Summer Events

VECA Street Faire and Ice Cream Social

VECA’s Historic Committee has been hard at work envisioning ideas for the future of the intersection at Jackson and Evergreen. On Saturday, June 10, they invited VECA neighbors to share their ideas with them at a Street Faire. The Faire was part of their project that engages businesses and community residents in imagining a thriving commercial district, including desired new uses for vacant and underused properties, exterior building and site improvements, and crosswalks and streetscape improvements. The event featured classic cars, a food truck, musical performances on the Mobile Porch, an ice cream social, and activities for kids.

The Faire’s success was due to the great help of many:
• Ice Cream was donated by Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.
• Vendors included: Overton Park Community Farmers Market; Textile artists Gloria Singleton, Aundra McCoy, and Vivian Hall, and food truck, A Southern Delight
• Musical Performances by:
  • Sammy Rich and members of the Memphis Scottish Society
  • Aries Rising
  • Steve Lockwood and John Chambliss (acoustic blues)
• Stage MCs: Ellis Rich and Jarvis Sumlin
• John Paul Schaffer with BLDG Memphis provided the Mobile Front Porch that acted as a stage for the musicians.
• Bike Racks were provided by Nicholas Oyler, Bikeway and Pedestrian Program Manager City of Memphis Division of Engineering
• Stephen Edwards with City of Memphis Traffic Engineering approved VECA’s request for creative placemaking crosswalks designed and installed by Artist Khara Woods and Architect Andy Kitsinger.

National Night Out and School Supply Drive

The air was heavy from an earlier threat of rain, but that didn’t stop neighbors from coming out to the annual National Night Out celebration on August 1. Inside the Welcome Center, volunteers served food and ice cream, gave away children’s books, and enjoyed the refreshing air conditioning. Outside, the children played games and took photos with the Memphis Fire Department officers and Memphis Police officers. A special treat was an appearance by the Dalmatian dog from the Memphis Fire Museum.

Many thanks to Andy Kitsinger, who talked with neighbors about the Evergreen-Jackson commercial area project. Andy will recap the project in full at the 2018 VECA annual meeting in January.

Many thanks to Mercy Hill Church for grilling hot dogs, helping with face painting and kids’ activities, providing festive music, and setting up and tearing down. Thank you also to the Neighborhood Watch groups for providing food and helping make the event fun.

The NNO event ran concurrently with a school supply drive for Vollentine Elementary and Snowden School. Many thanks to all the wonderful neighbors for helping students get ready for the new school year. A special thank you to Gethsemane Garden COGIC and neighbors at Parkway House Condominiums for their role.
Healthier Tennessee

VECA is partnering with nearby neighborhoods to provide events emphasizing healthy eating and physical activity. Leading the year-long effort is Healthier Tennessee Neighborhoods, an initiative of Governor Haslam’s Foundation for Health and Wellness. Neighborhoods in our partnership include Crosstown, Smokey/Klondike and Uptown.

Our first event is a series of free monthly dance classes to be held at the Crosstown Concourse. Each month Crosstown Get Down will feature a new dance theme with free lessons followed by music and dancing.

Date and times for the monthly dance classes are on the Crosstown Concourse Facebook page and their calendar: https://www.facebook.com/crosstownconcoursepage and events

More information on Healthier TN: https://healthiertn.com/about

Giving to VECA

In addition to being a dues paying member of VECA, there are several other ways you can contribute financially to the neighborhood:

Amazon Smile: Amazon Smile supports VECA and the V&E Greenline when you shop. You can shop at Amazon and make a donation to the Vollintine Evergreen Community Association of 0.5 percent of the purchase price. This donation is made by Amazon, with no charge to the customer. The funds will be equally split between VECA’s most visible projects: The V&E Greenline and the VECA Welcome Center. If you shop at Amazon, please sign up to have a donation made to VECA. You will be shopping at AmazonSmile.com, which is the same as regular Amazon with a different screen. Here’s how you sign up for the donation:

• Go to the website: smile.amazon.com and sign in to Amazon
• In the box that says “pick your own charitable organization,” type in Vollintine Evergreen Community Association and search.
• Next, select Vollintine Evergreen Community Association

United Way: 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 veca901@gmail.com for any questions or to let us know about your contribution!

Kroger Plus Card: Use your Kroger Plus Card and donate to VECA. Create an account on the Kroger page at: https://www.kroger.com/communityrewards. Once signed in, click on “My Account.” In the Community Rewards section, click on “Enroll”. The VECA number is 18512. Please contact us at veca901@gmail.com if you have any questions about using the Kroger Plus Card.

Connect with Vollintine Evergreen Neighbors via Nextdoor, a private social network for neighborhoods. Go to nextdoor.com and create an account by entering your address and email address. Once the address is verified, you can connect to other Vollintine Evergreen neighbors and talk to each other about things going on in the neighborhood, whether that’s exchanging recommendations on local service providers, like a contractor, a painter, a babysitter, or talking about local restaurants. People also use the site to talk about more personal things, like lost pets. Crime and prevention is a frequent topic and Nextdoor is increasingly becoming like a virtual neighborhood watch for the neighborhood. Technology is helping people become more connected, and you are invited to join the conversation.

Call MLGW at 320-1497 to report street light outages.

Report Littering

The following information is from TDOT’s website on how to report littering and the information they need:

Thank you for caring enough to help us keep our roadways free of litter! With your help, we can go a long way in keeping Tennessee clean and beautiful. The online litter hotline is available for concerned citizens like yourself to take action by letting us know when you witness littering from vehicles on the state’s roadways. You may also call toll-free 1-877-8-LITTER.

With the information you provide to us below, we will send a friendly reminder letter to the registered owner of the Tennessee vehicle informing them of the negative consequences of their littering actions and providing them with educational materials. The letter will include information about how to contain their litter and inform them that litterers can be fined up to $1,500.

Please fill out the information below completely and to the best of your ability: • Date and time you witnessed the incident • County in which the littering occurred • Name of road and/or route number where the incident occurred • Did the vehicle have a Tennessee license plate? • License plate number of the vehicle • County listed on plate • Description of the vehicle such as type, make and/or color • Direction the car was traveling and any other details you can provide, such as nearest cross street, intersection, mile marker or exit number where the incident occurred • Type of litter
Neighborhood Watch Updates

VECA now has three official Neighborhood Watch groups, thanks to Angela Walker, Velma Reed, and Scott McDermott.

Angela told us: “The neighbors in the 900 and 1000 block of North Willett Street began meeting in March of this year. We named our group Nine Ten N. Willett St. Neighborhood Watch Group. Our boundaries are Vollintine and Brown, and we have twelve active neighbors. Nine Ten NWG meets monthly. We are registered with the Crump Precinct of the police department and attend the monthly NWG meetings. Our group supported and participated with VECA in August for National Night Out. On August 28, we invited City Councilman Chairman Berlin Boyd to our meeting. We discussed our concerns about the crime in our neighborhood as reported in CyberWatch. Chairman Boyd said he would request more police patrols. We have seen more police presence. The Chairman suggested we apply for a Crime Prevention Grant and he would write a letter of support. On September 5, several of us attended a Neighborhood Crime Prevention Grant Workshop and we will be applying for the grant. We think that surveillance cameras and more lights will help to deter and reduce crime in our community. I’m currently attending the Citizens Police Academy held at Crump Precinct.”

Velma Reed has also been instrumental in forming a Neighborhood Watch Group. Their group’s name is Crime Free Zone of VECA or CFZV. Velma told us, “We have six active members and have met in combined meetings with the Nine Ten N. Willett St Neighborhood Watch Group as well as on our own.” The streets in the CFZV group include Maury and Avalon north of Vollintine, Terry Circle, Michelle Circle, and homes along Vollintine from Willett to Evergreen.

Scott McDermott is the lead on the Neighborhood Watch group for the overall Vollintine Evergreen area started two years ago. He worked closely with Melanie Dorsey and Officer Wilkins from the Crump Precinct to help the two new groups get started. He says, “VECA would like to thank Melanie Dorsey and Officer Rachael Wilkins for coming to our Welcome Center over the last couple of months and for helping us start two new Neighborhood Watch groups within VECA’s boundaries. These groups will be their own official Neighborhood Watch groups, and as they are in areas of higher crime we feel very confident that these groups will be able to help with decreasing crime in their neighborhoods and the surrounding areas.”

To be official, a group must meet with Memphis Police representatives and complete the required paperwork. The group chooses a name and agrees to hold regular meetings. Groups also agree to hold National Night Out festivities in the neighborhood and be a liaison between their community and the Memphis Police Department. For more information contact Neighborhood Watch coordinator Melanie Dorsey (636.4630) or Officer Rachael Wilkins at Crump Station (636.4600).

Neighborhood Watch

The National Neighborhood Watch program is one of the oldest and most well-known crime prevention concepts in history that stresses community awareness and teamwork. Neighborhood Watch in Memphis was officially formulated in 1984. It is an organization which empowers local citizens to take back and maintain a better quality of life in their respective neighborhoods. This program has shown that citizens help in the reduction of local crime by being vigilant and by partnering with local law enforcement to address the crime related issues and economical challenges within their community. (www.memphispolice.org/initiatives.asp)

VECA is an official member of the Neighborhood Watch program. Meetings are held at Crump Station Monthly the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm. You can share your concerns and ideas to help make our neighborhoods safe. VECA holds quarterly NW meetings as well at the VECA Welcome Center.

Look for meeting announcements on NextDoor and VECA Enews

Important Notice about Your City Government

If there is a blight problem in the neighborhood or near your house, it is important that you file a complaint with the City’s 311 program so the problem can be documented.
- Dial 311 or (901) 636-6500 and an operator will take your complaint
- Or, go online at https://seeclickfix.com/login

If your case is closed and it is still a problem, please file another complaint. This is the first step to ensuring that the City addresses neighborhood complaints. Examples of blight include:
- Vacant and abandoned properties
- Properties in disrepair
- Grass and weeds over 12 inches high
- Accumulation of litter and debris

Join the effort to fight blight in Vollintine Evergreen by joining VECA Blight Busters. For a calendar of events, please see: veca.org/content-calendar/ for Blight Busters

Common Code Violations

- Accumulation of junk, trash, and debris
- Open storage of material and furnishings
- Parking and storing inoperable (junk) motor vehicles
- Parking too many vehicles at a property (4 is max)
- Off street parking (please don’t park on your yard)
- Special use/recreational vehicles and equipment
- Substandard structures and fences
- Excessive weeds, grass, trees and shrubs
- Commercial vehicles and equipment
- Abandoned and derelict structures
- General service and repair shops
- Report code violations at 311
QuikFix

QuikFix was founded this summer by three entrepreneurial Rhodes students, Ben Siegel, Parker Pell, and Nathan Mirochnick. The students needed to earn money, but their busy schedules didn’t allow them to hold down conventional jobs. They brainstormed and came up with a win-win with QuikFix. Students can help neighbors while earning some extra cash, and in turn, neighbors can become more involved with students. Here’s how it works: Neighbors post odd jobs they need help with and students do the jobs that are tailored to their skills. QuikFix is mutually beneficial, promotes connectivity, and provides a new working relationship between community members and college students. Think of Uber, but for odd jobs such as yard work, moving furniture, cleaning. Contact QuikFix at: info@quikfixjobs.com or 410-2107.

Join the VECA Newsletter Team

Our neighborhood has stories to tell. From highlighting the accomplishments of our neighbors to letting the neighborhood know about the activities of VECA to keeping everyone apprised of trends in the area, there’s much work to be done.

The newsletter team is looking for two volunteers to research and write articles. This involves interviewing neighbors and business owners, and taking photos. Join us and help us tell the stories.

The newsletter team is also looking for two volunteers to work on our advertising team. This involves connecting with existing and potential customers and working to meet their advertising needs.

Contact us at vecanews901@gmail.com
VECA Garden Club Updates

By Connie Shepherd

Three of us met to weed the Butterfly Garden on May 11. Mary Wilder gave us a nice plot to clean. When finished with weed removal, we planted fennel and parsley to bring more butterflies in. These are host plants for Black Swallowtail. The offspring (caterpillars) can devour a bush in a few days. But then you can enjoy the butterflies after they emerge from their cocoon.

More than a dozen gathered on June 8 along Tutwiler to begin the wonderful job of cleaning up the medians that were obstructing the view of drivers. We came prepared with clippers, loppers, rakes, shovels, and saws. Thanks to the wonderful Kirby clan, Mary Wilder, Shay, Kevin and Ray, Tera and Michael and others who came to help. We cleared the medians so drivers now have a good sightline. Afterwards, we ate and drank our fill. Thanks again to the many neighbors who provided food, hard work and wonderful camaraderie.

VECA Awards

Dedicated MLGW Employee

By Kevin Scott McDermott
V&E Greenline Committee, V.P.

V&E Greenline committee recognized MLGW employee Cecil Barrett for his dedicated work over the years in helping maintain the MLGW greenspaces in VECA.

Mr. Barrett has been very professional in his working relationship with the V&E Greenline. Each year contractors are out working on the greenspaces around the pumping stations and the MLGW access sites. A considerable amount of mowing has to be done on a regular basis in these areas, and Mr. Barrett has helped let the contractors know which areas need regular maintenance. He has met with us onsite and with the contractors to ensure the right areas are being mowed and maintained.

We appreciate Mr. Barrett and all his work over the years in helping to make our little part of the world a much better place in which to live, work and play.

V&E Greenline Guests

Neighborhood resident and Executive Director of BLDG Memphis John Paul Shaffer led a bicycle tour of area greenway and trail projects with a group of 23 from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals on June 28. They talked with community leaders to obtain a context on development, transportation, trails, and such along the way. They visited the V&E Greenline to learn more about our trail and the role of volunteers in the development of the trail.

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals
Lexington, KY
http://www.apbp.org/

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My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give them eternal life. John 10:32

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Green Triangles Project Update:

Soil and Mulch Added to Islands ... Planting Begins Soon!

By Bill Schultz

The beautification of the two traffic triangles just north of the intersection of Jackson Avenue and University Street has continued with generous help from many neighbors over the summer. In addition, VECA always has those who work behind the scene to make things happen. With these efforts, the once barren asphalt islands are beginning to take on a new look. The greening (and blooming) of these very visible patches of City real estate will attract birds and butterflies, bringing smiles to the faces of those passing by.

As reported in the June issue of VE News, VECA was tremendously successful in raising funds to pay for the “Green Triangles Project.” The fundraising was facilitated by IOBY (In Our Back Yard Inc.) and rapidly reached the targeted amount last spring to capture a $1,750 match from IOBY, resulting in a budget of over $6,000.

In May, negotiations with the City lead to the removal of the asphalt and upgrades to curbing and pedestrian ramps. VECA was left with removing the hard, compacted red clay substrate. Project funds were used to pay Memphis Landscape to remove and haul away this material in early July, followed by delivery of several large loads of high-grade topsoil from Yardworks.

VECA Historic Committee member Steve Gadbois wasted no time organizing a soil “spreading party” by sending an email to other members and the donor population at large. On Saturday, August 5, 15 volunteers gathered on the triangles, with wheelbarrows, shovels, brooms, and rakes to spread the mountain of soil. Volunteers included Linda Nichols and Robert Burns, Chuck Fox, Steve Gadbis and Andrée Glenn, Ann George, Emma “EJ” Kessler, Jim Kovarik, Scott McDermott, Cathy Marcinko, Stacy Pennington, Bob Rigus, Andy Saunders, Bill Schultz, Natasha Strong, and Mary Wilder.

Andréé Glenn arraigned for the City to deliver free of charge a huge load of four-year-old composed leaf mulch to top off the soil. Steve Gadbis, Bill Schultz, and Andréé had another spreading party one late August afternoon to move the mulch evenly about the triangles. All of this in preparation for the fun part... PLANTING!

But the work isn’t finished yet. The soil and mulch form a slight berm in the traffic islands, an excellent bed for whatever will be planted in the coming months. Plant expert Greg Touliotos at Urban Earth and his manager, John Jennings, have graciously provided guidance and recommendations regarding additional soil amendments, offering to help us with plant selection and acquisition when the time comes. The island gardens will have no irrigation apart from Mother Nature’s offerings. We have fairly stringent sight line restrictions, which limits plant height. It remains to be seen if drainage will pose problems, although there was no soil erosion during the time Hurricane Harvey spent in the area dumping rainfall lot of rain. The good news is we have ample funds remaining to complete the project and meet insurance obligations. For those able and willing, the beds will need tending throughout the year. Please sign up to help maintain the Green Triangles. Look for future notices via VECA’s social media platforms (Facebook, Nextdoor, and the weekly E-news bulletin). Soon you’ll be able to enjoy the pleasant visual impact these community spaces have on our neighborhood!

Memphis Landscape uses walking front loader to remove compacted substrate

Soil “spreading party,” Saturday, August 5

Green Triangles Project Donors
Katherine and Jason Paxton
Linda Nichols and Robert Burns
Brian and Alisha Boone
Renate Rosenthal
Karen Casey
Tariq Hasan
Sheryl Jackson
Emily Trenholm
Jim Kovarik
Kim Halyak
Susan Fleischman
Kate Gilow and Trey Harrison
Sherry Henson
Eddie Hankins
Sam Powers
Emma Kessler and Gary Harris
Henry Kurtz
Chris and Brian Floyd
Steve Gadbis and Andréé Glenn
Natasha Strong
Ann and Bill Schultz
August Marshall
Scott McDermott
Lottie Rich
Kimberly Kasper
Cathy Marcinko
Any Saunders
Midtown Mike
KE_Love4V&E
The CatWirks
Mark L.
BJK
BancorpSouth
Hein Park neighborhood
Church of the Good Shepherd
Plus...several anonymous individuals
FREE OPERA at
Vollintine Evergreen Welcome Center

Monday, September 25 at 7:00 pm
Doors open at 6:30 pm

Opera Memphis presents the twenty-minute English opera, *The Telephone*, followed by an audience talk-back.

All Ben wants is to propose to his girlfriend, Lucy, before he heads out of town. When he goes to her apartment to pop the question, though, he gets interrupted by a constant stream of phone conversations. Sound familiar?

*LIGHT REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED.*

Info at operamemphis.org/telephone

Shawnette Sulker as Lucy

Marcus King as Ben
V&E Greenline Volunteers Work on Storm Damage

The massive storm of Saturday evening May 27 had an impact on VECA. It damaged houses, tore down trees and limbs, closed streets, and shut down the electrical grid. It also dropped trees and limbs onto the V&E Greenline trail.

Volunteers surveyed the damage the next morning and over the next two days removed debris so that the trail would be open to V&E Greenline users.

The most severe devastation was at the stationhouse area. Fortunately, the trail was not blocked and the building was not damaged. However, two large sweetgum trees fell in the open field and many limbs were also blown onto the field. One section of the field is owned by the V&E Greenline and the other by MLGW.

A cleanup event brought 17 volunteers to the site. They included people with chain saws used to cut both branches and the tree trunk. Volunteers moved the smaller limbs to the street for solid waste pickup, while tractor drivers moved the larger ones.

The effort by these volunteers was impressive and we are all thankful for their dedicated service.

Generator Recommendation

One VECA neighbor gives a hearty shout out for having a standby generator: “For several years we used a portable generator to manage short outages; but we had to be at home and maintain the gas and oil (gas stations often had no power either). After suffering two major outages in the past few decades, we chose to install a standby generator. When the power went out on May 27, we had full power to the house within a matter of seconds. Running off its own natural gas line, we did not need to be home or perform routine maintenance during the outage. When the MLGW power returned, the generator shut itself off and went back to standby until the next outage. Although it tests itself every 2 weeks, this was the first time in over a year that it came on due to an outage. No loss of food, no security system shutdown, central A/C fine, appliances fine, washer and dryer fine etc. It is an expensive investment but the recent outage made it worthwhile. We had it installed by Benchmark Electric and we know there are a few others in the VECA area.”

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Memorial Day weekend’s severe weather on Saturday, May 27, may seem like a distant memory. Folks will recall fallen trees, debris, the noise of generators filling the air, the hunt for ice and a hot meal, and the tension of waiting for power to be restored to 150,000 customers. They are the fortunate ones, as that mess is still a part of many of our neighbors’ lives. Work continues for those still dealing with insurance and rebuilding their homes damaged by the 80-mile-per hour winds and downed trees.

Labor Day weekend bookended the summer when the remnants of Hurricane Harvey that flooded Houston, renamed Tropical Depression Harvey, brought several inches of rain to Memphis in a 12-hour period on Thursday, September 1. About 40,000 customers were without power and again trees came down. The good news for Vollintine Evergreen was that Lick Creek did not overflow, thanks to several detention basins built in recent years.

Most recently, in the early morning hours of September 12, an easy, steady rain started falling from the remnants of Hurricane Irma that had wreaked havoc the day before in Florida. Unlike the holiday weekend storms, and what Florida experienced, this rain was gentle; the kind of rain that invites snuggling up with a good book or a nap. Wouldn’t it be lovely to only have that kind of rain all the time.

Photos provided by neighbors from the storm on May 27
VECA Hosts a Wine Tasting Event for the Greensward

VECA hosted a wine tasting fundraiser on the V&E Greenline for the Greensward on June 9. VECA neighbors raised over $1,000 to support the Greensward. The money went toward the Overton Park Conservancy’s goal of raising $1 million as required by Memphis City Council for the funding of a parking solution related to the Greensward at Overton Park.

“It is so rewarding to come here and simply practice medicine. Helping people is really what it’s all about.”

Dr. Thomas Motley, Volunteer since 1998
A salute to all of our residents past and present – men and women across all age groups – for their countless hours of volunteering, the untold stories of stepping up to lend a helping hand to a neighbor, and strong financial support of VECA.

We are extremely grateful for our members and residents. A successful neighborhood and community association like VECA does not happen overnight. It is the result of engaged residents and neighbors for 45 years and counting.

Your annual contributions to membership have helped in great measure to improve, maintain, preserve and protect our neighborhood’s resources and amenities:
- historic character
- interesting architectural details
- beautiful tree-lined streets
- safe greenspaces and nearby parks for our young and elderly
- walkable streets
- pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environment
- public spaces
- accessible and fun public art

VECA has a 45-year legacy of being a visionary community organization.

Your loyal support, active involvement, and strong sense of community spirit are vital to our continued success.

The money raised through membership dues during our annual campaign is vital for successful events and endeavors by VECA for 2017.

VECA Is Y·O·U·R Neighborhood Community Association Partner!

Please Renew Your Membership Now
• THANK YOU •

VECA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FORM
Join your neighbors in helping Vollintine Evergreen continue to be the great neighborhood it is!

Name __________________________ Address __________________________

Phone __________________________ Email __________________________

Be one of the following types of team members:
☐ Membership $25 • ☐ Family/Household Membership $35 • ☐ Gift Membership $45
☐ Neighbor $75 • ☐ Leader $100 • ☐ Other $ __________

Checks payable to VECA. Mail to VECA, 1680 Jackson Avenue, Memphis, TN 38107
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