

# The EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Working With Vollintine - Evergreen Community Association

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## ACTION NEEDED NOW ON RAILROAD TRACKS

The time is right for VECA to spur the Louisville & Nashville Railroad and the city to action on the abandoned railroad line through the heart of the Vollintine/Evergreen neighborhood.

The start of summer finally saw L&N pull up the tracks along most of the 4.1 mile route from west of Hollywood to Front Street, although track is still down across some major streets like McLean. Taking up the tracks is significant because it is a clear sign of abandonment and will eventually make it possible to do something else with the land.

A bike/jogging path or "greenbelt" are two of the possible new uses of the right of way that passes the Southwestern campus and a pleasant, shady stretch of grassy property in the heart of Midtown owned by MLG&W.

Unfortunately, a legal tangle and lack of agreement among affected parties has put things at a temporary standstill.

For one thing, city officials say it isn't clear exactly what happens to abandoned land. Does the city get it, or do the neighboring property owners get it? And although there hadn't been a train on the

now torn-up tracks for three years, it isn't even certain, in legal terms at least, that the track was abandoned.

Right now L&N still claims to own the land. They would like the city to buy it. The city would like L&N to give it to them.

Some property owners feel the wide open spaces make it easier for burglars to get at their property. They would like to take ownership of the patches of land near their homes and fence them off.

A single property owner could derail an effort by the city to take over the land and turn it into a bike path or other public use. City officials estimate that just running a title search on the property would cost over \$50,000.

In the meantime, no one has assumed responsibility for maintaining the land, and the weeds are tall and thick in several locations. A few home owners, tired of the mess, have whacked down the grass and weeds near their property themselves.

A similar situation exists with the alleys, which used to be used for trash pickup before the curbside system went into effect.

But there's hope. What's needed is a plan and a solid show of support for it from VECA. This is a case where the city is waiting for the neighborhood to make its wishes known. VECA will hold a meeting on the issue at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 27 at Lindsay Memorial Presbyterian Church, 1663 Tutwiler.

"I think it's our move," says Frank Moore, a member of the VECA executive committee. "The time is ripe for us to make a proposal."

## THANKS ADVERTISERS!

The *Evergreen News* would like to extend a special thanks to the advertisers who make our neighborhood newspaper possible. Their support and the efforts of the volunteer staff allow the newspaper to be delivered free to 5,500 families in the Vollintine/Evergreen area.

Few people are aware that *The Evergreen News* receives no financial support from any group, including the Vollintine-Evergreen Community Association. Only proceeds from advertising pay for production and printing costs. After the bills are paid, net profit is usually about \$3 or less, hardly enough to pay mailing and film costs.

That's why we are thanking our advertisers for their support of the *The Evergreen News* and hope our readers will too. Also, we encourage and appreciate the prompt payment of bills so the newspaper may pay its own bills.

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## WLYX UPDATE

Although issues still cloud the future of Southwestern's radio station, WLYX, college officials plan to renew operations by school time this month.

WLYX was silenced this summer by the college and the volunteers who staffed it were dismissed to allow school officials to evaluate the station and make changes. Associate Dean Robert Llewellyn said WLYX's musical and program format would not change dramatically, but would receive an increased educational focus.

Dean of College Gerald Tuff said he hopes WLYX's license to operate will be renewed by the Federal Communications Commission by the time school starts in mid-September. However, WLYX will be allowed to operate in lieu of the FCC approval, until otherwise notified, and plans are to get things cranked up by Sept. 13, Tuff said.

Two other groups have filed petitions with the FCC asking for rights to WLYX's airwave frequency.



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Photo by Berlynn Rizer

Restored woodwork and floors make striking partners in the Sigsbee's home.

## LABOR OF LOVE PAYS OFF FOR TWO EAST DRIVE FAMILIES

### The Sigsbees

There is no doubt about the pride in workmanship and love of home shown by this family on East Drive. Without the need for any dramatic changes in their home, Judith and David Sigsbee still have invested countless hours of meticulous, tiring labor in their efforts.

Upon close examination of their house, the small, subtle changes become striking and impressive.

The Sigsbees moved to the Vollintine/Evergreen area in August, 1977 specifically in search of an older home to test their renovating skills. Their first challenge was to restore the beauty of hardwood floors, hidden beneath a blanket of carpeting. Staples had to be removed and the floors sanded and coated with a stain-sander filler and

polyurethane.

David's proudest, but most difficult success story is his total insulation job. Crawling beneath the floor, hauling small pieces and working on his back, was physically grueling work. But the job offered an unexpected fringe benefit. David found, and repaired many minor water leaks.

Tearing out the attic floor to insulate under it was also grim work. But David has gained a total familiarity with his house through the many hours of making it as energy-efficient as possible.

Woodwork in the Sigsbee house has merited special attention. It has been stripped by whatever means necessary—varnished, rubbed with steel wool and waxed.

"These things are done forever once they're done right," David says. A similar devotion to doing jobs right the first time can be seen in David's "general maintenance" work. He has spent about 10 hours per window on his 45 double-hung windows, all of which are now in good working order.

Judith and David gradually have been replacing the plastic hardware in their house with the original brass, and they have installed five of the six ceiling fans that are in their plans. David stresses their caution and exacting standards in the kind of decorating they do. As they become more aware of the integrity and interdependence of the homes in the neighborhood, they have become more conscious of not violating that integrity.

"Our main job," he adds, "has been removing the veneers of various decorating fads to return our house to its original dignity and integrity of design."

Knowing how to maintain that dignity properly has been a matter of research and experience. The Sigsbees consider most do-it-yourself books, including the popular *This Old House*, of little value to individuals trying to do the physical labor themselves.

However, two books, *Diagnosing and Repairing House Structure Problems* by Edgar O. Seaquist and *The Old-House Journal Compendium*, edited by

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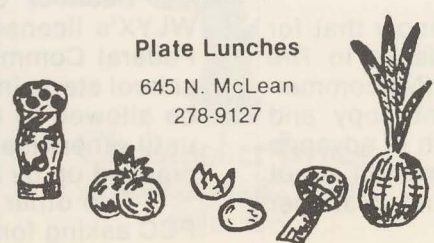
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Learning all they can from others, the Sigsbees use their own experience as the ultimate resource. For example, in order to do away with an old textured ceiling, they used a laborious process of soaking small areas at a time with a garden sprayer and scraping it with a razor blade. They have since decided that the faster and more permanent cure for such problems is simply putting new dry-wall over the old textured ceiling.

The Sigsbees have used more than 60 tubes of caulking in their insulation work and more than 400 razor blades in their general scraping. They have put in french doors with the help of a carpenter friend and sheets of foil-backed insulation behind all radiators.

"We were able to do this because of the attractive radiator covers the previous owners had made," David says.

However, the couple did find one job too big. The central air conditioning system was installed by a professional, but it was with regret that David and Judith backed away from even this mammoth chore.

There is a certain romanticism in doing the work himself that David finds irresistible, and he takes joy in "having all these beautiful things emerge."

"The house was here before I was and will be here after I'm gone. I'm part of its continuity more than it's part of mine," says David.

### The Fletchers

Unlike the Sigsbees, Carol and Greg Fletcher didn't come to the neighborhood in 1979 seeking a house restoration job. They merely accepted the fact that by having the convenience of a Mid-town location, an older home needing repair would probably come in the bargain.

After repairing some plumbing leaks, they began carrying out a five-year plan, a systematic list of needs and priorities, with winters reserved for indoor projects and the other three seasons set aside for the yard and house exterior.

The first year's work concentrated on the living room, dining room and entry way. The three upstairs bedrooms and the den were the next two year's projects. Planning for the other two bedrooms and the bathrooms would occupy the fourth year. That left the fifth year to finishing the room most important and most difficult--the kitchen.

Carol and Greg have stayed pretty close to schedule, considering the welcomed interruption caused by the birth of their son, Scott, a year ago.

In each room the wall and ceiling treatment has been arduous: chiseling off six layers of wallpaper and paint, repairing as needed (replastering, replacing rotted woodwork, sanding woodwork numerous times), and painting or wallpapering.

They have had their floors refinished gradually room to room. The Fletchers chose brass sconces as wall fixtures and were delighted when they discovered some beautiful ones that had been patched in and painted over upstairs. Electric lights rather than candles are used in all the sconces.

The major project of the Fletchers has been the redesign of a one-story 1950's frame addition to the back of their dark-bricked, Georgian-style, three-story house.

Setting out to blend the architecture and function of the two dissimilar structures, the Fletchers added lots of windows to the addition and re-bricked it with the closest match they could find.

They stripped the small two-room addition of its partition, shower, furnace, duct work, paneling, everything to the exterior shell, and have insulated it and added a ceiling.

Carol's father is coming this fall to put up the wall board and help finish this room, which will be a sun room equipped with a handsome circular elevated patio, which lacks only its concrete topping.

Carol says of the work she and Greg have put into the home they share, "It's always much more than you ever think it's going to be: so much harder, even, than building your own house."

*(Continued on last page)*

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## WANT AN ALLEY, ANYONE?

Claude Pearson, director of sanitation services division for the city, said his department has begun identifying alleys that no longer are needed by the city and can be deeded over to property owners.

The Vollintine-Evergreen area probably won't see as many alley give-backs as other parts of the city because the majority of alleys here are still used by various different city departments like sanitation and utilities, Pearson said.

Pearson said it will be at least 90 days before any property owner is notified by mail that his alley has the potential of being turned over to him. Property owners will be given a chance to contest or welcome the additional property.

The cleaning and maintenance of alleys which are deeded over to property owners will be totally the responsibility of those property owners, said Pearson.

That's really no different from the way it is now, claims Pearson. The city ordinance has always directed citizens to keep the alley clear of obstructions, he said.

But Pearson said the sanitation department does acknowledge responsibility for cleaning alleys, especially those that are still used by the department.

And he had good news for residents complaining of overgrown alleys. Although no money was budgeted for it, alley clean-ups by the sanitation department will begin this month and continue through the fall. All city alleys will be cleaned eventually, starting with the worst ones first.

Pearson said residents should not put bulky items such as limbs in the alley to be picked up. These items will only be picked up at curbside, usually on Wednesdays. Notifications to that effect are being distributed to residents, he added.

## LABOR OF LOVE

(Continued from page 3)

But her talk about the great support from her family and Greg's and her enthusiasm in showing off their many home-improvement successes make it evident that the Fletchers' Vollintine/Evergreen home, just like the Sigsbees, has been well worth the effort.

By Debbie Monroe

## FREE EVENTS AT BROOKS

A calendar of entertaining events, all free to the public, is happening this month at Brooks Memorial Art Gallery. It's part of the gallery's celebration of Japanese art.

From now until Oct. 10, Japanese paintings from the 1600s-1900s will be exhibited.

The special events begin with a lecture at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 7 on Japanese wood block prints. A brush painting demonstration will be held at 2:30 p.m. Sept. 12.

The Japanese classical film, "Street of Shame" will be shown at 7 p.m. Sept. 14. That event will be followed by a flower arrangement class from 2-4 p.m. Sept. 19.

Japanese religion and art are the topics of a lecture at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 21. Concluding the month's events is a Kabuki dance demonstration at 2:30 p.m. Sept. 26.

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