VOLLINTINE & EVERGREE

N E W S

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

Volume XXII, Number 6

DECEMBER 1996

FROM THE SIXTH ISSUE OF "THE EVERGREEN NEWS"

"THE EVERGREEN NEWS, A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association" (June 3, 1971)

— Since according to Dr. [Arlo] Smith there is considerable evidence that an expressway through Overton Park would not only put an end to the park as we know and love it, but it might also become a racial divide, the Evergreen News pleaded for support for the conservationists.

— Support for the newly-formed V.E.C.A.A. has already come from most of our neighborhood clergy and their church congregations: Dr. Lloyd O. Barker and McLean Baptist Church, Dr. Howard C. Walton and Lindsay Memorial Presbyterian Church, Dr. Van Arnold, Rev. Mellen Darnell and Evergreen Presbyterian Church, Rev. Kenneth Morelock and First United Lutheran Church, Rev. George Comes, Jr. and Trinity United Methodist Church, and Msgr. Joseph E. Leppert, Father Milton Guthrie, Father Tom Kirk and Little Flower Church.

— There is abnormal sales activity on only three neighborhood streets — McNeil, Avalon, and Sheridan, on all three between Jackson and Vollintine.... It would be naive to believe there are no more people anxious to move. However, there is no longer panic.

— Today, at \$1.35, [Southwestern Grill's] plate lunches ... are still the best deal around.

VECA's collection of old issues of the Evergreen News is far from complete. Old issues that you could donate, or loan and let us photocopy, would be very much appreciated. Other VECA memorabilia is welcome too. Call the VECA office (276-1782).

JANUARY 27, 1997 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The annual VECA business meeting and elections will be held at 7pm on Monday, January 27, 1997 at McLean Baptist Church (at McLean & Jackson).

The meeting is free and open to all. It will be preceded at 6pm by a reception for all Block Club representatives.

NOMINATIONS WELCOMED

Nominations for the Dichtel award (presented to a neighborhood resident), the Borys award (presented to a public official), and VECA officers and Board members for 1997 may be sent to Mary Wilder at the VECA office (1680 Jackson, 276-1782).

Dichtel Award

1988 Martha Heinemann

1990 Julie Borys

1991 Mike Kirby

1993 Mary Wilder

1995 Willette Gray & Gloria Singleton

1996 Rhodes College & The Terry Circle Block Club

1997 ???

Borys Award

1991 Steve Shular

1992 Vernua Hanrahan

1995 Janice Foster

1996 William Stemmler

1997 ???

UPCOMING MEETINGS

VECA Annual General Meeting

VECA Board

Delta Team

Second VECA Home Tour

Greenways Committee

Housing Committee

Unless otherwise marked, all of these meetings are at the VECA office at 1680 Jackson. To be certain, you can call first at 276-1782. All are open to everyone.

January 27, 7pm, McLean Baptist Church

January 6, 7pm

January 21, 7pm

October 19, afternoon

second Monday monthly, 7pm

January 4

SUCCESSFUL VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN HISTORIC DISTRICT HOME TOUR

"What a beautiful neighborhood! I didn't know this area existed in Memphis. These are such solid, wellbuilt homes. I feel very comfortable here. These homes seem so livable. The neighborhood looks great. I liked walking down the streets from home to home. Everyone was so nice on the tour and I enjoyed the variety of things to do and see on the tour. The free MATA trolley, old cars, and flappers were a great idea." These are just a few of the comments heard over and over from the over four hundred people who took the VECA Home Tour on Sunday, October 20.

Net our proceeds of about \$2,000 will allow the VECA Historic Designation Committee to continue its activities, including the next home tour on Sunday, October 19, 1997. (Call the VECA office if you'd like to suggest an area to be featured.)

Thanks and congratulations go to the Historic Designation Committee chair Linda Nichols who led the effort for VECA's first home tour. Linda had a troop of dedicated volunteers who helped her organize the event. Sherry Henson was the design artist for the brochures and posters. John Rutkauskas was the sketch artist for the drawings of the individual homes. Stephanie Banks was responsible for publicity and ticket sales. The Downtowner magazine provided free ad space. Dottie Sachritz helped secure and coordinate the antique cars, the city fire truck and the mounted police patrol. The West Tennessee chapter of the Tennessee Antique Auto Club provided the cars. Inspector T. C. Hastey of the Memphis Police Department graciously entertained while patrolling the tour area on his horse. The fire bell rang frequently as firefighter Howell Pickett showed off the antique fire engine from the Memphis Fire Department and children "drove" the truck. Emily Rodda, Brenda Carter, Claire Rutkauskas, Kristen Foster, Elizabeth Gibson,

Elizabeth Johnson, Emily Spence, Rachel Spence, and Ellen Thompson from Evergreen Presbyterian Church's Girl Scout Troop provided free child care.

Andre Glen coordinated neighborhood cleanups, and worked with city officials and MLGW to have the area in tip-top shape. He also assisted with the distribution of tour yard signs and arranged with Girl Scout troop leaders Stephanie Rodda and Ruth Gibson for the child care.

Denice Perkins coordinated the actresses who appeared at the homes to give the tour the authentic feel of the 1920s. The flappers were Angel Sands, Chris Gladney, Miriam Ragland, Louisa Koeppel and Charlotte Higginbotham; they recently performed in the Theatre Works production of "Diary of a Flapper".

Randall Wilder of Sowell and Company helped coordinate a series of open houses of the homes for sale in the VECA area that day. Perhaps you noticed the multiple listing with several agents from different companies advertising together under the Vollintine Evergreen Historic District logo in the Sunday real estate section of the Commercial Appeal.

VECA President Jenny Jensen, Rick Cartwright, Ruth Gibson, and Mary Wilder hosted the VECA table the day of the tour. Mary also helped with the coordination of the trolley with the Memphis Area Transit Authority.

Each home had a coordinator from the Historic Designation Committee.

Dottie Sachritz was the coordinator for Dell Stiner's lovely tudor cottage at 866 Kensington. Ed Wingfield, Mary Beth Wingfield, Kevin Robbins, Suzy Robbins, Kay Jordan, Donna Windham, Ed Davis, Helen Dunn, Errol Dunn, Lois Williams, Deseree McNairy, and Valerie Withlow were the docents.

Molly Miller was the coordinator for the unique and charming tudor home of John and Claudia Rutkauskas at 918 Oakmont. Molly's helpers were Margaret Leggett, Janie Gamble, Betty Spence, Lynn Jackson, Michael Briggs, Brett Ammons, Marilyn Paavola, Katherine Nathan, and Mickey Spence.

Denice Perkins was the coordinator for the distinctive and tastefully decorated tudor home of Chuck Dille and Randall Paxton at 1900 Jackson. Lynn Barnett, Sherry Henson, Norman Adcox, Jason West, Bill Newberg, Joyce Clarke, Tom Fagan, Sue Fagan, Carolyn Head, Stephanie Darnell, and Stephanie Banks helped as docents.

Kay Blues was the coordinator for the stately colonial home of Brenda and David Jeter at 2057 Hallwood. Kay was assisted by Brenda Morris, Connie Jones, Michelle Dye, Debbie Warren, Bill Warren, Shannon Tabor, Laura Smith, Ann Munns, Brenda Jeter, David Jeter, Jeff Blankenship, and Don Kenney.

Charlotte Swailes was the coordinator for the classic tudor home of Bette Ackerman and Henry Kurtz at 2056 Hallwood. Leslie Black, Susan Kus, Buddy Lee, Evalie Hill, Victoria Pintea, Jimmy Thompson, Darlene Loprete, Kathryn Wright, Bette Ackerman, Henry Kurtz, and Pete Swailes were the hosts.

The Church of the Good Shepherd was the accommodating host for the main staging area of the home tour, and gave it a special touch. The women and men of Good Shepherd let VECA use their fellowship hall for the child care. They gave tours of their sanctuary, and volunteers also served hot dogs, cookies, coffee and soft drinks to the tour visitors.

Thanks to Linda Nichols and everyone who helped VECA that special day.



FUNDS FOR HOME REPAIR AVAILABLE

VECA CDC's Executive Director Steve Lockwood recently signed a \$140,000 grant contract with the Tennessee Housing Development Agency to administer low-interest home improvement loans for low income and very low income homeowners. The loan amounts range from \$3,000 to \$10,000, and are for a minimum of five years to maximum of fifteen years at an annual interest rate of 3%.

Homes to be repaired must be in VECA, and loans must be to repair serious code violations - bad roofs, faulty wiring, faulty plumbing, and other problems that threaten health and safety or could result in loss of community housing stock.

Loan applications will be available at the VECA office in mid-January. Rehabilitation work for qualified applicants will begin in mid-March. The loan process includes verification of income and home ownership.

Eligibility is determined by the income limits below. Preference will be given to large households, the elderly and the handicapped. For more information concerning THDA/VECA CDC home repair loan program and announcement of the public meeting to further explain and answer questions, contact Robert Drain at 276-1782.

Income Limits by Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Very Low Income	\$13,850	15,800	17,750	19,750	21,350	22,900	24,500	26,050
Low Income	\$22,100	25,300	28,450	31,600	34,150	36,650	39,200	41,700

VECA CDC UPDATE

As of early December, the VECA Community Delvelopment Corporation has sold 11 of its 21 houses:

887 Charles

1769 Edwards

1811, 1403 & 1433 Faxon

899 Idelwild

1659, 1680 Jackson

845 Maury

1127-1129 McNeil

1082, 1093, 1099, 1105, 1111, 1117, 1123, 1127, 1131, 1135 Watkins

710, 1182 Willett;

We are encouraged by housing activity that appears to have been stimulated by the work of the CDC. On Faxon, block club members report seven recent completed home sales that they attribute, at least in part, to the upgrading by the CDC of two problem properties. In the Watkins Village area, a private developer has purchased all of the available duplexes on Lexington Circle, as well as a 28-unit apartment complex on Brown just across Watkins that has been an eyesore for years. The duplexes are scheduled to be converted to single family homes and sold to first-time buyers, just like the CDC's homes. And across the street, there has been a flurry of fix-up activity by existing owners.

In short, we feel that this is the flip side of the broken window syndrome (which says that a broken window left unfixed will result in more broken windows down the block). We think it is quite obvious that when properties get fixed up, especially if they are the worst on the block, those nearby are more likely to fix their properties as well.



VECA NEEDS BUYERS

VECA CDC sold 12 houses in 1996, and will have about 15 more to sell in 1997. These are beautiful, fully renovated homes in many parts of the historic Vollintine-Evergreen neighborhood, selling for an average of \$55,000. Call Ruth at 276-1782.



VOLLINTINE DE BYERGREEN

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FATHER ROBERT EWING - IN MEMORIAL

by Helen Evans

It was the last Sunday in June of this year following the 8am Mass at St. Therese Little Flower Catholic Church. I sat with Rev. Robert J. Ewing, the church's beloved priest, talking about our plans to visit Chicago, he to attend his aunt's funeral and I to attend my high school's alumni reunion. Father Ewing (the name he was affectionately called by those whose paths he crossed) was fond of the aunt who had played an important role in his life after the death of his parents. It sounded strange for Father Ewing to say that he never thought his aunt would "go" before him. She had been the aunt who made delicious Italian food and spaghetti gravy. Eventually all who endeared Father Ewing to their hearts were saying "spaghetti gravy" rather than "spaghetti sauce", as most of us Southerners are accustomed to saying.

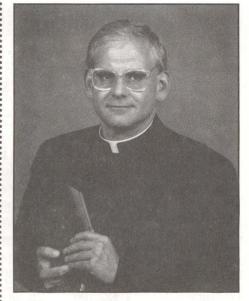
Father Ewing went to Chicago as planned, but he became ill and was hospitalized at Christ Methodist Hospital. I went to Chicago two weeks later to attend my reunion and with great anticipation of visiting Father Ewing. It took several calls to reach him and when we spoke he was surprised but cheerful and polite. When he told me, "I'll be here until the middle of August," I was devastated, since at that moment I realized that he was a very sick man. I never dreamed that would be my last conversation with

Father Ewing, who died September 14.

He was a priest who had been very proud of his vocation, and he had been very happy to serve the spiritual needs of the parishioners of his church. His homilies revolved around love, family, and peace. Father Ewing often recounted special stories of his family life - his parents, Chicago neighborhoods, and his love of God. He was an attention-getter. For example, many Sundays Father Ewing woud walk halfway down the center aisle or stand at the communion rail as he preached about that particular Sunday's readings. Many times he closed his homily by saying "St. Therese is a welcoming, Catholic community," and he extended a hearty welcome to church newcomers and visitors.

Father Ewing was also a man of great compassion. One Sunday, for instance, a stranger literally took over the service as he walked up and down the aisles while shaking the hands of people seated in the pews. The stranger led the surprised congregation in a gospel song, and he even took the liberty of delivering the sermon. While most in the congregation were quite disturbed, Father Ewing, compassionate as always, simply said "We have heard the homily," and he continued the service.

Father Ewing was an important leader who gave strength to his community. He was devoted to the



Catholic religion, and his love of Little Flower was enriched with the opening of Nazareth Hall, the daycare center, and the nursery, as well as the installation of the new air conditioning system. He visualized repairing the church's rain-damaged walls and ceiling. It would be wonderful if the parish would dedicate these repairs to the memory of Father Ewing.

I personally will miss his homilies, his assistance in so many areas, and even his funny little eyeglasses. Father Ewing was a caring priest who loved every Little Flower parishioner. Every gift, time and talent was significant. His message was simple yet poignant we are of one faith, one body of the Lord and one church. Although Father Ewing is no longer with us, he has left a community enriched by his presence and embellished by his memory.

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GREENWAYS

The near future promises to be an exciting and productive time for VECA's volunteer Greenways Committee. CSX Transportation has accepted VECA's offer to purchase the L&N railroad right-of-way for \$15,000; the sale is expected to close before the end of 1996.

VECA received a \$2000 planning grant from the state's Bicentennial Greenway Trails Planning Grant Program, in cooperation with the city's Office of Planning and Development. The awarding of this grant designates our greenway as an official Tennessee Greenway, complete with an authentic sign. The grant is to be matched by VECA and allows us to consult with professionals in creating a master plan for the effective development of our greenway. We have consulted with horticultural specialist Tom Pellett to identify and make recommendations about the plant life along the corridor. Local landscape architect Ritchie Smith has been consulted to create a base map with recommendations, opportunities, and constraints. The finished product will be a portfolio to be used as a marketing tool to gain further funds.

The section from University & Jackson east to Springdale is the current focus. On August 30 we received cleanup help from 75 Navy and Marine volunteers, as part of the United Way's Day of Caring. On October 12, a walk-through was conducted along that section to elicit the support and input of those neighbors, and on November 9, there was a major cleanup and planting, sponsored by the Rhodes

Townhouse Project and the Greenways Committee.

The Lick Creek project has been put on hold until the development of the Greenway is further along. However, a maintenance plan will be worked out involving the neighbors and the city's Public Works department. The possibility of youth employment is being looked into.

Cypress Creek is also on hold. There needs to be more research and investigation of the level of contamination before any action is taken. VECA will use the ser-

vices of a volunteer who is graciously giving her time.

There has been some discussion with City Beautiful about the Jackson Avenue median beautification project. A partnership between City Beautiful, Plough Industries, Rhodes College, and VECA will hopefully result in a proposal for Interstate Transportation Enhancement Act funds in 1997.

THE CYPRESS SCHOOL FUND

On September 10, Memphis city schools superintendent Dr. Gerry House addressed approximately 300 parents, teachers and community residents at Cypress Junior High School's first PTSA meeting of the school year. She made the official announcement of the creation of the permanent Cypress Junior High School fund at the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis. This fund was established with a gift of \$10,000 from VECA with the intent of encouraging parental involvement at Cypress. VECA's gift was made possible by the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative grant. Half of the VECA neighborhood is in the Cypress district.

The first grant from the fund was awarded to the Booster Club of Cypress School. The Booster Club works with the students involved in sports, and is made up of parents of Cypress students, which is why it qualified for a mini-grant. The Booster Club will use the funds to buy T-shirts to help recruit members, to create

identity for its volunteer efforts, and to raise funds.

The fund advisors include parents, teachers, administrators, representatives from the neighborhood, representatives of Cypress's adopters (the Veteran's Administration and Springdale Baptist Church). The advisors are planning to award mini-grants twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Anyone involved at the school who has ideas for good projects that involve parents can obtain applications from Cypress School. Anyone wishing to make a donation (which may be tax-deductible) to the fund should contact the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis.

ZONING AND LAND USE PLAN

VECA held two public meetings in June 1996 to review the Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan with the VECA community. Eighty people attended the first meeting and sixty attended the second meeting. Comments were generally positive and only one person had serious concerns. Four City Council members have toured the VECA neighborhood to review the Plan and have agreed to support the Plan and Zoning request.

If and when the Plan is adopted by both the Office of Planning and Development and the City Council, VECA will file with OPD for changes in zoning based on recommendations in the Plan. The Land Use Control Board will review and be asked to approve the Zoning request, as will the City Council.

The Plan and Zoning request is at the VECA office for public review. Call 276-1782 for more information.

A "CHILDISH HEART SPOTLIGHT"

VECA recognizes the importance and contributions of children to the commmunity, today and in the future. We would like to acknowledge some outstanding neighborhood students beginning in the next Vollintine-Evergreen News. Parents, send information on your child or children to the VECA office in care of "Childish Heart Spotlight".

YOUTH AND RECREATION

The new Youth Group is made up of four church ministers in the north area of VECA, and is coordinated by Ruth Gibson. They have met several times since March of 1996 and have settled on working with the Memphis Park Commission to develop a sports league for that area. They have written By-Laws, designated youth leaders for the participating churches, and chosen a league commissioner.

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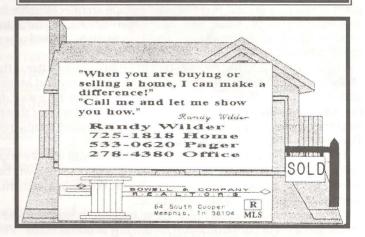
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Saturday Vigil Mass – 4:30 p.m. Tues. - Fri. Mass – 5:30 p.m.

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276-1412



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BLOCK CLUBS FOSTER GOOD NEIGHBORS

by Gloria Singleton, VECA Block Club coordinator

June saw the great Hot Dog Party, one of two new block club events held this past summer. The event was Janis Cannon's brainchild. Residents of Garland, Maury, McNeil, Stonewall, and Avalon held parties together. They met with grills and lawn chairs at Henry Avenue between Maury and Garland. Conversation and fellowship were the main course for the evening. Children and adults walked, talked, mingled, drank pops, and ate hot dogs, pickles, and chips. VECA donated the hot dogs, and residents donated other food items. Vincas were given out to residents of Maury Street (for having the most children in attendance) and Garland Street (most adults). Coming together in a show of unity and commitment to the neighborhood were Tommie Harris, Karen Crowder, Ray Crowder, Mary Holden, Myra Henderson, Preston Henderson, Carolyn Cannon, Bessie McBride, Mr. Ronald (our ice donor), Janis Cannon, Lawrence Gray, Mary Haynes, Pamela Haynes, Margaret Winfrey, Joan Bridges, Francis Hall, Gloria Singleton, Tyrone Moore, Eula Tyes, Erie Warren, Betty Shannon, Mr. Mertistein, Frankie Jones, Kaisee Powell, Carolyn Nelson, Jerry Powell, Annie Collins, and Bunnie Wilson.

Another new block club event was National Night Out, with candlelight prayer and celebration of community. The night of August 6, 1996 was designated as "Prayer for our community" event and will be a memorable night for some neighbors in the Vollintine Evergreen community. Candles were lit and prayers were said in honor of our families, homes, churches, and community. Neighbors barbecued on their driveways and ate outside and inside, and there was fellowship among new and old residents. Many lingered long after ending time. Some of the streets participating included Edward, Evergreen, Garland, Avalon (both north and south of Jackson), Maury, Sheridan, Stonewall, Terry Circle, and Berkeley. On Garland and Stonewall, children and adults

gathered in a large circle, held hands and bowed heads in reverence. Channel 13 interviewed some of the residents. Thanks to block club organizers Linda Stewart, Dorthy Davis, Othniel Marquei, Charles McBride, Conita Grisby, Ula Tyes, Lois Scott, Njama Thomas, Jessie Rodgers, John Thomas, Anne Laulederkind, Mary Haynes, Willett Gray, and Georgia Swift.

The Sheridan Street Block Club has been rolling steadily along towards its goal of unity. The turnout for the National Night Out was very impressive with all residents showing much enthusiasm. This enthusiasm manifested itself again on Sunday, September 8, when approximately forty residents gathered on the deadend of Sheridan for a cookout. With rain in the forecast and cloudy skies, hostesses Margaret McCain, Otis Jean Johnson, and Lois Scott held their breaths and remained optimistic. Residents feasted on hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans, and corn on the cob as they renewed old relationships and welcomed newcomers to the block. There was also discussion of the upcoming fifth annual block garage sale. Then the rain — cooperative long enough - finally arrived, after allowing residents ample time to mingle and begin closing out.

Lois Mayfield, one of the leaders of Evergreen Block Club, wanted her street to become more neighborly by hosting a meeting in the cool breezes on her porch. Neighbors were filled with friendship and the smell of good food. Jo Hauser discussed how the old-timers on the street looked after each other and testified about how one of her neighbors kept an unfortunate incident from happening to her. They also discussed future potluck parties, one of which may include a performance by Lois Mayfield's grandaughter Victoria, a former lead singer at Snowden. This section of Evergreen hopes everyone will join the Block Club and strengthen their neighborhood.

VECA "WISH LIST"

The new VECA office at 1680 Jackson is often a busy place, with plenty of good things going on. Stop by! To best serve our neighborhood, the staff and volunteers can use some of your good used castoffs:

shelves
file cabinets
tables
chairs
floor and desk lamps
bike rack
computer equipment
(especially Macintosh)
plants and volunteer landscaping
(especially in the spring)

We can arrange to pick up almost anything. Remember that your donation may be tax-deductible.

EVERGREEN CONCERT SERIES CONTINUES



Evergreen Presbyterian Church continues its third annual series of free concerts at 5pm on Sunday, December 22 with a concert of traditional Christmas carols by soprano Carole Blankenship, guitarist Howard Vance, and flutist Beverly Vance. Ms. Blankenship is a voice instructor at Rhodes College and a member of the Memphis Vocal Arts Ensemble. The Vances are well-known duo performers in Memphis and teach through the Howard Vance Guitar Academy.

Other upcoming concerts in the series:

8pm Friday, January 10—
Bruce Neswick, organ
8pm Friday, February 7—
Ron Burrichter, tenor
3pm Sunday, May 4—
Germantown Symphony

The public is cordially invited to these free concerts. Evergreen Presbyterian Church is located at 613 University Street across the street from Rhodes College and is handicapped accessible.

Name Telephone Evening: Telephone Day: Address Zip. I'M INT **MEMBERSHIP** ☐ Youth & Recreation ☐ Block Clubs DUES **VECA Treasurer** ☐ Housing & Code Enforcement ☐ Greenway ARE 705 N. Belvedere ☐ Business Association ☐ Home Tours \$10 ☐ Newsletter Delivery □ Newsletter Articles Memphis, TN 38107 **PER YEAR**



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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, and 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 (901) 276-1782.