

Vollintine Evergreen news

VECA901@GMAIL.COM

VECA.ORG



ARTWALK 2019: THE YEAR OF THE VOLUNTEER

Kudos to the volunteers for their resolute perseverance in pulling off the V&E Artwalk on Sunday, April 14, 2019, despite difficult conditions. The rain on Saturday saturated the grounds, and the weather predictions for Sunday weren't promising. As organizer Mike Kirby reported:

"We knew that Saturday was not an option, since there was a 100 percent chance of rain and even severe weather. We then rescheduled to Sunday which was our announced rain date. However, we were able to do a lot of field prep on Friday. Tom [Kirby] assessed the field on Sunday at 5:30 am and reported that drainage was fine. We then met with a small group at 7:00 am and decided to have the event. We had ordered 7 cubic yards of mulch that we spread into areas that were a problem. We had 35 vendors come to the event which was great; another 35 cancelled but that was not a problem because of reduced attendance. We were unable to have music because we could not set up the sound system, and we were disappointed we could not display the children's art. We had a significant number of people

coming to the Artwalk but not as large as normal, and they did not stay as long since it was chilly. We had a process defined in our earlier work and we followed it and were able to stage the event. Our core volunteers were crucial as they stepped in to work all day and did numerous jobs."

We talked to folks who attended and most had a fine time despite the chilly day. Rosie Meindl said, "All the volunteers were super-friendly, and the vendors had great attitudes. We had to drag Ben out of the bouncy house – he didn't care about the drizzle at all."

Caley Foreman, who takes photos for us every year, especially loved the Metal Museum's presence, "It was great, and hands on; anyone could make something, from kids to adults." He noted that despite it all, the kids were playing and having a great time and the food, as always, was great.

Stacy Pennington said that he didn't know of anything that went bad. "Atrocious weather pushed us right up to the limit of cancelling. Once in a while in the spring in Memphis, you're going to have awful weather. Sometimes in life, playing through and doing

what you can, in spite of all adversity, is the definition of success. We all owe a debt of gratitude to those volunteers that showed up with a smile on their face and a desire to serve their neighbors in their hearts."

Brad Dunlap, Pastor at Mercy Hill Church who sponsored the children's area, was grateful for the volunteers who pitched in. "Everything seemed to go well with having our Sunday Gathering and then seeing volunteers quickly jump into action. We were completely set-up by 12:10 pm. Likely, the largest disappointments were for the kids who got wet and cold going down the slide in the drizzle. Although Yohannes [son] and his friend Eli made the most of it by going home and putting on their swim suits so they would dry quickly and probably go down the slide even faster!"

The Artwalk 2019 was an adventure and will be remembered as the Year of the Volunteers for going above and beyond! Thank you for showing us all how the show must go on! 🐦



Spring 2019

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2019 MLK50 LUMINARY AWARDS



Winners of the Luminary Awards. Photo: LocalMemphis

Congratulations to – not one, but two – Vollintine Evergreen Neighbors for receiving the 2019 Luminary Award presented by the City of Memphis and Mayor Jim Strickland during MLK weekend. "The Luminary Awards celebrate people of brilliant achievement who inspire others and bring light to those around them. They are dreamers and doers within our community, working hard to make Memphis a better place."

Regina Walker, received the 2019 Luminary Award for her service as senior vice president of community engagement and alignment with The United Way of the Mid-South for 29 years. At the United Way, Regina was responsible for distribution of millions of dollars to not-for-profit agencies in the eight counties served by Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi. Regina is a strong advocate for education, the arts, economic development, neighborhood re-birth, diversity, and inclusion. Regina was active as a parent leader to Vollentine Elementary when her child attended school. Walker has been a long-term volunteer with VECA as a newsletter distributor. She has served on the VECA CDC board and used her vast experience to help the New Chicago CDC get reorganized.

Mary Wilder, received the 2019 Luminary Award for her service to Vollintine Evergreen, as well as her recent work with the Overton Park Alliance for helping to find a resolution

to the Greensward Zoo Parking. Mary has worked with The Girls Club of Memphis, United Methodist Centers, City of Memphis Rape Crisis Center, MIFA, and as Interim State Legislator. Mary has worked tirelessly for VECA since moving to Memphis in 1974. She has served as editor of the VE News and she acted as volunteer manager on the project to survey neighborhood homes for historic status leading to VECA receiving the National Register of Historic Preservation designation. Mary has served as president of VECA and in 1993 she received the Ditchtel Award. She also received the Center for Neighborhoods Neighborhood Leader of the Year in 1996. Mary led the project to have VECA rezoned as a primarily residential neighborhood; she helped develop the Pew Charitable Trusts proposal and was founder of the Greenline Gardens following the purchase of the L&N railroad track, now the V&E Greenline. She has worked on the Cypress Creek cleanups and with the Lick Creek flood plain project. Mary currently serves with VECA's rental committee, the membership committee, and on the historic committee's landmarks project. In 2009, VECA established the Mary Wilder award to honor her contributions to the neighborhood. The award is presented at the VECA Annual meeting and recognizes an institution who through their work contributes to the Vollintine Evergreen community. 🍷

CO-EDITORS
 Marci Hendrix
 Chloe Lane Elam

DISTRIBUTION COORDINATOR
 Jeannie Tomlinson Saltmarsh

CONTRIBUTORS
 Suzy Askew
 Chloe Elam
 Caley Foreman
 Marci Hendrix
 Mike Kirby
 VECA Committees

VECA BOARD OFFICERS
 President Bob Rigus
 Vice President Jeff Riddle
 Secretary Karen Edwards
 Treasurer Chuck Fox

VECA COMMITTEE HEADS
 V&E Greenline Greg Lieberman
 Housing Chuck Fox
 Neighborhood Networks Lilly Gilkey
 Blight Busters Chris Floyd
 Communications Marci Hendrix

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT PUBLICATION
 July 5, 2019

For advertising rate sheet, or to submit ads electronically, please email vecanews901@gmail.com

VECA is a neighborhood organization made up of volunteers and paying members. The newsletter, VECA email, 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
 Email: veca901@gmail.com

COLONEL RUSSELL HOUSTON RETIRES



Colonel Houston with Rick Maxwell, 2013.

Congratulations to **Russell Houston** on his recent retirement as Colonel at Crump Precinct.

Colonel Russell Houston was a great communicator when dealing

with neighbors and worked behind the scenes to make the police responsive to citizen concerns. We recall several important contacts:

One of our block clubs was having problems on the street with drug sales. Colonel Houston gave the block leader his direct number and had him call when the incidents were taking place. He also arranged for police resources to work on the problem.

In another case, residents expressed concerned about problems at a neighborhood business and Colonel Houston worked with other officials to address the issue.

Several years ago when the police precincts were being reorganized Colonel Houston kept us informed of what was happening and assured us it

would be more positive for VECA since the entire neighborhood would be in one precinct rather than being split into two precincts.

When the V&E Greenline was planning to purchase a SkyCop camera that would be managed by the police Colonel Houston strongly supported the project and helped us understand what we needed to do to make it happen.

In 2016 Colonel Houston came to the VECA Welcome Center to speak to neighborhood residents and he did it in an effective manner. His main theme was that residents needed to call the police when incidents occurred so the police would know what was happening and could then deploy resources.

We look forward to working

with Colonel Dana Sampietro.

Colonel Sampietro will be leading Crump Precinct, and tells us that, "After working as the Lt. Colonel for the past 2 years along side of Colonel Houston I was promoted to Colonel in February 2019 after Colonel Houston's much deserved retirement from the department.

Crump station officers, investigators and command staff pride themselves with partnering with the citizens of Memphis and more specifically we look forward to building stronger relationships with the some of the most awesome neighborhood groups and communities in Memphis, which of course includes our friends from VECA!" 🙌

MIDTOWN MOJO AWARDS

Congratulations to **Dr. Mike Kirby** for receiving a well-deserved MoJo Award for his work on the V&E Greenline. The tribute below, used with permission, retells the story of the V&E Greenline and it is a great history worth repeating.

The Midtown Memphis Development Corporation honored Dr. Mike Kirby with a Mojo Award for reminding us of the power of volunteers and the value of bridges. VECA volunteers and Dr. Kirby led the way in repurposing an abandoned railroad bed that by the mid-90s had become a trash dump and a magnet for drug use. Today the V&E Greenline cuts a verdant path across Midtown from near Crosstown to Hyde Park. "I didn't have a clue what it was going to be," says Dr. Kirby, a now-retired Rhodes College professor of Urban Studies. "I just said we've got to do something."

VECA bought the property "for ten thousand dollars and all kinds of legal fees" and a small group of volunteers started cleaning up and mowing grass. Then word got around the neighborhood about what they were doing. "We didn't have any money. So one day we said 'what would happen if we printed some brochures and

distributed them to the surrounding houses.' We did it and all of a sudden checks started coming in."

Gaps in the V&E Greenline, where the railroad had removed two small bridges, were a problem. "The neighborhood was kind of chopped up because the bridges were no longer there," Dr. Kirby says. A Memphis company, Keeler Iron Works, heard about the situation

and told VECA that Keeler would build the bridges if VECA would buy the materials. It unified the neighborhood.

"Once the first bridge got put in, some of the people on the west side said, well, you always thought of us as the bad neighbors, but we're really good neighbors and we want to be part of you." One VECA resident, Mary Wilder, called

the bridge project a "miracle of volunteerism." "That's how it came about," says Dr. Kirby. "If you had to guess that a small volunteer group like us could come up with a way to build a bridge. You got to be kidding."

A core group of VECA volunteers still manages everything from finances to maintenance, with sometimes hundreds of volunteers (including students from nearby Rhodes) joining in to work on projects. Today the V&E Greenline is a path for bicycling and walking and a space for gardening, visiting and the annual Art Walk.

We asked Dr. Kirby how it felt to be recognized. "In receiving the award I was representing the efforts of the many volunteers, contributors, VECA, trail users, and community partners who supported the V&E Greenline over its 22 years of existence."

Kudos to Dr. Kirby and all volunteers who keep our trail a high-class amenity. 🙌



Honoree Dr. Mike Kirby and family at the Mojo Awards.

neighbors

WE REMEMBER MODEANE THOMPSON

VECA sends condolences to the family of **Mrs. Modeane Nichols Thompson**, one of VECA's founding members. Mrs. Thompson's story is one of courage and determination.

In the 1960s, Modeane was active in the Civil Rights Movement by helping to encourage children to grow confident and dream big, even though living under the cloud of institutional racism. She wrote an article that was published in *Redbook Magazine*, "What Can We Tell Our Children."

Modeane was an active member of the Rearing Children of Goodwill Workshop, Dialogue in Black and White, and the Panel of American Women, a group that spoke publicly about their own biases and prejudices as a way to help others recognize prejudice in themselves. She also worked for 21 years with Family Services. Using the degree in Social Work she received from Lemoyne-Owen College, she counseled

unwed teenagers, conducted family education groups, and worked with many special projects.

Central to the neighborhood, in the 1970s, Modeane helped end redlining in the neighborhood. Working with Vollintine Evergreen churches, she and other early VECA members pressured real estate agencies to end racist and discriminatory selling practices, helping to stabilize the neighborhood during white flight.

For over forty years, Modeane continued to be an active member of the Vollintine Evergreen Neighborhood Association and community. She also was an active member of her Little Flower Church.

Today, Vollintine Evergreen enjoys a healthy diversity that can be attributed to neighbors like Modeane Thompson. 🙏



Modeane Thompson

NEIGHBORS IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE

Congratulations to neighbor, **Althea Greene** on her recent appointment to the Shelby County School Board. As a former educator with four decades of experience, Althea describes herself as a "dedicated service leader devoted to student achievement and leadership accountability." We wish her well in this role.

Best wishes also to neighbor **Teresa**

Jones on her appointment as City Court Judge. Teresa most recently served on the Shelby County School Board and her move to the City Court opened the position Althea now fills. We have two neighbors serving Memphis who we can count on to make Vollintine Evergreen a better place. 🙏



Althea Greene



Teresa Jones

TEXAS AND ALABAMA STUDENTS VOLUNTEER ON SPRING BREAK



On March 8 and 11, students from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the University of Texas at Arlington spent time on the V&E Greenline as volunteers. They worked hard and long on the tedious task of removing the invasive bamboo that was located at the corner of Evergreen Street and the V&E Greenline. Work involved hand cutting the bamboo to ground level, moving it up from the embankment and onto the V&E Greenline tractor to take

to the disposal site. Both groups were dedicated to the task and expressed a very positive reaction to the work that they had done. The V&E Greenline depends upon volunteers and would not have the resources to remove the bamboo without their aid.

A special thanks to Jeff Riddle Director of Serve901 for City Leadership which is located at Crosstown Concourse for making arrangements for the volunteers. 🙏

RHODES' SIGMA NU FRATERNITY HELPS THE V&E GREENLINE

Saturday, February 2, was a perfect winter day to work on the V&E Greenline: 65 degrees, sunny and dry. Twenty-two students from the Rhodes College Sigma Nu Fraternity and the Bonner Center, a Rhodes scholarship program, spent two hours working on a highly overgrown section of bamboo that was overtaking the drainage ditch and intruding into the trail. They worked energetically as they removed the invasive growth. They also cleaned the steps leading down to the trail at Barksdale and helped pull some invasive Chinese privet. They were able to walk to the work site since it was located near the campus.

This cleanup was part of the 2019 V&E Greenline strategy to control some of the invasive plants that are creating problems for the native trees.

A special thanks to Luke Staffelbach, Rhodes College 2021 Bonner Scholar and Philanthropy Chair of Sigma Nu for bringing his fellow fraternity members to the site. A special thanks to Tiffany Ford, Rhodes College director of



Tiffany Ford, Director of the Bonner Center at Rhodes, has been instrumental in bringing student volunteers to help with VECA Cleanups.

the Bonner Center for Service, for working to bring students to the V&E Greenline for volunteer cleanups.

V&E Greenline volunteers also involved in this project were Stacy Pennington, Joshua First, Scott McDermott, Paul Goldstein, and Jan Kirby. 🙌



Students and young people from all over helped clear brush along the Green Line this spring. Clockwise from left: Rhodes students from Sigma Nu; Youth from Fellowship Bible Church with Dr. Mike Kirby. Opposite Page: Students from the University of Alabama and the University of Texas at Arlington.

NW ARKANSAS YOUTH HELP VECA

March 17th to 20st were significant cleanup days in VECA brought to us by youth from Fellowship Bible Church of Norwest Arkansas in Rogers, Arkansas who spent their Spring break in Memphis. Over 28 dedicated youth workers helped with the V&E Greenline and the VECA Blight Busters Committee to clean up the neighborhood. This is the second consecutive year the group has served in Vollintine Evergreen.

The youth group leaders were great in organizing the work, and the youth were enthusiastic, hardworking, engaged, and very friendly. They accomplished a lot in making both the V&E Greenline and a street adjacent to Watkins Ave look great.

The Watkins group cleaned up 45 bags of debris, picking up litter on

the street, sidewalks, at abandoned buildings, and on vacant lots.

The V&E Greenline group cleared leaves and tree limbs from an area adjacent to where the V&E Artwalk will take place.

Neighborhood residents Stephanie Walker and Mike Kirby worked side by side with the youth. Hunter House was the Manager of the youth group and he was great communicating with VECA residents on when the youth would be available.

According to its website, Fellowship Bible Church sees "service as a primary thread of the way we do ministry and know additional opportunities exist in our local communities. You can serve these organizations as an individual, group, or family." 🙌



nature

VOLUNTEERS SAVING V&E GREENLINE TREES

Fifteen volunteers came together on February 10 to help save the V&E Greenline trees from invasive vines between Dickinson and Auburndale streets adjacent to the trail. They included neighborhood residents, committee members and Rhodes students.

Each tree that was threatened by vines climbing onto the trunk was marked with yellow tape. Volunteers clipped vines at the base of the tree so they would die over time. They also pulled vines along the ground in a three-foot diameter to avoid future growth.

Two invasives were the most prevalent. English ivy has been prolific in the area. Winter creeper, also known as climbing euonymus, is not as prevalent but is becoming more widespread. Many thanks to the volunteers for the great help. 🙏



TOMATOES ARE TOPS AT VECA




Memphis garden expert Tom Mashour gave a wonderful presentation on "How to Grow Tomatoes" at the VECA Welcome Center on February 16. Mashour has appeared frequently on the WKNO gardening show, The Family Plot. His advice was practical, and he answered many questions about problems people experience growing tomatoes. From the beginner to the expert, Mashour's advice was helpful to all levels of gardeners. He ended the night by providing tomatoes plants for those in attendance.

Mashour stressed the need to have a soil test to determine what nutrients the soil needs. A low cost test kit+- is available from the University of Tennessee Extension on

line or the Shelby County Extension at the Agricenter. He indicated that tomatoes like moist soil and do not like the soil to get dry—drip irrigation is a great way of watering tomatoes; tomatoes are great producers but become dormant in the extreme heat of the summer. Good sources of information about tomatoes and all vegetables is the University of Tennessee Extension and the many seed catalogues. He contrasted Heirlooms tomatoes which may have a better taste and hybrids which may be more resistant to pests and disease.

A special thanks to Connie Shepherd, Chair of the VECA Garden Club, for making arrangements for the presentation. 🙏



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news

“BLIGHT AND CRIME? LET’S HAVE A CONVERSATION”



On March 28, 2019, a townhall-esque event titled OGOR Hosts: Community Conversations filled the Hollywood Community Center with community residents ready to voice their concerns about blight and crime in North Memphis. Hosted by the community non-profit Our Grass Our Roots and moderated by its founder Michalyn Easter-Thomas, this Community Conversation lived up to expectations. Speaking to a packed room, the invited panelists responded to questions about crime updates and initiatives, as well as solutions for dilapidated housing and neighborhood Aesthetic concerns.

Panelists included:

- State Representative Antonio Parkinson, District 98
- Bill Gibbons, President of the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission
- George Boyington, Assistant to Melvin Burgess Property

Assessor

Major Jesse Neloms, North Main Branch

After the panelists spoke, community residents had an opportunity to ask questions previously submitted, and the floor was also opened to vocal questions as well. Feeling the need for answers, all panelists agreed to stay after the end time to individually address concerned neighbors. Founder and moderator Michalyn Easter-Thomas ended the event by directing attendees "This is the beginning of a conversation, and we have a lot to talk about. So let's continue this conversation in our neighborhoods, in our churches, in our schools, and with those who represent us."

The next Community Conversation is scheduled for Thursday, June 13th at Douglass Community Center. 🙏

MOSAIC CHURCH MOVES TO VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

In 2013, my wife and I took a step of faith to plant a church where people from all different cultures, and backgrounds could come to believe and follow Jesus together in one church. A truly Mosaic Church centered on the gospel of Jesus. We believe that the message of Jesus not only connects us to God but also to one another. In Jesus we can be different together as we follow Him! An extension of that vision is our merging with Living Hope VE. In the fall of 2018, after much prayer and


conversation our two churches came to believe that we are better together and that our differences makes us stronger! Both congregations have a love for the city of Memphis, and a heart to share the love and grace of Jesus with all of our neighbors no matter what culture or context they come from.

Along with merging with Living Hope VE, Mosaic Church will be acquiring ownership of the old McLean Baptist building and hope that it will not only continue to be a beacon

of light in Memphis but also vibrant location of activity in the community. It is our vision and hope that our building and church would enhance the vibrancy of the Vollintine Evergreen community and continue to be an asset to the neighborhood.

Ali Chambers
Lead Pastor of vision and preaching,
Mosaic Church. 🙏

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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

SAVE THE DATE!



Good news! For years, National Night Out was celebrated on the first Tuesday of August in the heat and humidity, however we are excited to announce that National Night Out in Memphis is moving to the first Tuesday in October.

National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes strong police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live and work. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. It also provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under stress-free circumstances.

So here's a thought: If your neighbors customarily celebrate NNO together on your block, go ahead and plan your event for August 6 and double the fun by joining the neighborhood at the Welcome Center on October 1! 🙏

MIDTOWN EATS IN VOLLINTINE EVERGREEN

Midtown Eats is a local foodscape, created by Rhodes College in partnership with Memphis Tilth, Edible Memphis, VECA, Caritas Village, Cooper Young Business Association, Crosstown Concourse, Binghamton Development Corporation, and the Overton Park Conservancy. This directory is funded by the Community Lift Grant, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture to increase local food access and to promote the local food economy in Midtown Memphis. This representation of the foodscape includes restaurants, coffee shops, breweries, farmers markets and community gardens.

The physical map are located in walkable and bikeable areas in Midtown:

- **Wisecre on Broad Ave**
- **Caritas Village on Harvard Ave**
- **VECA Welcome Center on Jackson Ave**
- **Community Table Garden on Madison Ave**
- **Celtic Crossing on Copper Street**
- **Railgarten on Central Ave**

The Midtown Eats project is dedicated to Jack Bickerest, a beloved grower, artist, and vendor at the Overton Park Community Farmers Market. We are thankful for his passion and dedication to collaborative advocacy and vision for a more inclusive Memphis food landscape.

Please contact Dr. Kimberly Kasper at kasperk@rhodes.edu for further information. 🍷



Rhodes students Amanda Lane and Katherine Cynkar help install the Midtown Eats sign at VECA along with VECA Board member, Caroline Bauman (Not Pictured).

AN INVITATION TO EXPERIENCE YOUR BROOKS MUSEUM

BY ANDRIA LISLE, CURATOR OF STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

As Curator of Strategic Engagement at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, I spend a lot of time thinking about—and rethinking—the museum experience. How do art museums stay relevant? What does good relationship building feel like? How can we deepen our partnerships with other arts groups, and how do we better strategize our outreach efforts? My most pressing goal, even as we've begun the heavy lifting for our next chapter in a new home, is to ensure that we have audiences in the museum today, whether it's people exploring the work, ranging from antiquity to contemporary, that comprises our permanent collection; children getting a deep dive into an exhibition via docent-led tours and artmaking in our studios; visitors to Café Brooks who make it a point to visit their favorite sculpture or painting before they leave the building; or friends catching up on a stroll through the galleries. Whether it's your first visit or your hundredth, the art museum is a great place to meditate, to relax, to cogitate—and to learn more about yourself, other humans, or the world at large.

What I'm learning as I'm listening is that for better or for worse, so many

Memphians think of the art museum as a place to visit on special occasions, and a space where you must always be on your best behavior. Those are myths. We're a home for all Memphians, and museum-going in 2019 is a different experience than it was 20 or even ten years ago. We're free every Wednesday, from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. Come check out what's old—I'm partial to the Greco-Roman Torso of Pan, an exquisite marble sculpture that dates to 40 B.C.E.-C.E. 312—and what's new. Right now, we've got Colombian artist Federico Uribe's 30-foot tall fabric tree in our rotunda, and on view in our traveling exhibition space on the Brooks' lower level are Catalan sculptor Jaume Plensa's floating steel structures and a thought-provoking selection of woodcuts by Memphian Ted Faiers. Not to mention some great events coming up including a concert with the Iris Orchestra and our annual Chalk Fest.

To help you get the most out of your museum experience, I thought I'd list a few tips:

1. Come as you are.

At the Brooks, we don't care if you wear cut-off shorts, yoga pants, sweats, or your Sunday best. Although we will ask you to check your backpack at our visitor services desk!

2. Don't stress out about what you're seeing.

Art means different things to different people. Let your mind wander on your visit—there is no wrong way to interpret what you view.

3. Museums are affordable.

Every Wednesday is free at the Brooks—and active military, veterans and teachers get in free year-round.

4. Trust the staff.

While you might not be familiar with an artist's name or exhibition, we spend countless hours vetting and acquiring a wide array of shows, from portraiture to photography and sculpture to still life. We look

for easy access points, be it through storytelling, cultural references, or community-driven collaborations.

5. You can get loud at the Brooks!

Look for programs like Community Days and Café Conversations, which are perfect for date nights, hanging with friends, and, in the case of the former, provide free fun for the whole family. If you're not sure how your kids will react to an art museum, pay a visit to Inside Art, our hands-on family gallery, which is dedicated to visual literacy. Kids can climb, build, play, dream, create, discover and touch in Inside Art, which is located on our third floor and open whenever the museum is open.

6. I mentioned this above, but the Brooks is a great place for a date!

Have a drink in the café, then walk around and look at the art. Get to know each other as you take in a gallery. And, if the date goes awry, you can always lose yourself in our exhibitions! 🍷



Landmarking VECA Vollintine Evergreen Community Association

Our neighborhood is a good place to live, raise a family, and retire. It's no secret that older neighborhoods like ours with attributes like a neighborly family-friendly environment, good public schools, greenspace amenities, centrally located to Downtown, manageable commutes, and affordable/attainable housing have special charm.

"Build Up, Not Out" is the central tenet of Memphis 3.0. As development in Memphis, Midtown, and North Memphis continues to accelerate - why would we not care about the following factors:

- Positive economic development
- Preserving the community's overall character and architecture
- Undesired demolition, careless development
- Insensitive change at the expense of longtime Vollintine Evergreen residents
- Maintaining our National Register Historic District Status

We invite you to join your neighbors for a series of talks developed by the VECA Historic committee that tells the story of the people, urban planning, architecture, and green spaces in our neighborhood. We will discuss our development from the early days of dairy farms to the cohesive, vital neighborhood that we are today.

The majority of Vollintine Evergreen lies within four National Historic Districts. Please attend at least one meeting focused on your district, but preferably all meetings focused on districts unfamiliar to you. Your ideas will help us define and protect the qualities that we as neighbors currently share.

Over its 40 plus year history VECA has shown a commitment to serving the needs of residents, from early efforts to fight blockbusting, support for environmental justice, upholding the values of racial inclusion, and grassroots engagement. We need your participation and opinions as we move toward Landmarks Designation.

Landmarking VECA Sessions

These presentations will be at the VECA Welcome Center at 1680 Jackson Avenue.

Saturday, May 4, 2019, 10:30 am, about Vollintine Evergreen
Bounded by Watkins, Vollintine, Faxon, Jackson, and University

Saturday, May 18, 2019, 10:30 am, about Vollintine Hills
Bounded by Vollintine, Brown, McLean, and Evergreen

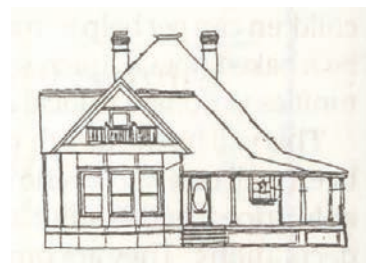
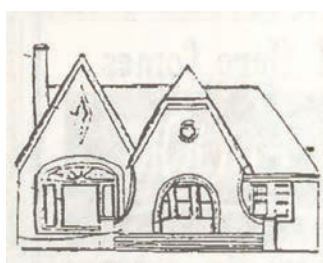
Special thanks to Peace Lutheran Church, St. Thérèse Little Flower Catholic Church, Living Hope Vollintine Evergreen Church, and Gethsemane Garden C.O.G.I.C. Church for hosting the 1st round of Landmarking VECA neighborhood sessions during February - March.

Landmarks Designation: a Tool for Neighborhood Preservation

Vollintine Evergreen is its residents, its buildings and its natural and public spaces. From 1997 to 2007, volunteers working through VECA successfully got most of the neighborhood designated on the National Register of Historic Places. Vollintine Evergreen's four National Register Historic Districts reflect successive building periods in the 20th century of its more than 2,000 homes and buildings.

The National Register is an honorary designation that recognizes the architectural value and social history of Vollintine Evergreen. It is important to point out, however, that this does not protect historic buildings or homes from demolition, nor can it prevent new development that is out of character with the historic architecture of the neighborhood.

The need for investment and wanting to preserve community is a tough balancing act. Cities across the nation struggle with this challenge. One of the best tools for preserving historic areas is local Landmarks designation. Each neighborhood has its own set of design guidelines that it adopted to govern demolition, new construction, and rehabilitation. Residents of each neighborhood determine what types of activities are addressed in their guidelines. All people, regardless of income, should have the opportunity to protect and preserve the history, architecture and social fabric of their community.



ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

The VECA Annual Meeting was held January 26 in the new and beautiful fellowship hall of St. John Orthodox Church, 1663 Tutwiler Avenue. Our hosts, Deacon Charles and Margaret McKelroy and Ben Shull made us feel welcome and at home. The spacious room was perfect and they surprised us by providing coffee for everyone. Many thanks to St. John for hosting – VECA is grateful to have the opportunity to work with all of our neighborhood churches.

During the breakfast hour, Carissa Husson, executive director for the Metal Museum spoke to the group about their proposal to expand the museum to Rust Hall in Overton Park after the Memphis College of Art closes in May 2020. The Metal Museum's mission is to preserve, promote, and advance the art and craft of fine metalwork with exhibitions, collections, studio practice, and community education. With the increased space of Rust Hall, they would be able to offer more classes, summer camps, and programs for seniors. The central location would bring more awareness to the museum and more people to Overton Park.

The annual meeting includes a time of sharing the work of the committee and achievements of 2018. We also

vote on VECA board members and the president. Our VECA president, Bob Rigus, was re-elected for his third term.

Service awards is a special part of the meeting. VECA presented 5 awards this year: Steve Shular, Special Assistant to Mayor Jim Strickland, received the Richard S. Borys award that recognizes public officials who through their work contribute to the Vollintine Evergreen community. Mr. Shular has helped VECA in many ways, and he has worked closely with VECA's Blight Busters Committee. He has been able to address blight concerns by getting the right information to the right agencies who then can help with solutions to the problems.

Rick Maxwell received the Margaret Dichtel Award that recognizes a neighbor who embodies the principles of community service and action. Rick has been involved with VECA as a board member hosting events for neighbors to come and hear best practices for safety and security issues. Lately though, Rick has been helping the neighborhood behind the scenes, yet right under our nose. Rick takes an hour on Saturday mornings to pick up the litter and trash along the Jackson Avenue median between McLean and University. He saw

a need and tackled it and we are very grateful!

Stacy Pennington received the Martha Heineman award that honors a VECA board member for exceptional service. Stacy hit the ground running when he joined the VECA board two years ago. He joined the Blight Busters committee and regularly participates in clean ups and attends committee meetings. To help the VECA board become a little more tech savvy, Stacy and his wife, Katherine, gifted a television to VECA to use with presentations at the Welcome Center. Now, the VECA board can easily view documents on the screen without having to print materials out in advance. Stacy has been a great VECA volunteer as well as a great board member. Stacy delivers the VECA newsletter to several streets in his area. He also helps the V&E Greenline committee with clean-ups, mowing the trail, volunteering at the Art Walk, and pitching in wherever he can.

Robbie McDermitt received the Mike Kirby award. For the last three years, Robbie has been the volunteer bookkeeper for VECA. This is a complicated task since VECA has 14 separate cost centers with a wide range

of entries. She has worked diligently to keep the VECA accounting accurate and has responded quickly to make the data available for use by the VECA Board on a timely manner. Robbie is dedicated to the neighborhood and works in the Lyndale Community Garden and volunteers at the V&E Art Walk.

Katherine Laviera received the Mike Kirby award. Katherine has a heart for VECA and for the neighborhood. She is an accomplished carpenter and has used her talents to help with the VECA rental homes. She has repaired woodwork, installed floors, deep cleaned, all to help our VECA neighbors have nice homes. Katherine also has a knack for database work. She maintains the VECA membership database and works with the committee throughout the year. She sends thank you notes and generates the mailing list as needed. Katherine has also volunteered for years on the V&E Art Walk's silent auction, an essential fundraising tool of the event.

Thank you, neighbors, for coming to the meeting, bringing breakfast to share, and for making our neighborhood a great place to call home!



Service award winners: Rick Maxwell, Steve Shular, Robbie McDermott, Stacy Pennington, Katherine Laviera



Deacon Charles and Margaret McKelroy and Ben Shull

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE ANNUAL CHILDREN'S ART CONTEST AT THE VECA ARTWALK!

GROUP 4 | 6-8TH GRADE



Peter Morton
Snowden School
8th Grade
WINNER



Kristin Millbrook
Snowden School
6th Grade
RUNNER UP

GROUP 3 | 4-5TH GRADE



Kennedi Waller
Snowden School
4th Grade
WINNER



Nautica Patton
Vollentine Elementary
5th Grade
RUNNER UP

GROUP 2 | 2ND-3RD GRADE



Myah Ridley
Snowden School
2nd Grade
WINNER

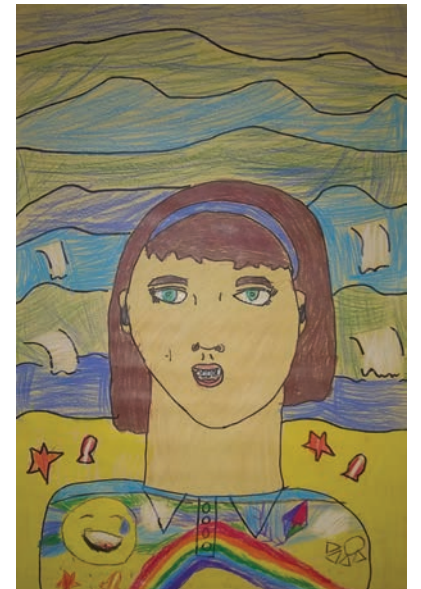


Miriam Ashley
Snowden School
3rd Grade
RUNNER UP

GROUP 1 | KINDERGARTEN - 1ST GRADE



Lily Trout
Snowden School
Kindergarten
WINNER



Evie Fetzer Gill
Snowden School
1st Grade
RUNNER UP

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VECA YOUTH COMMITTEE

MIDTOWN ROTARY

CROSTOWN CDC

COMMUNITY PARTNER

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