over-enrollment as to grade levels, nor if all of the students do indeed reside in the district. Accordingly, we cannot and will not propose solutions at this time. However, we do request that before the Board makes a decision as to how to rectify this undesirable situation for next year, you and your staff will consult with and seek input from responsible concerned neighborhood residents and parents who will be directly involved in the ultimate outcome."

"VECAA is quite proud of the present somewhat enviable pairing of Vollentine and Snowden which permits children in our neighborhood to walk to these esteemed elementary schools. The Vollentine-Snowden pairing is believed to be an important asset in whatever success we have had in stabilizing our acclaimed integrated community. We feel our previous intervention in the federal courts in the busing lawsuit played some part in the formation of these specific school zones. Any proposed changes in this arrangement or the existing boundaries will be viewed with grave concern and appropriately challenged if considered detri-

mental to the long-term stability of our mid-town neighborhood.

Dear Editor ...

December 14, 1977

This is just a little note about an old, thin, gray-headed man, nearly blind he was...but it's also about our neighborhood.

ROBERT GIBSON was right at 84 and a veteran of World War I, a fact of which he was most proud. He had retired from National Bank of Commerce, long ago, when his eye sight began to fail. A more independent self-reliant man you've never met. He had neither wife nor children to lean on, a life-long bachelor he was. But he could have never made it alone...really alone. He knew that, too. People in this neighborhood helped him in so many little ways...guiding him across the streets that he walked when he could no longer drive his car (which he still owned, mind you). Giving him lifts here and there, helping him with his coat, counting his monry when the dim eyes refused to focus. Yes, even feeding him his dinner. The people of this place did that, and more. He loved people and spent hours at the service station, drugstore or restaurant, rewarding folks with stories of that long ago war, about his farm at Eads, Tenn., that he bought when he came back from the army.

He could have lived in a more elegant, pretentious neighborhood and in that way he typified many people in this neighborhood; he chose to live here, amongst his friends.

You used to see him walking our streets daily, as erect as the infirmities of his age permitted. But you won't see him any more. He died today.

Despite the high crime image the inner city projects, can we really be so bad?

Sincerely,
Jack Borg

Borg Pharmacy
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Southwestern Offerings

THE GARDEN AND THE CITY - Cities create small and interesting greenspaces that challenge the imagination to find ways to maximize their usefulness, minimize their maintenance, and optimize the benefits-for-expenditures. As a follow-up to his "Living Spaces" course, David Bowman, architecture and environment writer for "City of Memphis" magazine, will bring together experts on landscape architecture, tropical plants, paving-and-fencing, greenhouses, solar energy systems, and related fields, to tell you what they know and answer questions about your particular urban landscaping needs. Beginning Jan. 30, weekly classes to be held on Mondays, 7:30-9:30 p.m., 200 Clough Hall. The fee is \$30.00 individual or couple.

C.S. LEWIS' TRILOGY - The celebrated space trilogy--Out of the Silent Planet, Perelandra, That Hideous Strength--will provide the basis for discussions of theological and ethical themes of concern to modern man. The six session program will be conducted by Mrs. James Jobs on Friday afternoons, 1:00-2:30, beginning Feb. 3. The fee, including books, is \$10.00.

To register or for further information telephone 274-6606, or 274-1800 (ext. 372).

FOR THE EUROPEAN TRAVELER - A unique buffet of mini course selections to enhance your travel appetite. Starting March 7, for twelve weeks every Tuesday evening an overview of each of the following cultures will be presented--British, French, Spanish, Italian, and German. These presentations discussing customs, traditions, history, art and culture will be taught by professors who have lived and studied in these areas. For schedule and fees call 274-6606 or 274-1800 (ext. 372). Partake of as little or as much as you choose.

BECOMING HUMAN - "Who am I?" The question of identity with all its unsettling consequences arises in each of the stories, plays, and poems to be read and discussed by participants in this new course. Becoming Human is one of a series of new anthologies being published by the Great Books Foundation. Beginning Feb. 21 eight weekly sessions to be held on Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. - Noon. The fee is \$20.00, \$30.00 for a married couple, includes the anthology of readings.

TELEVISION AWARENESS TRAINING - Concerned about how television influences your life and your children's? The workshop consists of eight two-hour sessions covering an overview of television, its images of violence, stereotyping, advertising, children, human sexuality and the news, as well as strategies for changes. The Workshop begins Feb. 7 in 200 Clough Hall. Fee is \$30.00 per person, \$45.00 per couple, and includes text-workbook summarizing nearly 30 years research on the effects of television.

EASTERN PSYCHOLOGY - This course deals with problems and meanings of human existence from an Eastern psychological point of view. It will be conducted by Dr. Ashok Kara. The ten weekly sessions to be held on Monday evenings, 7:00 - 9:30 p.m., Jan. 30 through April 10. The fee is \$50.00. Enrollment will be limited to twenty participants.

ROMANS AND CHRISTIANS - The next unit of Western Man, an adaptation of Southwestern's famous undergraduate course, "Man in the Light of History and Religion," will begin on Wednesday, Feb. 1 at 7:30 p.m. in Room 200 Clough Hall. The fee of \$40.00, \$55.00 for a couple, includes a copy of Vergil's Aeneid and a number of mimeographed readings.

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**Meet
The
Neighbors**

By J. Bruhwiler

JOHN S. DEVEREAUX, a Navy veteran, came to Memphis from Eugene, Oregon, in 1965 to teach Speech at the U.T. Dental College. He then became Executive Director for the Memphis Area Council on Alcoholism. A year later he was appointed Director of Education and Training at the Penal Farm, a position he held for more than nine years. For the past three years he has been Facility Supervisor for the Wells Fargo Security Service. Mr. Devereaux has an M.A. in Education, a degree that appears to have shaped his life, even in regard to his hobbies. As a horseman he has taught equitation, and as a gardener he is willing to talk on landscaping and the growing of roses.

His wife, MARTHA, is an ex-Navy nurse. She was raised in Little Rock and graduated from Vanderbilt University. At present she is disabled with Pernicious Anemia, a disease that numbs the limbs. For therapy Mrs. Devereaux swims twice a week at the Crippled Citizens' Handicap Centre. Somehow, perhaps with the moral support of the family dog, Pepe le Peux, she manages the home at 846 North Avalon.

The three Devereaux children are grown and are the pride of their parents. Daughter ARAH, an MSU graduate, is a musician and working wife in Chicago. Son BILL will graduate from Portland State University in Business Administration this spring. Son JOHN who is retarded, is employed by the Sheltered Occupation Workshop. He is a very articulate man who rides the bus, can play pool, and fishes and hunts

with his father. Along with his parents he attends First Christ United Methodist Church and, like his parents, enjoys living on tree-shaded Avalon.

However, the street may soon lose the Devereaux family. Mr. Devereaux thinks that upon his retirement next June they may want to return to their home in Oregon where, as he puts it, roses grow without chemicals, and the rain falls gently.

VECAA Meets
Sunday Feb. 26 2p.m.
Southwestern Student Center Room 301

Will do painting and other odd jobs at reasonable rate. Call Stephen Murphy, 324-1345, 794-8237.

staff: editor: karen tynes/news: chris menard, jennifer pritchard, patricia terry, marty thomas/art: john ryan/typing: sallee bruhwiler, david corum, vivian hill/business: shirley johnson/printing: mary murphy, courtesy southwestern at memphis

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
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