

# VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

**N E W S**

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

VOLUME XXXIV, NUMBER 2

MARCH 2008

## Residents and Police Work Together

A rash of recent neighborhood robberies prompted 70 Vollintine-Evergreen as well as Evergreen residents to pack a meeting at the Union Station Police Precinct mid-February. They were joined by District 5 Council Member Jim Strickland. Inspector Mark Collins, commander of the Memphis City Police Department's Union Station, reported that the individuals responsible for the crimes had been arrested. A detective with the robbery bureau indicated most of those apprehended were juveniles. According to Collins, the police department allocated a large amount of resources to this extensive investigation. Crime tips sent by Vollintine-Evergreen neighbors via email were instrumental in helping to identify the culprits. Lt. Steve Ware, who works in the Old Allen Precinct north of Jackson Avenue indicated that several robberies north of Jackson have also been cleared by arrests. Colonel Collins offered to meet with residents for further discussions on ways of dealing with crime concerns. Another meeting will be scheduled in the near future.

## V&E Greenline March is Contribution Month!

Thanks to those who have planted trees, mowed the trail, and provided landscaping and drainage, the V&E Greenline has never looked better. The V&E Greenline is a 1.7 mile rails-to-trails community park owned by the neighborhood. Maintenance and upkeep is largely provided by a group of dedicated neighborhood volunteers, but contractors must also be paid to do weed whacking and cleanups. In addition, ongoing costs, such as equipment repair, property tax payment, and the servicing of mowers and a tractor, must be met.

During the month of March, you will see signs at the entrances to the Greenline reminding you "Upkeep Costs Money — March Is Contribution Month." Please participate by supporting this beautiful neighborhood amenity by making a tax-deductible donation to V&E Greenline, 1680 Jackson Avenue, Memphis, TN, 38107.

Thanks — and see you on the trail!



There are now eight volunteers mowing the Greenline and two contractors supplement their work with weed eating and trimming.



## VECA's Annual meeting

More than 70 residents turned out for the annual Vollintine Evergreen Community Association meeting, held at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church on January 28th. Nedra Bailey was re-elected as board president and all members of the 2007 board were re-elected for the 2008 term. Committee members and residents listened as neighborhood achievements were reviewed.

There were a number of VECA events in 2007. Neighbors gathered on the V&E Greenline for the Summer Jubilee ice cream social and picnic, which included water play for tots and games for big kids. Over 100 neighbors attended. VECA celebrated urban forestry at our third Forest Faire fall festival and tree sale and over 200 neighbors attended. Many also gathered for fellowship on National Night Out.

A number of activities were funded by grants. The Neighbors for Trees committee used a state grant to plant 35 new trees on the Tutwiler Avenue medians. VECA CDC built (and sold) three new homes, thanks in part to a Shelby County program called YouthBuild. A U.S.



Department of Housing and Urban Development grant funded first-time home buyer counseling, mortgage default counseling, and reverse mortgage counseling for 224 clients. VECA CDC and the V&E Greenline received State of Tennessee Community Enhancement grants.

At the annual meeting a number of other accomplishments were highlighted.

- VECA worked to stop the city of Memphis from concrete lining Lick Creek, which would have destroyed the natural features of the creek.
- The V&E Greenline committee maintained the neighborhoods rails-to-trails park through mowing, cleaning and gardening.

- VECA CDC continued work with the state on environmental and health issues surrounding Cypress Creek. The year 2008 should see the State of Tennessee make Cypress Creek a priority.

- VECA placed Vollintine Hills on the National Register of Historic Places.

- The news of our neighborhood was also communicated more widely last year. VECA delivered over 15,000 copies of the *Vollintine-Evergreen News* and launched its new website: [www.veca-neighborhood.org](http://www.veca-neighborhood.org)

- A neighborhood brochure was also created to provide useful information to new and current residents.

## Join a VECA Committee

Open for all to attend, the Vollintine-Evergreen community has many committees on which residents can serve. The committees listed have a designated meeting time. Other committees, such as the Safety and Security Committee, and Block Clubs hold meetings periodically.

Call the VECA office at 276-1782 for more information about these committees or check the website for a calendar of events.

[www.veca-neighborhood.org](http://www.veca-neighborhood.org)

VECA CDC Board	First Monday of the month	6:30 pm
VECA Board	First Monday of the month	7:00 pm
Neighborhood Preservation	Fourth Thursday of the month	6:00 pm
Neighbors for Trees	Third Monday of the month	5:30 pm
V&E Greenline	Second Monday of the months of February, April, June, August and October at 1625 Tutwiler Ave	6:30 pm
Housing	Second Wednesday of the Month	5:30 pm
Managing Committee VECA CDC	Last Monday of the Month	5:30 pm

## State Grants Bring Improvements



Jeannie Richardson (third from right), State Representative for VECA, and former State Representative Mary Wilder (fourth from left), are shown presenting State of Tennessee

Enhancement grants to VECA CDC and the V&E Greenline as well as two other nonprofits, Binghampton CDC and ParkFriends.

The V&E Greenline grant is a first step in the goal of water and sewer installation at the Stationhouse, while the VECA CDC grant will support affordable housing, homeownership counseling, and environmental and health issues related to Cypress Creek.

Representative Richardson was pleased to help nonprofits such as VECA deliver services which are needed and desired by the neighborhood. Her district is located in the south half of Vollintine-Evergreen.

Representative Richardson's contact information is:

26 Legislative Plaza  
Nashville, TN 37243-0189  
Phone (615) 741-2010

[rep.jeanne.richardson@legislature.state.tn.us](mailto:rep.jeanne.richardson@legislature.state.tn.us)

## Have Complaints About Public Services?

The City of Memphis has a one-stop shop to receive complaints or requests about city services known as the Mayor's Citizen Service Center (MCSC). If you have a concern about garbage not being picked up on your street, vacant properties or lots, perpetual yard sales, loose dogs, faulty streetlights, sanitation issues, mosquito and rodent control, this is the place to call.

The center also responds to complaints about rooming houses, zoning violations, and conditions in commercial areas.

The Mayor's Citizen Service Center can be reached at 576-6500. The MCSC does not reveal who has complained, but you can request a letter about the resolution of the complaint.

The MCSC also has a complaint center on the City of Memphis website. Go to [www.memphistn.gov](http://www.memphistn.gov) and select "Online Support Center" under the mayor's picture.

Unless citizens file complaints about problem services, public agencies will not be able to improve those services.

## Do You Qualify for a Property Tax Break?

Did you know that the state of Tennessee may pay up to \$235.58 towards your Shelby County property taxes bill? There are approximately 10,000 people in Shelby County who qualify for property tax relief benefits. If you're 65 or older, own your own home, and earn less than \$24,000 a year, you may be eligible. Call the Trustee Customer Service at 521-1829.

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## Neighborhood Residents Oppose Apartment Development

A new housing development designed for senior citizens has residents in Vollintine Hills apprehensive. Gethsemane Church of God In Christ (COGIC) has proposed developing a 167-unit senior housing apartment complex at Vollintine and Evergreen. The project is on COGIC property (the former Baron Hirsch synagogue). VECA residents met with church leaders and planners in early February to discuss the project.

The primary issues of concern are an anticipated increase in traffic and parking, the overall scale of the development, and the zoning precedent a project of this nature and magnitude poses. Residents point out that the project will affect the integrity of the Vollintine Hills by introducing a high occupancy development into a neighborhood of single-family homes.

At the February meeting, the planner and church representative presented plans to resolve the issues related to parking, garbage, and drainage. The church also agreed to lower the number of units from 167 to 128. Residents were not persuaded and voted to oppose the apartment development.

The proposal goes before the Memphis City Council on March 13th. At the City Council meeting, Vollintine-Evergreen residents may suggest placing limits on growth and operational procedures. This would restrict the way the property can be developed in the future.

Drawings of the proposed project are available for viewing at the VECA office.

Concerned Vollintine-Evergreen residents are encouraged to contact their city council representatives and the Land Use Control Board before March 13th. Residents are also encouraged to attend the city council meeting, which begins at 1 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall.

Send an email to Chuck Scruggs if you are interested in attending the hearing: [cscruggs@wkno.org](mailto:cscruggs@wkno.org).

### Advertise With Us!

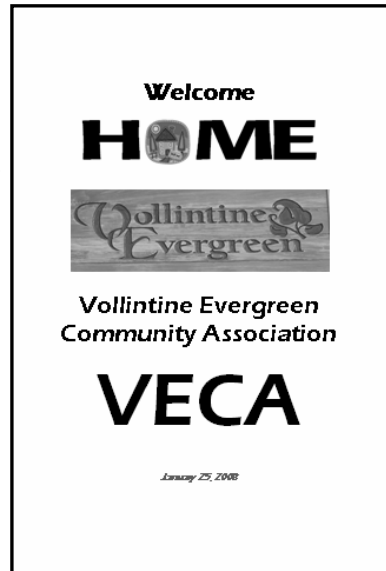
Want to reach 3,000 VECA residents? Why not advertise in *the Vollintine-Evergreen News*? Local businesses like yours can receive community support by appearing in our pages. Just \$125 buys five prominent ads in our 2008 newsletters. Don't wait! Call our advertising manager at 276-1782.

## New VECA Brochure

Are you new to the neighborhood? The efforts of block club members, along with Rhodes College students and staff, have resulted in the creation of a 36-page booklet about the Vollintine-Evergreen neighborhood.

Want to know more about VECA organizations? Which churches and schools serve the neighborhood? What are some important code enforcement guidelines for the neighborhood? All of this and more is covered in the brochure.

The brochure will be used to welcome newcomers, but it also contains helpful information of interest to all VECA residents. Copies are available at the VECA office, 1680 Jackson.



## Police Changes

Colonel Mark Collins is now the new commander of the Old Allen Police Precinct which covers the area north of Jackson Ave. Billy Garrett is the new commander of the Union Precinct that covers the area south of Jackson Ave. Colonel Collins will be leaving the Union station precinct and said "I can say without hesitation that I will truly miss my Mid-Town Neighbors."

## Welcome to Springdale Plaza

When you drive north on Springdale Street from Jackson Avenue, you have most likely noticed the collection of businesses, churches, and apartment complexes that anchor the heart of this street. Last summer, the neighborhood merchant's association decided to name this section Springdale Plaza. The goal of the Springdale Plaza Merchants Association (SPMA) is to promote and advance the development of businesses in hopes of encouraging the revitalization of this community. The initiative was spearheaded by the

SPMA president Lynn Dotson, who runs Lynn's Got It Going on #2 Beauty Salon.



The efforts of the SPMA, along with community policing, have quickly helped to decrease vagrancy and loitering on the street. Thanks to neighbors and Rhodes students working together to mow and clean up litter, the Plaza looks better than ever.

Merchants, which include Bryant Brothers Barber Shop, Chu's Supermarket, and King's Drive Inn Grocery, also will be painting their buildings the same color, providing a pleasing sense of balance. SPMA is getting the word out to residents via an advertising flyer announcing the Plaza's new name and services. Dotson invites everyone to, "Come see what we have to offer."

## J.S. BACH MASS IN B MINOR

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Tim Sharp, Conductor

FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2008  
7:30 PM

Admission: \$8 at the Door

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1695 Central Ave  
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*Job: Sebast: Bach  
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Rhodes College

## Broaden Your Horizons at Rhodes

Did you know Rhodes offers a "powerhouse of events" that can be enjoyed by Vollintine-Evergreen residents? Rhodes provides lectures on political issues, scientific insights, noteworthy authors, the arts, urban affairs and sports events all open to the public.

Upcoming events during March and April include a poetry reading by Jeffrey Levine, author of two prize-winning volumes, a religion and science colloquium, Bach's Mass in B Minor (at Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Friday, March 28, 7:30 p.m.), a student jazz ensemble, and an orchestra concert.

The Undergraduate Research Symposium (URCAS) on April 25th will feature student research activities of all disciplines. Additionally, a special session on community outreach will display student work done in the VECA and Hollywood-Springdale neighborhoods.

For event dates and times, go online to the events section of the Rhodes homepage: [www.rhodes.edu](http://www.rhodes.edu).

## Memphis Ten Point Coalition

The Memphis Ten Point Coalition, Inc. has settled into its new offices at 815 North McLean Avenue within McLean Baptist Church. Affiliated with the National Ten Point Leadership Foundation based in Boston, MA, The Memphis Chapter has been in existence since 2001 and in their new location in the neighborhood for the last six months.

The Ten Point Coalition is a non-denominational, faith-based organization aimed at providing our youth with the resources and relationships necessary for a prosperous future.

Their mission statement reads: The mission of the Memphis Ten Point

Coalition is to save at-risk/high-risk youth and their families from the ravages of destructive behavior. Through strategic collaboration and coordinated efforts we endeavor to rid our neighborhoods of gang violence, teenage pregnancy, truancy, chronic unemployment and substance abuse.

The Ten Point Coalition works with six Memphis City High Schools. They are currently working with Craigmont, Frayser, Fairley, Raleigh Egypt, Trezevant and Whitehaven High Schools.

The Ten Point also has established a computer lab in their office with the assistance of a Community Enhancement

Grant through the Frayser Inter-Faith Association. A Youth Rally was held on January 24, 2008 at the Ten Point site at McLean, and subsequent quarterly youth rallies are planned.

Please contact Tommy Andrew Sullivan, President of the Memphis Chapter, at 722-4059 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. for questions or to learn more on how to become a collaborative partner.

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A special thanks to McLean Baptist Church for being a great VECA partner. We look for many more years of fruitful collaboration.



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## Mailman Retires

Over 25 VECA residents held a goodbye reception for long-time mailman, George Lopozer.

George and his wife Brenda are pictured above at Dino's Grill. George described the many wonderful years and the friendships he had made in the neighborhood. The residents had their opportunity to thank George for his many years of service, and they gave him VECA memorabilia and made him an honorary member of the Vollintine-Evergreen neighborhood.



**St. John the Evangelist  
Orthodox Church**

Sunday  
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Weekdays  
Wednesday Vespers at 7 pm  
Saturday Great Vespers at 7 pm

1663 Tutwiler Avenue at Dickinson  
(901) 274-4119

## Breaking Walls, Building a Dream

A new Hollywood-Springdale area project is underway and is being sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen's Cathedral of Faith Community Church.

On January 19, as part of the ongoing effort to revitalize an apartment complex on Howell Street, Rhodes students began transforming two apartments into the future home of "A New Beginning Education Center." The Education Center will focus on helping members of the community earn their GED as well as provide help with computer and job-related training, entirely for free.

With a generous and significant donation made by Velsicol Chemical Corporation of Memphis, complete funding has been provided to help renovate two apartments into a classroom, purchase computers, and provide all the supplies needed for the program to develop. To help keep some costs down, Erin Foster, a sophomore from Greenville, South Carolina, who is working on the program as an academic internship for the Urban Studies department, recruited a group of her

friends to help knock down some walls and rip out unneeded parts of the apartment before construction officially began. Students who helped with the project included members of Kappa Delta Sorority and Sigma Alpha Epsilon

Anna Moak of Brookhaven, Mississippi agreed, "I know that the little bit that I am doing now is going to change lives. I cannot wait for the classroom to open up so I can come and volunteer!"

The New Beginning Education Center at A New Place Apartments should be open and ready by mid-March. Reverend Calvin Booker, who started A New Beginning, has been a guiding force with the project and has provided a great deal of support. He has given Foster the opportunity to take an idea and dream and make it a reality. With the help of Rhodes Bonner Scholars, Rhodes Kinney Program, and the Greek

community at the college, Foster earnestly hopes that her vision can be translated into real and actual change. According to Erin Foster, the author of this article, "It has been so inspiring to see the remarkable benefits that have already come from this program, and I can only imagine what we will do in the future. It is my hope that this will become a program that truly is changing lives and drives community members to succeed."

**If You're Looking For That Favorite Little Neighborhood Bar—Stop By And See Us At**  
**Alex's Tavern**  
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Fraternity, helping to continue the strong ties that the Greek community has with the Rhodes Hollywood-Springdale Partnership. "The project was an awesome way to start off my Saturday morning. I had a great time ripping the apartment up and I really look forward to all the good that will come out of this effort for the entire Hollywood-Springdale area," said Freshmen Grayson Lucas, also from Greenville, South Carolina. Sophomore

## Café Eclectic Is Open

Café Eclectic at 603 N. McLean has opened with a decidedly neighborhood focus. Its website says "We hope the neighborhood will embrace us and that we may become a home away from home for many: A place to have your morning coffee, visit with your children after school over a sweet treat, enjoy a hassle-free dinner with the family, and relax or study with friends at the end of the day. We wanted to concentrate on the little things that often get lost in life, like knowing the names of our patrons and serving wonderful fresh, local, and organic foods at reasonable prices."



## Help Us Revitalize the Neighborhood Newspaper

This issue marks a concerted effort to revitalize the Vollintine-Evergreen News – and we need your help! We are a dynamic, diverse community on the move and our bi-monthly newsletter is a great resource for keeping the neighborhood informed of our many activities.

The *Vollintine-Evergreen News* needs articles and photos from residents and committees that provide interesting

information about our neighborhood. To be included, materials must be submitted by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month for the following month's publication. Articles for the May issue are due by April 10th.

The *Vollintine-Evergreen News* committee is also looking for committee members to help behind the scenes with art, design and editing and contacting potential advertisers.

Additionally, if your block does not receive the newsletter, please volunteer to be your block's distributor. It takes 20 minutes every two months.

Thank you to Marci Hendrix, Mike Kirby, Jan Kirby, and the Community Development interns at Rhodes College for making this issue possible.

For more information, call the VECA office at 276-1782.

## Rhodes and VECA

The Urban Studies Program at Rhodes College will have a number of students working in the Vollintine-Evergreen neighborhood this Spring.

Alex Gates will be studying VECA's affordable housing homeowners using a questionnaire. Mia Norman will be using a questionnaire to study the perceptions of Edward Ave and Avalon St residents to

Cypress Creek as a follow up to Emily Passini's study of the late 1990s.

Rachel Thompson is studying the City election in District 8 Position 2 and also developing a booklet on office holders in VECA. Larry Hurd is interning at the VECA office and among other tasks, helping around the office during a time of staff transition.

Drew Davis and Jack Mann are serving on the V&E Greenline Committee and helping manage contractors. Alex Liu is serving on the Rhodes-Evergreen Historic-VECA committee. Alex Liu, Casey Mohan, and Marcus Falion are working on a foreclosures and condemnations database.

Virginia Fall is working on layout and design of the *Vollintine-Evergreen News*.

### VECA & VECA CDC Staff

Steve Gadbois  
Ruth Gibson, Homeowner Counselor and Office Manager  
([wruth@vecacdc.org](mailto:wruth@vecacdc.org))  
Student Intern, Larry Hurd

### YouthBuild

Vernua Hanrahan, Program Manager ([vh1956@bellsouth.net](mailto:vh1956@bellsouth.net))  
Dana Hendrick, Apprentice Coordinator  
Joe Kerley, Construction Manager

### Vollintine Evergreen Office

1680 Jackson Avenue ■ Memphis, TN 38107  
276-1782 Phone ■ 276-1784 Fax

### Email

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

### websites

[www.veca-neighborhood.org](http://www.veca-neighborhood.org)  
[www.vegreenline.org](http://www.vegreenline.org)

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