

# VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

**N E W S**

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

JANUARY 2010

## VECA's Annual Meeting

VECA's annual meeting is an opportunity to meet your neighbors, learn what's new, get involved in the association, elect your VECA board, and pay your annual dues.

Together, we'll celebrate the accomplishments of the committees as well as acknowledge the challenges we face. All of our committees welcome your involvement and the meeting is a good time to learn more about how you can participate.

The meeting will provide great information about the work of various VECA Committees and Programs. VECA will honor a special group for their work in behalf of VECA.

All VECA residents, businesses, churches, public officials, and others are invited and encouraged to attend.

The VECA area is bounded by Watkins on the West, Cypress Creek on the North, Springdale/ Rhodes College on the East, and North Parkway on the South.

Come to the meeting; it is a lot of fun so see what VECA has accomplished.

## Annual VECA Meeting

**Monday January 25 at 7:00**

**McLean Baptist Church  
McLean Blvd at Crump St near Jackson**

Enter on the west from the Parking Lot  
Parking lot is on Crump to the South of the Church

Dinner for Attendees 6:00-7:00

VECA officers and board are selected, awards are made for service, and VECA accomplishments are presented at this meeting.

## Schnucks' Fundraiser

Our community partners, Schnucks' grocery store has collaborated with VECA on a fundraiser.

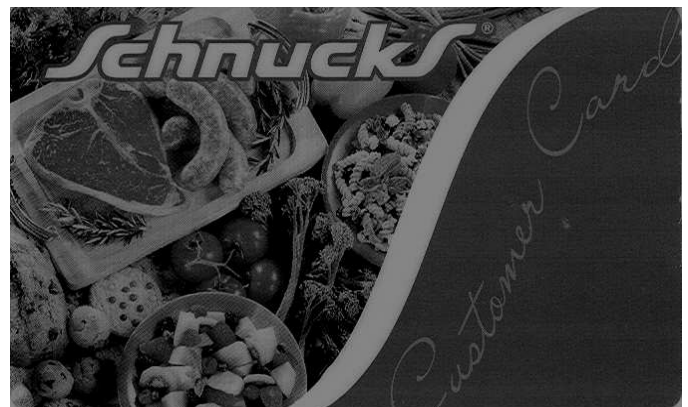
VECA residents can receive a card that is swiped at the time of the sale and a portion of the sale is then donated to VECA. And there is no charge to the customer—this is a painless way of donating to VECA.

The cards come in two sizes—credit card or a smaller size that fits on a key chain or in a wallet. The cards can be mailed to the resident or picked up at the VECA Welcome Center at 1680 Jackson 38107, 901-276-1782, VECA@VECA.Org.

The proceeds will be used to fund the VECA Welcome Center, which is the hub of VECA activity. There is a mortgage to pay, lights to turn on, and many other costs to run this important facility for the neighborhood. It costs about \$1,200 a month to run the Welcome Center and much of that cost must come from contributions.

The closest Schnucks' store is located at 1761 Union.

The Schnucks card is printed below and you can get by contacting the VECA Welcome Center. You can help "create extraordinary results from ordinary purchases."





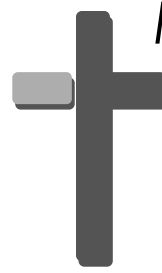
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## New VECA Restaurants by Meredith Cavin

The Rhodes students working at the VECA Welcome Center did a bit of taste testing—see photo to the right. We explored three new restaurants in or near the neighborhood so we can pass on our recommendations! The restaurants are Chicago’z Fast Foods, Lucky Star Chinese Restaurant, and Gereny East African & Mediterranean Restaurant.

Chicago’z is located at 1076 North Watkins Street and specializes in quick indulgent foods. We tried popcorn shrimp, fries and a pizza puff. The shrimp and fries were fried just right. The pizza puff was like a rectangle-shaped piece of pizza folded in on itself, perfect for when you’re on the go. We recommend this restaurant for quick meals, snacks, and fried treats.

Lucky Star Chinese Restaurant is at 1420 Jackson Avenue. It has a vast selection of Chinese food. We tried their Lo Mein and beef with broccoli. Both tasted delicious and very fresh. The vegetables are cooked just right and have a crisp crunch that can be hard to find elsewhere.

Rhodes Professor and VECA leader Mike Kirby found his favorite, the Lo Mein, and noted, "The noodles are great." If you're looking for a great lunch special, come by between 11-4 p.m. when you can get any of sixteen different lunches for \$4.69.

Gereny East African & Mediterranean is located at 2356 Jackson Avenue. It's a very unique restaurant and definitely one to try. Upon entering the restaurant, we were immersed in the rich smell of meat and spices.

We ordered Mediterranean Shish Kebabs with steak, lamb, and chicken. The meat was marinated, then grilled and was served on a bed of rice. Rhodes student Lacy Ward, a Texan who loves spicy food, tried the Shish Kebabs and endorsed them strongly, exclaiming, "Order that!" Of the lamb in particular, she said, "It's got a big kick in it. It was so spicy!"

Co-worker Bert Geer agreed, "The lamb was adeptly spiced." The rice on which the meats are served is also unexpectedly complex. It is sweet and seems cinnamon-flavored. Most of the plates here cost about \$10. Remember that they include a lot of food! This is a great restaurant for families to try.

Each of these restaurants has unique flavors, and we recommend you stop by and support your local VECA businesses! If you'd like to place an order or get more information, you can call Chicago's at 275-8969, Lucky Star Chinese Food at 725-0551 or 725-0337, and Gereny East African and Mediterranean at 458-6330 or 644-0815.



# Real Estate Ads

## Apartments for Rent

VECA has two apartments for rent located on the second floor at 820 Maury Ave. These are large one bedroom apartments with carpeting, a sunroom, and a front & back entrance. The front porches look onto the beautiful landscape of the historic neighborhood. Parking is available in the back of the apartments. These apartments are currently available for occupancy and rent for \$450 per month. Please call the VECA Welcome Center at 276-1782 for more information or to set up a showing.


## Affordable Business Site for Rent or Sale

A business site at 1570 Vollintine Ave is available for a very affordable rental rate or sale price, but you will need to clean up the site before occupying. This is a great opportunity for someone starting a new business who wants go get into a building for a low cost and expects to be a long time occupant. Contact Mid-South Realty at 761-4444.

## House Rental or Purchase

Great VECA House Rental or Lease Purchase; McNeil Street, North of Rhodes College

Fully remodeled with hard wood floor and spa tub; big fenced yard; new kitchen and bath; ceiling fans and central heat/air; bonus room & washer/dryer; pets o.k.; 2 bed and 2 bath; 1375 sq ft; \$795 lease purchase with \$3000 down; rental for only \$895 per month; 592-5251 or jjcmarkets@gmail.com




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## VECA Membership and Contribution Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Be one of the following types of contributors—everything above \$10 is tax deductible**

<b>Member.....\$10</b>	<b>Supporter.....\$50</b>	<b>Leader.....\$100</b>
<b>Neighbor.....\$25</b>		<b>Neighborhood Mayor.....\$500</b>

**Any Size Contribution: Bumper Sticker \_\_\_\_\_**  
**\$25 or more: Historic Plaque \_\_\_\_\_ or Poster \_\_\_\_\_**

## VECA Poster



## Mayor Wharton Report

VECA and other neighborhoods received a letter from Mayor A.C. Wharton about the appointment of James Nelson to lead the Office of Youth Services and Community Affairs.

The mayor said "I would like to thank you for being one of the City of Memphis' partners in enhancing and sustaining the quality of life in our neighborhoods. I have appointed James Nelson as my Special Assistant. Mr. Nelson and his team are ready and eager to enhance and resume providing services to you and your neighborhoods. I want to assure you that we will continue to support the work of citizens who organize and add value to emerging and established neighborhood, community, and civic organizations. When citizens' ideas are valued and their concerns, needs and challenges are addressed, they will be even more committed to their efforts to make Memphis a premier city in which to live, work and raise a family." (edited from the Mayor's letter)

Mr. Nelson can be reached at 636-6232 and Lashea West, manager of Neighborhood Relations can be reached at 636-6592.

According to the Neighborhood Relations' newsletter, the mission of the office is "to help build capacity in neighborhoods as it serves as a conduit to make government more accessible to the citizens of Memphis." It issues an attractive newsletter, hosts a variety of workshops on issues of interest to neighborhoods, and publishes a neighborhood directory.

**Purchase the VECA Poster**  
**Historic Houses, Vibrant Colors, Artistic Treasure**

**\$10 for poster and \$20 for mailed poster**  
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## Eagle Scout Project by Meredith Cavin

Each young man who pursues the honor of becoming an Eagle Scout must design and implement a project. Jordan Bruce, a high school senior at Saint Benedict, decided to help VECA with his project. His family friend knew VECA board member Marci Hendrix and Jordan learned of a drainage issue at the corner of University and Jackson on the V&E Greenline. The popular intersection had been flooding because of a clogged culvert to carry rainwater away. The culvert had two openings, one of which was clogged with dirt. The other was so filled that it seemed to have disappeared into the earth.

Jordan put together a team to help fix the drainage issue. They began with fundraisers to pay for the materials. Then they cleaned the visible opening of the culvert and put rocks at the mouth of it to catch debris that would have previously clogged the culvert. The group also put a small wooden fence around the ditch and painted it to match the Greenline signs in the area.

The VECA community appreciates all of the effort put forth by Jordan, his troupe of fifteen Eagle Scouts, Jordan's family members, and members from his church. They remind us that, by taking the initiative to fix even one small thing, we are helping our community. See picture on page 6.

### Jackson Ave-Watkins Strip Commercial

VECA received a number of complaints about inappropriate signage and the VECA Board is concerned and is addressing the problem.



### St. John the Evangelist Orthodox Church

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### Purchase the VECA note card set Vibrant Colors and VECA Themes

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Available at 1680 Jackson

Fundraiser for VECA Welcome Center  
901-276-1782 VECA@VECA.Org



These cards are a hyper-colored, fanciful representation of Vollintine Evergreen themes.

These include our historic houses and churches, the musical depiction of joy among the bungalows, the serenity of our green-spaces near the built environment, and a stunning display of the VECA map.

VECA has a new email and website address

**VECA.ORG**  
**VECA@VECA.ORG**

## Vollintine Strip West

Several VECA board members met with the owner of the strip commercial property at 1570 Vollintine—see the picture below.

This strip is has two separate owners and Jerry Couloubaritis (picture below and to the right) is a co-owner for the section that extends from the bay with the Mid-South Realty banner to the corner of Maury.

Jerry Couloubaritis showed the board members two very large vacant bays—in the past they had housed a total of four stores. Previous tenants were a cleaners, a tattoo parlor, a beauty shop, and a convenience store.

Possible new uses could include a restaurant, a tax preparer, used furniture, cell phones, computer repair, after school tutoring, and may other options that would serve the neighborhood. The limited vehicle traffic on Vollintine Street means that the users would primarily serve the surrounding area.

However, this would be great space for an office that does mail order or does not necessarily provide services. The owner is willing to use an in-kind work by renters as a way of making the rent affordable.

Eddie Harper is a personable business owner of the barber shop at the corner of Maury and Vollintine and he has a thriving business.

VECA discussed concerns which included the condition of the front parking lot and lighting, which the owner agreed to address. VECA also expressed concern about the vagrants at the site and Jerry Couloubaritis said he will give the police permission to remove vagrants from his property.

VECA was very pleased to meet with Jerry Couloubaritis and he was cooperative and upbeat. VECA is considering several other projects with him, including a clean up, paint up effort. The VECA historic committee is look at the site for façade improvements.

VECA plans on continuing to work with the strip commercial areas in the neighborhood with the initial focus on the Vollintine Strip. Next, VECA will examine the collection of businesses at Jackson Ave and Evergreen St, with a focus on the former BP station.




## Trinity Music Conservatory

Trinity United Methodist Church in Midtown Memphis will launch a new music academy to help provide opportunities to children between ages 11-18 to realize their music potential. It will begin in January 2010 by offering LIMITED private instruction in instrumental and vocal music, taught by a talented, experienced staff, including members of the Memphis Symphony.

The summer will see it hosting two MUSIC DAY CAMPS (junior and senior high school aged students). These camps will also involve a gifted, professional music staff inspiring and guiding young musicians to rise to the next level. The fall of 2010 will usher in the OFFICIAL opening of the conservatory, which will follow the schedule of Memphis public schools. It is directed by Thomas M. Machen and is located at 1738 Galloway. The phone number is 274-6895. Information concerning teachers' names and instruments, tuition and registration will be available for viewing at its website: [www.trinitymusicconservatory.com](http://www.trinitymusicconservatory.com).

## Photo of Scout Project—See story on page 5



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## New Grocery in the Vollintine Strip East by Meredith Cavin

O'Keila and Rashad Alasadi are the new owners of the North Memphis Grocery in the Vollintine-Avalon Strip at 1590 Vollintine Ave.

The couple moved to Memphis from Chicago seven years ago, and they have been in the VECA neighborhood for the past three. They began working at the North Memphis Grocery on May 13, 2009.

They say they do the job to make a living and because they want to help people. The store provides necessities to the community, including all kinds of groceries, seasonings, baking goods, toiletries, and supplies for everyday life. In the mornings they sell coffee and breakfast, which O'Keila, a self-described "people person" says lifts her customers' spirits.

While the store has opportunities for positive community interactions, managing the store is also very challenging. O'Keila and Rashad were able to buy the store when the previous owners left the neighborhood.

The couple laments that there are "issues" at the corner, including lots of loitering and littering. Many people dump unwanted items steps away from the dumpster which the store has to pay to have emptied.

At times, O'Keila admits she feels intimidated, like when people try to get stuff for free from the store. As the store represents her livelihood, she must protect both herself and also her business.

She and Rashad are doing a lot to protect and improve the business. Since the change in management in May, O'Keila and Rashad have had a mural painted on the side of their business.

They are thinking of putting up signs discouraging loitering or trash-dumping, and like many other business owners on the Vollintine Strip, they would like to see more lights in the area for increased safety.

Overall, O'Keila notes that it can feel like everyone is on his or her own, and this competitive attitude can override compassion. She would like to see more positivity and unity. She thinks the area needs something to bring everybody together, something positive in all aspects.

O'Keila and Rashad are very kind, dedicated people, so if you would like to share ideas about neighborhood improvement with them, let them know on your next trip to North Memphis Grocery. Also, be sure to say congratulations! The couple is officially tying the knot this winter.

The owners said they also run two other markets, one in North Memphis near Chelsea and one in Orange Mound.

Editors Note: The Owners of the property area at 1580 Vollintine, the east side of the strip mall, are Almorais Husien and Sadeo A. Aikabsh 1009 Getwell Memphis TN 38111



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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*, VECA email, the annual meeting, and committee activity are the ways in which VECA communicates with its residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. The VECA area 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 Ave, Memphis, TN 38107 or call (901) 276-1782. Website: [www.veca.org](http://www.veca.org); Email: [VECA@veca.org](mailto:VECA@veca.org)

**Who is VECA? You are VECA.**

**VECA, the Vollintine-Evergreen Community Association, is your neighborhood organization, composed of volunteers and neighbors.**

## Newsletter Advertising

Want to reach 3,500 VECA residents and other neighborhood supporters? Why not advertise in the *Vollintine-Evergreen News*? Local businesses can receive community support by appearing in our pages.

Just \$150 buys 6 prominent ads in our newsletters. Don't wait! Call our advertising manager at 276-1782. It will help you get customers and help the neighborhood at the same time.



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## VECA & VECA CDC Information

Elizabeth Saba, Project Manager, Welcome Center  
901-276-1782 and [ESaba@VECA.org](mailto:ESaba@VECA.org)

VECA Board: Nedra Bailey

VECA CDC: Paul Davis and Chuck Fox

*Vollintine-Evergreen News* Advertising: Barbara Gavalas

V&E Greenline: Renate Rosenthal & Len Cobb

Safety and Security Committee: TBA

Neighborhood Preservation Committee: Chris Floyd

Neighbors for Trees: Marci Hendrix and André Glenn

VECA Welcome Center Committee: Mike Kirby

VECA Email and Communication Committee: TBA

Apartments and Houses: Mary Wilder, Chuck Fox, and Nedra Bailey

Rhodes Community Development Interns funded by City of Memphis, Division of Housing and Community Development

VECA Welcome Center 1680 Jackson Avenue Memphis, TN 38107  
Phone: 901-276-1782

VECA Website: [www.VECA.org](http://www.VECA.org)

VECA and VECA CDC Email: [VECA@VECA.org](mailto:VECA@VECA.org)

VECA Email Announcements: [news@VECA.org](mailto:news@VECA.org)

*Vollintine-Evergreen News*: [VECA@VECA.org](mailto:VECA@VECA.org)

V&E Greenline: [VEgreenline@gmail.com](mailto:VEgreenline@gmail.com) and [www.VEGreenline.org](http://www.VEGreenline.org)

## Lick Creek Meeting Minutes Trevor Wylie

The VECA Lick Creek Committee recently met to discuss possible solutions to the flooding affecting VECA during times of heavy rain. Areas from near McLean Blvd to near Watkins Street overflow their banks. In addition, residents with basements experience problems with the sanitary sewer at these times.

VECA residents affected by the flooding are working on a grant proposal which will help them organize efforts with the City of Memphis to address the problem.

VECA has started surveying residents living along the creek and will continue doing this for the next several months.

The committee thought that there were a number of actions that could be taken by the City: creating retentions ponds to hold water during flooding, creating baffles to slow the flow entering the VECA area and thus preventing some flooding, building retention walls, clearing brush from the walls of the creek, hiring a firm to design retaining lines, or using new slopes to help retain the storm water.

The committee also thought there were some regulatory actions that could be taken by the City, including requiring new development to store rainwater on premises and requiring that parking lots be permeable so that water can enter the ground rather than running off into Lick Creek.

The committee needs more residents to work on this issue who live adjacent to Lick Creek. Call the VECA Welcome Center for more information at 276-1782. The program chair is Mary Wilder; Brian Floyd conducted the meeting of residents.

The City of Memphis Division of Engineering is working with VECA and other Midtown neighborhoods to address these issue. An exciting development is that the City is considering hiring a consulting firm to conduct meetings with Midtown neighborhoods and to provide the City with information on the recommendations from those meetings.

A special thanks is due to City Council Member Jim Strickland for his interest in the issue.