

# VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

**N E W S**

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

Volume XXX, Number 6

NOVEMBER 2004

## OFFICE RENOVATION UPDATE

We hope that you have noticed the recent dramatic improvement in the appearance of our VECA office, which is owned by the neighborhood. Renovation of the exterior is complete, and considerable straightening out inside has finally taken place. The kitchenette is fully functioning and just needs some final trim work done.

However, neither VECA nor VECA CDC has more funding available for much-needed landscaping. So in the next few months, watch for news about your opportunity to donate labor and/or plants and other materials to make our corner of Jackson and Belvedere a pleasure to look at.



*Before: Prior to VECA purchasing the building in 1996, it was operating as a 7-11 convenience store*



*After: In September, renovations of the exterior are complete, except for landscaping*

## NEXT CYPRESS CREEK MEETING

Cypress Creek forms the northern border of the Vollintine-Evergreen neighborhood, and long-standing environmental concerns now lead some neighborhood leaders to raise the question of whether VECA should formally begin to push for the Creek to be designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a Superfund cleanup site.

Accordingly, VECA will host a free public meeting at the VECA office (1680 Jackson Avenue) at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 17. Come to find out the pros and cons of Superfund designation, and help shape our important decision.



*October 6 meeting at VECA office*

## CYPRESS CREEK REPORT

*by Jerry Loftin, CHMM, REM, REPA*

For the past year Vita Environmental Engineers has worked with VECA to determine the potential health effects of pesticide contamination along Cypress Creek and to raise awareness in the neighborhood of potential risk associated with exposure to these dangerous chemicals.

When VECA applied for the EPA environmental justice small grant, it was believed that a risk assessment would be completed by Velsicol Chemical Company, the party responsible for release of these chemicals, during the grant period. Velsicol has consistently requested extensions of deadlines set by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) and quibbled with wording in documents, and this has resulted in moving the deadline for completion of the risk assessment well into 2006.

The best thing Vita could have done for the neighborhood would have been to insure the proposed assessment was prepared using realistic assumptions and data used in the assessment was properly interpreted. This will not be possible

*CYPRESS CREEK REPORT continued on page 5*

Do Not Place In Or On Mailboxes

## 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 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	fourth 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:	December 3
VECA CDC & VECA Boards	first Monday monthly, 6:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
VECA CDC & VECA Boards	November 1 (joint), 6:30 p.m.
VECA CDC & VECA Boards	December 6, 6:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
VECA CDC & VECA Boards	January 3, 6:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.



### FOR SALE BY VECA CDC

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For more information, contact Judith Johnson of  
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#### UPCOMING RENOVATION:

1522 Jackson  
1810 Hunter

## 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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Printer ..... Diamond Printing Company

Distribution ..... Fredha Feaster

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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)



- to Shirley Key, for the donation of a projector screen and a word-processor
- to Pat Sexsmith and Li-Min Sexsmith, for the donation of plenty of good shelving for use at the VECA office
- to Kristine Long for numerous resources on American Bungalows

### VECA CDC SEEKS "ATTORNEY ON RETAINER"

VECA CDC is soliciting proposals for an attorney (or law firm) to provide legal representation in VECA CDC's work, including doing real estate closings, drafting and reviewing leases, representing landlords as plaintiffs in court, and representing creditors in bankruptcy cases. It is hoped that a fixed fee can be negotiated for which VECA CDC (and to a much lesser degree, VECA) will receive a range of services during the contract period (probably two years at a time). The attorney will be in a position to develop a comprehensive understanding of the non-profit work done by VECA CDC and VECA in the Vollintine-Evergreen neighborhood. There may even be an interested attorney living in, or otherwise already familiar with, our neighborhood. For a fuller written description of what is desired, call the VECA office at 276-1782.

### VOLLENTINE SCHOOL FENCE FUND

The Parent-Teacher Organization at our own Vollentine School is in the midst of raising funds to completely enclose the yard behind the school, to ensure the safety of the children, especially because of the traffic on Evergreen Street. Current plans are for a six-foot tall wrought iron fence with three gates. Call Lori Joyner (832-1060) or Carolyn Sisco (331-3118) if you wish to donate or need to find out more.

## NOTICE TO VENDORS, ARTISTS, AND OTHER CREATIVE FOLKS

VECA plans to have a spring neighborfest in April 2005. If you are interested in having a booth, please call the VECA office at 276-1782, and we can send you an application later.

### HOUSE OF PRAYERS OUTREACH HOMELESS MISSION

House of Prayers is a "Mission with a Vision." That vision is to help homeless men, women (including those with children), families, and former prisoners. That vision is based simply on a woman's love for God and a heart large enough to hear the cries of hurting individuals. Being obedient to the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 25:35-36, "I was hungry and you gave me meat; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you clothed me..." Every day Minister Ophelia Payne heeds the cries of the battered, drug addicts, and homeless people who need another opportunity to get back on their feet in the community and become productive members of society.

This is accomplished in a structured atmosphere that promotes recovery and independence through principals of good stewardship: biblical teachings, accountability, training, and much more. We're a non-profit organization with no state funding. For more information or to donate items contact us at 901-276-6192. Come by 1233 N. McLean Boulevard, Memphis, TN 38108. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 80584, Memphis, TN 38108.

### 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



## WANTED: DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS FOR OUR BOARDS

At the general membership meeting each January, Vollintine-Evergreen residents elect their representatives to the VECA Board, as well as the VECA president and vice-president. All terms are for one year, so the entire Board is voted upon. This year, as has been the case every year in the past, some current Board members are willing and able to stand for election again, while others need to be replaced.

The VECA Board appoints the CDC Board. Those terms are for two years. So the CDC Board will have some members continuing, but there will also be vacancies.

The VECA Board ordinarily meets at 7:00 p.m. on the first Monday of each month, and the CDC Board ordinarily meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. Board members usually also serve on one committee. If you are interested in being nominated to one of the Boards, need additional information, or know someone who would be able to contribute their time and talents, contact any VECA staff person or any member of either Board.

## THE MARGARET DICHTEL AWARD

Margaret Dichtel was one of the founding members of VECA and its first president. She strongly believed that neighbors working in a community organization could accomplish together what they as individuals or government could not. Her faith in the value of neighboring and the importance of grassroots community action remains the VECA philosophy.

The Margaret Dichtel Award is presented annually to a Vollintine-Evergreen resident and VECA member who embodies the principles of neighboring and community action. There is no specific length of membership required and the awardee need not be an officer. The awardee will be an individual who strengthens relationships between community members, tackles problems that threaten the integrity of the community, makes the neighborhood a better place to live, improves VECA's image city-wide, and demonstrates a commitment to the neighborhood and the concept of a neighborhood.

Each nomination must be by a current dues-paying member of VECA and should consist of a letter stating the candidate's contributions and achievements. Send nominations by December 31 to the Nominating Committee, care of the VECA office.

## THE RICHARD BORYS AWARD

Richard Borys moved to the Vollintine-Evergreen community in 1975 and served on various committees in the early years of the organization. Despite dying young at the age of 44, Dick's life was an example of public service. Dick came to Memphis as a VISTA volunteer. He helped design and start the Memphis City and Shelby County Pre Trial Release Program. In 1976 he was awarded the outstanding service award from the Memphis and Shelby County Bar Association for his contributions to the Criminal Justice System. At the time of his death Dick was a vice president at the Regional Medical Center ("The Med").

Dick was active with his children in soccer, coaching up to three teams at a time. He was a member St. Therese Little Flower Church, located at the center of the Vollintine-Evergreen community. Clearly, Richard Borys served the community in his work, in the neighborhood, at church, and through his children, Claire, Alex and Pete. Dick's wife Julie M. Borys still resides in Vollintine-Evergreen and has served as VECA president, on the VECA CDC Board of Directors, and as active volunteer over the years.

The Richard S. Borys Award was created to recognize public officials who through their work contribute to the Vollintine-Evergreen community. The awardee need not be a Vollintine-Evergreen resident or a VECA member.

Each nomination must be by a current dues-paying member of VECA and should consist of a letter stating the candidate's contributions and achievements. Send nominations by December 31 to the Nominating Committee, care of the VECA office.

## THE MARTHA HEINEMANN AWARD

Martha Heinemann grew up in Hot Springs, Arkansas, graduated from Southwestern at Memphis (now Rhodes College) in biology, and earned her Masters degree from University of Arkansas in biochemistry. She was a research chemist at the University of Tennessee and the Veterans Administration hospital. Besides her volunteer work with VECA, Martha was associated with Rhodes Alumni, Memphis Symphony Orchestra, Brooks Museum, and the Tennessee Ornithological Society.

The Heinemann Award honors a Board member who has rendered exceptional service to either the VECA Board or the VECA CDC Board. The Nominating Committee will select one winner from either Board.

Each nomination must be by a current dues-paying member of VECA and should consist of a letter stating the candidate's contributions and achievements. Send nominations by December 31 to the Nominating Committee, care of the VECA office.

## PAST AWARD WINNERS

### DICHEL 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	Linda Nichols
1998	Steve Gadbois
1999	Charlotte & Pete Swailes
2000	Sherry Henson & Belinda Kerusch
2001	Bill Rehberg
2002	Tom Fagan
2003	Fredha Feaster
2004	Craig Jordan & Len Cobb
2005	???

### BORYS AWARD

1991	Steve Shular
1992	Vernua Hanrahan
1995	Janis Foster
1996	William Stemmler
1997	Charles Cook
1998	Barbara Swearingen Holt
1999	Carol Chumney
2000	Wayne Risher
2001	Charles Granderson
2002	Don Campbell
2003	Rickey Peete
2004	Will & Rob Keeler
2005	???

### HEINEMANN AWARD

2003	Janis Cannon
2004	Helen Johnson
2005	???

## CYPRESS CREEK REPORT cont'd from page 1

during the current grant period. The second charge Vita had was to raise awareness in the neighborhood about possible risks and how residents may best make their voices heard. To that end the grant allowed for heightening interest in the issues through articles in this neighborhood newsletter, presentations to students at Rhodes College (Rhodes being part of the neighborhood has been a steadfast ally to its residents), meetings for the neighborhood, meetings with involved parties and elected officials, and other activities to spread the word of concern.

Vita reviewed thousands of pages of documents related directly to the ongoing evaluation of contamination in the vicinity of Cypress Creek. Much has been written but very little has been done to determine the actual risk to the community. Additionally over one thousand pages of documents related to the health effects of the chemicals known to be in the area and case studies of communities with similar problems were reviewed. The following are core conclusions and recommendations based on information reviewed and opinions formed during the grant period.

First, it is apparent that, with the exception of the neighborhood residents, the stakeholders in the contamination issues are not motivated to finish the required tasks required under the RCRA (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act) corrective action plan in a timely manner. Second, Velsicol and TDEC have limited resources to commit to bringing the study to its conclusion. Third, Velsicol probably does not have the financial resources to bring about the preferred type of remediation, namely removal of contaminated soils, to protect the community in the future. Fourth, the Memphis Shelby County Health Department's independent study of cancer rates, incidence of low births rates and proposed future studies of other health problems associated with exposure to pesticides in the community will likely reveal some link between health issues and the presence of pesticides in the area.

Vita recommends the following actions to insure that the residents in the area are heard and subsequently protected from exposure to dangerous chemicals found in and around Cypress Creek:

(1) Continue to keep the community informed and involved through meetings, newsletter articles, and local media involvement.

(2) Continue lobbying local and elected officials at higher levels of government to press for an expeditious resolution to the problem.

(3) Petition other government agencies (e.g., The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) for their assistance.

(4) Consider attacking the problem from another regulatory perspective, action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (Superfund).

In conclusion I have enjoyed working with the community, VECA and all who have shown an interest in protecting the neighborhood in this situation. I will continue to make myself available as a resource on an as-needed basis until the neighborhood's health and rights are adequately protected. Thanks to all with whom I have worked.

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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.

### SEPTEMBER — 789 MCLEAN AVENUE

Barry French, pictured here with his dog Sable, is September's yard of the month winner. He has lived at 789 McLean Avenue for 15 years. Mixing herbs, flowers and shrubs in an informal style, Barry describes his style as English cottage gardening. Each year he experiments with new plants. The result is a mixture of unusual plants along with popular favorites. His plants include chives, mountain laurel, moonflowers, lenten roses, Solomon's seal, Chinese aster, purple verbena, celosia, Mexican petunia and many others.



### OCTOBER — 933 UNIVERSITY

October's yard of the month winner is Lena Gaines, whose yard at 933 University is full of color. One plant that thrives in her yard is a firecracker plant that is covered with small red blooms. Another plant that really stands out is the spider plant with its exotic blooms. With their sharply contrasting colors and leaves, black elephant ears with chartreuse potato vines are one of the great combinations that Lena uses. Other plants include hibiscus, roses, four o'clocks, begonias, purple potato vines and mandevilla vines.

## IN SEARCH OF HOMES FOR 2005 HOME TOUR

Although, the next Historic Home Tour is not until April 2005, the Historic Committee is planning it now. The committee is interested in homes that may have been damaged from the July 2003 summer storm or homes with renovations. If you would like to submit your home or your neighbor's home as a candidate for the next year's home tour, please email us at [vehistoric@yahoo.com](mailto:vehistoric@yahoo.com) or call 278-9838.

## TWO VECA HOMES ARE WINNERS

At Memphis Heritage's Preservation Awards ceremony on September 23, two Vollintine-Evergreen houses got well-deserved recognition.

Ken Lecco's home at 871 University Street won the Memphis Landmarks Commission Small House Award, and Rodney and Alia Berg's new house at 773 University Street won the Memphis Heritage President's Award for New Construction.



773 University



871 University

Lecco's 1932-era Tudor-style cottage was on the 2004 VECA Historic Home Tour. The exterior landscaping is traditional and elegant, while the interior decorating is eclectic and "cosmic", as might be expected from the owner of Cosmic Closet in Overton Square.

The Bergs' home replaced the original 1923 home severely damaged first by lightning and then by wind in 2003. Not only is it beautiful and functional, it really fits in well in our historic neighborhood. The Bergs hosted their own open house on September 26, and received wonderful coverage in that morning's Commercial Appeal.

**VECA NEEDS MEMBERS**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

MAIL TO: MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE, 1680 JACKSON AVENUE, 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)

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AND ARE NOT TAX DEDUCTIBLE. ADDITIONAL DONATIONS TO VECA CDC MAY BE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

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- \$20 dues (household), 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.
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- 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, 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.