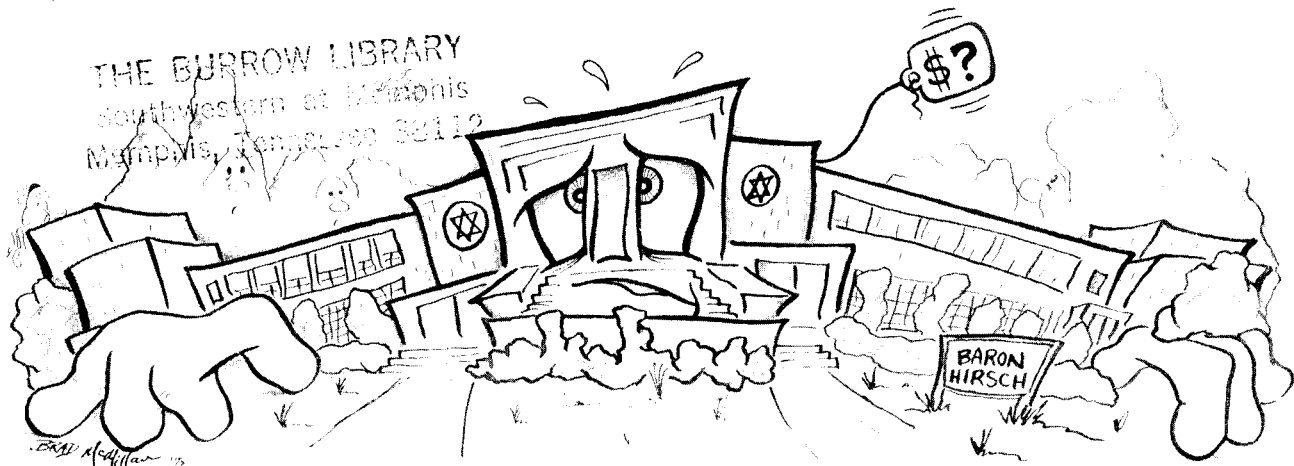


# The EVERGREEN NEWS

*A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association*



## WHY ME, LORD?

During the past few months several residents of the V/E community and surrounding areas have actively pushed for the acquisition of Baron Hirsch Synagogue at Vollintine and Evergreen for use as a cultural, recreational and educational center. The Cypress Citizens Committee, headed by NOAH T. GREENE of 1074 Terry Circle, has spearheaded the movement, holding neighborhood rallies and attempting to amend the city's plans for the spending of Community Development Act funds to include the synagogue's purchase. (See April, 1975, issue of The Evergreen News.)

The latest push for the acquisition of the synagogue came on May 24 when about 150 persons attended a lawn rally at Vollintine School. At this time several people spoke in favor of the proposal including U.S. Representative HAROLD FORD, Monsignor JOSEPH LEPPERT, civic leader Dr. JOHN E. JORDAN and JESSE BUSBY, who represented the Memphis Public Employees Union. Rep. Ford reportedly said that he would ask the City Council to appropriate \$1 toward the cost as a token and this would allow him to explore the use of federal funds for the proposal. In addition, Mr. Greene presented endorsements he had received from several leaders in government and business.

This movement to acquire the synagogue raises several questions of importance to the V/E community, the first of which is the need. It is true that the number of children in the community is increasing. No longer is the V/E community characterized by an older population but it now contains a wide range of age groups. Young families - both black and white - continue to move in and increase the number of children. This factor requires that VECAA at least consider the problem.

A second consideration is the feasibility of the proposed project. What are the chances of Community Development money being used for a community center in this neighborhood? According to JOHN DUDAS, director of Policy Planning and Analysis Office, little of these funds will be spent on community centers, in fact none during the first year. Since Community Development money is intended to halt

neighborhood deterioration, other problems have higher priority. What are the chances of the Park Commission approving of a community center at this location? LYNN WHEELER of the Park Commission surveyed the needs of the North Memphis planning district in which the site is located and concluded that, based on Park Commission standards, it is one of the best served districts in the City. The new center at Klondike in the 1200 block of Vollintine and the center at Hollywood give an additional center in this area low priority.

After much thought The Evergreen News feels compelled to oppose the proposal on the following grounds:

1) The limited Community Development funds that are available should be reserved for needs of highest priority. Although everyone is in favor of adequate recreation opportunities for neighborhood children, it is obvious that there exist more pressing needs in the area north of Vollintine. The survey conducted by the City Policy Planning and Analysis Office indicated a need for housing rehabilitation, street repair and sewer and gutter installation and these needs are apparent to anyone driving through the area. The Cypress Citizens Committee is proposing that over two-thirds of the money earmarked for this area be spent on a community center rather than on housing and street improvements.

2) The News does not want to encourage the exodus of the Jewish community. Baron Hirsch Synagogue boasts the largest Orthodox congregation in the United States and several hundred of its families still reside in the Vollintine-Evergreen area. Many non-Jewish residents erroneously



There will be no general meeting of the Vollintine/Evergreen Community Action Association in June. Watch the News for notice of the next meeting.

EVERY SUNDAY 7:30 pm

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believe that the synagogue is not being used but on Saturday morning hundreds of members attend services there. Although the synagogue may eventually follow many of its members "out east", officials insist that the building is not for sale and that no offers have been made. The large Jewish community here has done much to give the neighborhood its character and stability and The News feels that a premature departure of these residents would be unfortunate.

3) The VECAA long-range planning committee is formulating a plan to fully utilize existing facilities. Despite the lack of a full-fledged community center, the neighborhood is fortunate in having a large number of recreational programs. Evergreen Presbyterian Church has a comprehensive program that presently serves over 200 youngsters from the neighborhood regardless of race or religious affiliation. The Snowden School gym has been used during the summer on a trial basis and activities there will no doubt be expanded. The new YWCA at Jackson and Willett now has a score of programs involving nearly 200 residents and continues to grow. VECAA contends that a new center would serve to duplicate many of these activities and that coordination of the existing facilities and programs is the best solution to the problem.

## VECAA & the Synagogue

For some months now VECAA has been formulating a policy in regard to the proposed center. The organization had earlier been approached by the Cypress Citizens Committee for an endorsement but VECAA declined to take any position (although some individual members did) until more information was available. The following statement presents the VECAA position on the conversion of Baron Hirsch Synagogue into a community center.

"When the Vollintine - Evergreen Community Action Association was founded, its purpose was to support civic matters that are believed to stabilize, beautify, enhance and improve the community and to oppose actions which are deemed to be detrimental to the character, beauty and tranquility of this community. We have succeeded in creating a stable, multi-racial neighborhood which has earned the respect of many other Memphians and is looked to as an example of what can be done by a group of people who are dedicated to working for the betterment of all segments of the community.

Like anybody anywhere, we too would like to have as many municipally furnished services available for everybody. However we realize that we are also part of a larger community -

the City of Memphis - and it is not possible financially for the City of Memphis to do everything that everybody would like for it to do. Therefore we believe that people have to establish some priorities and determine what will do the most good for the most people - black, white, young, old, rich, poor, and in-between. We also must consider the sources of funding regardless of whether a project is funded with city money, county money, state money, of Federal money it all comes out of the same pocket - yours and mine.

In our community there has been some feeling that the Baron Hirsch Synagogue should be purchased and converted into a North Memphis Neighborhood Cultural, Recreational and Educational Center.

The Memphis Park Commission has established parks and recreational facilities in our section of town within a reasonable distance of most of our children. Recently the Memphis Transit Authority has set a special 10¢ fare for youngsters. It is true that there is not a park or a playground on every block, but most physical fitness programs stress that walking is one of the best exercises there is.

In our section of town there is a Senior Citizens' Center which has many activities for older folks. We now have a North Branch of the Y. W. C. A. which provides various activities for people of all ages. If we look around and take inventory of what we already have in the VECAA area, we will find that we have much more than many other parts of the city. The facilities are here to be used by our citizens. We would hope that if more money ever becomes available to be used to expand the existing facilities such as streets and street lights, improved sewage systems, and to meet the great need for improving our existing educational facilities and equipment, rather than to purchase more buildings.

The Baron Hirsch Synagogue is already an educational and cultural facility and has been since its founding in Memphis in 1892. We can point with pride that it is the home of the largest Orthodox Jewish congregation in America and it is in our neighborhood. The building is well kept; the grounds are well cared for; the parking lot is in good repair and clean. We in the Vollintine-Evergreen community feel that the Baron Hirsch Synagogue has been a good neighbor - and is a good neighbor - and we hope will continue to be a good neighbor for many years to come.

For all of the reasons listed above, the Steering Committee of the Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association is on record as being opposed to any action which would tend to alter this relationship and we urge your concern for this matter and your support in opposition to an absolutely unnecessary effort in this case."

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## Barker Leaves McLean

Rev. LLOYD O. BARKER, pastor of McLean Baptist Church since 1960, has resigned, effective June 30. He will continue to serve as director of recruiting and instructor of Bible at the Baptist Memorial Hospital School of Nursing.

Rev. Barker was one of the organizers of the neighborhood clergymen's committee which provided the spark to get VECAA going back in 1970. He, along with Monsignor JOSEPH LEPPERT and Father TOM KIRK, is considered a founding father of that organization.

In connection with his work for the Doctor of Ministries degree, Rev. Barker is planning a survey of the attitudes of V/E residents regarding neighborhood services. The survey will be conducted this summer in cooperation with Dr. MIKE KIRBY of Southwestern's Policy Research Institute.

The survey will cover a random sample of perhaps one household in ten and will ask why people chose this neighborhood. Of interest are the effects of things like schools, churches, shopping, and convenience to work, on the choice of a place to live. The survey will also explore needs for new services, including church-related programs and needs for spiritual experience.

(Incidentally, volunteers are needed for each block to help with the survey in the last two weeks in June. If you can help call Rev. Barker at 274-3766 or Dr. Kirby at 274-1800, extension 335.)

In some comments recently about the neighborhood Rev. Barker said he would like to see the VECAA organization be very positive in its leadership, involving all segments in improving interracial understanding and other aspects of community life. He warned VECAA against remaining aloof in the face of fragmentation of the community and suggested a role of resolving conflicts between special interest groups. For the churches of the neighborhood, Rev. Barker proposed an emphasis on the enrichment of family life and on intra-faith cooperation in worship and outreach.

Before moving to an apartment recently, the Barker family lived at 2124 Vollintine. Mrs. Barker, Jane, is a teacher at Willow Oaks School. Their children are STEVE, owner of Silver Threads Shop in Germantown, DOUG, a minister in California, and MARTHA, a student at Georgetown College in Kentucky.

Address all correspondence to: The Evergreen News, 1906 Mignon Avenue, Memphis, TN 38107.

The Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association (VECAA) is a non-profit neighborhood organization founded in 1970. Its boundaries are roughly Watkins, Cypress Creek, Trezevant and Overton Park Avenue. VECAA's initial goal was to enhance and maintain a stable biracial community with quality housing, services and facilities. It has been active in promoting stability, assisting in school desegregation, opposing commercial rezoning and in general promoting those activities that serve to create a viable mid-town community.

Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association

**1975 NEW AND RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP 1975**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Membership \$2.50 - Individual, Family, Business  
Make checks payable to VECAA.

Send to: Mrs. Janet Leonard.

1729 Tutwiler Avenue  
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staff: editors; rick thomas, george bradfute/news: hershel lipow, marty thomas/art-copy: brad mcmillan/typing: george bradfute, jr., sallee bruhwiler, kendy kallaher/circulation/jean bradfute/business: shirley johnson/printing: courtesy southwestern at memphis

## **Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd**

1971 Jackson Ave. (at University)  
Sunday Services  
7:30 A.M. — Mass  
10:30 A.M. — Choral Communion,  
Sermon with Sunday School.  
Wednesday Service  
10:00 A.M. — Mass and Bible Study  
The Rev. Canon George A. Fox,  
Priest-In-Charge

## **ICE CREAM FESTIVAL** Church of Good Shepherd

1971 Jackson Avenue  
Thursday, June 26  
6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.  
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## Around The Neighborhood

Perhaps no other organization in the city has such a representation of V/E residents as the Memphis Business and Professional Women's Club. Over 15% of its members are from our community and last year three of the Club's officers were V/E women. They were LOYCE WINFIELD (recording secretary) of 811 No. Avalon, LILLIAN SITTER (corresponding secretary) of 390 No. Avalon and MANER DAVANT (custodian) of 861 No. McLean. This year Ms. Winfield will serve as first vice-president, Ms. Davant will again be custodian and LILLIAN CARTER of 1550 N. Parkway will act as treasurer.

Fifth-grader DAVID BRUHWILER of 883 University was featured recently in the Commercial Appeal's "Assignment Memphis" column for the fable he wrote for "Memphis Mosaics," a yearly publication of literary work by public school students.

Two big trips are coming up for members of the Lewis Center for Senior Citizens, 1188 N. Parkway. In July, members will spend three days at Eureka Springs, Arkansas, in the Ozarks. The entire trip costs \$55.00, with registration beginning June 11th. In September the Center will sponsor another trip, this one to the Pacific Northwest and the Canadian Rockies. The 18-day trip will take members all over the western U. S. and Canada. The cost of \$328.60 covers most expenses. Additional information can be obtained by calling the Center at 272-7408.

A new neighborhood resident is FRED RAWLINSON, who recently moved into 420 N. Garland. Fred, a long-time mid-town resident, is an instructor at the Memphis Academy of Arts and is medical illustrator for the Memphis Regional Medical Program. Fred will receive his Master's Degree in Fine Arts this summer.

On May 24th the Reverend RICHARD GANTERT of 474 Stonewall was ordained into the Catholic priesthood at Little Flower Church. The ordination, performed by Bishop Carroll T. Dozier, was the first ever held at Little Flower with Gantert being only the second priest ordained from this parish. Father Gantert celebrated his first Mass on Sunday, May 25 and later in the day married his sister, BARBIE to JOHN BRUCE GREGG in the Chapel at Christian Brothers College. (Mr. and Mrs. Gregg will live at 874 N. Belvedere.) Father Gantert will receive his assignment in July. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Gantert at the Stonewall address.

On May 19 Congressman HAROLD E. FORD announced that \$570,000 had been given to the city by the Environmental Protection Agency for the Cypress Creek sewer project. He also commended the Cypress Health and Safety Committee for their diligence in campaigning for the project.

The grant will cover 75 per cent of the cost. The project covers 3 miles of sewer line and will take 18 months to complete. Bids will be received June 27 and a contract is expected to be let shortly thereafter.

## Ice Cream Festival



For the last 20 years or more, on the last Thursday in June the men of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church have sponsored an Ice Cream Festival held on the front lawn of the church. Cake walks and game booths will be in operation, as the purpose is "fun and games for all," and there will be plenty of ice cream and cake (baked by the women of the parish) for all who attend.

According to JOHN MCKIM, secretary of the men's group, door prizes of \$10, \$15 and \$25 will be awarded, and a 45-minute airplane ride around the city will be raffled off. This year the date is Thursday, June 26 and the hours are 6 p. m. to 9:30. Tickets are 50 cents at the door (25 cents if bought in advance).

### Classifieds

FOR SALE—Two window air conditioners. 18,000 BTU in good shape. \$50 each. 274-5690.

BABYSITTER NEEDED—Reliable person needed to sit with three children (six months, six years and eight years. Days, Monday thru Friday. 276-0598.

WINDOW AIR CONDITIONERS: Repaired and Cleaned—\$16.50 for single unit; \$14 per unit for two or more. Call Ed Wingfield at 274-3840.

FOR RENT: One-bedroom apartment in Jackson/Evergreen area. Unfurnished. Air conditioned. Call 274-4036.

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<p>8 P.M. EVERY MONDAY</p> <p>16 Games for \$2 3 Cards for \$5 4th CARD FREE WITH EACH \$5 PURCHASE</p> <p><b>Jackpot</b></p> <p>\$1500 - 50 Numbers or Less \$1000 Minimum - Over 50 Numbers Baron Hirsch Ladies Auxiliary (Lighted Parking Area)</p>				
<b>B</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>O</b>

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