

# VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

## N E W S

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

Volume XXX, Number 5

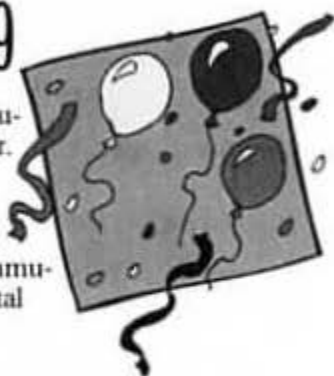
SEPTEMBER 2004

## CYPRESS CREEK COMMUNITY EVENT SEPTEMBER 9

Mark your calendar for the evening of Thursday, September 9, when VECA will host a free community event focusing on current issues related to Cypress Creek, which forms VECA's northern border. The event will begin at 6:00 p.m. in the main auditorium at Cypress Middle School.

All interested community residents are welcome. VECA will also invite industry representatives, environmentalists, environmental and health authorities, and state and local government officials. VECA's environmental consultant Jerry Loftin will be the featured expert. This event and some community surveying are partially supported by an environmental justice grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Besides the program, there will be socializing, door prizes, and refreshments.



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## CYPRESS CREEK CONUNDRUM

*by Jerry Loftin, CHMM, REM, REPA*

The rhetoric continues to flow and the work continues to go slow. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation has finished sampling sub-area IV, and raw data should be available in September. Meanwhile, the Memphis Shelby County Health Department has received cancer data for the neighborhood from the state, and their analysis should be available in September. Hopefully that analysis will not show elevated levels of cancer in the neighborhood. We should remember that the class of chemicals detected in the area potentially could cause a variety of health problems other than cancer. The Health Department has indicated that it will evaluate other potential health risks.

The Cypress Creek Community Event on September 9 (see separate article) will deal with contamination concerns related to Cypress Creek. My formal involvement with VECA's project ends at that time. However, I will continue to make myself available on an "as needed" basis pro bono until issues of concern to the neighborhood are resolved. What I need right now is help from all of you. I need to know what questions you have about the Cypress Creek situation, so if possible I can answer them at the Community Event. I will be preparing a synopsis of activities to date with recommendations for further action. Please contact VECA (901-276-1782) or me (615-269-5719 or vita@comcast.net) with your questions as soon as possible.

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## CYPRESS CREEK SOIL INVESTIGATION CONTINUES

*by Chuck Hanson, Vice President of Environment, Health, Safety and Product Safety, Velsicol Chemical Corporation*



Velsicol Chemical Corporation continued the next phase of its Cypress Creek soil investigation on schedule as sampling began in August on 50 additional residential properties between Jackson Avenue and Evergreen Street. Gary Hermann, Velsicol's Project Manager for the soil investigation, has already written, called and/or made personal visits to most of the residents who own property we expect to sample and will be finishing this process by October. For every property we sample, the property owner will be given a full report of the test results, pending review of the reports by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC).

*CYPRESS CREEK continued on page 4*

## 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.



Cypress Creek event	September 9, 6:00 p.m. (Cypress Middle School)
Ice Cream Social	September 11 (V&E Greenline)
VECA Block Club Reception & General Membership Meeting	January 24 (McLean Baptist Church)
Potluck Supper & Pool Party	July 9 (tentative; Rhodes College)
National Night Out	August 2 (throughout neighborhood)
Historic Committee	second Monday monthly, 7:00 p.m. (various locations; call office)
Code Enforcement Committee	third Thursday monthly, 6:00 p.m.
Block Club Committee	first Monday monthly, 6:00 p.m.
Cypress Creek Committee	third Wednesday monthly, 6:00 p.m.
Youth Committee	call office to help
V&E Greenline Committee	third Tuesday monthly, 6:30 p.m. (but not July or December)
Housing Committee	second Tuesday monthly, 5:30 p.m.
Commercial Revitalization Committee	second Tuesday monthly, 6:00 p.m.
Managing Committee	last Monday monthly, 5:30 p.m.
VENews deadlines:	October 5, December 3
VECA CDC & VECA Boards	first Monday monthly, 6:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
VECA CDC & VECA Boards	September 13, 6:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
VECA CDC & VECA Boards	October 4, 6:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
VECA CDC & VECA Boards	November 1, 6:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.



### FOR SALE BY VECA CDC

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## VISIT VECA'S WEBSITE

[www.vegreenline.org](http://www.vegreenline.org)

### VECA & VECA CDC STAFF

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## VOLLINTINE -- EVERGREEN

**N E W S**

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276-1782 phone • 276-1784 fax

email: [veca@vecacdc.org](mailto:veca@vecacdc.org) and  
[vecacdc@vecacdc.org](mailto:vecacdc@vecacdc.org)



## THANK YOU KAY!

Long-time Vollintine-Evergreen resident and volunteer Kay Blues recently moved to Lexington, Kentucky to be closer to family. For many years, Kay was a hard-working, behind-the-scenes VECA Board member: she kept track of VECA dues-paying members, set up and cleaned up after the annual potluck supper, staffed tables at many events, and served as a voice of reason at numerous Board meetings.

Kay, we'll miss you!

## THANKS

- to Cynthia Pelak, for the donation of a projector screen

## HOMEBUYER'S CLASSES



VECA CDC's housing counselor will conduct special homebuyer's classes from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 18 and then again on Saturday, October 23. Call the VECA office (276-1782) to sign up in advance for either of these free classes. Our HUD-certified counselor is also available during the week for first-time homebuyer counseling, mortgage default prevention counseling, and home equity conversion mortgage (HECM, or "reverse") counseling.

## ARTIST'S LINK

*by Dottie Sachritz*

Artist's Link is a support group of visual artists in Memphis and the surrounding area. For many years, we have been meeting regularly, with program meetings every month and breakfast meetings every Thursday morning at Dino's Restaurant.

On August 29, Artist's Link celebrated twelve years of breakfasts with Rudy at Dino's. You might have noticed the coverage in the Neighborhood Appeal Sections of the Commercial Appeal — a nice "feather in our cap". The group is open to anyone in the visual arts, and includes painters, glass artists, sculptors — you name it, we've got it.

## COMPUTER REMINDER

With a new school year underway, VECA would like to remind everyone that we have computers for free use by any neighborhood resident. Our computers have high speed internet, Microsoft Word, Publisher, Excel, and PowerPoint. They're perfect for typing resumes, writing school reports, or just surfing the internet! The VECA office is usually open most weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



## UNIVERSITY PARK NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH MEETING

The University Park neighborhood (near University Street and Edward Avenue) will hold a Neighborhood Watch meeting at the park at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 8. Please bring chairs, ideas, and a neighbor. Thank you.

### Do you want to remodel? Do you need home repairs but don't know how to start?

Do you want to remodel? Do you need home repairs but don't know how to start? VECA CDC has staff that can assist Vollintine-Evergreen residents with inspecting and determining necessary repairs. Staff can also prepare the scope-of-work and do preliminary estimates. The fee is modest. Call the VECA office for details.



276-1782





## EVERGREEN'S CLANJAMFRY

Evergreen Presbyterian Church is delighted to announce the return of "Clanjamfry: A Scottish Festival", this year being celebrated for the sixth time. The festival will be on the weekend of September 24-26 and once again there will be entertainment and activities for the whole family, plus, of course, the stirring sounds of the Wolf River Pipes and Drums, Clanjamfry's official bagpipe band.

The weekend starts on Friday evening at 8:00 p.m. with the Ceilidh, a traditional Scottish talent show, in the Bryan Campus Life Center at Rhodes College. Saturday morning at 9:30 a.m., a 5K run/walk starts on University Street in front of the church and goes through Overton Park. Also on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., the Scottish Faire fills the lawn of Evergreen with music, vendors, games, displays, clan tents, a children's area and much more. Saturday night at 7:00 p.m., in cooperation with the Mid-South Celtic Arts Alliance, Clanjamfry presents Calasaig, a five piece Scottish band, performing in Evergreen's sanctuary. The grand finale is the Kirkin' o' the Tartans on Sunday morning at 10:55 a.m., a moving church service with many elements of Scottish traditional worship, including the bagpipes in grand procession. A picnic on the lawn follows the service at about noon.

For more information, call the church office at 274-3740, check the website [www.clanjamfrymemphis.org](http://www.clanjamfrymemphis.org), or send email to [everscot@netscape.net](mailto:everscot@netscape.net).



## CYPRESS CREEK Cont'd from pg. 1

When Gary and I meet with local residents, we hear two common themes. First, why do you need more data — isn't there enough information to determine the safety of Cypress Creek by now? Second, why is the process taking so long?

To get as broad a picture as possible, Velsicol began conducting soil sampling around Cypress Creek first in 2001 at seven locations. In 2002, we conducted sampling at Cypress Middle School and then conducted sampling again in 2003 on every second and third property along what is known as Sub-Area III, the residential area in which many homes back up to Cypress Creek. In many neighborhoods, little or no chemicals were found in the soils of the properties sampled.

That process has allowed us to do two things. First, the information gathered answered an important question. According to a review of the data by toxicology experts, there are no immediate or acute health hazards from the soils in and around Cypress Creek. For about one third of the properties we sampled in 2003, however, there were levels of chemicals above screening levels TDEC established for further investigation. In those cases, we're going to sample the properties between or directly adjacent to those properties. From this and the existing information, we will complete a risk assessment that TDEC expects to approve by the end of March. The risk assessment will use conservative assumptions about potential exposure to contamination and the toxicity of contaminants to provide regulators with a worse case estimate of the potential health risks posed by a site.

We have heard residents' frustration about the pace of the project and are looking for ways to accelerate it where it is within our control and resources to do so. We all agree the goal is for good quality work to be done so residents can feel comfortable that, whatever the outcome, the information is correct and the investigation has been thorough.

The risk assessment will do that because it is being done under EPA guidance and will provide the quality information policymakers need to determine if the levels of chemicals in the soil warrant clean-up. If the State determines clean-up is needed above a specific level, then, because of the additional sampling being done now, Velsicol will also know what properties will be affected and can begin a process of clean-up more quickly.

One of the ways we are moving the project at a faster pace in response to residents is to begin the risk assessment now while additional samples are still being collected. The work being done this summer and early fall will supplement and complete the picture needed to finish the risk assessment. At this point, we cannot see any obstacle to achieving the timeline we have established for the remaining soil collection and risk assessment. Please keep in mind, however, all of Velsicol's work is subject to review and approval by TDEC and the United States Environmental Protection Agency which can affect the schedule.

As the soil investigation continues, we welcome any questions you have. Copies of reports that have been completed so far are available at the VECA office, at the Memphis and Shelby County Public Health Department, and at the TDEC office in Nashville. You can also contact the Project Manager, Gary Hermann, at 345-1788 or [gghermann@velsicol.com](mailto:gghermann@velsicol.com).

Jared Pawelson, OD      Missa Gherman, OD

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## GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT STORMWATER AND LICK CREEK

by Jerry Collins, Director of Public Works, City of Memphis

The City of Memphis has had its share of storms over the last three years. Sunday afternoon, August 12, 2001, signaled the beginning of this unusual series of severe wet weather events. Along a diagonal line stretching from Frayser to Hickory Hill, up to 4 1/2 inches of rain fell in about an hour. Water rose quickly in the creeks and bayous, flooded dozens of homes, and receded almost as quickly as it rose.

More than seven inches of rain fell on November 28, 2001, causing 150 homes to flood along Fletcher Creek. In fact, 21 inches of rain fell in November and December of that year alone. By comparison, the City normally averages 52 inches of rainfall per year.

Approximately 75 inches of rain fell in calendar year 2002. During 2003, rainfall amounts normalized, but the July 22, 2003, windstorm left us with unforgettable memories.

As of this writing (early August), rainfall in calendar year 2004 is about three inches below normal. Nevertheless, the storm that hit midtown on Saturday afternoon, March 20, 2004, was more devastating for many homeowners than any of the storms that had occurred over the previous three years.

You never want to challenge Mother Nature, but at this point one has to believe that any structure that will ever flood did flood at some time during the past three years. It is now clear as to which neighborhoods are most susceptible to flooding.

The information gathered by the Division of Public Works through observation by staff members and first-hand accounts from citizens has been invaluable in helping Public Works to formulate a plan for making drainage improvements throughout the City. Thus, far more than \$80 million in drainage improvement projects have been identified, and by the time all current drainage studies are complete, this figure could double.

Until this fiscal year, the annual budget allotment for drainage improvements was less than \$2 million per year. The Mayor and City Council have, however, focused their attention and monetary resources on improving drainage in Memphis. As a result, the stormwater capital improvements budget this year has ballooned to more than \$13 million, and the five year plan calls for a total expenditure of \$84 million.

As each day passes and the need for additional drainage improvements become obvious, it is also clear that funding for these improvements will be an issue. Therefore, the City is studying revenue alternatives that will insure adequate funding for drainage improvements in the future without placing an undue burden on property taxes. As this process continues, it is important for all citizens to underscore the importance of adequate investment in drainage infrastructure.

It is the goal of the Division of Public Works to (1) eliminate the flooding of homes and businesses, (2) make sure that property values within the City increase at a healthy rate, (3) improve the quality of life for every citizen, and (4) increase the desirability of the City of Memphis as a place to live.

A strong partnership between the Division of Public Works and VECA is a step toward making these dreams become a reality.



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## PUBLIC INPUT SOUGHT FOR TRI-COUNTY BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

The Memphis Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization kicked off a series of public meetings in July to begin mapping the future of bicycle and pedestrian facilities for the Memphis region.

Over the next four months, the MPO and the project's consultant team, RPM Transportation Consultants, Hawkins Partners, SR Consulting and McNeely Pigott and Fox will be collecting data and public input for the project. The plan, which will cover Shelby County and parts of Fayette county Tennessee and parts of DeSoto County Mississippi, will include a comprehensive network of bike lanes, multi-use trails, road-sharing routes, and new sidewalks.

Approximately \$330,000 in federal money is earmarked for the Bike and Pedestrian Destination plan, which must be completed by December 31, 2004. The plan is a component of the Memphis MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan to provide more transportation choices, help ease traffic congestion, improve safety, and reduce air pollution.

The next two rounds of meetings will be held on September 7 and 8 and October 12 and 13. Times and locations will be determined soon. In addition to the public meetings, the MPO and RPM will conduct a survey through the meetings, other community events and the project's Web site, [www.memphisbikeped.com](http://www.memphisbikeped.com).

For more information about the Memphis Bike and Pedestrian Plan, please visit [www.memphisbikeped.com](http://www.memphisbikeped.com) or contact Katherine Turner, Memphis MPO Senior Planner at (901) 379-7853.



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## YARD OF THE MONTH HONOREES!

Congratulations to these honorees! Please drive by and admire these homes. If you would like to nominate a house for Yard of the Month, please email us at: [vehistoric@yahoo.com](mailto:vehistoric@yahoo.com) or call 278-9838.

### JULY — 1054 TERRY CIRCLE

Van and Josephine Heyser of 1054 Terry Circle are July's yard of the month winners. They have been residents of VECA for 32 years. Van takes care of the lawn and Josephine takes care of the flowers. Neatly trimmed boxwood hedges provide the background for their flowerbeds in which Josephine uses contrasting colors and textures to provide interest. The lamb's ear seems to make everything stand out. Other plants include salvia, marigolds, sweet potato vines, dahlias, day lilies, cannas, burning bushes and African daisies. Of course, everything looks better with a beautiful lawn that is lush and weedless.



### AUGUST — 841 N. AVALON

The August yard of the month winner is Forestine Grandberry at 841 N. Avalon. Her neighbor, Conita Grigsby nominated her by saying, "the neighborhood is made more beautiful because of Forestine's hard work, she is always in her yard planting new flowers and pulling weeds." Forestine has lived here for almost 20 years and loves her home, her yard and her neighborhood. Carefully planted with a large variety perennials and annuals including caladiums, marigolds, red hibiscus, zinnias, hostas and brightly colored impatiens, her yard pops with color. She also grows several varieties of tomatoes and peppers.



## VOLLINTINE HILLS TURNS 50!

This year, the VECA neighborhood west of McLean, known as Vollintine Hills, turns 50 years old. The Historic Committee will soon be surveying the area to include it in the Vollintine-Evergreen National Historic Register. The Historic Committee is looking for volunteers to help in the survey. Please email: [vehistoric@yahoo.com](mailto:vehistoric@yahoo.com) or call 278-9838, if interested.

## HOW VOLLINTINE-EVERGREEN RESIDENTS CAN HELP

Dozens of Vollintine-Evergreen residents currently serve on one of our Committees or on one of our two Boards, and about one hundred residents help prepare and deliver this free newsletter. But there are always tasks — one-time and recurring, large and small — that VECA CDC staff members don't have the time or the expertise to tackle, so whatever your skills and resources, your help is always welcome.

- can you help maintain copy machines?
- can you help sort, label, and store photographs?
- can you help prepare various display boards?
- can you do light carpentry and painting at the office?
- can you repaint the metal Watkins Village sign?
- can you help us stripe the office parking lot?
- can you help create a "master database" using Access?



Remember that VECA CDC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, which means that your donations may be tax-deductible. We would gladly arrange free pickup of any donated used goods. Visit or call the office if you might be able to help in any way, whether it is listed here or not. Thanks.

**VECA NEEDS MEMBERS**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Evening: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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**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, Springdale 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.