

VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

N E W S

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

Volume XXII, Number 4

JULY 1996

VECA ANNUAL PICNIC!

This year's free VECA potluck picnic will be held on Saturday, July 13 from 5 to 7 p.m. behind Evergreen Presbyterian Church at 613 University Street. The playground will be available for children. Drinks and eating utensils will be provided. Bring your favorite dish and join your neighbors for food, fun, and fellowship!

UPCOMING MEETINGS

ALL MEETINGS AND EVENTS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE.

VECA PICNIC July 13, 5-7pm
(Evergreen Presbyterian Church)

VECA Board July 13, 4pm
(Evergreen Presbyterian Church)

VECA CDC Board July 13, 4pm
(Evergreen Presbyterian Church)

Greenways & Parks Committee July 16, 5pm
(at University & Jackson)

Housing Committee August 3, 9am
(VECA office)

The VECA Business Association will soon have its first meeting. For more info call the office at 276-1783

VECA Board (at VECA Office) August 5, 7pm

VECA CDC Board (at VECA Office) August 10, 9am



WE'RE NOW THE VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT!

On April 12, 1996 the Vollintine Evergreen Community was placed on the Secretary of the Interior's National Register of Historic Places. At a reception for all residents held at the VECA office May 17, VECA received a certificate of Merit from the Tennessee Historical Commission recognizing the preparation of the nomination by volunteers. Darrell Cozen from the Memphis Landmarks Commission and Chris Fales from Memphis Heritage spoke to the crowd of VECA residents. Plaques for our homes were designed by Sherry Henson Adcox and were made by Rainbow Studio, and are now available for sale. Samples and order forms are available in the VECA office at 1680 Jackson.

Another article later in this issue details the history of the "Avalon area", and the plans to include it in a future Historic District nomination.

Congratulations VECA residents — many of you have worked hard for several years on this project.

FROM THE FOURTH ISSUE OF "THE EVERGREEN NEWS"

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association (April 8, 1971)

—Before Time Magazine (March 15, 1971) in an article called "Showdown in the Park" gave national recognition to the effort of Citizens to Preserve Overton Park, the fate of the park, at least to the average person, appeared sealed.

—In recent days many neighborhood residents have been approached by real estate salesmen claiming they have a client willing to buy the resident's house.... Such action, although by no means illegal, indicates that certain agents feel they can profit from the placing of additional "For Sale" signs. VECAA urges that any deals involving quick sales be thoroughly investigated.

—A group from VECAA will put on a panel discussion at the April meeting of the Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association in order to present its approach to current urban problems.

—FOR SALE: Sears Copy King II — wet copier, \$10.

—JOBS WANTED: Two teenage girls 15 and 16 desire baby sitting jobs. 50 cents an hour, 75 cents after midnight.

YARD SALES — 'TIS THE SEASON!

Too much of a good thing is too much. The VECA office has been receiving calls about yard sales on Jackson Avenue and in other areas of the neighborhood. Here is information that may help residents understand the rules of yard sales.

A person may have two yard sales a year. Each yard sale may run from Friday evening to Sunday evening.

You do not need a business license if you are selling used merchandise. However, selling new merchandise requires a business license.

Two yard sales are considered "casual and isolated" sales and are tax exempt under state sales tax laws.

If you run a yard sale ad in the Commercial Appeal, you may pick up two free signs at the Commercial Appeal offices.

It is against city code to post signs on trees in public spaces (e.g., boulevards and medians).

You must remove all signs from public spaces after the sale.

If there are more than two sales a year at one location, violations can be reported to Shelby County Code Enforcement at 385-5197 and/or the Tennessee Department of Revenue Field Audit Division at 537-2902.

Though not essential, it may be helpful to have dated photographs.

Yard sales are fun and a good project for a street to do together. They can also be an unsightly nuisance if done too frequently without consideration for your neighbors. Give others the respect you would like to receive. Have a great summer — clean out those garages, closets, and attics. Just follow the rules of common courtesy.

SNOWDEN STUDENTS RUN ON...

Congratulations to Christopher Gray and Joneau Singleton for excelling in track at Snowden this spring. Both of these young men live on Stonewall in the VECA neighborhood. Christopher won third place in the 800 meter run. Also in the 800 meter run, Joneau won first place in the city and first place in the district. They competed against Cypress, Georgia Hill, Humes, Fairview, Chickasaw and other junior high schools in the city. We attribute Christopher's winning spirit to his cool quiet confidence and Joneau's partly to his Aunt Vickie who got him involved in sports in his preschool days at the Dave Wells Community Center. The instruction of Coach Bell and encouragement of Coach Taylor were also important.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION REPORT

As of press time the VECA CDC has sold the first of our ten houses on North Watkins and one of our houses on Faxon. We want to welcome to the neighborhood Ms. Henrienne Coffee and her family as well as Brian and Samantha Bullard. Of the remaining houses on North Watkins, we have sale contracts on six. Also available are 1659 Jackson (\$57,000), 1433 Faxon (\$65,000), and 1403 Faxon (\$55,000). Call Steve, Ruth or Robert at 276-1783 for more information.

As part of an effort to work more closely with realtors, we will be setting up a display area at the office with information available on all houses for sale in VECA: the CDC's houses, houses for sale by owner, and houses offered by realtors. Let us know if you have a house for sale in the neighborhood, and encourage potential buyers to stop by to check.

ZONING MEETINGS HELD

On June 18 and June 20, VECA residents had opportunities to attend two public meetings on a comprehensive land use plan for the VECA community. (Thanks to Open Door Bible Church for hosting the first of the meetings.) The proposed plan will downzone much of the neighborhood, making our zoning much more consistent and helping to preserve the mostly-residential nature of the neighborhood. Mr. Jimmy Covington will be presenting the plan soon to the Memphis City Council for its approval.

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS FESTIVAL

The first annual Tennessee Williams Theatre Festival announces a picnic, costume contest, and entertainment to celebrate the 1935 Memphis premiere of Tennessee Williams's first play, "Cairo! Shanghai! Bombay!"

The events will be held in Rhodes College's Fisher Gardens on Saturday, July 13, beginning at 12:30 p.m. Bring an old-fashioned picnic lunch; soft drinks will be provided. Come dressed as the young Tom Williams (circa 1935), the older Tennessee Williams, or as a character from one of his plays.

At 2:00 p.m., there will be a commemoration of the production of "Cairo! Shanghai! Bombay!" in Memphis on July 12, 1935. The entertainment will include a background piece from the play, presentation of "Belle Reve" (a new play by Memphis playwright Howell Pearre), a reading of Tennessee Williams's poetry by his brother Dakin Williams, a costume parade, and presentation of the \$100 prize for best costume.





PLANTING ON TUTWILER

Have you noticed the new crepe myrtles on Tutwiler? Neighborhood volunteer and long-time resident Charlotte Swales and her hard-working sidekick Pete have been seen planting tree and flowers. Charlotte got the plants from developers who had thrown them out. She and Pete nursed them through the winter and have taken on this project this spring. She has recruited helpers on Tutwiler to water the planted medians. If you like the work tell them and offer join in.

Would you like to plant all VECA medians with daffodils and crocuses? How about a fall plant-a-thon? Would you be willing to organize an area in front of your home on Jackson, University, Tutwiler, or North Parkway for a planting? Call the office at 276-1782 to join the VECA Green Median Subcommittee of the Greenways Committee.

THANKS

I would like to thank the Stonewall Block Club for their kind expressions of love during the passing of my father, Mr. Leslie Jones.

From your neighbor, Margaret Winfrey.

AUBURNDALE BEWARE!

When Chiquita Isom comes through, beware! Moving along Auburndale like a ball of thunder, knocking on doors, and talking to neighbors in their homes and on the street, she is determined to wake up the residents and convince them to become responsible and accountable for their neighborhood. Under her leadership, the Auburndale blockclub had a meeting on May 21 at the new VECA office. Their three goals this year are to have a blockclub barbecue, a garage sale and a National Night Out event where neighbors would pray for their home, street and community. Wake up and watch out, here she comes again!

HOT DOGS

The streets of Garland, McNeil, Maury, and Avalon got together for fellowship and a good time on June 1 and June 8. Janis Cannon and Gloria Singleton helped organize the event.

A PASSING ERA

Pete Swailes

Older residents of VECA will remember Ed's Exxon. From its location at McLean and Faxon to Madison and Belvedere, Ed's was a midtown institution — a service station (with the emphasis on service!).

After 42 years of caring for the cars of VECA drivers, Ed Cisson has slowed down. Having the heart hiccup twice in the last three months has shown Ed that even the best of us must take time to smell the flowers. Gone are the ubiquitous gray coveralls, the 16-hour workdays, and the exposure to the vagaries of Memphis waether.

During those 42 years, Ed maintained the cars of people like Genola Alexander, who lived most of her adult life at 663 North Auburndale. Ed performed his magic on Gen's '62 Chevy for 18 years after it was paid for. She finally looked for a trade in 1982 — she got tired of the Chevy's color.

Ed and his merry band — Jimmy, John, Willie, and David — still can cock an ear at an ailing engine, pop the hood, and after just a tweak, send you on your way.

The next time you are driving south on Evergreen, hang a right at Overton Park. A few doors past the Stonewall Lodge of the AF&AM, you will see a little sign for Ed's place. Stop in — it's a service station. They don't pump gas.



Welcome to the Stokes,
our new family on Stonewall.
Thank you Marilyn, Marlus,
Laresha and Julius.
You have already become
an asset to us by being here!

FUTURE ADDITIONS TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

While much of the VECA neighborhood dates from the 1920s and 1930s, some areas are newer and thus weren't eligible for Historic District designation with the original application. But plans are to include these newer areas later, and much of the work has already been done.

The nomination for the area between Vollintine and Cypress Creek has been prepared and submitted to the Tennessee Historical Commission for review. This area is divided into two sections, Avalon and Colonial. When the nomination is complete both areas will be referred to as Vollintine Evergreen National Historic District. This issue of the Vollintine-Evergreen News will outline the Avalon area nomination. In the next issue will highlight Colonial.

The National Vollintine Evergreen Avalon Historic District is bound by Vollintine on the south, Cypress Creek on the north, Evergreen on the east, and the back property line of Stonewall (with the exception of the west lot line of two adjacent properties on the north of Vollintine west of Stonewall) on the west. This district is being presented for National Register nomination based on the changes in the historical pattern of development and the impact of the national Jadwin Flood Control Plan in the flood-prone areas of this section of the VECA neighborhood. The street patterns change from a grid pattern to a loop street pattern, which came into fashion during the 1930s in an attempt to maximize land usage and reduce building costs. This is exemplified by Terry Circle, Michelle Circle and Evergreen Circle. This change was

prompted by the recommendations of the National Resources Planning Board. Established in 1935 under FDR's New Deal, this board published more than 370 pamphlets in the late 1930s and early 1940s dealing with the wise development and conservation of our natural resources, including land management and subdivision planning. They informed county and city planning officials as well as

levees didn't work and that it was impractical to keep extending their heights. They believed that the floods would go over the levees no matter how tall they were. A compromise was reached, and the levee system was supplemented with flood walls, channelization, reservoirs, pumping stations, etc. The flood of 1937 covered a large part of Avalon. All of the developments bordering the north

side of this area were dangerous-to-impossible before the Cypress Creek Pumping Station was built in 1941. The pumping station is located at North Bellevue and North Levee, where Cypress Creek empties into the Wolf River. It was a massive undertaking at the time it was built, being the largest in the Mid-

South area. It can pump 3120 cubic feet per second of storm water, and 5800 gallons per minute of sewage into the reservoir. The Cypress Creek floodplain still remains undeveloped, and is used to hold runoff in the spring.



individual developers. The loop street pattern was based on the same concept as the cul-de-sac, which also was widely used during this time. This design also eliminated through traffic, as only residents' vehicles and service vehicles would have the need to drive down the street. Pedestrian-friendly plans were coming into vogue at this time, and this streetscape facilitated this new desire of American homebuyers.

The Jadwin Plan was in response to the Great Flood of 1937, which covered the Mississippi and Ohio river basins. The devastation caused a major debate over what was to be done about flood control. General Jadwin of the U.S. Corps of Engineers promoted the "levees only" idea, which held that the government needed to add to and strengthen the already-existing levees. Much of the public disagreed, saying that the

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VECA HOTLINE: 276-1782

The quality and style of housing in the Avalon area is another criteria for National Register nomination. The Avalon neighborhood housing stock changed as well, due to the depressed economy prior to World War II. There was a housing shortage, so developers were building, and people were settling for, smaller houses. Building supplies were very expensive, so houses were not only smaller but also less detailed. This is apparent when comparing Avalon area of VECA to the area of VECA south of Vollintine and the earlier grid pattern on the west side of Avalon. The loop street developments in Avalon began in the late 1930s and continued until the mid-1940s. These loop street areas are prime examples of depression era and World War II housing; their Minimal Traditional style and smaller house sizes are keys to the area's nomination. Avalon is the first district in Memphis to be nominated as a cohesive group of the Minimal Traditional housing, as this era of architecture is now eligible for National Register status.

Avalon was not incorporated into the Memphis City limits until 1929, although this area north of Vollintine Street was part of early Memphis development. Hill Street (now Evergreen) was a dirt road that connected Old Raleigh Road (now Jackson Avenue) to New Raleigh Road (now Chelsea Avenue). Hill Street went past the property of Constantine Paine. The Constantine Paine home dates from the 1850s and still stands at 1055 Evergreen, though it recently burned. The Paine homestead consisted of 80 acres and the Terrys bought lot six acres of the Paine property for their home. They subsequently purchased other land in the area for the development of small, ten-acre dairy farms. The surrounding area became known as Terry Town.

Cypress Creek (which forms the northern boundary of the Avalon

area) was the source of fresh water and the reason the Paines and Terrys located their farms on the hill above Vollintine back to the creek.

During the yellow fever epidemic, the Father Matthew Society set up a refugee camp at Stonewall and Willett at Vollintine, with Cypress Creek as a source of water. Avalon remained rural in character until its 1929 incorporation into the Memphis city limits. Watkins was not extended to Chelsea until the 1941 flood control measures along Cypress Creek were completed and a city incinerator was removed from the Watkins/Cypress Creek area.

The first development of Avalon was H.M. Hall's Stonewall Heights, which was started in 1927, along both sides of Stonewall. Although this is Hall's only development being included in this nomination, he was a large developer in Memphis, especially the Vollintine-Evergreen area, during the first half of this century.

W.H. Coats continued development along Stonewall north to the Cypress Creek floodplain in 1937. Some of the Coats family still lives on the end of the street.

The Dlugach brothers were members of the Jewish community and influential developers in the Avalon area. Ben P. Dlugach developed Avalon View in three phases, beginning in the late 1920s and ending in the mid-1940s. Avalon View ran along the back of the property lines of Willett to the west, east to the west property line of Belvedere, and north of Terry Circle. Avalon's third and last addition includes Michelle Circle, which is a loop street development.

In 1940, Harry Dlugach filed plat maps for Terry Circle. This development was done with Colonel Terry (of the same family that ran the dairy farms). Terry Circle, a classic loop street, was developed along with the parts of Avalon and Vollintine that surround it. This development also includes the original Terry homeplace.

Dlugach and his relatives (some of whom changed their name to Delugach) ran development firms during most of this century in Memphis and were important developers in the Vollintine-Evergreen area south of Vollintine.

In 1939 John E. Taylor Sr., a descendant of Constantine Paine, began development of the Evergreen Circle subdivision. This too is a loop street development and includes the Constantine Paine homestead.

The commercial strip on Vollintine between Maury and Avalon was built in 1930 as a "suburban center" and has remained an important part of neighborhood. There are eight store bays that have been occupied by various merchants throughout the years, usually neighborhood-oriented businesses such as grocery stores, beauty shops, restaurants, and dry cleaners.

Vollintine Elementary School on the corner of Vollintine and Evergreen has served as a neighborhood school since it was built in 1930. The name stands as a reminder of the disagreement over the spelling of Voll - "i" or "e" - tine. The original landowner's name was spelled with an "e", but after years of showing up on maps and the city directory with an "i", the street was officially spelled this way. Vollintine Elementary voluntarily paired with Snowden Elementary during the turbulent integration of Memphis city schools.

The Jewish community started moving to Avalon as soon as homes were built in the 1930s. As the Jewish population grew so did the interest in moving their place of worship to the area. The war and the European refugee situation for the Jewish community put plans on hold. But after the war, the Vollintine Hills area and the Baron Hirsch Synagogue were developed by Herman Gruber and Philip Belz Sr., prominent members of the Baron Hirsch Jewish community.

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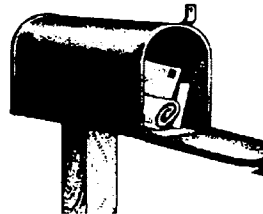
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ALEX'S — THE CLASSIC MEMPHIS TAVERN

A tavern with character is hard to find in any city, but when one is found, it is to be cherished. Alex's Tavern at 1445 Jackson Avenue is held dear by those who guard its quaintness.

Alex's was opened by Alex Kasafes in 1953. Alex died in 1978 and his son Rocky Kasafes took over after his death.

Alex's Tavern is the oldest bar in Memphis. In a city where bars come and go, Alex's has stood the test of time for the past 43 years. In 1993 Alex's was presented a key to the city and a proclamation from the mayor's office and city council before a standing room only crowd. Although the neighborhood has changed through the years, Alex's has managed to adapt to the ever-changing demographics and remain a successful bar.

The main lure over the years at Alex's has been the 2,500 song CD "Juke Box" which includes hits from the 50s to the 90s - just enough to satisfy both young and old. The juke box has been voted #1 in Memphis 18 consecutive years. You will find artists such as Frank Sinatra, Bobby Darin, Jimmy Buffett, Doobies, America, Van Morrison, Temptations, Rascals, Eagles, Elvis, Beatles, Elvis Costello, REM, Hootie and many, many more. You will always seem to hear those "hard to find" classics that have been stored forever in the back of your mind. You will also find those classic "soul and R&B" tunes from the 60s along with some hard to find "beach" music.

If you decide that you want something to eat at dinner time or late at night, don't hesitate to try Alex's world famous "Greek Burger". Cheeseburgers at Alex's have been voted "Best in Memphis" several times. If you are not in the mood

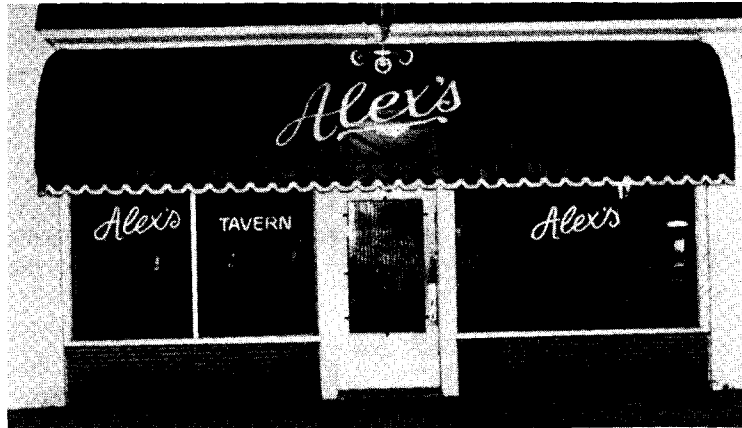
for a burger, try their hot wings - EXCELLENT! If you go in and ask for a menu be prepared for a hearty laugh from the regulars. Everybody knows it's "burgers and wings" - THAT'S IT! (But the kitchen is open until 5 a.m.)

You don't have to drive to east Memphis to watch your favorite sporting events either. Alex's was a "sports bar" before the term became popular. Stocked with four state-of-the-art, big-screen TVs and a satellite dish, Alex's is the perfect place to watch sports. The big screen up front is a "must see".

As far as live music goes, Alex's has hosted many bands throughout the years. Right now you can hear the acoustic duo of Posey Hedges and Fred Whither every Thursday night from 10:00 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Their sets consist of 70s and 80s rock along with some nice bluegrass. Alex's is also a favorite stop-off for famous bands and movie stars, such as Don Henley, Greg Almond, David Keith, Tim McCarver, Chicago, Dennis Quaid, Belinda Carlisle, Gin Blossoms and many more.

So, if you have been looking for the perfect, quaint, unpretentious, little neighborhood bar for a while, stop by and check out Alex's. Whether you want to sip an ice cold beer and have a "Greek Burger" ... put a dollar in the juke box and hear a blast from the past ... watch a ball game ... hear some live music ... Alex's Tavern is the place for you. Go by and belly up to the bar at the oldest and finest tavern in Memphis. All VECA neighbors are welcome!

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<input type="checkbox"/> Home Tours	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Association	Memphis, TN 38107		
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VECA

VOLLINTINE-EVERGREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

VECA is a neighborhood organization made up of volunteers and paying members. The Vollintine-Evergreen News is the way in which VECA communicates with its residents. The Vollintine-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 1680 Jackson Ave., Memphis, TN 38107 or call 276-1782.

A VECA COMMUNITY CENTER? -- IMPORTANT SURVEY!

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. Then fax, mail, or drop in the mailslot at the VECA office: 1680 Jackson, Memphis, TN 38107.

As you may know already, Rhodes College and VECA have formed a partnership (one of five college/community teams in the Delta region) to improve our people's lives. We will be writing and submitting this fall a major grant proposal to the Ford Foundation for a project of our design. Currently discussions have settled on a community center, and we have begun meeting with officials of Gethsemane Garden Church of God in Christ about the possibility of leasing and renovating some space in their large facility at 1740 Vollintine. (Other locations have not been ruled out, however.)

Many VECA residents attended the general membership meeting on May 16 to offer their suggestions. This survey is another chance for you to offer your ideas.

How long have you lived in the VECA neighborhood?

How old are all of the residents in your home?

"Community center" means different things to different people. How would you rate the following? Use this scale: 1=very important; 2=somewhat important; 3=not important but wouldn't hurt; 4=bad idea. Don't rate these all "very important"; we simply won't be able to do everything at the beginning!

- health education*
- basic health services*
- afterschool clubs for teens*
- afterschool recreation for teens*
- afterschool clubs for preteens*
- afterschool recreation for preteens*
- tutoring*
- mentoring*
- vocational guidance*
- college guidance*
- community education (all ages)*
- access to technology (computers, etc.)*
- cultural enrichment*
- improvement of racial relations*
- musical enrichment*
- youth service to others*
- lawn services*
- grocery delivery services*
- OTHER: _____*
- OTHER: _____*
- OTHER: _____*

We have already contacted VECA, Rhodes College, all nine neighborhood churches, all three neighborhood schools, the west and north police precincts, and the YWCA, and will attempt to involve them all. What other groups or agencies do you think should be involved?

Do you have concerns about this proposed project?

Do you have time to volunteer, or talents or skills to share? What?

Do you have additional thoughts?

Name (optional):

Address (optional):