

# VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

## NEWS

A NEIGHBORHOOD PUBLICATION SPONSORED BY VECA, THE VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION / VECA.ORG / VECA@VECA.ORG



DECEMBER 2013 / JANUARY 2014

### VECA Annual Meeting Agenda

- 9:00 am – Potluck Breakfast –  
bring a dish to share
- 9:30 am – Guest Speaker Syd Lerner,  
executive director at Greater  
Memphis Greenline, Inc.
- 10:00 am – Meeting begins
- 11:15 am – Meeting concludes

I am VECA, You are VECA, We are  
VECA together

VECA Service Awards Nominations  
are open for VECA Service Awards  
in several categories:

- The Margaret Dichtel Award is  
presented annually to a Vollintine  
Evergreen resident and VECA  
member who embodies the prin-  
ciples of neighboring and com-  
munity action
- The Martha Heinemann Award  
honors a Board member who has  
rendered exceptional service to  
the VECA Board.
- The Richard Borys Award honors  
public officials who contribute to  
the Vollintine Evergreen neigh-  
borhood.
- The Mary Wilder Award recog-  
nizes excellence in institutions  
that through their work contrib-  
ute to the Vollintine Evergreen  
community.

*Please send your nominations to  
veca@veca.org by December 31.*

## VECA Annual Meeting

Saturday, January 25, 2014 • Living Hope Church • 815 N. McLean (at Jackson)

The VECA annual meeting is a time to elect officers for 2014 and hear about the accomplishments and challenges of 2013. A highlight of the meeting is celebrating our volunteers through public service awards for their work in the neighborhood.

During the breakfast hour we look forward to hearing from Syd Lerner, executive director of the Greater Memphis Greenline, Inc. He will update us on the Chelsea Avenue Greenline project as well as other Greenline route projects.

The annual meeting is a great time to renew your VECA membership for 2014. VECA strives to be good stewards of membership dollars received. Because of your support, a community garden is flourishing, graffiti has been painted over, and neighbors are connecting. We would not be where we are today without your financial support and volunteer participation. Thank you for believing in our neighborhood. Only through all of us working together do good things happen!

Chuck Fox, who works with our rental properties, says about volunteering with VECA: "I volunteer because I can see results of my efforts. I get to meet different people in the Homes for Neighbors and I treat them like my customers. I am rewarded with their smiles, their thank yous, and their talk. I learn from them of how other landlords have treated them and how much they appreciate the respect and the results. I financially give to VECA (membership and donations at work through United Way) to make sure I do my part to pay the utilities and keep the VECA office open."

Chris Floyd says, "I volunteer because I love our neighborhood. I grew up in Vollintine Evergreen and want the neighborhood to remain a safe and vibrant area to live with my husband and daughter. I financially support VECA because it provides many activities throughout the year to bring neighbors together and ensure Vollintine Evergreen remains a great place to live."

Join with us in 2014! We need your help!

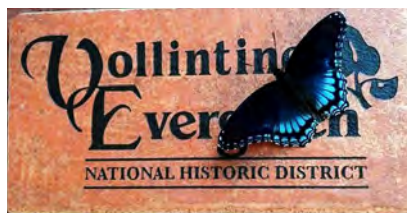
## UPCOMING EVENTS (and other important stuff)

### Annual Meeting

Saturday, January 25, 2013

Living Hope Church

815 N. McLean (at Jackson)



### Vollintine Evergreen Youth Group

Every Wednesday from 2:30-6:30 pm

Peace Lutheran Church

1548 Jackson Avenue

The newly established Vollintine Evergreen Youth Group (ages 11-18) will meet for arts and crafts, basketball, and homework help on Wednesdays, from 2:30pm to 6:30pm

Saturday, April 26

The V&E ArtWalk

Save the date!



### Curbside Recycling Bins

The Cooper Young recycling bins has expanded their recycling options. They now take cardboard boxes flattened/broken down. Break down your boxes after Christmas and take them to the recycling bins at Cooper and Walker to avoid advertising what is new inside your house.



### Give to VECA through United Way

The United Way campaign allows you to donate directly to VECA! United Way donations are used by many nonprofit organizations and donating through United Way is a great opportunity for you to give to your neighborhood!

To Donate to VECA: use the back of the yellow sheet of the United Way form. The bottom of Item 3 has the following statement: "You may also support a specific United Way or Mid-South partner agency." Enter VECA or Vollintine Evergreen as the agency name and the amount. The agency number is 5377.

Please contact VECA at 276-1782 or [veca@veca.org](mailto:veca@veca.org) for any questions or to let us know about your contribution!



## VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN NEWS

DECEMBER 2013 / JANUARY 2014

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Please send all articles and submissions to [NEWS@VECA.ORG](mailto:NEWS@VECA.ORG)  
For advertising rate sheet, or to submit ads electronically, please email [NEWS@VECA.ORG](mailto:NEWS@VECA.ORG)

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**Preservation** Chris Floyd  
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VECA is a neighborhood organization made up of volunteers and paying members. The newsletter, VECA mail, annual meeting, and committee activities are 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.

VECA  
1680 Jackson Avenue  
901.276.1782  
Website / Calendar: [veca.org](http://veca.org)  
Email: [veca@veca.org](mailto:veca@veca.org)

# Holiday Party at VECA Welcome Center

By Lilly Gilkey

The Welcome Center lit up in holiday festivities as the Neighborhood Network Committee hosted its 2nd Annual VECA Holiday Celebration on Saturday, December 7.

Kids of all ages gathered around for candy canes and pics with Santa.

Cookies baking in the oven filled the center with a delightful aroma as eager hands decorated them with colorful sprinkles, M&M's and other tasty treats.

Arts and crafts tables allowed children to be creative and express their inner artists. The snowflakes in the Welcome Center window are the work of some of our budding geniuses.

The cold weather did not deter participants from marshmallow roasting and making s'mores in the parking lot. They knew that a cup of hot chocolate was just inside the door.

A hearty "Ho, Ho, Ho and Merry Christmas!" from Santa could be heard throughout the room. It was a fun-filled evening with some 60 in attendance.

A very special thank you to Shannon Little of Huey's for donating door prizes. They were a big hit.

Also thanks to Andree Glenn, Steve Gadbois, Jackie Jones, Sara First, Gloria Singleton, and Rhodes Fellows Dy'nelle Todman, Sam Brobeck, and Caroline Clark for helping to pull everything together.



# Vollentine Optional Elementary School Hosts 1st Annual Community Science Fair

By Tamika Jackson



PICTURED: Mrs. Tamika Jackson (principal of Vollentine), Dontavius Taylor (Gordon), Alijah Featherson (3rd Place Vollentine), Luciana Gonzales (Klondike), Ayanna Chairs (1st Place, Klondike), Stacey Berry (2nd Place, Klondike), Ms. J. Anderson (principal of Klondike), Aaliyah Taylor, Anna Weaver (Vollentine).

Vollentine Optional Elementary School hosted its first annual Community Science Fair on November 19, 2013, at Living Hope Church. The participating schools were Gordon Elementary, Klondike Elementary, and Vollentine Optional Elementary. The Vollentine family is dedicated to the belief that success in learning can and must be achieved by every student. Science fairs offer students experiences in exploring beyond the classroom to understand more about their world as well as foster an appreciation for science. We would like to thank all students, parents, teachers, event coordinators (Tracy Davis and Willette Jeffries), school administrators (Joyce Anderson and Robert Davis), and a very special thanks to our wonderful adopters, Living Hope Church. We look forward to continued growth and support of this event. Congratulations to all of the students who participated in our first annual Community Science Fair.



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# Neighbor Highlight: Lending a Hand

By Marci Hendrix



One recent fall morning, I visited with Lindsay Butler, one of our newer VECA neighbors. The time flew by as Lindsay engaged me with stories, her passions for life and her work with the underserved in Memphis – the homeless.

Lindsay grew up in Jackson, TN. She was a goalie on the soccer team while pursuing a ministerial major/theater minor at Bethel College in McKenzie, TN. It was during one of her ministerial classes that she realized she wanted to work with the homeless. In that class, guest speaker Pete Gathke, a

professor at Memphis Theological Seminary, talked about working with “the least of these” and for Lindsay, that became a pivotal moment for her.

Lindsay finished her college career and began a graduate degree at Memphis Theological Seminary, where she is in her last year. At the invitation of Gathke, Lindsay visited Manna House in Memphis. There she found that the homeless and poor were called by name; they were treated with dignity, and they found a place of respite for a few hours. Lindsay is now a board member at Manna House and serves as a volunteer staff member along with five other board members. Manna House’s Facebook page reads as follows: “Manna House, located at 1268 Jefferson, Memphis, TN 38104, is a house of hospitality in the Catholic Worker tradition. Open three days a week, Manna House provides showers, some clothing, coffee, and a sanctuary for poor and homeless persons. We believe compassion is contagious and that

justice structures compassion so that all may have life to the full.”

Lindsay’s work there led her to become involved with the Room in the Inn program. Room in the Inn is modeled after a similar program in Nashville. After 27 years of experience, Nashville has 180 churches participating, each hosting twelve guests per gathering. Typically, the guests are picked up at a location where they have been vetted to make sure they are not inebriated or a danger to anyone, etc. The host church has volunteers who stay with the guests during their overnight visit; in the morning, the guests return to a designated location. In Memphis the designated pickup and return location this season is Manna House.

Memphis is relatively new to the Room in the Inn program. Peace Lutheran Church in our neighborhood participated in the program during the winter months of 2013 and they will participate again this year. Nearby Trinity United Methodist in Evergreen is

new to the program. There are six total Room in the Inn programs in Memphis.

Lindsay, who also works with the youth at Peace Lutheran, describes one goal of Room in the Inn as providing guests with a peaceful setting where they can rest. Most homeless walk approximately eight miles a day, and a safe place to sleep is a welcome sanctuary.

Lindsay understands that neighbors have concerns about homeless people. She found that her own concerns were eased by getting to know individuals rather than “the homeless.” Many people become homeless because they lack a support system or safety net when faced with a challenge such as a job loss. Their dignity has been stripped and they need help getting back on track. She hopes that people will be open to understanding more about the problem so we can work together for a common good.

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## Vollintine Evergreen Youth Initiative Update



Thanks to the generosity of Sherron Plummer and friends and co-workers at First Tennessee Bank – Corporation Real Estate, all 16 children attending the Vollintine Evergreen Youth Initiative Program received early Christmas presents of brand-new winter coats.

The youth group established this fall is going well. The kids are coming in for help with homework and are entertained with academic projects and games. Each child is offered a nutritious meal before leaving. Youth leader Nickolas Bradshaw is doing an excellent job as a liaison. The kids recently entered an art contest spon-

sored by Memphis Light Gas & Water on saving energy.

Volunteers and contributions are always needed.



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# Alex's Tavern: Your neighborhood watering hole

By Jeff Hulett

What can you say about Alex's Tavern? The historic watering hole, located at 1445 Jackson Avenue dates back to 1953. In fact, it's the oldest family-owned tavern in Memphis.

It's a great place to watch Tigers and Grizzlies games, play tunes on the jukebox and hang out with friends. But let's not forget the amazing food. I'm a fan of the burgers, of course, but I also love the wings and mouth-watering seasoned fries. Another reason people keep coming back is the coldest beer in town. Not to mention that Alex's never seems to close. It's the perfect neighborhood bar with tons of big-screen TVs, memorabilia of all kinds and some of the best writing on the wall you'll find anywhere.

The tavern walls also feature a resolution from the city council giving the tavern a key to the city. They also have a shuffleboard table. What? Who has a shuffleboard table these days? The game's quick, too, making it a blast to play.

Alex's Tavern has long attracted a wide cross-section of regulars, from Rhodes and UT medical and dentistry students to radio and TV personalities to baseball umpires and restaurant servers who come late, after their shifts. There have been many world-famous personalities, too, through the years [name some]. If you look closely, you can see Alex's in many movies and TV shows.

Like their Facebook page says, Alex's Tavern is good for all occasions, but for quick service don't say "Hey Rock." And don't forget to bring cash, because that's all they take. Do people know what "Hey Rock" means?

\*Some information from this piece was featured courtesy of VIP Memphis Magazine and ran in the May 2010 issue of our newsletter.

*Alex's Tavern*  
1445 Jackson Avenue  
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901.278.9086



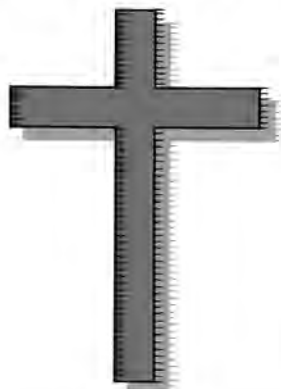
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# Neighborhood Fall Block Party

Held on Sunday, October 27th at the VECA Stationhouse, neighbors came out to enjoy fun and food thanks to the generosity of Mercy Hill Church. The weather was perfect and plans are already in place to hold the event next year (October 26, 2014).




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# VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

NEWS

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# Hi-Tone Firmly Lands ...

By Jeff Hulett

For years, the Hi-Tone was the place to see live music. I played there many times. I also witnessed some of the best shows I've ever seen in that space. I think I speak for a lot of people when I say that. It was a great venue that offered a wide variety of music, food and drinks. When it closed in early 2013 many people didn't think it would ever find another home. Thankfully, it did, and it's now in our neighborhood. And it's not just a place to hear good live music, it's a place to hang out, eat great food and catch a Tigers or Grizzlies game.

I recently had a chance to sit down with longtime owner Jonathan Kiersky and hear his thoughts on the new Hi-Tone and what he likes about being a part of VECA and Crosstown.

## *What are you most excited about being in the Crosstown/VECA neighborhood?*

A lot of factors, honestly. We love the neighborhood and really enjoy being a part of a neighborhood. We had opportunities to reopen the business in many locations but nothing else came even close to the combination that Crosstown/VECA provided. First off, the Crosstown folks were just exceptional to work with and really welcomed us with open arms, and we very much believe in what the Crosstown folks are doing and their vision. The other major factor was the neighborhood – a lot of people have come by and thanked us for moving into the neighborhood, and that's really been a cool development. We like the idea of someone walking or riding their bikes to the lounge or a show. We also wanted to be a part of something that we felt was meaningful. The way that Crosstown has come together and seeing the community at events like the block party that we just had reinforced that immensely.

## *Give me the overall mission you have for Hi-Tone.*

Our mission has always been to bring the best music to Midtown, Memphis and the surrounding areas. That being said, we always want to be good neighbors and give people something that they will really enjoy. We set the spaces (more on that in a minute) up so that they are both sonically great as well as accommodating to feedback we heard from our concert-goers in the past. We strive to make every person who walks through our doors have a smile on their face when they leave and hopefully even into the next day at work. We want people to feel like the Hi-Tone is a home away from home; somewhere they can go to grab a drink, eat some dinner and see a great show, and to totally expect the best service from a staff they want to see and hang out with and a great concert-going experience. We worked very hard to make this a comfortable, first-class space for everyone involved. We want to give people something unique to the city that they can get behind, but especially for those in our neighborhood.

## *What can people expect at the new Hi-Tone?*

I think this is where we get to set ourselves apart, even from our old location on Poplar. We put a good amount of time and effort into collating

the suggestions that people wanted, not just in a venue sense, but in overall aesthetics and functionality. We realized that folks wanted to not only see a show but wanted to stop by for a drink, grab some food, wanted a good parking situation, air conditioning and heat that, you know, actually worked. So we kind of reinvented our own wheel. We decided that we needed a full-time dedicated lounge that has full-service beer, liquor, wine, food and entertainment, because while people wanted to come sit with us, they didn't want to sit through a sound check to eat dinner or pay a cover to come have a few beers and, say, watch the Grizzlies or Tigers game.

## *When did the lounge open and what do people think?*

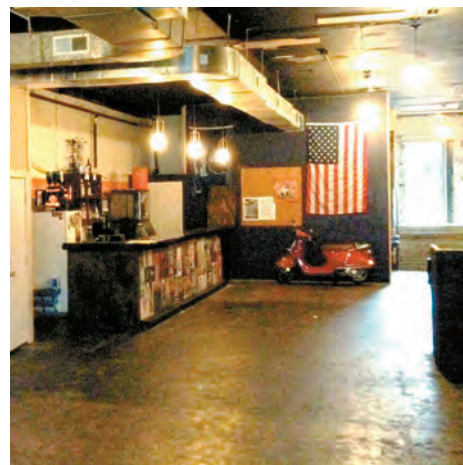
We opened the Hi-Tone lounge (412 N. Cleveland) at the end of October and people have been really excited about being able to hang out, watch TV, eat BBQ and have some drinks without having to see the show that particular night. It's been a pretty overwhelmingly great response. The lounge is open from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. seven nights a week with a Memphis-centric happy hour from 5 to 8 p.m. daily featuring Roaring Tiger Vodka and Memphis beers on special. We brought back Monday Night Wing Night and Taco Night on Wednesdays – check our website, [hitonememphis.com](http://hitonememphis.com), for more specials. We kept the Ping Pong table (please exhale). We have board games. We have free Wifi.

## *What about shows?*

We decided that two performance spaces were better than just the one due to the large number of band requests we get. This gives us the ability to do two shows in an evening. We have the big room (414 N. Cleveland) that will house the bigger shows and the weekend shows. Weekday shows in the big room will start earlier than at the previous venue – usually between 7 and 8 p.m. – and the sound in the room is light years ahead of what we had. We built a smaller room behind the lounge to accommodate smaller shows and other events that we are contacted about such as birthday parties, art events, etc. Both music rooms have topnotch sound and equipment.

## *Anything else we should know?*

Lastly, we added Richard, the former pit boss from Cozy Corner, and his food truck, a huge development that we didn't even see coming. He serves nightly from 6 p.m. until the show is over. He is outside so he can provide food to the lounge, to concert-goers and to the general public if they just want to stop by on their way home to pick up some to-go dinner. His food is downright addictive. Come by and see us!





# Three's a charm

*"Art is language and public art is public speech" –  
Jonathan Jones, The Guardian*

By Marci Hendrix

The V&E Greenline is not only an important neighborhood amenity for green space and recreation, it is now home to three public art pieces for all to enjoy.

The first art project to find a home on the V&E Greenline was the Big Kids located on the far western section of the V&E Greenline. The Big Kids, installed in April 2011, was funded through Rhodes and was an art class project. Now an alum, student Graham Smart was the designer of the project, and he and his classmates produced the Big Kids.

The colorful bike rack art was project number two and is located due west of the Station House on the Greenline. Installed in April 2013, the project was funded by the Rhodes Plough Transforming Neighborhoods grant and was designed and built by glass artist Suzy Hendrix.

The newest art project is the fish sculptures located west of Lick Creek Bridge. The installation went smoothly and was topped off by a dedication ceremony and party on November 23. Funded by Crosstown Arts, the fish sculpture was designed and created by neighbor Jeannie Tomlinson Saltmarsh. Jeannie has lived in the neighborhood since 2002 and has been involved in several other neighborhood projects. She fabricated the VECA sign for the Welcome Center, she helped Suzy Hendrix with the metal frame of the bike rack project, and she monitors and maintains the Big Kids.

Our neighborhood is fortunate to have many artists involved in public art. Anthony Lee and Kiersten Williams painted the mural on the wall of Bari Restaurant in Overton Square. Suzy Hendrix is the artist behind the stained glass windows installed in the old TGI Friday's (soon to be Babalu Tacos & Tapas). Lea Holland was the art director and fabricator on the "I Can Fly" mosaic statue at Le Bonheur Hospital. She designed and installed a mosaic in Overton Square (on the sidewalk in front of the old Paulette's) this fall and restored two mosaics by Thorne Edwards displayed in the parking garage plaza. Holland expresses the importance of public art: "Adding art to a space changes that space into a place that people can identify with. Public art creates a sense of ownership and pride in one's

community. It spurs further interaction and collaboration. Seeing my art in the community just makes me happy. I hope it makes others happy as well."

It sure does. My dog and I look forward to greeting the elevated fish as we walk along the V&E Greenline,, and the Big Kids always evoke a smile. I bet you'll have the same reaction.





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# Fish Sculptures Adorn the Greenline



# V&E Greenline Grants and Trail Work

By John Paul Shaffer

The V&E Greenline is receiving a lot of good attention these days. Several construction and art projects, as well as two planning grants through the Memphis and Shelby County Office of Sustainability, are raising the profile of the community-owned linear park running through the heart of VECA.

## Current and Recent Projects

The Lick Creek Bridge on the Greenline, east of Evergreen Street, reopened in November after receiving new wood decking and a coat of paint. Work on the bridge was funded through a grant from the Hyde Family Foundations that was awarded for major infrastructure improvements. The grant will also include two new walking bridges at the Stationhouse along Tutwiler, improving access to the space for events like the annual VECA Art Walk.

## Mid-South Regional Greenprint Planning Grants

Through the Mid-South Regional Greenprint and Sustainability Plan, two federal "subplanning" grants were awarded this fall to projects related to the V&E Greenline. In the first, the Vollintine Evergreen Community Association is partnering with local landscape architecture firm Richie Smith and Associates to evaluate street crossings along the Greenline. By working with VECA residents, the team will produce designs for more accessible facilities (ramps, crosswalks, etc.) that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The second grant was awarded to Crosstown Arts and will pay for planning and design of a half-mile extension of the V&E Greenline through the Sears Crosstown redevelopment site. The project will connect the Greenline to Bellevue Boulevard across North Parkway and Watkins and will provide a convenient link between VECA and Crosstown. These projects "showcase concepts of improved access to green space, connectivity between housing and neighborhood centers, and connectivity to a greater bicycle and pedestrian network," said John Zeanah, program manager for the Greenprint Plan.

## Support YOUR Greenline!

*While these grant funds are paying for some exciting big-ticket projects and planning for the future of the V&E Greenline, the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the trail is provided entirely by community members and volunteers. Visit [www.veggreenline.org](http://www.veggreenline.org) to volunteer or make a donation today!*

Many thanks to all who helped with the bridge renovation: Scott McDermott, Paul Goldstein, Chuck Fox, Bill Rehberg, Jim Martin, Daniel Guerra-Monje, Greg Lieberman, Nubuko Igarshi, Susan and Roger Bransforddeck contractor John Langley, painter Tom Bowers, Matt, and Active Bolt for hardware donations.



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