

# THE EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Association

DO NOT PUT IN MAILBOXES

VECA Address: 1663 Tutwiler, Memphis 38107  
Volume XIII, Number 3, August, 1987

VECA is a neighborhood organization made up of volunteers and paying members. The Evergreen News is the way in which VECA communicates with its residents.

The Evergreen News contains information about VECA, stories about neighborhood residents and businesses, information about City of Memphis government policies which affect the neighborhood, and both problems and successes in the area.

The VECA neighborhood is a mid-town community made up of older though elegant homes. It is bounded by Watkins on the West, Cypress Creek on the North, Trezvant on the East, and North Parkway on the South. VECA is a diverse neighborhood. It is one of the few successfully integrated neighborhoods in Memphis. The area has elderly residents, younger families, and single residents. VECA has very attractive institutions such as Snowden and Vollintine Optional Schools; churches including Protestant, Jewish and Catholic; one of the nation's most prestigious colleges in Rhodes College (Rhodes was named by Time Magazine as one of its "nifty nine colleges"); and several small neighborhood shopping areas which include dry cleaners, grocery/deli, butcher shop, car care center and restaurant.

## VECA DUES

VECA has a core of volunteers who are working to assist the neighborhood. We know that the vast majority of neighbors identify with these efforts, but may not have the time to devote to VECA.

**YOU CAN HELP.** Please send your yearly dues of \$5.00 to VECA to aid us in our work. It is crucial to have your financial help.

We no longer solicit advertising for the Evergreen News so it must now be paid from the Treasury. VECA would like to print a real estate brochure to attract new neighbors to VECA.

Since VECA was first founded, the price of houses has increased 300 percent. Some of this increase in value is directly attributable to the efforts of VECA. Please return the favor to VECA by your yearly membership contribution. A coupon is located at the end of the newspaper.

## BUSINESS COMMITTEE

VECA has formed a business committee to work on issues related to the commercial areas in our neighborhood. The committee is a direct outgrowth of a presentation by realtor Richard E. Wallace at the March VECA meeting.

Wallace made members aware that commercial areas are the gateway to the neighborhood. However, they are not a positive reflection on the neighborhood. Wallace showed what can be done in VECA by pointing out his efforts in restoring the commercial area at Evergreen and Poplar.

The committee will work with neighborhood businesses in beautification efforts. It will also attempt to improve the quality of commercial areas.

## YOUR INPUT NEEDED

The Business Committee of VECA is developing a plan to entice new businesses to enter the neighborhood. The committee needs to hear from VECA residents on the types of businesses needed in the neighborhood. We are asking residents to send their ideas for types of businesses to VECA. The comments can be very short and should be sent to Carol Bowden, 998 Sheridan Pl. Memphis, TN 38107.

## VECA MEETING CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

The next VECA meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 21 at 1663 Tutwiler. The meeting will start at 7:30 and will serve refreshments. The City Council candidates for the VECA district have been invited to a debate on neighborhood issues.

A panel of neighborhood residents will be questioning the candidates. It will be an

exciting political event and a chance for VECA to make its contribution in selecting the most effective City Council member.

At the time this paper went to press, District 5 had three candidates: Jack Sammons, Mike Shelby and David Lee. The incumbent, Robert James, is not running for the position.

#### NEWSPAPER CARRIERS NEEDED

Evergreen News carriers are needed for the VECA area between Evergreen, Vollintine, Jackson and Watkins. Please fill out the coupon at the end of the paper if you are willing to deliver on your block.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESSES

VECA supports the neighborhood businesses. The following is an unsolicited testimonial on some excellent products:

Townsend's Meat Market on McLean at Tutwiler has very fresh chicken breasts and leg quarters. Dino's Italian sausage is also on sale and is one of the best in the city.

Bosi's Market has a deli with "old world" cold meats. His barbecued ham is delicious and his genoa salami and turkey are both exceptionally good. Bosi also has inexpensive and tasty deli sandwiches.

Firestone Car Care is a friendly and competent repair service. They do a number of different types of engine work.

University Park Cleaners at McLean and Tutwiler does a booming business in the neighborhood. They do a competent job of cleaning clothes and make a genuine effort to learn the names of their customers.

Dino's restaurant has inexpensive plate lunches and a great Italian menu. He recently started some new and excellent specialties including lasagna, fettucini and tortellini.

#### A VECA SUCCESS STORY LITTLE FLOWER AND SUSANNA CENTER

The following scene, is typical of some neighborhoods, but not in VECA: A city church loses members moving to the suburbs; families remaining are smaller, older or have no children. The church school closes.

Why didn't this happen in VECA? Perhaps because parishioners and community members realized that the future of the church, the school, and the neighborhood were undeniably intertwined and required a broader viewpoint to achieve a solution.

Little Flower Catholic Church has maintained a parochial school since 1922. However, the number of children in the school had declined because Catholic families were becoming smaller. Some parishioners had moved from the neighborhood and the congregation itself had aged. And most importantly, the public schools in the area had attracted Catholic students. We are very fortunate to have optional schools in the neighborhood at Snowden, Springdale and Vollintine.

Little Flower could no longer justify maintaining its parochial school. Rather than leave the building vacant, the church, Father Edwin Creary and the Parish Council went to work on finding a suitable tenant for the building. Susanna Center was searching for a new building because it had combined two of its preschool programs. Reverend Mark Matheney worked with Mary Wilder, who was both director of Susanna Center and a VECA resident, to reach an agreement to use the school.

Susanna Center spent \$100,000 to renovate the school. New doors, fire alarms, and upgrading of heating, painting, plumbing and electricity were all accomplished. According to Susanna Director Nina Staples, there are now "six cheery classrooms with colored popsicle shapes." Specialized furniture and play materials were added. Extensive office space was created.

Ms. Staples said that the school has an enrollment of 95. The children are physically and mentally handicapped preschoolers from the age of 15 months to four years. Class sizes range from 6 to 20 depending upon the children. There is a staff of 35 teachers, social workers, teacher assistants, therapists, cooks and administrative personnel. The preschool program operates year round, Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Ms. Nina Staples spoke positively about the neighborhood. She said "members of the staff are very pleased with the warmth, friendliness and beauty of the community." Ms. Staples also invited visitors from the

neighborhoods; "We welcome members of the community to visit the center to learn more about us."

#### CITY AGENCIES

The following city agencies should be called if you have a problem.

**Mayor's Action Center:** This is the agency which deals with all complaints. It is a good source to deal with most any issue. Phone: 576-6500

**Sanitation:** This agency is one of the most responsive to citizen complaints. If trash appears around your garbage can, it may be that the flipper on the sanitation truck is not working properly. A call will alert the agency to this problem. If your street needs sweeping, a call will result in a visit by a street sweeper. Numbers for Sanitation are: Curbside cart Repairs 576-6508; Dial-A-Truck for weekend cleanup 576-6508; Weed Department 576-6716; and Complaints 576-6851.

**Health Department:** If there are signs of rats, high weeds and unsanitary practices, this agency will be very responsive. (576-7600)

**Memphis Light, Gas and Water:** MLGW maintains a large section of right of way which is a greenbelt. Motor cycles and cars which destroy the turf should be reported. (528-4186)

**Renters:** Renters sometime have problems with landlords not maintaining the property. There is an excellent private agency, called Memphis Housing Opportunities, which can provide advice. (526-2191)

#### FOR SALE

VECA is a dynamic neighborhood: property values are increasing and many new attractive neighbors moving into the area. Many houses are undergoing remodeling. It is the type of neighborhood to which many Memphians are attracted.

A reader recently sent us this article which reminds us how to attract good neighbors. The reader writes:

A house is currently for sale on our street. We would like to share our thoughts with you on the actions that our neighborhood took to get good neighbors.

It is important to understand that your house is the most important investment that you own. It is up to you to protect that investment. The most influential factor in the value of your house is location--in other words, the quality and the friendliness of the neighborhood.

We found out that our neighbors, who we treasured, had decided to move since their house was no longer large enough for their family and enlarging the existing house was impossible. We told our friends and colleagues about the house. This did not lead to a sale, but it did indicate our feelings about getting good neighbors. Once the realtor's sign went up, we spruced up our block. Sometimes a neighborhood is wonderful, but appears ragged due to minor details. We swept sidewalks, the street, raked our lawns, picked up paper, parked extra vehicles in driveways so that it did not seem our street was overcrowded, and put away garbage cans and any material on our front porches.

We met the realtors and offered to help them in the sale of the house. Ours is a close neighborhood. We know each other and we have some very close friendships.

We want prospective neighbors to know about us and our neighborhood. We also are active in VECA and find that prospective buyers are impressed that there is a newspaper in the area. We willingly meet with an interested buyer. Sometimes we saw a prospective buyer walking on the street who wants to know more about the neighborhood.

#### RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY

A special thanks from VECA to the Sanitation Department for their fine work in maintaining the railroad route through the neighborhood. Unfortunately, the railroad has not exercised their obligation to maintain the property.

Steve Gadbois is interested in forming a VECA group to discuss the right of way, especially for purposes of a bike trail. Call Steve at 278-4116 if you are interested in participating in the discussion.

#### VECA HOUSING COMMITTEE CLAIMS SUCCESS

It is not legal for businesses to put up signs and function in a residential areas. When several businesses developed, the VECA

housing committee took their case to the City of Memphis to remove them.

Organized and obvious businesses will not be tolerated in residential areas and will be reported to the city at once.

RHODES UPDATE

Tom Kepple, Provost of Rhodes, spoke at the last VECA meeting. He discussed the new master plan which would require some new buildings on campus since the student population was increasing to 1500. The College is also planning to request a change to a university/college zoning type.

Kepple indicated that he would be meeting with neighbors directly adjacent to the College before the plan went to the City Council. Kepple made a commitment to the group that the College had no intention of expanding into the residential areas of the neighborhood. He displayed a strong Rhodes commitment to the neighborhood.

Kevin McDonald from Hein Park spoke in opposition. He said the change in zoning was not necessary and had the potential of introducing uses not compatible with the neighborhood. He also spoke against relocating the football stadium from its present site.

THE VECA ADVISOR

The VECA Advisor provides hints to homeowners on a variety of issues.

MLGW still provides zero interest loans to home owners to install insulation and storm windows. All it takes is a call to MLGW for an energy survey.

It has been reported to VECA that unscrupulous plumbers are banging on water pipes at the time they provide estimates. The reason the plumbers give is to test them. However, banging on pipes actually creates water leaks.

Stripping woodwork with chemicals is a dangerous and difficult task. Now, a new heat gun make the task easier, safer and neater. A heat gun can be purchased at hardware stores for about \$30.

SECURITY PATROL

The VECA Executive Committee endorses the

Universal Security Patrol. The service operates on a voluntary subscription fee of \$23 per month from homeowners who receive the service. They patrol the streets around subscribers, respond to calls for assistance, pick up mail during vacations, and respond in situations in which the police would not want to be bothered. It is a wonderful service. Their phone number is 274-1794.

VECA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President Grace Wallace has been meeting with the Executive Committee of VECA on the first Monday of every month. The following is a report of their actions. Rich Olcott was appointed secretary of the committee. The committee voted to establish the Margaret Ditchel Award to be given for meritorious service to the VECA neighborhood. Mark Lindstrom is investigating the planting of the Jackson Median with flowers, as a memorial to Margaret. Mark Lindstrom is the VECA Representative to the Mid-Town Council. Mike Kirby serves as the Editor of the Evergreen News. A special mailing was made to VECA members asking for their help on June 27 to deliver the Evergreen News in areas which are not normally covered.

CLASSIFIED AD

Two line Classified ads in the Evergreen News cost \$10.00 and can be sent to 1663 Tutwiler 38107.

Wanted: Handyman; 10 hours a painting, lawns and cleaning. \$3.50 274-3875

VECA NEEDS YOUR HELP

You can help VECA by paying dues, attending meetings, or assisting one of the committees. Committee membership requires only 2 hours a month. The attached coupon should be returned to VECA at 1663 Tutwiler, Memphis, TN 38107.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
\$5.00 yearly dues \_\_\_\_\_  
Write for Evergreen News \_\_\_\_\_  
Deliver Evergreen News \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Committee \_\_\_\_\_  
Housing Committee \_\_\_\_\_  
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