

VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

N E W S

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

Volume XXV, Number 1

JANUARY 1999

VECA ANNUAL MEETING

All Vollintine-Evergreen residents are invited to VECA's annual meeting to be held on Monday, January 25, at Evergreen Presbyterian Church (613 University Street). There will be a block club reception at 6pm and a business meeting at 7pm. Though VECA hosts various other events during the year, this event is the most important for laying the foundation for a productive year. The new VECA Board and its officers will be elected, the new VECA CDC Board will be introduced, and both the Dichtel Award and Borys Award will be presented. Call the VECA office if you have any questions.

VECA'S YEAR-END RETREAT

On November 7, 1998, 27 VECA residents participated in a retreat conducted at MLGW's main office by Peggy Brewer, a Vollintine-Evergreen resident who works as Community Relations officer for MLGW. Participants included members of the VECA Board, members of the VECA CDC Board, members of several committees, and staff. Everyone had the chance to note what is good about Vollintine-Evergreen as well as to express concerns about our neighborhood. The new Strategic Plan (summarized in the November 1998 *Vollintine-Evergreen News*) and its Organizational Structure chart were discussed, and many goals were reaffirmed and prioritized. Topping the list were (1) increased volunteerism and (2) fundraising and membership.

Following the retreat, most enjoyed a pleasant dinner cruise on the Memphis Queen III, thanks to full funding from Pew Charitable Trust's Neighborhood Preservation Initiative.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & COMMITTEES

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. Committee meetings and Board meetings are open to everyone.



VECA Block Club Reception & General Membership Meeting	January 25, 6pm & 7pm
Old Home Expo & Trade Show (Snowden School and McLean Baptist Church)	May 22-23
Potluck Supper & Pool Party (Rhodes College)	July 10, 6pm & 7pm
Block Club Festival	fall, TBA
VECA Board	first Monday monthly, 7:00pm
VECA CDC Board	fourth Saturday monthly, 9:00am
Historic Committee	second Monday monthly, 7:00pm
Block Club Committee	first Monday monthly, 6:00pm (except for January 11)
Code Enforcement Committee	first Saturday of even months, 9:00am
V&E Greenline Committee	second Monday monthly, 7:00pm
Cypress Creek Beautification Committee	third Tuesday monthly, 6:00pm
Managing Committee	first Monday monthly, 5:30pm
Budget & Finance Committee	third Tuesday monthly, 7:30am
Housing Committee	second Tuesday monthly, 5:30pm
Commercial Revitalization Committee	second Thursday monthly, 7:00pm
VENews deadlines:	February 5, April 9, June 4, August 6, October 1, December 3
VECA Board	January 11, 7:00pm
VECA Board	February 1, 7:00pm
VECA Board	March 1, 7:00pm
CDC Board	January 23, 9:00am
CDC Board	February 27, 9:00am
CDC Board	March 27, 9:00am

CYPRESS CREEK UPDATE

Trent Pingnot

As profiled in the November 1998 issue of the *Vollintine-Evergreen News*, VECA recently received a \$20,000 Environmental Justice Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to be used in efforts to promote community involvement in the environmental issues regarding Cypress Creek, which forms the northern boundary of VECA.

On December 5, the Cypress Creek Beautification Committee and a local environmental educator held a walk-through of Cypress Creek and its floodplain between Evergreen and Watkins. The group discussed potential pollution sources as well as visible trash and lack of maintenance. The Committee would like to return in early 1999 with officials of Memphis Parks Commission and Memphis Public Works.

Dr. Maier of the University of Memphis Biology Department has identified sites for environmental testing to determine if the floodplain is contaminated. He will have completed his first series of soil tests by January 15, and will also conduct tests in April, August, and December.

If the test results indicate that Cypress Creek or its floodplain are polluted, the Committee, the EPA, and local government officials will begin planning clean up and beautification. If they are not polluted, planning for beautification and maintenance will be immediate.

The Cypress Creek Beautification Committee currently meets at 6pm on the third Tuesday of every month at the VECA office. All are welcome, especially those with knowledge of environmental issues.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST VISITS

On February 2, Rhodes College will host environmental activist Jerome Ringo. Mr. Ringo has extensive experience working with grass-roots organizations, and has a special passion for educating people about environmental justice. He was a delegate to The White House Conference on Global Warming and a representative at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

Mr. Ringo's free presentation will be held at 7pm in Blount Auditorium on the first floor of Rhodes College's Buckman Hall (the building closest to North Parkway). All Vollintine-Evergreen residents, especially those with a special concern for Cypress Creek, are welcome.

OCTOBER FEST REPORT

Gloria Singleton Fulton



We would like to thank all who participated in the October Fest held at St. Theresa Little Flower Church on Saturday afternoon, October 10. The weather was brisk, the sun was shining brightly, and it was a great day to share with family, friends, and our community. The new V&E

Greenline tractor was on display, amidst pumpkins and hay to add some fall flavor. It was a perfect day to enjoy hotdogs, chips, cupcakes, candy apples, and other fun food and drinks.

After eating, there was fortunetelling, watching the steppers, and other fun activities.

Thanks especially to the committee members: Annette Anderson, Janis Cannon, Betty Johnson, Jessie Rodgers, Clara Terrell, and Alma Warren. Once again, St. Theresa Church came through to support the entire neighborhood.

VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN N E W S

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VECA'S EARLY THANKSGIVING

Gloria Singleton Fulton

Thanksgiving came early to the VECA office this year, on Saturday, October 24, when the Michelle Circle Block Club celebrated its first year anniversary. There was plenty of chicken, turnip greens, green beans, potato salad, macaroni salad, deviled eggs, veggie dip, corn muffins, pound cake, lemon supreme cake, peach cobbler, and drinks.

Ann Wright is the contact person and the force behind the block club. Flexible and witty, she blends activities and good food to make a stronger block club.

Vivian Wilburn arrived after attending a book-signing at Greater Mount Zion by Rick Malone, author of "Violet of a Deeper Blue". Vivian says, "This book offers an exciting and provocative look at what it is like to be a black man in corporate America."

Others attending were Lois Bins, Lois Daniels and granddaughter Bianca, Elder and Ada Gaston, Milva Gill, L.D. and Juanita Hardy, Flora Hill, John and Sandra Shannon and daughter Erica, Mollie Shipmon, Patlee Taylor, and Eddie and Irene Tucker and daughter Barbara.

SALUTE TO NEIGHBORHOODS

On November 6, about a dozen Vollintine-Evergreen residents joined several hundred people from all over Memphis for the sixth annual "Salute to Neighborhoods" dinner at the Memphis Marriott. The sponsor was the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis and the theme was "Neighborhoods United Together for a Greater Memphis". Our own Julie Borys was one of twenty "Unsung Heroes and Heroines" honored that evening.

COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION

The following letter was sent on November 20, 1998 to all business owners in Vollintine-Evergreen's six commercial districts (Jackson at Evergreen, Vollintine at Avalon, Jackson at Watkins, Watkins at Brown, Springdale at Brown, and McLean at Tutwiler). It is reprinted here for two reasons: (1) to update you on our commercial revitalization work, and (2) to invite you to communicate your desires regarding our commercial districts directly to business owners that you do patronize (or wish you could patronize).

Dear Vollintine-Evergreen business owner:

We write to you on behalf of VECA's Commercial Revitalization Committee, to thank you for your business's service to our neighborhood and to bring you up-to-date on developments we hope you'll choose to be part of with us.

As you may know, through its Community Development Corporation, the Vollintine-Evergreen Community Association (VECA) has spent the last three years improving housing in our Vollintine-Evergreen neighborhood. Now our attention and our resources are turning to our commercial property (though work on housing will always continue). A commercial revitalization report was recently completed by E.T.I. Corporation (the same firm that did the plan for the revitalized Cooper-Young district). Some of you chose to participate in E.T.I.'s small focus meetings. E.T.I.'s report clearly shows that Vollintine-Evergreen's six small commercial districts could and would be supported by many more residents if relatively modest improvements (especially in exterior appearance) are made, and that report includes many detailed plans and concrete suggestions. City and county officials are more willing than ever to do commercial code enforcement with us. And commercial assessments will be taking place soon.

There are many redevelopment possibilities, some of which you might not be aware of. Some are listed on the form accompanying this letter, which we hope you'll fill out and return. *[Editor's note: That form is not included here.]* Because of support from VECA, the city and county, and the federal government, the costs of many improvements might be lower than you'd expect, and we have convincing data suggesting that improvements make good business sense. We welcome your creative ideas on how we can work together — your business experience and desires are unique.

For more information about any part of this commercial redevelopment work, feel free to stop by or call the VECA office (1680 Jackson Avenue, 276-1782). You are also welcome at any meeting of the Committee, normally at the VECA office at 7pm on the second Thursday of each month. Thank you, and we hope to hear from you soon.

FUTURE BUILDERS FOR SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

VECA, Rhodes College, and Bridge Builders are pleased to sponsor the second year of the VECA Youth Corps and the Future Builders camp for service and leadership. Current seventh graders with leadership potential and an interest in new experiences are eligible, especially those who either live in Vollintine-Evergreen or attend Cypress Junior High School or Snowden Middle School. Applications are available at the VECA office, Cypress, and Snowden, and are due by March 26. Selections will be made by April 9.

Students selected for the program will be asked to make a six-month commitment to exploring new ways of community building, self expression, service, and leadership. The Youth Corps will plan monthly activities, beginning in April, which will culminate with an adventurous week of action-leadership camp at Rhodes College, tentatively scheduled for June 21-25. The camp's theme is Future Builders, and it will be conducted in collaboration with Bridges, Inc., modeled after Bridge Builders, the landmark high school program for cross-cultural learning, adventure, recreation and leadership.

The Youth Corps is funded by gifts from VECA, the Rhodes College Kinney Program, the Bonner Scholarship Program, and Bridges, Inc. Youth Corps members will be asked to contribute \$10 to a community service fund, but all other expenses (about \$200 per student) are covered. That includes the Future Builders camp, all activities, all outings, meals, T-shirts, and graduation ceremony. Coordinators and trained counselors will come from VECA, Rhodes College, and Bridges, Inc.

Current seventh graders: If you are ready for adventure and new experiences in action leadership, this may be for you! We're searching right now for a few good Youth Corps members to help us build the future, so get ready to apply for this great new program.

- Fun & adventure
- Cool T-shirts & all-you-can-eat meals
- Future Builders action-leadership camp at Rhodes College
- Soup kitchens, ecology-action & other service projects
- Community adventures & outings once a month
- ...and a chance to do something that can make a difference in your life and in the world!

Have questions? Call Billy Newton, Rhodes Chaplain and Vollintine-Evergreen resident, at 843-3849.



WHAT CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE?

Many Vollintine-Evergreen residents make annual tax-deductible contributions to United Way, which funds various worthy causes here in Memphis and elsewhere. Although most donations are unrestricted (which United Way does its best to determine an equitable allocation of), it is possible to make a "directed gift" to United Way for a specific cause.

If you feel strongly about a specific cause, consider making a directed gift to it. You'll need to check to see if the agency is on United Way's list.

VECA CDC is one such agency. On the other hand, VECA itself is NOT such an agency, so DON'T DONATE TO VECA, donate instead to VECA CDC, specifying how you'd like your gift used. Remember, VECA was established in 1971 as a 501(c)4 tax-exempt organization, which allows it to lobby but prohibits it from receiving tax-deductible contributions; VECA CDC was established in 1995 as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization, which allows it to receive tax-deductible contributions but prohibits it from lobbying.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The most recent VECA membership drive was a tremendous success, thanks to the efforts of Kay Blues and Helen Johnson and the enthusiasm and generosity of the new members. Total membership is now over 525, including about 75 "Gold Star Heritage" members. If you paid for but don't yet have a Historic plaque, call or stop by the VECA office (276-1782, 1680 Jackson Avenue).

Besides much-appreciated income from dues paid to VECA, a number of generous contributions were made to VECA's CDC. Those funds have been incorporated into the 1999 budget for specific projects, such as block clubs, historic preservation, and the V&E Greenline.

The official 1998 drive may be over, but there will be another drive in 1999, and new members are welcome at any time. There is a membership/volunteer form on the back page of this newsletter.

1999 VECA YOUTH CORPS & FUTURE BUILDERS APPLICATION

Congratulations! You have decided to apply for the VECA Youth Corps and Future Builders, an exciting leadership and service program for current seventh graders. Be sure this application is complete. There are some items on this application that do not enter into the selection process, but it is used as an information source during the program. This application should be turned in by March 26, 1999 at the VECA office (1680 Jackson Avenue). We will begin to review your application as soon as it is received.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, ZIPcode: _____

Home phone number: _____ Birthdate: _____

School and current grade: _____ Gender and race: _____

Name of parent(s) or guardian: _____

In 50 words or less, describe what you think about the importance of service and leadership in our community and world today.
(Please use a separate sheet of paper)

List any service or leadership experiences you have had, any church or community activities you have helped with, clubs you have joined, and awards you have received that are important to you. *(Please use a separate sheet of paper)*

Student Statement: I hereby apply for 1999's VECA Youth Corps and Future Builders program. If I am selected, I will contribute \$10 to help with community service projects, and I will make a strong commitment to building the future of our community through service and leadership.

 Student's signature

 Date

Parental Consent and Commitment: Being the parent or legal guardian of _____, I hereby grant permission and promise encouragement for her/him to participate in the VECA Youth Corps and Future Builders program. I understand that the program includes service in the community, leadership and cross cultural experiences, and a week-long day camp at Rhodes College in June. I hereby voluntarily waive any claim against the sponsoring organizations (VECA, Rhodes College, Bridges, Inc.), any employee or volunteer, for any and all causes which may arise in connection with the activities of the VECA Youth Corps and Future Builders. I further agree to support the program and encourage my child in fulfilling her/his commitment to the VECA Youth Corps and Future Builders program. I will make every attempt to avoid scheduling activities that would prevent her/him from participating in any part of the program.

 Parents' or Guardian's signature

 Date

References: List two adults (teachers, ministers, friends, or neighbors, NOT parents or guardians) who know you well, and whom we may call as references.

(_____) _____

Names

Phone Numbers

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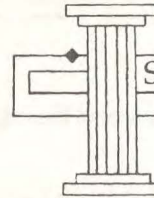
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VECA NEEDS MEMBERS

Name _____

Telephone Day: _____ Telephone Evening: _____

Address _____ Zip _____

MAIL TO: VECA TREASURER, 705. N. BELVEDERE, MEMPHIS, TN 38107

I'M INTERESTED IN:

- Block Club
- Historic Home Tours
- Housing
- Code Enforcement
- Commercial Revitalization
- Greenways
- V&E Greenline
- Youth
- Newsletter Delivery
- Newsletter Writing
- Volunteer (general)

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE \$10 OR \$35 PER YEAR

AND ARE NOT TAX DEDUCTIBLE; ADDITIONAL DONATIONS TO VECA CDC ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

PLEASE CHOOSE ONE:

- \$10 dues, Gold Star members receive their choice of bumper sticker.
- \$35 dues, Gold Star Heritage members receive their choice of bumper sticker and the Historic Designation Plaque.
- Bumper Sticker A
- Bumper Sticker B
- Historic Designation Plaque



Historic Designation Plaque

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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, 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 Avenue, Memphis, TN 38107 or call (901) 276-1782.