

VECA VOICE

Fall 2021

ARTWALK 2021



ABOVE

The butterflies found the pollinator plants in the Idlewild garden

COVER

Artwork by Matthew Shepherd

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VECA Board Officers – 2021

Lilly Faulkner Gilkey, President
Caroline Bauman, Vice President
Chuck Fox, Treasurer
Karen Edwards, Secretary

Correction: In the Summer Issue we failed to mention that the traffic islands mentioned are now called "The Green Triangles." We apologize for the omission.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings Neighbors,

I hope everyone had a happy and safe summer and is gearing up for a brand new season. If you have not yet taken the opportunity to get out and about to walk the Greenline and take in some sunshine and spectacular views of our beautiful garden you still have time. You might even spot a few Swallowtails fluttering here and there.



So what have we been up to these past few months? To say we have been busy would be an understatement. We've reached a milestone thanks to the tenacity of our Historic Committee. The Memphis City Council voted unanimously to approve VECA as a new historic overlay district. We now have a voice in keeping our neighborhood up to its true standards of what makes our homes so unique and makes us who we are. VECA!

VECA applied for and received its second grant for sidewalk repair. This grant will be used to offset the overall cost of replacing sidewalks for homeowners in the VECA area. It will allow up to a 75% discount based on need. You may apply by contacting us at veca901@gmail.com or call us at **901-276-1782** and leave a message. The duration will be until funds are depleted.

Some other happenings – VECA participated in the Taste of Memphis event September 30 at the Liberty Bowl Stadium. This year's theme was "Overcoming Obstacles." And, the V&E Artwalk will return to the Greenline on Saturday, October 9 at Kirby Station.

If you haven't noticed the "VECA 50 year anniversary" signs throughout the neighborhood, take a look the next time you are out walking or driving. Because of COVID we are still limited to how we can plan for activities to celebrate. We are looking forward to a hosting a 50th Year Anniversary Holiday Party on Saturday, December 18 from 5:00-7:00 at the Welcome Center. We plan to have small gifts and games for the kids and a fire pit and marshmallow roasting on the parking lot.

Our Annual Meeting will be January 2022 where we will elect new officers. The date and time are TBA. If you did not get a chance to volunteer this past year you still have time. Otherwise, we look forward to working with you in 2022.

Thank you for your support and I will see you around the neighborhood.

Lilly R. Gilkey
President

A History of Volunteerism

Think of all the volunteers who have lent their time and resources to make our community a better place to call home. From folks who planted daffodils on the Jackson Avenue median years ago that we still enjoy every spring to this year's Artwalk and Supply Drive volunteers – our neighbors know how to come together to help!

Neighbors have been sharing resources since the early years of the neighborhood. In 1877, Robert Allen Terry bought land north of Vollintine and started the Chestnut Grove Dairy on land that became known as Terrytown. The area needed a school, so Terry built a one-room school house and paid the teachers until the county was able to provide resources for it.

Terry saw a need and he took action, and while he had the means to give financially, when we give our time, we are giving something equally substantial. Through volunteer efforts, VECA has planted; given school supplies for KIPP, Snowden, and Vollentine schools; helped with clean-ups; helped set up and run events, and so much more. VECA salutes and thanks everyone over the past 50 years for jumping in to help.

Like so many non-profits, we would be thrilled to have your help. Fresh ideas and fresh energy are important to an organization like ours. The best place to start is at the committee level. Committees are the backbone of the organization and they work hard in areas ranging from the Greenline to Youth Committees and more.

Ask yourself where do you see VECA in the next five years? Fifty years? Join us and let's make it happen!



Vollentine Elementary Principal Mrs. Crystal Watts Peterson (left) and Youth Committee Chair Donald Batiste (right).

School Supply Drive 2021

Our local elementary schools were the beneficiaries of donations this fall of school supplies, masks, wipes, and other needed items. In true VECA fashion, our community answered the call to action from Youth Committee Chair Donald Batiste, pictured here with Vollentine Elementary Principal Mrs. Crystal Watts Peterson receiving their supplies. Our local teachers and students send a big “thank you” to everyone who helped out and donated. ■



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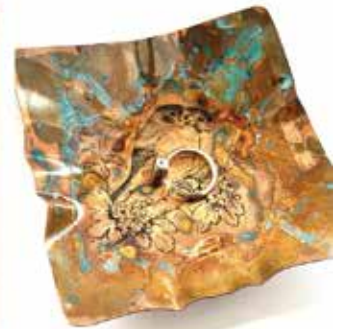
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FEATURE

V&E Artwalk Is Back

October 9, 10am-6pm

BY JOSHUA FIRST



One of the most anticipated events in VECA is coming soon. The Artwalk returns to Kirby Station on October 9. This year will feature 55 local artists and other attractions, food trucks, craft beer and wine, and plenty of other works of art for sale at the silent auction. The 2021 V&E Artwalk is dedicated to Jan Kirby, one the founding organizers and a good friend to many of the artists who continue to support the event. In Jan's honor, a new "Best of Artwalk" award will be presented to an artist whose work best reflects the excellence and spirit of the Artwalk. As always, all proceeds from the Artwalk go to the upkeep of the V&E Greenline, Memphis's original rails-to-trails project and the only community-supported walking and biking trail.

The Artwalk began in 2012 after VECA resident Alex Smythe proposed the event to the V&E Greenline committee earlier the previous year. Since then, the Artwalk has grown in popularity with more and more artists participating. In 2018, more than 70 artists participated and a record number of visitors attended the event. This year, the continuing pandemic, along with the digging of a new well on MLGW property, will limit the Artwalk to the more immediate area around Kirby Station and will require artists, volunteers and visitors alike to wear face masks while at the event. Nonetheless, we anticipate a successful return of the Artwalk after last year's hiatus due to Covid-19.

We look forward to seeing you on Saturday, October 9. ■



Sign up on the **V&E Greenline Volunteer Odyssey** site if you are interested in volunteering for the Artwalk:
<https://serve.volunteerodyssey.com/event/240093-VandE-Artwalk>



Images courtesy of The Evergreen News

A Lost Treasure

Memories of Carl's Bakery Remain Strong and Heartfelt

BY JOSHUA FIRST

Younger VECA residents may not think too much of the intersection of Jackson Ave. and Evergreen St., with its run-down gas station, King's Grocery and the Family Dollar, but until the turn of the millennium, this intersection was the site of Carl's Bakery, an important but unassuming gathering spot for the neighborhood.

Originally called Johns Bakery, the shop opened at 1688 Jackson Ave in 1948 in the space of a former hardware store and then, in 1962, expanded into the neighboring laundromat. The owners, J.E. and Virginia Johns specialized in birthday and wedding cakes along with other classic American baked goods. Johns was one of the first advertisers for *The Evergreen News*, asking in the April 1971 issue, "Have you tried a date-nut cake from Johns Bakery?" In the early 1970s, they also sold American classics like fruit cake and plum pudding.

Their head baker, Carl Koppeis, learned his trade from his father, a German baker who immigrated to St. Louis, MO before the First World War. Having never received a high school diploma, Carl had worked full-time in bakeries since he was a teenager. Soon after the formation of VECA, the Johnses retired and Koppeis bought the establishment in October 1972. While maintaining the focus on American-style sweets, Carl, and his wife Maggie added several German-inspired items like coffee cake and other European breads to the menu. Johns himself continued to work with the Koppeises for the first few years after the transfer. Carl even maintained the name Johns Bakery until August 1977.

Joe Sohm, the chairman of the VECA Housing Improvement Committee in 1979, identified Carl's Bakery as a landmark and long-time meeting place on Jackson Avenue. Susan Helms wrote

in *The Evergreen News* in 1981, "Midtown Memphis couldn't be prouder than to have Carl and Marie Koppeis a part of their business community." By the early 1980s, Carl and Marie had 20 employees on staff. Carl's supported VECA by supplying cakes at neighborhood parties, such as the 13th "birthday party" of the Evergreen News at Dino's in 1984, and gift certificates were typical prizes at VECA events.

"I've never found anyone whose knot bread was as good."

In 1985, Carl and Maggie retired and, without a buyer to take over the bakery, it closed, seemingly for good. Three years later, however, *The Evergreen News* excitedly reported that Carl's had reopened under new ownership. Linda Joffre, a recent transplant from New York who had managed the baking, along with native Memphian Arthur Young, who had handled finances and bookkeeping, bought the storefront next to the old Bakery (1690 Jackson). With Koppeis's blessing, they kept the old name. Koppeis even gave them the old blue sign, which they continued to display on the awning. Advertisements re-appeared again in *The Evergreen News*, proclaiming "more breads than ever, including rye and pumpernickel," while also promising "all the goodies you remember." To long-time VECA residents, the only change they may have noticed were the new hours, Sunday through Friday, 6am-6pm, so that the new owners, both Orthodox Jews who attended the Anshei Sphard Synagogue on Yates Rd, could observe Shabbat.

True to the advertisement, Joffre and Young brought back many of the items that made Carl's Bakery famous in the 1970s and early 80s, such as his Mocha Cake, which Koppeis called the "tuxedo" of cakes, but also featured a fully Kosher kitchen and introduced bagels and challah (or, as they called it, knot bread), among other characteristically Jewish

baked goods. In fact, Carl's became the only Kosher bakery in Memphis until Ricki Krupp opened Ricki's Cookie Corner and Bakery in East Memphis in 2000. Although much of the Jewish community had already moved east by the 1980s, the Youngs remained in the historically Jewish neighborhood around McLean and Vollintine.

Young's granddaughter and VECA resident Sarah Rushakoff, whose late mother also worked there full time, recalls the bakery fondly from her youth. Rushakoff was eight when Joffre and Young reopened Carl's and remembered "playing with the cake decorations in the window facing Jackson or checking the 'day old' shelves for stuff that had started to mold... If I didn't have somewhere to be, I would be [at the bakery] during [my mom's] shift." Rushakoff recalls how her grandfather never corrected customers when they called him Carl, which happened more often than not. Young ran the bakery until he died in 1999, after which Carl's closed for good. Joffre moved on to other opportunities, eventually serving as the president of her synagogue, and she died earlier this year.

Memories of Carl's Bakery remain strong, both within VECA and throughout Memphis. *Vollintine-Evergreen News*

featured a series on VECA childhood memories, and many respondents mentioned Carl's bakery fondly. Mary Claire Borys, life-long VECA resident, and who grew up going to Carl's recalls, "I still miss Carl's to this day. I've never found a better chocolate glazed donut, and despite trying all sorts of prominent bakeries in New York City and Chicago, I've never found anyone whose knot bread was as good."

Everyone has their favorite item that they bought at Carl's, but one of the most popular memories was its Mocha Cake, which featured in a "Carl's Mocha Cake Throwdown" at Muddy's Bake Shop in September 2017. At this event, five competitors attempted to make the bakery's most famous item, and Muddy's invited several tasters, including former Carl's employee, Jo Ann Thweat, to rank them. The winner made a recipe that included crushed pineapple in its filling.

Rushakoff said, "The things I liked best from the bakery were the bagels, danish, eclairs, and brownies. After Carl's closed, people would hound Linda for the recipes for their favorite item, but as far as I know, she never shared them."

Perhaps a reflection of what many older VECA residents feel, she concluded by saying, "I know it's important to have an affordable neighborhood store, but seeing that Family Dollar always makes me miss the bakery." ■

Joshua is a Greenline Committee member and a regular contributor.



E-Bikes in VECA

Zippering residents around all over the community

BY STACY PENNINGTON

One of the best ways to enjoy our Vollintine Evergreen neighborhood is from the seat of a bicycle. Not only is our neighborhood fortunate to have miles of bike lanes on major streets, such as McLean and Vollintine, but the shady and quiet V&E Greenline trail provides a welcome refuge from cars for those traveling from Springdale to the Crosstown Concourse.

Battery-powered electric bicycles deliver a new and easier way to get around than your standard pedal-pusher, one that still lets you get in a workout but not arrive exhausted. These bikes rely on a motor, usually located in the rear wheel or crankset, that is powered by a lithium-ion battery mounted on, or in, the frame. Once a rarity, 130 million e-bikes are expected to be sold worldwide between 2020 and 2023, so get used to seeing them around town.

Electric bikes feature all of the traditional parts of a bicycle and simply add a few components to make pedaling easier, as well as providing safety improvements, like headlights and brakelights. Ideal for seniors that need a little push or commuters that want to arrive at the office sweat-free, e-bikes can get you up a hill with the same effort as riding on a level surface. While range estimates vary depending on the type of riding you do, expect between 20 to 40 miles on a single battery charge.

In most cases, the e-bike rider still pedals the bike, and the motor provides assistance by turning on for short periods of time when the pedals are at the 12 and 6 o'clock positions, turning off when the rider pushes one of the pedals down. This method helps the battery last longer and is commonly called the "pedal-assist mode" (PAS).

Some e-bikes also feature a throttle that can be turned or pushed to activate the motor instead of, or in addition to, pedaling. Known as the "throttle-and-go" (TAG) mode, this allows riders to start moving from a stopped position with little effort, without having to first balance on the bike or push forward.

For legal reasons, electric bicycles are divided into classes. Class 1 e-bikes offer pedal-assistance only and are limited to 20 mph. Class 2 e-bikes are also limited to 20 mph but

feature PAS and TAG. Rarer than the first two classes and illegal in some areas, Class 3 e-bikes let you go up to 28 mph but are only pedal-assisted.

While some electric bike models are available in local shops around town, the greatest selection and lowest prices can be found online. E-bikes can be purchased directly from quality manufacturers, like Rad Power, Juiced, Trek, Cannondale, Specialized, and Schwinn, and shipped directly to your door, with easy assembly upon arrival. Expect to pay between \$1000 and \$2500 for a quality electric bike, though plenty of models can be found below or above that range. Lots of helpful reviews of e-bike models are available on YouTube from Electrek and EBikeSchool.com.

Interested in experiencing an electric bike but don't know where to start? Explore Bike Share features e-bikes for rent in Overton Park for \$5 for 20 minutes. Check out <https://explorebikeshare.bicycle.com> for more information. ■

Stacy Pennington is an avid cyclist and e-bike enthusiast. He is a VECA Board member and a Greenline committee member.

Purchasing Tips

Buy an e-bike with a removable battery that is standardized and used in multiple models by that manufacturer. While rated for hundreds of use cycles, the other bike components will probably outlast the battery, and you may want the option to replace it in the future.

Be prepared to spend more than \$1000 on a new bike to avoid uncomfortable compromises. The cheapest e-bikes feature heavy batteries and components and don't provide decent range.

Know in advance how you will get your new e-bike fixed before you buy it. While e-bike repairs aren't difficult for anyone used to replacing brake pads or patching bike tires, you will need a manufacturer that stands behind their product with spare parts and a warranty.



VECA member and neighbor Katherine Lambert-Pennington riding her Surface 604 Rook electric bike on the V&E Greenline.



Landmarks and Your Home

You have questions
and the Historic Committee has the answers

BY THE LANDMARKS COMMITTEE, KAREN EDWARDS, AND NATASHA STRONG

VECA is proud to be a local landmarks historic district, called VEHD. We understand that you have questions and want to know what process to follow if you are doing exterior alterations or beginning a new construction project. The VECA Historic Committee is here to help you! Here are a few of the common questions and answers pulled from our FAQs.

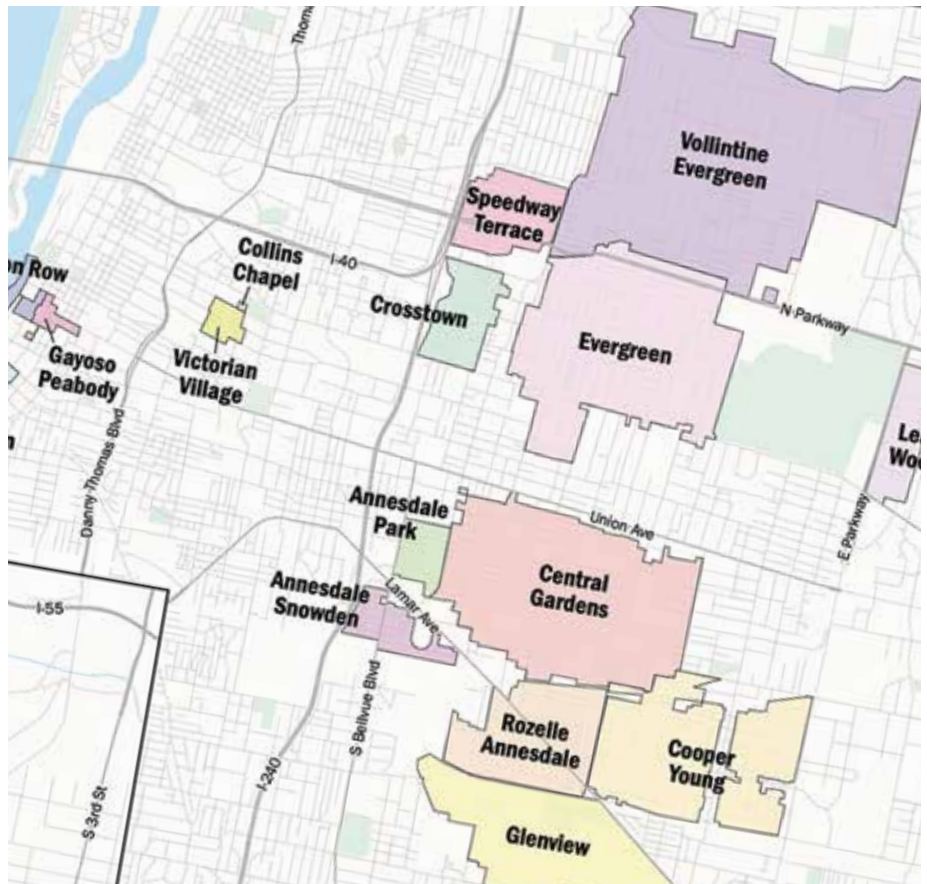
What type of work is reviewed by the Memphis Landmarks Commission?

The Memphis Landmarks Commission reviews work visible from the street, that includes new construction, demolition, relocation of structures, and different types of exterior alterations within the historic districts such as ours.

What is a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)?

A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is a building permit administered by Land Use and Development Services (formerly the Office of Public Development or OPD) through the Memphis Landmarks Commission. OPD reviews all building permits and COA's for exterior work.

A COA is required for work done to a building's exterior and areas of the property that are visible, in whole or in part from a public street or right-of-way. Generally, visibility includes all portions of the front and side elevations visible from the adjacent street or sidewalk. Areas that would be visible but are currently obscured by landscaping are considered visible. Routine maintenance of a building/property that does not involve altering historic fabric does not require approval from the MLC unless it changes the exterior appearance.



If you have questions related to VEHD's Design Guidelines or questions about the COA process for your exterior work projects, contact VECA Historic Committee: vecahistoric@gmail.com • (901) 276-1782

For questions related to new construction, renovation, restoration, COAs and Building Permits, or to report Landmarks violations contact Memphis Landmarks Commission Staff:

Mr. Brett Ragsdale, Deputy Administrator brett.ragsdale@memphistn.gov
Ms. Ayse Tezel, Preservation Planner ayse.tezel@memphistn.gov (901) 636-6619

DPD Online Permitting for COA's and Building Permits www.develop901.com

Memphis Landmarks Commission www.develop901.com/landuse-developmentservices/MemphisLandmarksCommission

Do exterior alterations to the front of my house for programs like "Aging in Place" require a COA?

VECA enthusiastically supports Habitat for Humanity's "Aging in Place" program. However, any exterior alterations visible from the street will require a COA. VECA's Design Guidelines strive to be practical. The guidelines do not dictate solutions; instead, they define a range of appropriate responses to a given design.

Section 8.3 of the Design Guidelines indicates that necessary alterations such as handicapped ramps should be done. If the alteration were removed later, the original form and character of the building or structure would still be evident. An alteration should not damage historic features, details, or materials. ■

Fall Garden Care

A little work now goes a long way in the spring



A small amount of planning and preparation in the fall garden can really go a long way to making your garden its best come springtime. Now is the time to clean up those raggedy flower beds, amend and supplement your soil and sod, and to take steps to cut down on problems for the year ahead. And of course it is time to plant bulbs.

The time spent in the garden this fall will be reflected in a beautiful and lush spring garden. We've been given these fall garden tips from neighbors around VECA.

Now is the time to plant trees, shrubs, and bulbs to give them a great start in the year ahead. It is also time to brighten up the looks of your fall and winter garden with some cool weather plants like Mums, Kale, and Cyclamens. Planting trees and shrubs now gives them time to get established before any freezing weather may come along. It is always a good idea to heavily mulch new trees and shrubs during the winter to help protect them.

It's time to clean up flower beds and remove dead plant growth and anything you don't want to overwinter in the garden. Many perennials have excellent winter structure

or provide food for native wildlife during the winter so not everything has to go. But things that should not be left in the garden such as tomato plants and weeds should all be dealt with now.

Late fall is a great time to amend your soil with local compost and granular fertilizers so they can be worked into the soil and have time to settle in over the winter. Now is the time to add lime to your lawn if it needs it as well.

Fall bulb planting is well known for producing wonderful spring blooms. There are countless types and varieties of bulbs available in the fall in almost every color. Be sure to plant bulbs into soil that is properly amended, prepared, and that has good drainage. Planting bulbs at the correct depths in the garden beds is also important to protect them and to give them room to grow. The rule of thumb is to plant them two to three times deeper than the bulb is tall but always check the instructions that came with the bulbs.

Every garden can really benefit in the spring from a little work done now, when it is cooler and much more enjoyable to be in the garden. Happy gardening! ■



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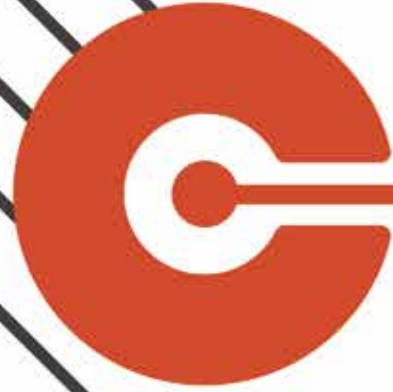
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