

# VOLLINTINE-EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Publication Sponsored by VECA, the Vollintine-Evergreen Community Association

Volume XX, Number 4

November 1994

## VECA AWARDED \$975,000 GRANT!

by Steve Gadbois, VECA President

On October 3 the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis was notified that it will be one of nine national recipients of a Neighborhood Preservation Initiative grant from the Pew Charitable Trust, for use in the VECA neighborhood. Pew's \$650,000 will be matched by \$350,000 from local sources. The VECA neighborhood was invited to apply with the Community Foundation because of our strong neighborhood association, because of our diversity, and because our working-class neighborhood has much to offer and thus is worth saving.

The grant proposal required specific goals and strategies, but planning continues. Be sure to join us for our next general membership meeting on November 14 as the work continues in earnest. The highlights of the grant proposal follow:

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1. VECA will employ a part-time NPI grant coordinator.
  2. VECA will establish an office in the neighborhood.
  3. VECA will form a Community Development Corporation to acquire, rehabilitate, and market at-risk housing in the VECA area, and will employ a full-time CDC director.
  4. VECA will organize block clubs and establish a small grants endowment fund for block activities.
  5. VECA will establish a youth council, drawing from youth in area schools, churches and other programs.
  6. VECA will form a team to work with Cypress Junior High School.
  7. VECA will work to increase recreational opportunities. This includes working with area churches and schools, as well as the development and maintenance of the railroad right-of-way and other green spaces.
  8. VECA will help establish a business association to promote physical and economic improvement of area businesses.
  9. VECA will complete the National Register Nomination for Historic Designation.

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Many VECA residents and friends were involved in putting together the proposal and planning the very successful site visit on August 5. (Did you see the MATA trolley touring the neighborhood that day? Or did you hear the crowd in the "war room" at Dino's for lunch?) Thanks go to Chatty Bass, Margaret Blackmon, Kay Blues, Julie Borys, Janis Cannon, Rick Cartwright, Helen Evans, Janis Foster, Steve Gadbois, William Grandberry, Willette Gray, Conita Grigsby, Rudy Grisanti, Maryland Harrison, Martha Heinemann, Jenny Jenson, Josie Johnson, Sherry Lewis, Othneil Marque, Lois Mayfield, Danny Munns, Roland Nash, Linda

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Do not place in mailboxes

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Nichols, Gertrude Rhodes, Dottie Sachritz, Gloria Singleton, Gid Smith, Charlotte Swailes, Modene Thompson, and Mary Wilder, as well as anyone overlooked for this list. Several VECA Board members also met with Rhodes College officials Arthur Criscillis, David Harlow, Janice Herbert, Mark McMahon, and Billy Newton, and with Robert Lipscomb, director of the city's Housing and Community Development office.

But this could not have happened without the generosity of the Pew Charitable Trust, the organizing ability and vision of VECA vice-president Mary Wilder, and the experience and hard work of Community Foundation program officer Janis Foster. Janis first alerted VECA to the grant possibility, worked closely with all of us as we drafted our proposal, and finally turned our sketchy "wish list" into a very professional grant proposal. Mary kept the project alive and saw to it that dozens of us got involved in the entire process. The positive effects on our VECA neighborhood will be visible for many years. Thanks and congratulations to everyone!

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*... because of our strong neighborhood association, because of our diversity, and because our working-class neighborhood has much to offer and thus is worth saving.*

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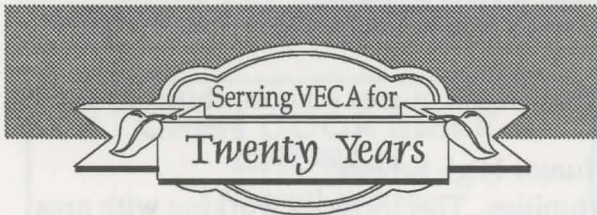


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## Our Feathered Neighbors

by Lula Coffey

The Mockingbird is the state bird of Tennessee and is one of our most visible birds. About



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P. O. Box 12011  
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Danny Munns, Layout & Graphics Editor

Ann Munns, Coordinating Editor

Mary Wilder, Writer

Martha Heinemann, Finance

Steve Gadbois, Distribution

Center for Neighborhoods, Editing

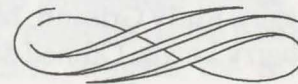
**VECA Hotline: 276-1066**

nine inches long, with gray and white in wings and tail, it imitates many other bird songs in a flowing manner, often at night in the spring.

The Brown Thrasher is slightly larger, and is rich brown above and streaked brown below. It also imitates other bird songs but gives phrases twice with a slight pause in between. It's not as common as the Mockingbird.

The Catbird is the most shy of this family, and is named for its mewing call ... just like a kitten! But it is a poor imitator, and its song is a bit squeaky. It's smaller, and dark gray above with a black cap and hard-to-see rusty undertail coverts.

The Catbird leaves our area in late September or October, while the Mockingbird and Brown Thrasher are here all year long. These birds do not eat birdseed. To attract them, feed bread crumbs, fruit, suet, or peanut butter mixed well with meal or grits.



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Fr. Bob Ewing, Pastor  
276-1412



"All Are Welcome"

## VECA NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUS

### Peace Lutheran Church Celebrates Its Seventieth Anniversary

On Sunday, October 16 the congregation of Peace Lutheran Church celebrated its seventieth anniversary. Presider was Reverend Tom Ridenhour, pastor of Peace Church (and a very active VECA person!), and Preacher was Bishop Harold Skillurd of the Southeastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Peace Church, originally called First United Lutheran Church, was chartered in October of 1924, and is located at 1548 Jackson, between Willett and Maury, in VECA's northwest quadrant.

The congregation of Peace Church is a growing mixture of diverse people united by faith. Members reflect the same diversity treasured by VECA: black and white, young and old, from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

Peace Church hosts a variety of programs in its facilities: OPACT provides school-age child care for working families, 12-step groups provide paths to recovery from addiction, a Boy Scout troop molds boys into young men. Besides its growing involvement in VECA, the Church runs an after-school tutoring program and fosters a rich worship life that draws on the riches of cultural traditions from Martin Luther and J. S. Bach to Thomas Dorsey and Andre Crouch. For more information, call the church office at 274-3677.

### November General Membership Meeting



The next VECA general membership meeting will be at 7pm on Monday, November 14 at Peace Lutheran Church (1548 Jackson Avenue). The focus of the meeting will be on implementing the strategies outlined in the successful proposal for the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative grant, explained more fully in the separate feature article. A large portion of the grant deals with housing, and a Community Development Corporation is already being formed. Come with ideas and be prepared to volunteer with your neighbors. Everyone is welcome!

### Boatmen's Bank Teams Up With VECA

Boatmen's Bank of Tennessee believes in business and neighborhood partnerships as the primary ingredient in undertaking successful projects, and makes it its business to be a part of them. That's why Bill Stemmler, Vice President and Manager of CRA and Compliance, met twice recently with Steve Gadbois, Mike Kirby, Tom Ridenhour and Mary Wilder to discuss a possible partnership with VECA.

According to Stemmler, Boatmen's has worked with the Cooper-Young neighborhood and merchant associations for more than eight years, and formed the Copper-Young Development Corporation in 1990. That CDC now has one house under rehab construction.

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Three more houses have been purchased under a CHDO grant, and the group plans to acquire nine more under the Home Program.

Mr. Stemmler, a Memphis native who grew up in the midtown area, shared with the group the Bank's philosophy that revitalized neighborhoods is not only the right thing to do, but makes good economic sense as well. Boatmen's has been a long-time sponsor of Snowden School through the city's Adopt-A-School pro-

gram. It looks forward to exploring all of the preservation initiatives which VECA has identified, particularly the formation of a Community Development Corporation.

Boatmen's Bank of Tennessee is a subsidiary of Boatmen's Bancshares, Inc., with assets of \$780 million and 14 Memphis locations. Questions or comments are welcome; contact Bill Stemmer at 762-6307.

## VECA News Advertising Editor, Margaret Brown Dies

Long-time VECA resident and advertising editor for this Vollintine-Evergreen News passed away on August 30, 1994. Mrs. Brown was an MLGW employee, a former teacher, and a generous volunteer. She leaves her husband,

Judge George H. Brown, as well as a daughter and a son. Memorials may be sent to the United Negro College Fund in care of LeMoyné-Owen College.

## Back to School for the Stonewall Block Club

The Stonewall Block Club rung the bells at their September 1 meeting at 893 Stonewall. Members brought school supplies to donate to neighborhood school children, a project that will continue throughout the year. Thanks to all who shared! Block Club officers were also elected: Gloria Singleton, president; Samuel Thompson, vice-president; Jane Danridge, secretary; Georgia Swift, treasurer; Darrell Richardson, chaplain; and Mary Haynes, public relations. Other members present were Kay Bradford, Francis Hall, Mary Stugall and Margaret Winfrey. Special thanks to Payne's Lawn Service for adopting a yard and congratulation to the senior citizen who received this service.

### *School's out. Do you know where your kids are?*

EVERGREEN'S AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM could be the answer you've been looking for. We've increased our staff of trained adult supervisors to provide recreation and tutoring in age-specific groups for children in kindergarten through 9th grade. Monday-Friday, 2:15-6:00 p.m. Call Debby Preslar at 278-8919 for details!

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## CAUTION!

A man has been going around the neighborhood posing as a fundraiser for Friends for Life trying to collect money for a new house in midtown. He has NO relationship to Friends for Life which does not raise money door-to-door. While we encourage donations to Friends for Life, this man is a con artist and the police should be called if he approaches anyone.

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## VECA Vollintine-Evergreen Community Association

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, neighborhood residents, business and government policies. VECA is bounded by Watkins on the West, Cypress Creek on the North, Trezevant on the East and North Parkway on the South. Contact VECA by writing to P.O. Box 12011, Memphis, TN 38182-0011.