

The EVERGREEN NEWS

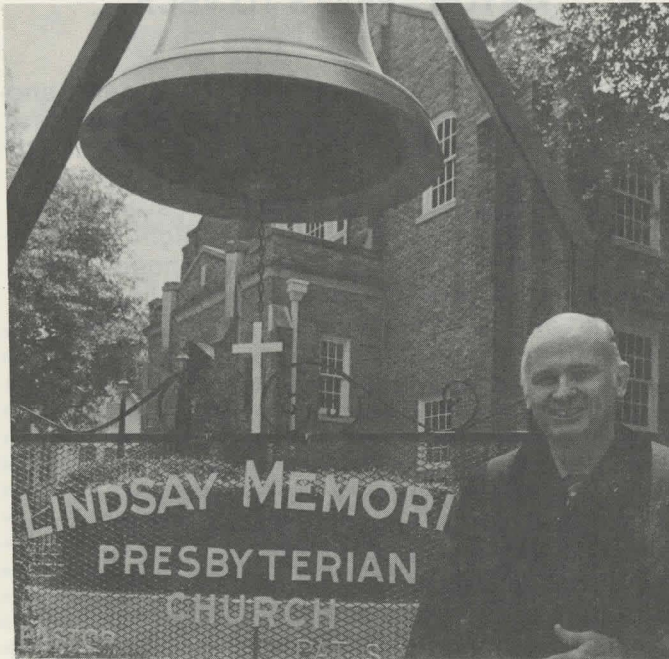
A Neighborhood Newspaper Working With Vollintine - Evergreen Community Association

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Rev. Pat Wright at Lindsay Memorial Presbyterian Church

LINDSAY THRIVES TO MAINTAIN PLACE IN COMMUNITY

By Kathie Jarmon Kerr

When a baby cries out during services at Lindsay Memorial Presbyterian Church no one offers a disapproving glance. It is a cry of hope and one which church members are counting on to pull them out of a decreasing membership trend.

Some of the same friends have been coming to worship at Lindsay at 1663 Tutwiler for more than 50 years, finding spiritual solitude and taking pleasure from its quiet beauty. But over the years friends and family members have died or moved away, dropping membership from an all-time high in the 1950s of 800 to below 100 today. Younger members have not stepped in to fill the vacant places and now the average member's age is 70 and above.

In his almost eight years as pastor at Lindsay, Rev. Pat Wright has conducted more than 40 funerals, but very few christenings. The problem that Lindsay faces is shared by some other churches in the Vollintine-Evergreen community and results from the same situation, Rev. Wright says.

"In this community, children and grandchildren have moved out east or out-of-town. We can't expect to pick up the older people in the community because they probably already belong to a thriving church, maybe one which buses people on Sunday morning. That leaves the young people, and all the

(Continued on page 2)

CHURCHES IN TRANSITION

Neighborhood churches appear to be recommitting themselves to holding on to their physical properties by reaching out with new spiritual and community programs in hopes of sponsoring growth.

Once overflowing with people in its large facilities, McLean Baptist Church now uses a small sanctuary for Sunday services, but that might change soon. In the past three months since new Minister Jimmy Millikin came, church participation has increased 20 percent. Instead of talk of selling the church's buildings, the congregation has adopted a \$55,000 buildings renovation project. "Folks here plan to stay," says Millikin.

St. Therese Church-Little Flower, long a stronghold in the community, but also facing a decline from a shrinking Catholic population within its boundaries, is gaining some new members through the church's outreach to non-Catholic spouses and it's successful integration efforts, says Father Edwin Creary.

Programs to attract young people have turned things around for large churches like Trinity United Methodist and Evergreen Presbyterian churches. While actual membership is still nowhere near what it once was 10 years ago, church participation in Sunday schools and youth programs have increased dramatically.

"People went out of this neighborhood in a rush and are coming back in a trickle; we are making sure we're at the bottom of that spout catching the ones coming in," says Dr. David Hilliard Jr., minister at Trinity.

Contributing to Trinity's growth, Hilliard feels, are immediate follow-up visits by lay people of new visitors, a strong "singles" ministry and name recognition which comes from sharing the church's physical facilities with community groups. "The key is to be where the young people are," says Hilliard.

"Young adults attract other young adults, there's no doubt about that," says Dr. W. Ned Hollandsworth, pastor at Evergreen Presbyterian. Evergreen's large facilities are well-used, the minister says. In fact, \$300,000 renovation goal has been set by the church to uplift the facilities. (Kerr)

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LINDSAY THRIVES (cont.)

churches are trying to benefit from those moving back into the midtown area.

"What it boils down to is we have the same number of churches trying to reach a diminishing number of people," said Rev. Wright.

The logical answer might be to diminish the number of churches, specifically, to merge Lindsay and Evergreen Presbyterian Church. It's an option that has been discussed openly with the congregation at Lindsay and made more attractive by the recent reunion of two former denominations.

But a church with as much history as Lindsay dies hard. The present structure was built in 1930, but the church itself has roots which go back to the 1840s when it was the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Memphis. Under another name, the church was once located downtown on Court Avenue. Two stained-glass windows which now adorn the church's sanctuary were painstakingly moved from that location, as was a large bell, which once tolled for each yellow fever victim during the epidemic that struck Memphis in the 1870s.

It is more than history Lindsay's members are considering.

"If we come to a place where our ministry is not going anyplace, then joining with Evergreen might become a probability," said Rev. Wright. "But right now we still feel this church has a unique ministry to share with the community."

With this in mind, Lindsay has begun a campaign of identity awareness which is creating a flurry of community services. Lindsay has long been active in the community, providing meeting places for VECA and The Evergreen News, as well as sponsoring an eight-member refugee family. Most recently, Lindsay has offered a summer day camp for children, a workshop for babysitters and an after-school program for children in kindergarten through grade six coming this fall. Alcoholics Anonymous groups now meet at Lindsay three nights per week.

Topping this all off is the announcement that Lindsay has hired a program director in charge of community outreach. Jeff Cowell, former recreational coordinator at Southwestern, will plan recreational activities for all ages at Lindsay and will supervise the before-school program. In addition, he will work with agencies like the YWCA to study the needs of the community and pull together services to fill those needs.

Lindsay's members are optimistic, yet cautions of the new programs' impact on the future of the church. Says Rev. Wright, "We know sponsoring programs won't automatically sponsor growth at Lindsay, but as people identify us with caring about the community, we hope that will bring people to us."

MAYOR SPEAKS TO VECA

By Franklin Moore

Mayor Dick Hackett brought "good news and bad news" questions at the May 23rd VECA general membership meeting at Lindsay Memorial Presbyterian Church. The mayor had obviously prepared himself for the issues and questions which came up during the meeting and brought with him three members of his staff: Neighborhood Liaison Janet Parker; Director of Public Service Paul Gurley and Director of the Mayor's Action Center Mark Hackett.

The mayor first announced the "bad news" to the crowd of about 40 people: The city is unwilling to purchase the abandoned L & N right-of-way because "the city would be paying almost one-half million dollars for massive legal problems." He stated that a large proportion of more than 300 adjacent property owners along the right-of-way may have the legal right to move their fences out and claim ownership. Furthermore, the mayor stated that the city was not going to acquire more property until it is able to take care of the property it has now.

The "good news" brought by the mayor was that he had obtained the agreement of the railroad to begin cutting the right-of-way and apply chemical retardant to weeds. The right-of-way may be cut twice more this summer. He also said the health department can spray for mosquitoes along the right-of-way, but he gave no encouragement that the embankments would be graded.

In regard to the I-40 right-of-way, the mayor publicly stated for the first time that the city was "leaning toward" asking the Department of Transportation to grant funds to build a roadway connecting I-40 with Cleveland and East Parkway at grade level with no ramps and no construction between those streets.

The abandoned I-40 right-of-way between Cleveland and East Parkway most likely will be offered back to the original property owners first at fair market value, and then auctioned for residential property, although no definite decisions have been made on this matter, said Dick Hackett.

SNOWDEN JUDGED MODEL SCHOOL

Snowden Junior High School has been judged a "model" school by the U.S. Department of Education. Only 144 secondary schools were chosen from 396 nominations submitted by state education officials in 42 states and the District of Columbia. Only one other school in Shelby County, Collierville Middle School, received the recognition.

Ronnie Bynum, Snowden's principal until this

(Continued on page 4)

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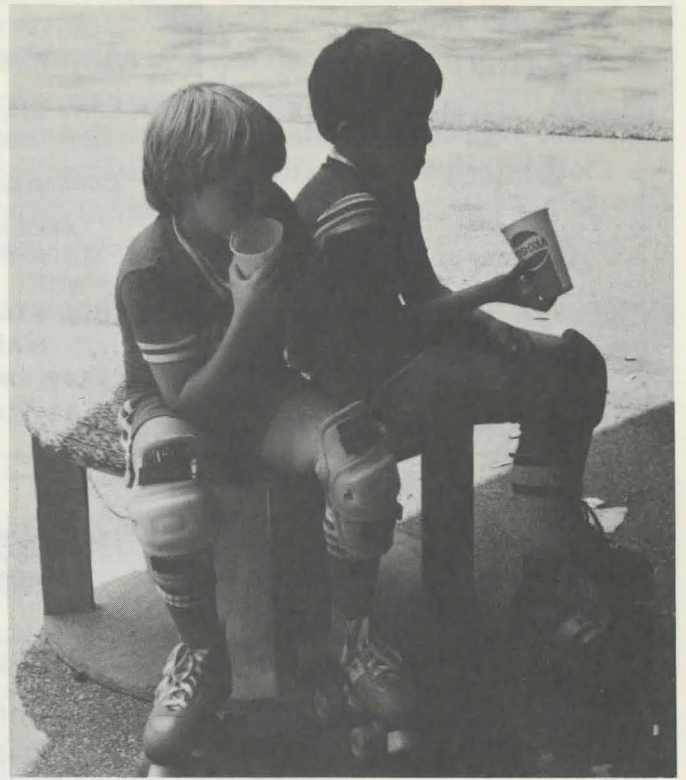
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B. J. Conner took home first place in *The Evergreen News* first photography contest with these two pictures taken this June in Overton Park with a 35mm Yashica camera. A former newspaper reporter, Conner and her family recently moved to Hein Park from Pennsylvania. She and her husband, Michael, have two children, Nichole - 5, and Sean - 16 months.

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Racial harmony, the natural beauty and stability of our neighborhood were winning themes in *The Evergreen News* first "Picture Your Neighborhood" contest, which ended June 30. Twenty-nine black and white photographs were entered and judged on July 1 by a panel of three judges.

B. J. Connor of North Trezevant will receive first place prizes of a family membership to the zoo and gift certificates from Carl's Bakery and Dino's Southwestern Grill. Two of her pictures tied for first place. Judges thought the photograph of black and white children playing together at Overton Park displayed a sense of racial harmony and a bright future for the Vollintine-Evergreen community. The tying photograph was of two weary skaters at the park. Said judge Murry Riss, photography instructor at the Memphis Art Academy, "This is just a very well done picture. B. J. Conner is okay with me."

Placing second was Thomas Turley, retired attorney who lives on North Maury. Turley entitled his picture, "Strolling under the dogwoods on Galloway with your college sweetheart." The "college sweethearts" are Mr. and Mrs. Jameson Jones, long-time VECA residents. Said judge Peggy McCollough, neighborhood reporter for the Commercial Appeal,

"It gives me a feeling of the beauty of our neighborhood as well as the people who have lived here for many years and have taken care of it." Turley wins four complete tickets to Mud Island, a \$15 gift selection from the Quality Incentive Company of Malone & Hyde and a Carroll Cloar print from Brooks Memorial Art Gallery.

Southwestern's gown-clad graduates, ready to take on the world, won Marjorie Stoner of Snowden third place. "This captures the real spirit of Southwestern, which is such a historical place in our neighborhood," said judge Patti Lechman, chairman of the art department at Shelby State Community College. Stoner will receive a \$10 gift selection from the Quality Incentive Company and a Carroll Cloar print from Brooks.

Receiving honorable mention were M. Jordan, III, of Monticello Drive and John Collins of Lyndale Ave. Second and third prize pictures will be published in later issues of *The Evergreen News*.

The Evergreen News staff thanks all those who participated in the photography contest — the talented photographers, our generous neighborhood businesses and organizations which donated the prizes, and our three judges.



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SNOWDEN JUDGED (continued)

school year, said the optional school was judged to be "unusually effective in meeting the needs of its students." Snowden's Community School, which features programs like exercise and crafts, was a deciding factor in the recognition, he added. Bynum leaves Snowden this fall to start an optional program at East High School and will be replaced by Robert Archer, former assistant principal at Ridgeway High School.

Snowden School, located at 1870 Parkway, is one of the city's optional schools in that it offers students a highly structured, demanding program in language arts, math, science and social studies.

\$100 PRIZE FOR LOGO

By Rebecca Smith Richardson
VECA President

VECA is having a contest to create a new logo, or symbol. After the changes we've gone through in the last decade a new logo is needed to broaden the concept for which VECA stands while incorporating the full intent and meaning of the original logo.

Everyone living within the VECA boundaries (Watkins, Cypress Creek, Springdale/Trezevant, former I-40 right-of-way) is invited to enter. The rules are simple.

Drawings are to be black ink on white (unlined) paper, any size. Deadline for entries is Thanksgiving. No work will be returned. A \$100 cash prize will be awarded to the winner from VECA.

The new VECA logo should be something that can easily be adapted to different print forms — T-shirts, name badges, bumperstickers, letterheads and checks. It should be simple in design, original in content and, most of all, a timeless symbol of our neighborhood. It should be the visual counterpart to our slogan, "VECA - Midtown at its Best." Mail your entries to VECA LOGO, 1663 Tutwiler, Memphis, TN 38107.



Old VECA Logo

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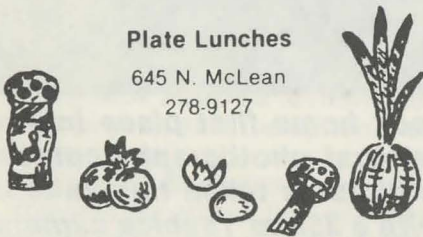
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