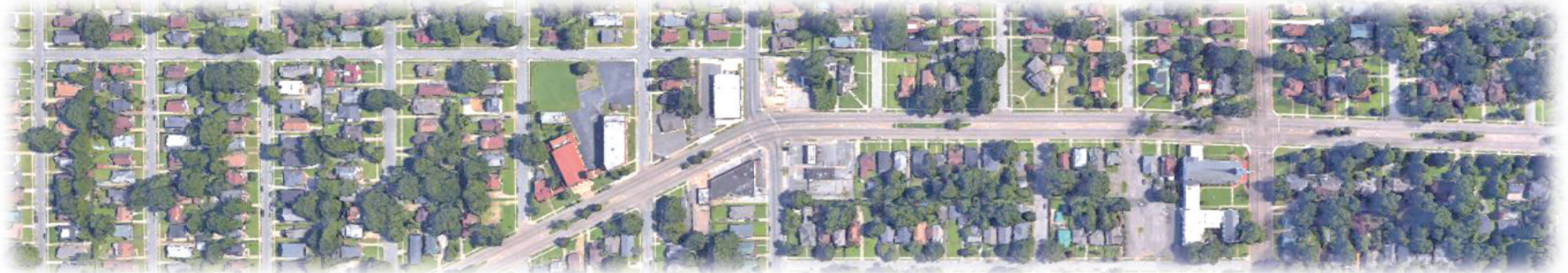


VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

NEWS

A NEIGHBORHOOD PUBLICATION SPONSORED BY VECA, THE VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION / VECA.ORG / VECA901@GMAIL.COM

SPRING 2017



How Residents See the Evergreen-Jackson Commercial Area

By Cathy Marcinko

The initial results of the VECA survey on the Evergreen-Jackson commercial area are in! VECA heard back from 140 respondents, a vast majority (96%) being residents. In addition, 6% respondents were property or business owners in the neighborhood, 4% were employed by, attend or represent a neighborhood institution or organization, and 6% were “other.” These results are “initial” because VECA is still asking other residents to complete the survey – including those not online and those who patronize businesses in the commercial area. We want to thank everyone who took the time to fill out the survey. The results to date are summarized below.

Meanwhile, please mark your calendar to attend the next VECA event to move this initiative forward, the *Evergreen-Jackson Walking Tour and Community Conversation* on Saturday, April 1, from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. This event will be an opportunity for everyone who cares about improving the commercial area to get an up-close look and to share and discuss ideas on improvements with VECA neighbors and Andy Kitsinger, our planning consultant and architect.

Image and Attractiveness of Evergreen-Jackson Commercial Area: All survey respondents said that the Evergreen-Jackson commercial area was either “very important” (85%) or “important” (15%) to the image of the neighborhood. With regard to the “attractiveness of the area,” a majority of respondents saw the commercial district as either “not attractive at all” (67%) or as “okay, but it could be better” (32%).

There was a striking consensus on what should be done to improve the attractiveness of the area: 99% wanted to see new, attractive uses, followed by 90% who said that façade improvements were needed. These were followed by 83% of respondents who wanted more landscaping, 81% who wanted repairs to public sidewalks and curbs, 65% who wanted painted crosswalks, and 60% who saw a need for more frequent litter pickup.

Safety of the Evergreen-Jackson Commercial Area: On the surface, the safety of the area did not seem to evoke as strong a consensus from respondents as did physical attractiveness: 50% said it is “okay, but could be better,” while 39% said the area is not safe or doesn’t feel safe. However, the fact that only 9% of respondents felt that the area is “reasonably safe” is perhaps the most revealing on this topic.

Responses on ways to improve the safety or perceived safety of the area, in order from highest to lowest, were change in uses of some properties, especially those vacant or underutilized (90%); design changes to make it feel safer/make it harder to commit

Evergreen-Jackson Walking Tour and Community

Saturday, April 1, 2017
1:00 pm – 3:30 pm
VECA Welcome Center
1680 Jackson Avenue

Come join us for a walking tour of the Evergreen-Jackson area, and a hands-on meeting to brainstorm ways we can work together to make our neighborhood commercial area a destination place. A place where families can meet up with friends, shop for groceries, grab a bite to eat, or have an ice cream cone, and getting there can be done on foot or by bike. Light refreshments will be served.

Long-term residents are encouraged to bring old photos of the Evergreen-Jackson area!



Dates unknown. Above shows the BP Station and Firestone and former restaurant where VECA Welcome Center is now. Below shows Carls Bakery.



VECA Annual Meeting Recap, January 29, 2017

The VECA board held its annual meeting at the VECA Welcome Center this year. Customarily, we meet at a neighborhood church and we're very grateful for their hospitality. However, we wanted to get neighbors into the Center so they could see the potential of the space as a place for community activities.

The plan worked. The building was filled, yet comfortable enough for people to get their breakfast and visit with each other. Thank you, Living Hope Church, for lending us the cushion chairs; thank you, neighbors, for bringing plenty of food for everyone to enjoy; and thank you all for attending. A special thanks to Lifeblood for being on site to receive donations – saving lives, one pint at a time!

The meeting started off on the right note with speaker Cindy McMillion of the Connecting Memphis project. She tells the story of Memphis through people. She kept everyone engaged by telling about the Memphians she has interviewed for her website in the last 2 1/2 years.

Andy Kitsinger then introduced the Strengthening Communities Initiative project. He will be leading the VECA effort to re-envision the Evergreen/Jackson intersection. A survey about the intersection was conducted with those in attendance. There will be a lot of activity this year related to this project, so look for announcements about upcoming workshops.

Chuck Fox gave the financial report, Justin Burkhead gave the committee report, and Chris Floyd facilitated the VECA board and president election. Lilly Gilkey, who has been VECA president for the last three years, ended her term in accordance with the VECA bylaws. The nomination for president was VECA resident and board member Bob Rigus. The VECA membership enthusiastically voted for him. We look forward to working with Bob this year.

The 2017 VECA board members are: Justin Burkhead; Michalyn Easter; Karen Edwards, Secretary; Chris Floyd; Chuck Fox, Treasurer; Mary Gibson; Lilly Gilkey; Marci Hendrix; Jackie Jones; Ryan Knop; Angela Lamb; Stacy Pennington; Sam Powers; Jeff Riddle; Bob Rigus, President; Tony Steinberg; Natasha Strong, Vice President; Jeannie Tomlinson

Service awards were presented to people and institutions who help make Vollintine Evergreen a better neighborhood.

The Richard S. Borys Award is given to public officials who, through their work, contribute to the Vollintine Evergreen community. The award was presented to Memphis City Beautiful. MCB has been instrumental in helping make the neighborhood cleaner through the years by grants and cleanups. Cyndy Grivich Tucker and Eldra White accepted the award on MCB's behalf.

The Margaret Dichtel Award goes to a Vollintine Evergreen resident who embodies the principles of community service and action. Two such awards were given this year.

Raymond Wells received the Dichtel award for his volunteer work on the Lyndale Community Garden. He helps at all of the garden clean-up days, but he's seen many other days doing tasks such as working on the mulch pile, picking vegetables, cleaning up the site and, most important, carrying heavy items. During the heat of summer, vegetables must be picked almost daily in order for the plants to keep bearing, and he has undertaken that task. Jo Ann Street received the Dichtel award for working with children and adults in the northeast section of the neighborhood. She is the founder of a litter patrol brigade named HUG. HUG is an acronym of the three parks in the area: Hollywood Park, University Park and Gooch Park. Jo Ann has coordinated bike safety classes for children, and she initiated the Adopt a Park program through Memphis City Beautiful.

The Michael Kirby award honors a VECA volunteer who has rendered exceptional service to the Vollintine Evergreen Community Association. Two awards were given this year. Natasha Strong received the Kirby award for her leadership of the VECA Membership Committee, which had a fundraising record high in 2016. A passionate board member, she has been involved in the mural project, the green triangle projects, and the historic street sign project through the VECA Historic Committee. Cathy Marcinko received the Kirby award for her outstanding work on the VECA Historic Committee. She and Natasha make a great team co-leading the committee, and their efforts are commendable. Cathy has helped VECA with numerous grants, and she is always willing to share her vast knowledge and expertise of urban planning with VECA.



VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN NEWS
Spring 2017

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Housing Chuck Fox
Neighborhood Networks Lilly Gilkey
Blight Busters Chris Floyd
Communications Marci Hendrix

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 and Calendar: veca.org

Top to bottom:
Cathy Marcinko
Natasha Strong, Chuck Fox
Cyndy Grivich Tucker, Eldra White, CF
Raymond Wells, CF;
Modeane Thompson, a VECA founder
Lilly Gilkey, Bob Rigus.

Lilly Gilkey received a Presidential Appreciation Award for serving VECA well in her three terms as president. We have been inspired by her care and compassion, and we have seen her be a patient and open-minded leader who always managed to lead graciously and with a sense of humor. 🐦

Giving to VECA

In addition to being a dues paying member of VECA, there are several other ways you can contribute financially to the neighborhood:

Amazon Smile : Amazon Smile supports VECA and the V&E Greenline when you shop. You can shop at Amazon and make a donation to the Vollintine Evergreen Community Association of 0.5 percent of the purchase price. This donation is made by Amazon, with no charge to the customer. The funds will be equally split between VECA's most visible projects: The V&E Greenline and the VECA Welcome Center. If you shop at Amazon, please sign up to have a donation made to VECA. You will be shopping at AmazonSmile.com, which is the same as regular Amazon with a different screen. Here's how you sign up for the donation:

- Go to the website: smile.amazon.com and sign in to Amazon
- In the box that says "pick your own charitable organization," type in Vollintine Evergreen Community Association and search.
- Next, select Vollintine Evergreen Community Association

United Way: Donate 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 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 another health and human services organization in the United Way of the Mid-South service area." Enter VECA or Vollintine Evergreen as the agency name and the amount. Please contact VECA at 276-1782 or veca901@gmail.com for any questions or to let us know about your contribution!

Kroger Plus Card: Use your Kroger Plus Card and donate to VECA. Create an account on the Kroger page at: <https://www.kroger.com/communityrewards>. Once signed in, click on "My Account." In the Community Rewards section, click on "Enroll". The VECA number is 18512. Please contact us at veca901@gmail.com if you have any questions about using the Kroger Plus Card.

Neighborhood Watch

The National Neighborhood Watch program is one of the oldest and most well-known crime prevention concepts in history that stresses community awareness and teamwork. Neighborhood Watch in Memphis was officially formulated in 1984. It is an organization which empowers local citizens to take back and maintain a better quality of life in their respective neighborhoods. This program has shown that citizens help in the reduction of local crime by being vigilant and by partnering with local law enforcement to address the crime related issues and economical challenges within their community. (www.memphispolice.org/initiatives.asp)

VECA is an official member of the Neighborhood Watch program. Meetings are held at Crump Station Monthly the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm. You can share your concerns and ideas to help make our neighborhoods safe.

VECA holds quarterly NW meetings as well at the VECA Welcome Center. 📍

Remaining 2017 NW Meetings at the VECA Welcome Cente

- Tuesday, June 20, 2017, 6-7pm
- Tuesday, September 19, 2017, 6-7pm



Crump Station (photo left)
949 E.H. Crump
Memphis, TN 38104
Front Desk: (901) 636-4600
Traffic Violations: (901) 636-4568
GIB Local Investigations: (901) 636-4793
Neighborhood Watch: (901) 636-4625
www.memphispolice.org/crump.asp



**Help your Neighborhood
Report crime to police so they know
where it is taking place**

Report Drugs and Crime Anonymously

- Police Dispatch: 545-2677 (then press zero). Listen to the prompts. You can advise the dispatcher if you want to remain anonymous
- Drug Hotline: 525-3673 is anonymous
- Gang Hotline: 528-2338 is anonymous
- Crime Stoppers: 528-2274 is anonymous
- Crump Station: 636-4631- this gets you to the front desk officer. If you are calling to file a complaint only, advise the officer that you wish to remain anonymous.
- SeniorBsafe hotline: 528-0699 is anonymous

When reporting

- Be specific on the address
- Be specific on the type of crime you are seeing
- Describe the persons who are the problem in as much detail as possible



Connect with Vollintine Evergreen Neighbors via Nextdoor, a private social network for neighborhoods. Go to nextdoor.com and create an account by entering your address and email address. Once the address is verified, you can connect to other Vollintine Evergreen neighbors and talk to each other about things going on in the neighborhood, whether that's exchanging recommendations on local service providers, like a contractor, a painter, a babysitter, or talking about local restaurants. People also use the site to talk about more personal things, like lost pets. Crime and prevention is a frequent topic and Nextdoor is increasingly becoming like a virtual neighborhood watch for the neighborhood. Technology is helping people become more connected, and you are invited to join the conversation.

Common Code Violations

Accumulation of junk, trash, and debris
Open storage of material and furnishings
Parking and storing inoperable (junk) motor vehicles
Parking too many vehicles at a property (4 is max)
Excessive weeds, grass, trees and shrubs
Substandard structures and fences
Off street parking (please don't park on your yard)
Special use/recreational vehicles and equipment
Commercial vehicles and equipment
Abandoned and derelict structures
General service and repair shops



To report street light outages, call MLGW at 320-1497



To report code violations call Memphis City Government at 311 (tall weeds, junk vehicles, vehicles parked on grass, etc.)

Church of the Good Shepherd

An Episcopal Church
Organized in Memphis in 1865



My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give them eternal life. -John 10:27

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The Rev. William N. Fry III, Rector
1971 Jackson Avenue
Office: 901-725-9768
Services: Sundays, 7:30 and 10:30 am
Wednesdays, 10:30 am

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VECA Blight Busters Take Action

City of Memphis Code Enforcement Takes No Action

By the Blight Busters Committee

On a beautiful Saturday morning on March 4, volunteers gathered to clean up a long-time vacant property at 1402 Snowden. The property was inundated with trash and debris. The front door was open to trespassers and illegal activity. This property is a diamond in the rough with good bones and is only three blocks from the Crosstown Concourse.

Numerous complaints have been made to the City of Memphis's Code Enforcement division regarding this nuisance as well as many other vacant, blighted properties throughout the neighborhood. Code Enforcement's response has been ineffective, and the division does not hold owners of blighted properties accountable. We need the City of Memphis and Code Enforcement to respond to our neighborhood concerns and save our beautiful historic homes.

Volunteers with VECA Blight Busters decided to take matters into their own hands. Volunteers cleaned up all the clothing, trash and debris that littered the property and boarded the front door securely. Two Memphis police officers also assisted in the effort by ensuring that vagrants were not in the house before the front door was boarded. VECA appreciates the brave men and women who patrol our neighborhood and keep us safe.

Way to go, Blight Busters, for cleaning up neglected properties in our neighborhood! You can join the effort against blight in Vollintine Evergreen by attending Blight Busters committee meetings and clean-up events. Check the VECA calendar or Nextdoor.

com, or call the office for volunteer opportunities. 🐦



VECA Blight Busters Team



1402 Snowden before cleanup



Mike Kirby

Memphis City Beautiful Coordinates Cleanup

By Mike Kirby

Memphis City Beautiful Commission partnered with VECA on Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service to sponsor Dumpster Day at a blighted property at 1445 Lyndale Avenue.

The property had an overwhelming amount of debris, and the owners were unwilling to clean up the property. VECA had filed complaints with the Code Enforcement and most recently complained to the mayor when he came to VECA last November.

City Beautiful, through leader Cyndy Grivich, provided a Dumpster, advertised for MLK Day volunteers and arranged for fifteen community service workers. They also provided a staff member the day of the event to help with intake.

The Dumpster got filled and the volunteers also trimmed and raked so the property was not so unsightly. However, it is still up to Code Enforcement to address the damage to the house itself. More than 30 volunteers turned up, despite the threat of rain. VECA volunteers from the neighborhood were joined by residents of the Lyndale block, along with a group of students from Rhodes College. The Dumpster was provided by Republic Services and tools were provided by the V&E Greenline. Solid Waste Management picked up a lot of debris that did not fit in the Dumpster, and we appreciate their efforts.

Special thanks are due to the neighbors on Lyndale, especially Wayne Stanfil, who brought this concern to VECA.

Memphis City Beautiful is a long-time supporter of VECA. Previously, they presented VECA with two grants: one for the Lyndale Community Garden and one for the Leaps and Bounds mural. They were also the primary sponsor for the planting of trees that have now grown to a large size on Jackson Avenue. After Hurricane Elvis, they donated over 20 large trees that were planted at homes on Jackson Avenue and on the V&E Greenline. They have been steadfast supporters of cleanups and have twice donated Dumpsters to VECA for cleanups. 🐦



Cyndy Grivich Tucker, Program Coordinator, MCB



St John Church Building Project

St. John Orthodox Church on Tutwiler at Dickinson has embarked on a new building project. We spoke to Father Philip Rogers for an update on the project. Father Rogers tells us:

“The new building being constructed is the St. Raphael Fellowship Hall. We have the wonderful problem of not having enough space in our current facility to meet the needs of our community. The new fellowship hall will be large enough for our entire community to enjoy meals and fellowship together. We hope that this building will enable us to better minister to the community. We worked hard with our architect to ensure that the building will be complementary to our existing building and the rest of the neighborhood. Construction is scheduled to be completed at the beginning of October.

“The hall is being named for St. Raphael of Brooklyn, who was an Orthodox bishop in the 20th century in Brooklyn, NY. He traveled across the country establishing churches and ministering to people all over the United States. We would love for his well-known spirit of hospitality to be an example for our community as we work to enhance our ability to have fellowship with our church community and the neighborhood as a whole.”

Other news from St. John is that Father Mashburn retired and Father Rogers is the new pastor. Father Rogers explained: “Yes, Father John Mashburn is officially retired. He served the community here for over 30 years! Thankfully, he is not leaving Memphis and is still a fixture at the church. I am the new pastor. My wife, Kathryn, and I previously served for

eight years in Lafayette, LA, and have now been in Memphis for over a year. We live in Midtown and love being part of this community. We also have a new assistant pastor, Father Alex Mackoul. He and his wife, Amanda, also live in VECA and are enjoying life in Memphis. The transition has gone very smoothly and I am looking forward to many more years of living and working here in Memphis.” 🙏



Rendering used with permission from the St. John link: stjohnmemphis.org/our-parish/renovation-plans-and-updates/

V&E Greenline Partners with Serve901 and St. George's

The V&E Greenline benefited from a service project conducted by the students from St. George's Independent School under the auspices of Serve901, located at Living Hope Church.

Over 30 students and chaperones worked on projects that improved the condition of the V&E Greenline.

On the morning of February 22, the students raked leaves in the drainage ditch from Auburndale Street to Hawthorne Street. The leaves were a problem since they both impeded drainage and did not look so great.

In the afternoon, the students painted the Big Kids sculptures on the west end of the trail near Crosstown Concourse. Some damage to the sculptures was repaired and the painting made the sculptures look great. In addition, the

students did maintenance work on the thirteen trees that were recently planted on the trail.



The St. George's students were a hard-working, very friendly group and the chaperones did a great job.

St. George's Independent School is a college preparatory school in the Episcopal tradition of education that is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence, preparing students for a life of learning and meaningful contribution in an inclusive learning community that nurtures outstanding academic achievement, relationships, leadership, and character reinforced by Judeo-Christian values.

Serve901 also curates service experiences with college students to understand and serve with Memphis.”

Special thanks to Timothy Gibson and Jeff Riddle for making this service project happen. 🙏



St. John the Evangelist Orthodox Church

Sunday
Orthos at 9 am • Liturgy at 10 am

Weekdays
Wednesday Vespers at 5:30 pm
Saturday Great Vespers at 5:50 pm

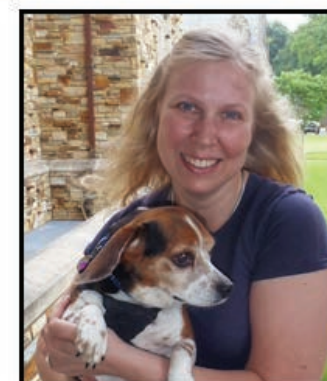
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Leaps and Bounds Mural on Jackson Avenue

By Khara Woods

There's a new mural on Jackson Avenue. Last October, with the help of volunteers, I completed my second public art project in our neighborhood. The new mural, inspired by the eclectic mix of architecture found throughout Vollintine Evergreen, depicts silhouettes of some landmarks in various shades of green.

Early last year VECA board member Natasha Strong called me with the opportunity to revitalize the wall at the Talk of the Town Salon, formerly Swag Barbershop. We worked closely together on securing funding for the mural through Memphis City Beautiful and developed a crowd funding campaign through ioby. Through multiple sources, including VECA, we raised \$2,000.

Once most of the funding was awarded I started to gather materials,

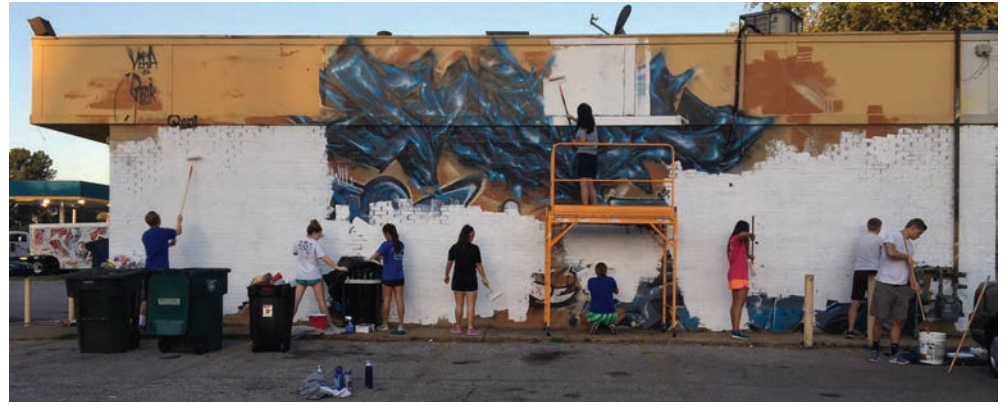
which included a 5-gallon bucket of primer to coat the 15'x40' wall. In mid-October I worked with volunteers through organizations like Serve901, Rhodes College and the University of Memphis. Students from Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, working with Serve901, volunteered to help us prime and paint sections of the wall. With everyone's help I was able to get the mural completed in early November.

This mural was a neighborhood effort and showed how much can get accomplished with a little planning and paint. I am constantly thinking of ways to make where I live better, and I look forward to creating and supporting similar projects in the future. 🐦

* www.ioby.org/blog/neighbors-making-neighborhoods-khara-and-nj-woods



Khara Woods and her mother NJ Woods, in front of the Headshots mural they painted on Jackson near Evergreen. * Used with permission. Photo by David Leonard.



VECA's MISSION

"To maintain a quality residential neighborhood through volunteer efforts of the neighborhood's residents."

A salute to all of our residents past and present – men and women across all age groups – for their countless hours of volunteering, the untold stories of stepping up to lend a helping hand to a neighbor, and strong financial support of VECA.

We are extremely grateful for our members and residents. A successful neighborhood and community association like VECA does not happen overnight. It is the result of engaged residents and neighbors for 45 years and counting.

Your annual contributions to membership have helped in great measure to improve, maintain, preserve and protect our neighborhood's resources and amenities:

- historic character
- interesting architectural details
- beautiful tree-lined streets
- safe greenspaces and nearby parks for our young and elderly
- walkable streets
- pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environment
- public spaces
- accessible and fun public art

VECA is a 100% volunteer-run neighborhood organization.

VECA has a 45-year legacy of being a visionary community organization.

VECA has a track record of being engaged and committed to the betterment of V&E.

We Are VECA. Past, present, future.

.....
VECA donations are 100% Tax Deductible.
Renew Your Membership Today!
.....

Your loyal support, active involvement, and strong sense of community spirit are vital to our continued success.

The money raised through membership dues during our annual campaign is vital for successful events and endeavors by VECA for 2017.

VECA Is Y·O·U·R Neighborhood Community Association Partner!

Please Renew Your Membership Now
• THANK YOU •



VECA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

Join your neighbors in helping Vollintine Evergreen continue to be the great neighborhood it is!

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Be one of the following types of team members:

- Membership \$25 • Family/Household Membership \$35 • Gift Membership \$45
 Neighbor \$75 • Leader \$100 • Other \$ _____

Checks payable to VECA. Mail to VECA, 1680 Jackson Avenue, Memphis, TN 38107

VECA Garden Club

The VECA Garden Club, now six months old, met on February 10 with both members and those interested in gardening. The club meets monthly for presentations and community work sessions.

Its mission is to beautify the V&E neighborhood, one garden at a time, and to enhance our knowledge of gardening. It is a member of the Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs. It will also be honoring VECA Yard of the Month winners.

The meeting offered a presentation by Carol Watkins, a master gardener, on preparing the spring garden. Among the suggestions she made was to remove leaves and dead plant growth, to mulch the garden to reduce weeds, and not to till the soil, since that activates weed seeds. Mulching also conserves water, cools plant roots, and feeds the soil.



Several online sources were suggested for following garden events and plant sales, including those of the Memphis Horticultural Society, the Botanic Garden, and the Dixon.

See the calendar on veca.org for the club meeting dates. It is a great group, and it's a lot of fun to attend the meeting and meet neighbors. Connie Shepherd, chair of the Garden Club, offered to answer questions about garden issues through email: bmech314@gmail.com 🐦

Planning for the Future

By Jackie Waters

Saving money isn't easy; if it were, we'd never have money troubles again. Yet it's important to ensure that our futures are taken care of, especially if there are children involved (even more so if your child has special needs), because nothing is set in stone. Job security wanes, major expenses come up, and our needs change. That's just a part of life.

Fortunately, there are several easy ways you can start saving money now for the years to come, whether you want to put aside some cash for a rainy day or start a college fund for your kids. The key is to think outside the box and get creative. Here are some of the best ways you can plan for your future.

Determine your goals: Planning for the future can be overwhelming, so it's best to start small and go from there. First, sit down and think about what your goals are. Do you want to save for a car or to buy and move into your first home, or are your needs more long-term? Creating a nest egg for retirement is something we all have to think about, so narrow your focus and figure out a number. Having a financial goal will help you stay focused.



Set a budget: Like millions of Americans, you might already be on a tight budget, but that doesn't mean you can't find ways to save money. Remember: every little bit helps. Don't be seduced by big numbers; it's unlikely that you'll be able to sock away a thousand bucks at a time, so focus instead on small savings that will add up. You can do this by using coupons at the supermarket and checking the weekly ads so you can combine savings, finding Groupon deals for things you already need or use, carpooling to save on gas and wear-and-tear on your car, and taking your lunch to work or school instead of eating out.

Get creative: If you are skilled at making things—furniture, jewelry, clothing, art—consider opening up an Etsy business or selling through your own site (there are plenty of tools to make creating one easy for the novice). The fees are minimal (about 20 cents per item you put in your shop) and you can expand your business quickly by promoting it on social media. Maybe you already have some supplies on hand.

Upgrade your home: Having your own place is expensive, whether you rent or own, so take small measures now to save money later. If you have windows or doors that don't seal properly, keep warm or cool air from leaking out by using caulk, plastic insulation, or just a rolled-up towel along the bottom. Set your ceiling fans to turn the other way in wintertime so the warm air near the ceiling will be pushed down. Invest in a smart thermostat that can be set to keep a steady temperature all day. All these things can help lower your utility bills.

Get cooking: It's so much easier to stop for fast food when you've had a long day, but eating out once or twice a week can really add up. Do your shopping for the week and then cook up a few meals to freeze for those nights when you just don't feel like being in the kitchen. It will taste so much better when you know it's saving you money. 🐦



Midtown Hardware and Plumbing
2504 Summer Avenue
901-324-9282
sales@bjsscreensandthings.com

Dear Valued Customer,

We have some exciting news to share with you! Tina Brewer, Manager of Gate City Hardware for 30 years, and Jane Laberge, owner of BJ's Screens and Glass for 22 years, have recently joined forces and have purchased Gate City Hardware! We will be opening on March 31 under our new name Midtown Hardware and Plumbing! Expect the same great service and products along with a spiffing up of the building.

Tina Brewer and Jane Laberge

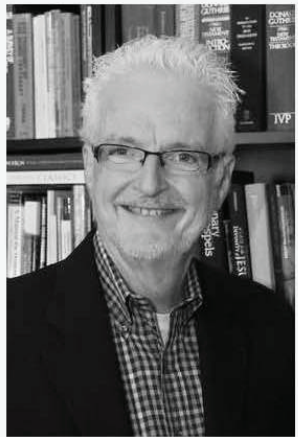
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Come and enjoy traditional hymns,
Bible preaching, and a truly caring
family of Jesus followers."
—Dr. Kendall Easley, Pastor



Neighbor Highlight - Ned Canty

By Marci Hendrix

I had the pleasure of meeting with Ned Canty, general director of the Memphis Opera, at Café Eclectic last week. We talked about opera and our neighborhood. He and his wife, Karen, moved to Vollintine Evergreen in January 2016 from Central Gardens. They needed a home with a large yard for their three rescue dogs, Stella, PJ and Shorty. They were thrilled to find the yard and the house – a 1927 Tudor – here in V&E. The home had recently been rehabbed and the contractors did a great job of opening up the space, and the new chef's kitchen enhances their love of cooking.

They are delighted with the house, the yard and us. Canty is inspired by Memphians who walk the walk. He attended the VECA annual meeting and was fascinated by the Evergreen/Jackson business district project, and he's looking forward to an opera performance at the old BP gas station site at that intersection.

Canty says, "I like to get skin in the game. My fortune needs to rise and fall with the city. I don't want to test the waters – I like to jump in the deep end." Now seems to be the perfect time: "These are exciting times for the city, from the rise of craft beer breweries, to Overton Square and Crosstown Concourse. There's so much going on in the city and everything is only ten minutes away." He notes that change can happen very quickly and carries the risk that a place can lose the essential qualities that makes it special. But Canty believes Memphis has a great chance of growing in a more organic way, which in the long term prevents the danger of losing its unique identity.

Canty is working to make opera more accessible, as he is convinced that opera improves the life of everyone in the city. "Art that works is where there's no hard line between arts, artists and the audience." An example of Canty's dream of accessibility was his idea of a Memphis-specific original work. The dream came to fruition in 2014 with a cycle of five short operas titled "Ghosts of Crosstown." The work was performed that year on the loading dock at the Crosstown Concourse as part of the Midtown Opera Festival. The five operas were based on stories from employees of Sears and by nearby neighbors. Each opera had its own composer and all the librettos were written by Jerre Dye. The stories ranged from romance to special purchases (such as a wedding ring) to the smells of popcorn and observations from the elevator staff. "There seem to be unifying connections to the Crosstown Concourse. It's a metaphor of Memphis that anything is possible," he says.

Canty encourages people to give opera a chance. He has a fun YouTube clip called "Opera Doesn't Suck." "We enjoy opera through movies, television, and cartoons, but the prospect of going to the opera seems different," Canty observes. "Like TV and movies, opera is not a one-size-fit-all. One wouldn't think of going to a movie or watching a TV show just once and writing it off for life. Opera needs to be seen at least four times before deciding yay or nay." According



Karen and Ned Canty

to Canty, terrific operas are being written today about current issues and stories. "The art form is as broad as going to movies and TV – opera is for anyone with ears and a heart."

Fun fact: Operatic music, like classical and choral music is heard regularly in commercials. My favorite right now is the Delta Faucet featuring the popular Habanera aria from Bizet's Carmen. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHUMr9WZQBQ>

The Memphis Opera season begins with the 30 Days of Opera and is bookended with the Midtown Opera Festival running now (March 31-April 9) at the Playhouse on the Square. <http://www.operamemphis.org/MOF>

Don't be surprised if you see Ned Canty walking or riding his bike on the V&E Greenline, and don't be afraid to stop him to chat about the arts in Memphis. His enthusiasm is contagious, and I'm looking forward to a future pop-up opera performance at the corner of Jackson and Evergreen. 🍷

Opening Day is Thursday, April 6

Letter from the Treasurer

Dear VECA,

We have reached financial stability. Back in 2008 the VECA Community Development Corporation closed its doors and the paid staff left. At that time VECA had five houses, two apartment buildings, and an office. VECA also had \$41,236 in unsecured notes and \$404,982 in bank loans for those houses, apartments, and office. Income from membership was less than \$2,000 annually. VECA did not know if it could meet its monthly expenses. VECA understood the financial predicament and went to work. Owing to a great deal of sweat and over 1,000 volunteer hours, VECA volunteers fixed and rented the houses one at a time, with three houses in 2009 and all five by 2014. Volunteers fixed and rented the apartments one at a time, with three in 2009 and all seven by 2014. Then Rhodes College assisted with financial help through a grant for a renovation to the renamed Welcome Center in 2013. Members kept renewing and increasing membership contributions annually.



Chuck Fox at VECA annual meeting

Today, we are financially stable. VECA has reduced the bank loans to \$185,000. VECA also has an emergency reserve of more than \$15,000. The housing market has improved and VECA is working with a local bank to sell houses again. The plan is to sell one house this year. The other part of the financial plan is to continue to pay down the principal on the loans. This would allow VECA to have all the loans paid off by 2022-2023.

There is still a dark cloud on the horizon: the cost for the Welcome Center. The Welcome Center costs \$15,000 to operate and keep open. With contributions from Membership, there still remains a net \$9,000 shortfall in the 2017 Welcome Center budget. This shortfall is now being funded from the rental apartments and houses, but that arrangement cannot continue if VECA is to remain sustainable. The Welcome Center is a very valuable resource for VECA. VECA is one of the few neighborhood associations that has its own building for offices, events, and meetings.

Membership income funds the various committees – Communications (newsletter), Historic (signage), blight abatement, events (annual meeting, National Night Out), Neighborhood Networks, and Neighborhood Watch meetings. For VECA to remain financially stable and strong, membership needs to increase and stay strong. All VECA residents, volunteers and Board members need to join as paying members to the fullest of their ability and to continue their good work! 🙌

Sincerely,
Chuck Fox, Treasurer

Pizza with Planners VECA and ioby

By John Paul Shaffer

On February 28, the VECA Welcome Center hosted the latest installment of Livable Memphis's Pizza with Planners series. Forty people, including many Vollintine Evergreen residents, gathered to learn about the neighborhood's work using ioby (in our backyard) to fund improvement projects around the community. After an introduction to ioby's crowd-resourcing work in Memphis and across the U.S. by Ellen Roberds, City action strategist with ioby, VECA volunteers Khara Woods, Scott McDermott, Natasha Strong, and Cathy Marcinko shared their work on ioby projects.

VECA ioby projects covered:

- Khara Woods – Headshots mural (done with her mother N.J. Woods) and Leaps and Bounds mural
- Scott McDermott – SkyCop camera
- Natasha Strong – V&E National Historic District signs campaign
- Cathy Marcinko – The Green Triangles Project

Roberds and Livable Memphis program director John Paul Shaffer also discussed other ioby projects in the neighborhood, including a mobile bocce court, two projects improving play and public space at neighborhood schools, and the purchase of tablet computers for an after-school program.

ioby

- As of this spring, ioby has helped Memphians raise over \$600,000 for roughly 200 neighborhood improvement projects.
- The partnership began in 2013 with a funding campaign for the Hampline bicycle trail to connect the Shelby Farms Greenline to Overton Park through Binghampton.
- The average project budget is around \$3,000

Learn more about current and past Memphis projects at ioby.org/Memphis. ioby has also created a page on its site just for VECA – visit www.ioby.org/campaign/vollintine-evergreen-community to learn more about the projects happening around the neighborhood.

Pizza with Planners is a monthly series under Livable Memphis's community education and engagement program. Each month topical experts talk about current issues facing Memphis and urban areas around the U.S. Topics include transportation funding, blight and community development, creative placemaking*, and community and comprehensive planning. And of course there's pizza! Learn more about PwP and other Livable Memphis programs at www.livablememphis.org. 🙌

**Creative placemaking is an approach that deeply engages the arts, culture, and creativity, especially from underrepresented communities, in planning and designing projects so that the resulting communities better reflect and celebrate local culture, heritage and values.*
creativeplacemaking.t4america.org/what-is-creative-placemaking/



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**ioby – in our back yard – ioby brings
neighborhood project to life, block by block**

How Residents See the Evergreen-Jackson Commercial Area

Continued from Page 1

crimes (70%); improved lighting for better visibility (68%); (continued page 11) security cameras at properties likely to have safety issues (53%); and greater police presence (43%). These responses mirror survey responses about image and attractiveness in that they relate to both physical design and occupancy concerns.

Transit and accessibility in the Evergreen-Jackson Commercial Area:

The majority (54%) of respondents thought that bike, bus transit and pedestrian safety and access in the commercial area was “okay but could be better,” while 34% said it was not bike, bus transit or pedestrian-friendly. Only 11% thought that transit and mobility options were “reasonably accessible and safe.”

(Continued on page 11)

The responses to what could be done to make the area more accessible and transit-friendly were topped by a desire for better crosswalks (79%) and crosswalk signals at major intersections (67%). Improvements to sidewalks, parking lots and handicapped ramps were a close second at 68%, followed by the wish for better bus service and shelters (49%), bike lanes (47%) and bike racks at more businesses (42%).

Desired uses for vacant or under-used properties: The responses to this question may reveal that we are a community of coffee drinkers – 79% of respondents said that they wanted a coffee shop in the commercial area. A majority (72%) also wanted a small grocery store or farmer’s market, and 66% were in favor of a greenspace or public space at the vacant former gas station site for sale at the northeast corner of Evergreen and Jackson. Other uses that were less popular included office or light retail (40%), medical or dental office (27%) and community bank or credit union (29%).

Other ideas or concerns: This was by far the most interesting but hardest to summarize part of the survey. We have tried to give a taste of what people said below.

- Many wrote comments about King’s Grocery being an eyesore, with loitering in the vicinity, all of which contributes to the impression of it being a “sketchy business” and the area not being safe.
- A similar number of comments said MAPCO needed to invest in improving the gas station. Some respondents said they don’t get gas there (even though it would be convenient) because it feels unsafe and is unattractive.
- Many respondents wrote that they want to see local (including minority-owned) businesses, including ideas like pop-up shops, bar/restaurant, bakery, flea market, books and records, etc., and comments like “No fast food restaurants!” and “We don’t need another chain.” As one historic committee member observed, there is a clear preference for uses that create real identity, uniqueness and community – in short, what attracts people to live in Midtown in the first place.
- Many respondents commented about the need for more landscaping, greenspace and trees and to address litter in and around the commercial area.
- Several respondents suggested that VECA could help by organizing a business or merchants association, or by getting business development organizations like EDGE to help find investors or and venture capital. 🙌 (see EDGE at: growth-engine.org)



BP at Jackson/Evergreen before razing

Midtown All-Star ATA Martial Arts

Check out the new kid on the block – Midtown All-Star ATA Martial Arts. The school moved to 585 McLean in January when the lease expired at its Central Avenue location. Their loss is our gain, and the corner at McLean and Faxon is buzzing with more activity than ever.

The school is geared toward students of all ages. The youngest eligible students are 3-6 year-olds, and classes are available for adults as well. The school aims to help the kids to become aware of their surroundings and to have more self-confidence.

Midtown All-Star is partnering with Snowden School by teaching “stranger danger” and “bully prevention” to students at the school. They also offer an after-school program for Snowden students.

Midtown All-Star is offering a special through the end of April: five classes for \$25, and the uniform is included. During the introductory period, if a student is interested in becoming a full member through the basic package, the registration fee will be waived. 🙌



Midtown All-Star ATA Martial Arts
585 N McLean Blvd
901-725-7725
atamidtown@gmail.com

The V&E Greenline is Soliciting Donations As Part of the “March is Contribution Month Campaign”

Operating costs such as maintenance, repair and beautification of the V&E Greenline are paid for from donations.

Upkeep on the V&E Greenline costs money. In addition to funding materials for routine chores like mowing, weed eating, emptying of garbage cans, litter pickup, and leaf removal, we pay utilities and equipment repairs. Other problems such as tree and trail damage impact the bottom line. There are also needs like mailings and insurance costs. The V&E Greenline has recently worked on and funded two high profile project, the SkyCop camera which was installed in January 2017 and new crosswalks and entrances that will be constructed in the summer of 2017. There are several ways to contribute:

- Mail a check payable to V&E Greenline, 1680 Jackson Ave Memphis TN 38107
- Donate online through PayPal at VEGreenline.org
- Make smaller monthly payments through PayPal
- If your company has a donation matching program, please ask them to donate to the V&E Greenline.

Your contribution will ensure that VECA’s treasured trail remains a prominent and well-maintained part of the Vollintine Evergreen neighborhood.



Benefits VECA’s V&E Greenline

A premier event for all will take place in VECA with the sixth annual V&E Artwalk that will feature

- Over 70 artists from the Greater Memphis area selling their crafts
- Children’s area with games and art activities
- Local popular musicians
- Exciting food options including barbeque by a Memphis in May team
- Craft beer by Wiseacre, wine and soft drinks
- Silent auction

The Artwalk is sponsored by the V&E Greenline. For more information:

VEGreenline.org;
VEGreenline@gmail.com

Sponsors

- Memphis Arts Collective
- Sowell & Company Realtors
- Mercy Hill Church
- Wiseacre Brewing
- Crosstown Arts
- Buckman
- Joe Spake, InCity Realty
- Evergeen Historic District Association
- Polo Liquor and Wines
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- Midtown Mini Mart
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