CHILD CARE

by Karen Tynes

In the areas of child care and pre-school education, as in others, we are certainly fortunate in the variety of services available in the V/E community. Today when the working mother is the rule rather than the exception, such care and education are vital.

Right in the middle of the neighborhood is the McLean Baptist Church Day Care Center. The Center takes children from two to six years of age. It has been in operation for several years, originally serving as a daytime baby-sitting service. In the last two years it has been reorganized and now offers an educational curriculum designed to develop the total child.

The program includes introduction to numbers and the alphabet, as well as activities to expand the child’s self-image and his relationship to his family and community. Ms. PAT GOAD, the director, says that there are two class periods each day interspersed with outdoor activity, lunch and rest periods. All of the teachers are very enthusiastic and very concerned that each child develop a good positive image of himself, others and the community. (In fact, the closing song each day is entitled "Memphis is a Wonderful Place").

The McLean Center is open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. five days a week. Its staff includes five full-time teachers and one part-time. The Center charges $21 per week plus a $25 registration fee. It is open to anyone and is one of the few racially balanced centers in the City.

At the kindergarten level, the community has both public and private programs available. Trinity Methodist Church opened its kindergarten for three- and four-year-olds just this year. Mrs. BRUCIA MOREY, who taught at Grace-St. Luke’s last year, and Mrs. KAREN WHALEY, who previously taught at the second grade level, got together and initiated the program with a class of seventeen children. As they were starting from scratch, they have had to decorate and paint as they went along. Now large characters from Sesame Street and animal and number graphics cover the walls. The kindergarten uses teaching units, extemporaneous methods and field trips in its program. The directors have encouraged parents to spend some time at the center and to share their talents with the children.

Next year Trinity plans to expand its program to include five-year-olds. The kindergarten now runs three days a week with a charge of $30 per month plus a $30 registration fee. Although the present class is not racially mixed, the directors point out that anyone is welcome and that the Church’s Council has voted unanimously to maintain an open door policy.

This year Vollintine Elementary School has four kindergarten classes and Snowden Junior High one. These are for children who are five years old at the beginning of the school year. These classes operate on a regular school day schedule (8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m.) five days a week and are, of course, free. The classes have twenty-five students each and are open to anyone, even those who do not reside in the school district. Vollintine kindergarten welcomes visitors, especially parents of children who are considering enrolling their children for next year.

The Head Start kindergarten program at McLean Baptist Church will not be in operation at that location next year. It has provided a good program for the four years it has been in operation and has served as a model for other centers in the City. As was reported in The Commercial Appeal (4/24/76), the Church voted not to renew the Head Start contract. Although the contract expired last December, the members voted an extension until the end of the present school term. The Church has in the past operated the Head Start center in the face of objections by many members. Some have contended that a government-supported school that does not have daily prayers or use Christian material should not be based in the Church. It is hoped that the center will find other housing within the bounds of the V/E community.

There are a few residents in the neighborhood who supplement the programs offered by centers like those above by keeping children in their homes. An example is Mrs. SAM GENTRY of 693 N. Belvedere. Mrs. Gentry has a limit of four children and charges four dollars a day. She and her husband are real professionals at handling children. Sam is assistant director of Tall Trees, a youth guidance center, and they are also shelter parents for the Juvenile Court. Mrs. Gentry has a fenced-in back yard and provides a clean, healthful environment for the children.

There are doubtless other individuals and groups who care for children in the neighborhood. In view of the small number of children in the area we are fortunate to have such good facilities.
Rep. Gaia said in summary that although she experienced some disappointments in the lack of consumer legislation passed during the 89th General Assembly, she still feels that some high points had occurred during the session including the passage of the above mentioned legislation and resolutions.

KENNETH O. COLE of 1042 Monticello Drive has been selected as the new director of the Shelby County Housing Authority. Ken has previously been involved in various governmental and educational programs. He has also been active in various government.

The VECAA Housing Committee is becoming increasingly active in neighborhood affairs. It will be dealing with such important matters as housing rehabilitation and red-lining. For it to be effective it needs the input of residents of all ages, races and income brackets. If you would like to participate on this important committee, contact JOE SOHM at 273-6962.

The Lewis Center for Senior Citizens in cooperation with the Park Commission is sponsoring an "Older American's Bi-Centennial Dance." It will be held on Saturday, May 22.

The Vollandtine-Evergreen Community 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.


WANTED. Settled woman to share home with life-long neighborhood resident. Very reasonable rent. 879 N. McNeil. Call 276-5331.

REWARD. Female German Shepherd, black and tan, weighing 60 pounds. Lost in Snowden School area on April 17. Call 274-3324 or 327-5219.

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1697 JACKSON at EVERGREEN
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Haircuts-$1.75

Mid-Memphis Moves

The Mid Memphis Improvement Association (MMIA) has recently begun to develop a neighborhood improvement plan using an approach similar to that of VECAA and the Central Garden Area Association.

The MMIA area covers the large midtown area immediately south of the V.E. neighborhood. Its major concern has been with the intrusion of commercial and institutional uses into residential areas, especially along such major streets as Poplar and Madison. Another concern is with the problem of zoning in that most of the homes are in areas zoned for duplex and apartment usage. The same fear exists here as in the V/E and Central Gardens area that such zoning could lead to an overabundance of multiple family dwellings and the eventual deterioration of the neighborhood.

The MMIA plan is to begin with a home survey to determine population density, home improvement activity, and opinions about the neighborhood and the services it has to offer. This survey was begun about a month ago with about 50 volunteers and will be followed by an inventory of businesses and institutions. The data collected through these household interviews will be utilized to draw up a comprehensive neighborhood plan for Mid-Memphis.

Vollandtine-Evergreen Community Action Association
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As I drive through the neighborhood a carelessness on the part of many residents is apparent. I have had complaints about litter in almost every area of our neighborhood. Commercial areas seem to be strewn from one end to the other. The owner of the establishment says he has no control over litter, the child who litters feels no responsibility for his actions, the person who will simply be passing through our most beautiful residential streets are starting to see the accumulation of litter in the form of candy wrappers, popsicle sticks and paper bags. It is time that we, the residents, take individual initiative and responsibility for discouraging others from littering and ourselves picking up litter which does exist. VECAA is going to do its best in trying to obtain some trash receptacles and working with some of the owners of commercial establishments. We are also going to approach some of the schools to see if the development of a litter patrol is possible. We are going to try and obtain some type of volunteer help so that some of the litter can be picked up in this initial phase. However, any long-lasting impact towards decreasing the level of litter in this a very beautiful neighborhood depends on you the resident. WON'T YOU PLEASE HELP US? Make an effort to pick up litter and point to your neighbors and friends what littering does to a beautiful neighborhood such as ours.

By the way, as a follow up to the NBC news story on our neighborhood Marge Thrasher of Channel 13 has asked VECAA representatives to appear on her television interview show on May 25. We appreciate the opportunity to tell you the residents and the other members of our great city what VECAA is trying to do for itself.

VECAA is not a rich organization. Most of its work is carried on by volunteers and with the help of the very small membership dues given by our residents. Won't you please help us by either donating some of your time, or most importantly, sending us your check for $2.50. It is a small amount of money, but we in VECAA are making the money work for you.

### Circulation

The distribution of the *Evergreen News* has been taken over by the recently-reactivated VECAA communications committee and various improvements are being made to assure fast and thorough circulation. JOE HOUGH, chairman of this committee, wants anyone who is not receiving the *News* on a regular basis or who wants to deliver on his street to call him at 274-5551.

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**Porteous Garage**

- **OIL CHANGE, LUBE** and **OIL FILTER** $9.95 With This Ad
- Tune-Up (Parts & Labor) — $26
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**Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd**

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**NEW YORK LIFE**

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**Around The Neighborhood**

The Lewis Center for Senior Citizens, 1138 N. Parkway, is offering a new service. Through the center senior citizens can receive free financial advice from Credit Counseling Service, Inc. CCS is a non-profit agency offering money management services to families and individuals. Interested parties may call 527-2424 for an appointment. (The Center is continuing to offer free income tax assistance on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.)

Any neighborhood resident interested in going to the annual conference of National Neighbors (NN) should contact Mike Kirby (274-1800). VECAA is allowed to send two delegates. Delegates must pay their way although NN will contribute something toward travel costs. National Neighbors is a coalition of interracial neighborhoods across the U.S.

Recent newcomers to the neighborhood include CHARLES FOX and MARY WILDER who recently moved into 678 N. Idlewild. Chuck is assistant project director for the City’s Pre-Trial Services and founder and past director for the City’s Probation Department. He is originally from Queens, New York, and came to Memphis in 1971 as a VISTA volunteer. Mary, who is also a former VISTA worker, is now associated with the Girl’s Club.

**Highlights of this year’s Tennessee legislative session** for Rep. PAM GAY (District 89) were the passage of several bills dealing with the health profession.

For some time there has been a need for a legal definition of death. The American Medical Association and the American Bar Association have been working on a suitable definition for some years and Rep. Baia’s bill was the suggested outcome of those many nationwide conferences and hearings. This definition agreed upon will aid the many kidney victims who are now awaiting transplants as well as to serve to implement and simplify criminal judicial procedural matters in which time and type of death were previously impossible to define.

A second bill helping all professionals as well as those involved in the health profession by Rep. Gaia was the passage of the reciprocal insurance law which would allow any group of professionals, that is, lawyers, doctors, nurses, etc. to form their own insurance companies.

Another resolution was passed honoring MONSIGNOR JOSEPH LEPPERT for celebrating his 50th Anniversary in the priesthood and for his many achievements for the neighborhood as well as for mankind. EMMANUEL GOLDBERGER of 871 Barbara Drive was honored for his many civic contributions to the community as well as for the city at large.
VECAA News

by Mike Kirby

The Voluntine-Evergreen Community Action Association has been exceptionally busy during the first three months in 1976 in developing programs for the neighborhood. I think it is important as Chairman that I describe some of these activities.

VECAA, in conjunction with the City of Memphis, Department of Community Development, is submitting a proposal to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to give citizens of VECAA the opportunity to do something about housing problems that exist. If funded, the program would provide for extensive code enforcement activities, a neighborhood development corporation to fix up homes, a fix-up program for elderly unable to repair and paint their own homes, the purchase of trash receptacles to be placed throughout the neighborhood, etc. The neighborhood development corporation would be staffed with retired artisans from the area.

VECAA is starting a plan for a program called "Adopt-a-House". We have been contacted by various organizations asking for ideas for volunteer projects in our community. Many of these organizations are on the Southwestern campus, but some of them have included city service organizations. It is our hope that these organizations will adopt a house of a person physically or financially unable to fix it up himself. In the beginning, it would be expected that the group would mainly rake leaves, clean up the yard, dispose of clutter, fix leaky faucets, and do small repair. As the organization is able to obtain funds and donations of supplies, then the adopt-a-house organization might paint homes, replace rotting wood, etc.

At present time, we need the help of our residents in the two following ways. First of all, we need either neighbors or residents themselves needing help to give us the name of residents who would be eligible and would profit from Adopt-a-Home. If you know an elderly person or a disabled person who could benefit by some organization adopting their home and fixing it up, please write me at 2000 N. Parkway, Memphis 38112. Secondly, as we identify homes and organizations, we are going to need materials such as lumber, paint, bug spray, nails, tools, etc. If you know of any business that would be willing to donate materials of this type, please write me at the above address or call me at 274-8709.

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

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VECAA is going to commence a house-by-house survey this summer to try and identify those houses which need considerable work and which would reflect negatively upon the neighborhood. We will be contacting the residents in these homes trying to find out if there is any way we can encourage them to paint and fix up their homes. Please cooperate with us as we go from house to house in making this survey. Furthermore, if you know of any houses that are especially troublesome, please feel free to call us and we will put it on our priority listing.

Last month a number of VECAA residents called me to complain about the Seven-Eleven store at the corner of Jackson and Belvedere. Their complaints included such items as the installation of pinball machines, the installation of gasoline pumps on the premises, trash and litter problems, and harassment of citizens by individuals loitering around the store. I brought these conditions to the attention of the zone manager for Seven-Eleven in Memphis. The convenience store chain agreed to immediately remove the pinball machines from the premises. The zone manager pointed out however, that the presence of gasoline pumps would not be a detriment to the neighborhood. He pointed out that the pumps were attractive and relatively small. Furthermore, he indicated some procedures to minimize gasoline spillage. Since the conversation convinced me that the relatively innocuous nature of these pumps, I indicated that VECAA had no objection to their being put into operation. However, I did make it clear that if the gasoline business was profitable that the Seven-Eleven store would not expand its operation beyond its present boundary and intrude into the residential area. The zone manager assured me that this was not the case and in fact it was their policy to restrict the size of the store to the number of square feet now existing at the Jackson store.

The zone manager indicated that employees would promptly report harassments of customers and drunkenness to the police. He in turn asked that if neighborhood residents saw such situations or thought that perhaps a robbery could be taking place at the store to feel free to call the police for help. The matter of trash and litter proved to be a more illusive component to deal with in our meeting. It was indicated that the Seven-Eleven stores sweep the outside premises twice a day and provide an attractive trash receptacle. He indicated, and I think rightly so, that for trash and litter to be minimized, the users of the store must begin to become more careful. All in all, I felt it was a worthwhile meeting, one in which we indicated that VECAA had no objection to a private company making money off its residents as long as that company adhered to neighborhood standards.