January 2011

Join Your Neighbors – Join VECA
Membership Drive January 2011

January is VECA’s Membership Month. Dues to the Vollintine Evergreen Community Association are annual and traditionally are renewed in January each year. Membership Month will culminate at the VECA Annual Meeting, Saturday, January 22 where dues paying members will elect the new board. There will also be an annual report of all the volunteer activity you have helped with this year.

I want to plant a tree; I want to help clean a vacant lot on my street; I want to meet my neighbors; I want the City to help me because of flooding; what should I do about that junk car; I want to have fun and walk in my neighborhood. These and more, represent questions that can be addressed through membership in Vollintine Evergreen Neighborhood Association, VECA.

VECA is you and you are VECA. We came together back in 1970 as neighbors to organize and work on making our community a livable place. Vollintine Evergreen has over 4,000 residents. VECA’s mission is “to maintain a quality residential neighborhood through the volunteer efforts of the neighborhood’s residents”. It is as simple as saying I want to do something and join.

Being a member of VECA is the first step in involvement. VECA membership is from January to December. Please join now. If 2,000 residents joined at the $30 level we could raise $60,000 for neighborhood projects; if 1000 residents joined at $30 we could raise $30,000. Last year 300 residents joined VECA.

VECA does not have paid staff – through volunteering you help run the organization. Dues help us hold our annual meeting and the Summer Jubilee. Dues support the VECA Welcome Center at 1680 Jackson. VECA receives additional revenue from homes and apartments it owns and volunteer manages. Your dues help the volunteers help the neighborhood. You could do more if more residents collaborated with their neighbors by joining VECA.

Join your neighbors and join VECA now. All dues are tax deductible.

VECA Annual Meeting

Join Your Neighbors – Join VECA

Saturday, January 22, 9:00am - 11:00am
St. John Orthodox Church
1663 Tutwiler Avenue (at Dickinson)

Potluck Breakfast: 9:00 am
Annual Meeting: 10:00 am
St. John Sanctuary Tour: 11:00 am

Bring your favorite breakfast food
VECA will have coffee and juice

Top Ten Reasons for Having a Saturday Morning Annual Meeting:
10. No having to get the kids to bed on time
9. You can stroll the V&E Greenline before or after the meeting
8. Monday nights are for football (well, maybe not in January)
7. You won’t have to leave the office early
6. Coffee and donuts
5. It’s not dark out
4. No hard day at work to thwart you
3. There is cool artwork at St. John to admire
2. Seeing your neighbors is a great way to start the day
1. It’s not community without YOU
VECA Poster
Welcome Center Fundraiser

- $10 for poster ($20 if mailed)
- $20 for signed poster and $40 for a framed poster
- The poster is 17x21

Also available are
VECA note card sets
Set of 20 Note Cards and Envelopes; 5 each of 4 designs

Available at 1680 Jackson
901-276-1782
veca@veca.org

Framed House History
VECA Historic Committee Fundraiser

Celebrate your historic home with a unique gift idea! Featured will be the historic description of the home along with a photograph of the home.
Please allow 30 days to process the order. Three sizes are available: $15, $20 and $25.
The order form is online at veca.org. You may also call the Welcome Center, 901-276-1782 for an order form or email veca@veca.org to request an order form.

Avoid Frozen Pipes
By Jeff Hendrix
Wintertime in Memphis means many different things depending upon who you ask. To some, it’s the time of the Holiday Season, time off from work, time to celebrate with family and friends. To others, mainly kids, it’s the time of snow days. To all, wintertime is the time to bundle up and take precautions against the sometimes bitterly cold weather. To homeowners and responsible renters, this includes taking precautions against frozen pipes.

Yes, no one wants to awaken or come home to the sound of running water when there isn’t a faucet open in the house. Water line freeze breaks are something you unfortunately don’t think about until the water is flowing through your house. They happen suddenly and they show up after the damage is done.

Water pipes usually freeze and break here in the Mid-South when the outside temperature drops into the 20’s or lower and stays there for a couple of days with the daytime high remaining below freezing. During these extended periods of freezing weather, the water has time to freeze and turn to ice if it is not moving. It then expands and breaks the pipe that carries it. You won’t notice the problem, however, until the ice thaws out and the water starts flowing out of the break in the pipe.

The key to preventing this is to keep the water moving. Water will not freeze if it stays in motion. It doesn’t have to be moving fast. Simply letting a faucet drip will allow enough movement that the water will not freeze. You can also open the cabinet doors underneath the faucet. On the outside of the house, you should disconnect the hose from the hosebib. This will prevent the ice inside the hose from working its way into the plumbing.

A further precaution which the ambitious among us can take is to purchase insulation that can be wrapped around exposed pipes in attics, basements, and crawlspaces.

Some may think that the expense of letting water run through the pipes is too much. But it doesn’t come close to comparing to the cost of repairs necessary should your house suffer from the devastating effects of broken water pipes.

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 veca@veca.org for any questions or to let us know about your contribution!
Cold Weather Does Not Have to Mean Cold Home

Ten Inexpensive Residential Fixes that can Keep Winter Winds at Bay, Energy Costs in Check

By Jim Weiker (The Columbus Dispatch, www.dispatch.com, used with permission)

Warm air can leak out of a home from places small (electrical outlets) and large (picture windows). But there are steps you can take to close those gaps.

Here are 10 ways to help keep the cold air out and the warm air in this winter. These tips are mostly on the cheap. But those who can afford the expense might want to also consider major improvements.

1. **Seal or weatherstrip doors and windows** ($5 to $40). There's a reason this is the fall-back winterizing technique. Bad windows and door seams can pull warm air out of your home like a vacuum. Several manufacturers offer caulk or foam weatherstrips for doors and windows.

2. **Insulate pipes** ($2 to $5). Heat can leak out of hot-water pipes just as it can leak out of drafty homes. Reduce water-heating bills by wrapping hot-water pipes in foam pipe wrap.

3. **Insulate outlet covers** ($1 or less per outlet). Outlets and switch boxes on exterior walls aren't huge sources of heat loss from a home, but they are easily overlooked and easily remedied. Most hardware stores offer inexpensive foam insulating plates that slip discreetly under the existing plate to reduce the loss.

4. **Replace the furnace filter** ($8 to $12). A clean furnace filter might not make your home warmer, but a dirty one will make your furnace work harder, jacking up your utility bill. (The price is for conventional filters; electrostatic filters, which can last years, cost more.)

5. **Block the chimney effect** ($50 to $2,000). Even with the flue closed, a chimney can continue to suck air out of the house. There are two quick ways to seal the leak: properly installed glass doors – ideally, with airtight doors – can stop much of the loss, although they can be expensive. A far cheaper alternative is a chimney balloon or plug, which inflates to block the air loss – although it must be removed when the fireplace is in use.

6. **Install programmable thermostat** ($25 to $100). No need to leave the heat at 70 degrees when you're gone all day or sleeping all night. A programmable thermostat allows you to control the temperature and save money (the EPA estimates $180 a year) without feeling the chill.

7. **Install thermal window coverings** ($10 to $500). Thermal-backed drapes or quilted drapes might not be the most stylish feature of your room, but they don't have to look hideous, either – and they can dramatically reduce the amount of heat lost through your windows.

8. **Install a ceiling fan** ($100 to $300). A ceiling fan can help warm, as well as cool, a room, which can be especially valuable if the home has high ceilings, where heat gathers. Most ceiling fans have switches that reverse the direction of the blades, so the fan can gently pull cool air up and push warm air down. Look for Energy Star-rated fans, which will use less juice.

9. **Add attic insulation** ($50 to $100). Experts recommend at least 12 inches of insulation, so if you can see your ceiling joists, you don't have enough. Blown insulation is best over existing insulation but requires a blower. (Some retailers will provide a blower free if enough insulation is purchased.)

10. **Wear a sweater** (Free). This standby requires no professional installation, is portable and fits like a glove. Best of all, it can already be found in your closet.

Cover window AC units. This additional suggestion is for the many VECA homes with window units. Burlap, towels or any large fabric covering the unit on the inside will help keep cold air out and warm air in.
Goal Setting in the New Year

By Marci Hendrix

Most would agree that the New Year is a great time to review your existing goals and set new goals. Most would also agree that resolutions and goals are a challenge to keep, but they are a practical strategy for accomplishing your dreams. Goals help you focus on what is important in your life. Like a target, goal setting gives you the planning steps you need to accomplish your aim. What goals have you considered setting for 2011? How about learning to build furniture, cook, sew, paint, knit, garden, run a 5K—all are fun goals. Or maybe you want to lose 10 pounds, take a class, serve others, fix things around the house, be a savvy grocery shopper, read more books, etc.

To help get started, here are a few simple goal setting practices outlined by motivational speaker Zig Ziglar as well as from random sources on the Internet.

- **Commitment**: An essential ingredient to achieving a goal. Commitment and a desire to achieve a goal will keep us on track and will get us back on track when derailments happen. Commitment reminds us of what is important in life.
- **Writing down goals**: Helps makes goals tangible. Writing down the benefits and advantages of achieving your goal can be a meaningful exercise, too, if the goal is particularly daunting.
- **Planning the action steps of your goal using realistic steps**: Helps us from getting overwhelmed. It is a series of little things that build into a big achievement.
- **The overall goal is the long-term goal**
- **The short-term goals are the steps that need to be taken to accomplish the long-term goal**
- **List all the steps and activities and prioritize them. This becomes the plan to accomplish each goal**
- **Have a deadline for each step (i.e., how long do you need to complete the goal)**
- **More planning tips are to ask yourself:**
  - What do I know about this?
  - What information do I have?
  - What information do I need? Where can I get it?
  - What skills do I need to master?
  - What other resources should I use?
  - Is this the best way to do it, or is there some other way?
- **Keeping a simple daily journal**: Helps prioritize your time. At the end of the day, write down what you did that day. Did you do the thing you planned to do? Do you need to revise your activities for tomorrow to fit in your priorities?
- **Encourage yourself by your vocabulary**: Put things in a positive light. For example, you don’t pay the price for good health, you enjoy the benefits of good health. Visualize yourself achieving the goal and talk positively of it (picture that garden you want to build and plant).
- **Help is out there**: What organization, company or friend is out there that can help or advise you.
- **Obstacles and disappointments happen**: Identify the potential obstacles you will need to overcome. Know, too, that you can do everything you’re supposed to and someone else may drop the ball (i.e., football game can be easily lost due to one player dropping the ball). It’s not the disappointment that is critical, it’s how you react to the disappointment that is critical. This is vitally important. You must be prepared to deal with obstacles and then when they occur, change your direction to reach your goal, but don’t change your decision to reach your goal.
- **Get a clear mental picture of the goal already accomplished and play that picture over and over in your mind**
- **Remember to back your plan up with resolve and persistence – and never “give” up. “Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.” – Confucius**

If you do these things your goals have a high chance of being accomplished!
Walking/Running the V&E Greenline - Part 3

By Jane Owen

As a brief recap of my two previous articles about getting off the couch and doing something active, my suggestions are to start by setting small, easily achievable goals while aiming for a bigger, harder to achieve goal as the overall target. Now I’m going to make a suggestion about a big goal for all of you readers out there – how about training for a 5K for the early spring (3.1 miles)? There are plenty of spring 5Ks to choose from in Memphis and Midtown and walkers are always welcomed and encouraged. To find a scheduled 5K go to the Memphis Road and Track Club (MRTC) website www.memphisrunners.com and on the left, click on the link: Race Calendar. You will find many 5Ks that support charitable causes and those will give you a sense of double accomplishment.

I’m writing this just two weeks before Christmas, and in keeping with the season I’ve made lists – as have my grandchildren – and I’m checking them twice to make sure I’m not leaving any of the six of them out, or that I won’t miss an activity I’m supposed to attend. Start your exercise intention by making a list that you can start checking off achieved goals very quickly. The list might look like this:

- Make list
- Go online and choose a spring race/walk
- Write and sign your contract (explained below)
- Register for the race/walk
- Get notebook
- Get shoes
- Get started – Follow the plan (below)
- First entry…and the list goes on and on.

Make a contract with yourself, in writing and sign it. Maybe even get a witness or even better an exercise partner to do the same thing. An exercise partner is a great idea so you can hold each other accountable when motivation disappears. Your contract should contain the big goal (the 5K) and the time frame (ie, the date of the 5K), which is the big target you are shooting for. Your weekly short-term goals are very easily achievable goals (below) that have come from the Women in Running/Walking program that I helped coach this last summer.

Get a notebook so you can write down the daily/weekly schedule of what you are to accomplish, and then track how you are doing. Another helpful process is to journal your progress which is fun to read later to remember how you got your start! Any way in which you can compare and track your progress is important because it will keep you motivated and excited about how great you are doing! Another really great option is to run with a group doing the same thing and hire me as a group trainer, pay me $60/hour. Then I could quit my day job, and just run and write every day - best idea so far I think!!

Now, on to the actual exercise part of this article. This is really the easy part; the hard part is getting out of the house, especially when it’s cold, rainy, hot or you are just tired and have the “I don’t feel like it” blues. Just do it anyway! Know that you will feel better just having gotten up and out of the house. The schedule provided below is for beginners. More advanced schedules are available on the MRTC site.

The 9-Week Beginning Runners Plan: Start in January and celebrate the goal in March or April with the 5K. Eight weeks of training with one last week being race week. Train 3 or 4 times each week for the best results and to build confidence. Each session should be done at a ‘conversational pace’, so you can talk but are a little breathless.

If you are overweight, and/or completely sedentary, you can modify this to run seconds, rather than minutes. For instance run for 10 seconds, and rest 10 seconds, until you are comfortably up to a minute of running. Walking the (run) times is also a good alternative if you are sedentary or have some health issues. Modify the schedule so that it meets your physical needs yet remains challenging, and gets you moving forward such that your stamina and endurance are improving! It is a good idea if you have any chronic health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, or any heart issues, to see your healthcare provider and make sure you have the okay to do some exercise.

So you make your list and check it twice. Happy Trails!

Part 1 of Jane’s article is available in the September issue online at veca.org.
Part 2 of Jane’s article is available in the November issue online at veca.org

### Train 3 or 4 times each week for the best results and to build confidence

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Week 9 is the taper week which means you cut down on the total running days so you can be rested for race day -- but don’t stop running the week of the race. Run 2 days during the week of the race at a comfortable pace, like in your week 7 or 8.
VECA: Vollintine-Evergreen Community Association

VECA is a neighborhood organization made up of volunteers and paying members. The Vollintine-Evergreen News, VECA email, the annual meeting, and committee activities are the 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. Contact VECA by writing to 1680 Jackson Ave, Memphis, TN 38107 (901) 276-1782 Website: veca.org; email: veca@veca.org

Our V&E Greenline Elves

By Maura Weber
Have you noticed any changes on the V&E Greenline between McLean and University? Our neighborhood elves have spent many cold December days working to improve our V&E Greenline. Last fall, Clay Keeler was taking his usual walk down the Greenline when he noticed about two feet of standing water in the middle of the trail. Clearly, the structure of the trail was not allowing proper drainage of storm water. Clay took it upon himself to fix this problem using resources from his family company, Keeler Iron Works.

Clay and his two brothers Will and Rob run Keeler Iron Works which manufactures steel for various projects including billboards, amusement park rides, and scoreboards, including the Memphis Redbirds scoreboard! While a good deal of their work is out of town, Clay and his brothers do not forget about their own neighborhood. They spent several days donating their time and services, including a bobcat, to help fix the flooding on the Greenline between McLean and University. After about four full days that he and a few of his workers spent fixing the flooding, the Greenline now appears to be flood-proof. They built up on top of the trail to make it higher, using the earth that they had dug up on either side. The ditches also will provide for further drainage of rainwater. Thanks to Clay, his brothers, and various other volunteers we will not have to worry about the upcoming spring showers.

Clay Keeler, who has lived in the Evergreen Historic neighborhood, first became involved in VECA about ten years ago. Clay, Rob, and Will all have donated the services of Keeler Iron Works, to install both bridges on the V&E Greenline.

Clay Keeler walks his two German Shepherd dogs on the Greenline at least three times a week (photo on left). Keeler knows firsthand how important the Greenline is not just to our community but even for the city of Memphis as a whole. VECA would like to express our sincere gratitude to Clay, Rob, and Will Keeler for donating their time and services so graciously. Between the bridges and the water drainage work, our daily walks on the Greenline could not have been possible or as nice without their help!

By Jeff Hughlett
Elliott Lawns prides itself on beautifying Memphis, one house at a time, and they offer a full compliment of services including mowing, leaf clean-up, mulching, edging and more. They also build patios and offer landscaping services as well.

Elliott Lawns was founded in 2005 by Tim and his brother Michael and they are proud to offer full service to many neighbors and businesses in the VECA neighborhood. St. John Orthodox Church on the corner of Tutwiler and Dickinson are long time clients and they couldn’t be happier with the service Elliott Lawns provides.

Mention this article and Elliott Lawns will take 10 percent off your first service. To learn more about Elliott Lawns and the services they offer, call (901) 272-0630.

Another business that strengthens the VECA neighborhood is soul food institution, Melanie’s Restaurant, located at 1070 N. Watkins. Melanie’s has been serving up made-from-scratch, home cooked meals for more than 24 years and owner Jimmie Leach loves feeding the neighborhood. “It’s a family like thing here at Melanie’s,” she said. “Everybody knows everybody and we all look out for one another.”

Melanie’s is family owned and operated with some of the recipes dating back generations. The food is absolutely delicious and the friendly service and down home atmosphere is like no other. If you haven’t been to Melanie’s, I recommend the lasagna, squash and cabbage.

For the daily menu at Melanie’s Restaurant, call (901) 278-0751.

Elliott Lawns and Melanie’s Restaurant strengthen our neighborhood

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AmeriCorps NCCC Team Lends a Helping Hand to VECA

By Tim Griffith

Over the past several weeks a ten-person team of AmeriCorps NCCC members has been working in the community helping wrap up another successful year of engaging and improving the neighborhood. The AmeriCorps NCCC known as Delta One arrived in Memphis the last week of October and will serve till mid-December.

Members of the ten member team are: Mike Bradley from Denver, Colorado, Jared Clancy from Wilmington, Delaware, Ben Brown from Goshen, New York, Rachael LeFebber from Sheboygan, Wisconsin, Tim Griffith from Columbus, Ohio, Moses Moua from Clermont, Florida, Ashley Dickinson from St. Charles, Missouri, Chelsea Coss from East Lansing, Michigan, Nicholas Shawver from Las Vegas, Nevada and Jesse Cohn from Westfield, NJ.

NCCC is a full-time, team-based, 10-month, residential national service program for men and women ages 18-24, who are organized into teams of 10-12 Corps members. They serve in a region’s local communities on projects related to disaster services; environmental stewardship; energy conservation; urban and rural development; and, infrastructure improvement. NCCC members respond to disasters, construct homes, develop trails in state and national parks, engage youth in service, oversee emergency shelters, organize donations of food, clothing and other materials, lead volunteers and meet many other needs. NCCC members receive housing, meals, uniforms, a living allowance, a $5350 education award, training and valuable work skills. There are five NCCC campuses in the United States.

Delta One began their service project with VECA by doing some maintenance on the V&E Greenline. Clearing major obstructions along the Greenline in order for leaf removal was the first task the team took on with much vigor. In addition to cleaning up the trail itself, Delta One winterized the gardens along the Greenline by clearing weeds and gathering seeds for next year’s plant.

Along with their work on the Greenline, the team of ten also helped prepare and renovate homes throughout the neighborhood. The team first helped clear overgrown brush and create new parking spaces in an apartment complex leased by VECA to residents. Delta One also painted boarded up homes along Jackson Avenue and cleaned up the trash in and about the homes.

“It felt very rewarding fixing up these homes so it looked better for the community,” said Ben Brown of Delta One.

Delta One has worked with other organizations in the Memphis area, with their primary work with the Wolf River Conservancy. Other organizations this AmeriCorps NCCC team has worked with are Arkwings, Grow Memphis, Livable Memphis and Clean Memphis.

After their service in Memphis, Delta One will return to Vicksburg and then to their respective homes for two weeks for the holidays and then will return to a service project throughout the entire Southern Region.

Rhodes offers programs of unique interest to the community.
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This is the fourth AmeriCorps team to help us in the last 18 months, and we are very grateful for all of their fine service to our community.

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We offer dog sitting and dog walking services at your convenience. Whether in the comfort of your own home or a stroll through the park, we provide loving caregivers to watch after your beloved pets. References available.

Eileen Castine 725-9216 www.mrscruff.net
By Mary Wilder  
Councilman Jim Strickland, Mayor AC Wharton, the Lick Creek Storm Water Coalition, and Tetra Tech hosted a storm water flooding open house on November 22nd. The purpose of the meeting was to gather input from Midtown residents regarding flooding. Available, too, was information for the community about storm water flooding, what it is and how storm water systems work.

Tetra Tech Water Resources Engineering has been hired by the City of Memphis through a resolution sponsored by Councilman Strickland to review existing engineering plans, meet with residents, and gather information. In February 2011 Tetra Tech will provide recommendations for Memphis City Engineering and Public Works for addressing the flooding in Midtown.

Over 250 residents attended the meeting. VECA was well represented by Rich Alcott, Hazel Morgan, Andy Hays, Leslie Terrell, Ashley and Jonathon McIntosh, Barbara Luttrell, Brian and Chris Floyd, Mary F Pitts, The Reynolds, Michael Dempster, Chuck Fox, Jan and Mike Kirby and many more. All listed their address as a location of flooding and spoke with officials. Many submitted reports to Mayor AC Wharton and to Tetra Tech. All of the input gathered at the meeting will be used to complete the final recommendations to the City for flooding solutions.

VECA wants to thank Mayor Wharton and Councilman Strickland for making this meeting possible. Leadership that listens to the community and finds solutions for long standing problems is appreciated by the residents of Vollintine Evergreen.

Understanding that Midtown, and VECA in particular, has an under capacity and poorly maintained storm water system is important. Finding solutions that are sustainable and acceptable to the community is more important. We will keep you posted as to the next step in the process. To be included in the Lick Creek email list, send a note to: marywild@comcast.net. Please put “Lick Creek” in the subject line.

VECA Annual Membership Form - Become a Member
Join your neighbors in helping Vollintine Evergreen be the great neighborhood it is! Dues are tax deductible.

Name ___________________________ Phone ___________________________ Address ____________________________________________ Email ___________________________

Be one of the following types of team members:

Member $20 • Neighbor $30 • Supporter $50 • Leader $100 • Champion $500 • Benefactor $1000

$30 or more: Historic Plaque____ or Poster____ or Notecards____ or Bumper Sticker____

VECA Contact Information
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Website and Calendar: veca.org Fax: 901-276-1784  
VECA Board: Paul Herron  
VECA Housing: Chuck Fox  
Vollintine-Evergreen News Advertising: TBA  
VECA Email and Communication Committee: Marc Hendrix  
V&E Greenline: Len Cobb  
Safety and Security : Garnette Stephens and Erin Hartong  
Neighborhood Preservation Committee: Chris Floyd  
VECA Businesses Committee: TBA  
Lick Creek: Mary Wilder  
Neighborhood Network Committee: Gloria Singleton  
Historic Committee: Cathy Marcinko

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