

The EVERGREEN NEWS

THE BUI BOW LIBRARY
Southwestern at Memphis
Memphis, Tennessee 38112

DEAN JONES

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine - Evergreen Community Action Association

Memphis, Tennessee 8 April, 1971 Vol. I, No. 4 Circulation: 5000

ANATOMY OF A MURDER

by John Bruhwiler

Before Time Magazine (March 15, 1971) in an article called "Showdown in the Park" gave national recognition to the effort of Citizens to Preserve Overton Park, the fate of the park, at least to the average person, appeared sealed. The U.S. Supreme Court's directive to the federal district court to determine whether approval to build the expressway through the park was "arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of direction, or otherwise not in accordance with the law" may not stop the promoters of the expressway, but it has given new hope to Memphians who are aware of the implications of an expressway through the park for the city in general and for the Midtown area and the Vollentine/Evergreen Community in particular.

In an interview, Dr. Arlo I. Smith, President of Citizens to Preserve Overton Park, the group of concerned Memphians largely responsible for the park controversy having been brought to the attention of the U.S. Supreme Court, very kindly consented to answer questions any one of us may have wanted to ask but never got around to:

Question: Dr. Smith, who are the "Citizens to Preserve Overton Park"?

Answer: Memphians of all walks of life and from every part of the city who realize the importance of Overton Park. We are supported by the Sierra Club, the National Audubon Society and over fifty civic, service and state organizations.

Q.: What is the importance of Overton Park?
A.: The importance of Overton Park has several aspects: physiological, psychological, sociological, economical and, of course, educational.

Q.: Can you give examples, starting with the physiological aspects?

A.: Take, for instance, emphysema. Today emphysema is five times more prevalent in the city than it is in the country, and it is rapidly becoming the number one cause of death, primarily due to air pollution, of which the automobile is responsible for 50% to 80%. With interstate truck traffic, this percentage would be increased. The city of Memphis is already short 40% of the park area which is considered standard for its size and density of population. We need more parks, not less, to absorb carbon monoxide and oxide pollution. We need them in the city. Fox Meadows is no substitute.

Q.: How is Overton Park important from a psychological aspect?

A.: It is the only park in the central city large enough to make a visitor forget he is in the city. In the summer, the temperature in the park may be as much as ten degrees cooler than outside. The density of the trees combats noise pollution so effectively that all you can hear is a police or ambulance siren and the rumble of an airplane flying overhead. Over two million people a year take refuge in Overton Park. Overton Park is the star attraction of our city.

Q.: What about the sociological aspects?

A.: The expressway would greatly contribute to the polarization of the races. There is ample documentation from other cities that, when an expressway cuts a city in half, it often becomes a racial divide. In our case, the area south of the proposed expressway would remain predominantly white, the area north of it, the Vollentine/Evergreen neighborhood, would quickly become predominantly black.

Q.: Wouldn't it be worse though if the expressway were to go north of the park, right through the Vollentine/Evergreen community?

A.: This can't happen. The Bartholomew Plan never called for alternate routes such as north or south of the park. The Highway Department did that, apparently to make the route through the Park more palatable.

Q.: What then is the alternative?

A.: Stop the expressway where it is now. With a little imagination the area surrounding the park could be developed into the most desirable residential district in the city, similar to the area surrounding Central Park in New York. We could even have swimming pools and bridle paths. The revenue for the city from such a project in construction alone would surpass that of building a highway. Real estate around the park could become so valuable that the tax revenue from it would probably pay for the improvement of the east-west traffic arteries or perhaps even an efficient, quiet, electric monorail mass transit system. As one renowned city planner testified, any other city but Memphis would value a treasure such as Overton Park in the very heart of the city and take advantage of it, not destroy it. There are other alternatives being presented, but none seem to offer any really satisfactory solutions.

Q.: Why did this thing progress so far? Wasn't there any opposition to the expressway through the park when plans for it first became known?



MURDER continued

A.: In 1957, when plans for an expressway through Overton Park first became known, there was vigorous opposition immediately. Over thirty civic, service, and conservation organizations, both state and local, formed the Memphis Council of Civic Clubs which adopted a resolution to oppose the use of park land for an expressway. This resolution, in spirit similar to ours, was submitted to the City Council, along with the signatures of 10,000 Memphians. However, without the cooperation of at least one of the news media it is difficult to reach a wide public. And the news media, without exception, were then, as they are today, backing the promoters of the expressway. There was no measurable progress on our efforts to save the park until March 5, 1968. On this memorable day, the City Council voted unanimously to oppose the construction of the expressway through the park. But then, less than a month later, on April 3, Federal Highway Commissioner Lowell K. Bridwell met with the City Council at the Airport Terminal, and although no record is available of what transpired at that meeting, the next day, April 4, the City Council, by a majority of one, passed a resolution that Overton Park was "the feasible and prudent location for said route". The hearings, maneuvers, and appeals which followed climaxed in the U.S. Supreme Court decision which reversed the verdicts of the lower courts and remanded the case back to Memphis for review.

Q.: Why did the U.S. Supreme Court rule against the promoters of the expressway?

A.: They were apparently not able to furnish any evidence that they had cleared the project with the appropriate government agencies, the Department of Interior, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Congress passed a number of laws regarding the invasion of park land for facilities other than park purposes, especially highways. These laws were simply ignored. The U.S. Supreme Court also states that park lands should be invaded only under exceptionally rare and unusual circumstances. These laws have to be observed, even by government departments.

FOR SALE

Sears Copy King II -- wet copier, \$10. Call 276-6553.

Garage Sale -- Men's and women's clothes and shoes. 1043 N. Idlewild, Sat., April 10, 1971. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Shoulder-length human hair fall. Wheat blonde. Worn only four times. Original price \$150, will sell for \$50. Call 725-0680, Ext. 38, during business hours.

WANTED

Old fashioned hand-lawnmower, or good second-hand electric lawn mower. 274-5690.

JOBS WANTED

Two teenage girls 15 and 16 desire baby sitting jobs. 50¢ an hour, 75¢ after midnight. Teenager 13 will walk dogs, price negotiated. Call 278-6860, or come by 805 N. Evergreen.

FOR VECAA MEMBERSHIP

CONTACT JOHN W. APPLING
2116 UNIVERSITY CIRCLE
\$2.50 -- one-year membership,
including attractive decal.

The regular VECAA meeting will be held at McLean Baptist Church, at 8:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The guest speaker will be: Mrs. Loretta Cato, well-known for her activities in community development. [19 APRIL]

Q.: Who are the promoters of the expressway?

A.: For one, the downtown business establishment which is trying to attract customers from East Memphis. This, of course, is very understandable, but it's a fallacious hope. Studies in other cities have shown that suburbanites do not support downtown business. Even from the Mid-Town area many people would rather shop at suburban centers where there is ample parking. Let's assume, however, that the downtown establishment managed to overhaul the business district and make it an attractive place to shop, the construction of the waterfront freeway would again affect it adversely. Another group lobbying for the expressway through the park are some of the people out East who work downtown. Let me add that many people out East are for the park. Another potent factor pushing the expressway is the gasoline tax. Four cents out of every gallon of gas goes toward the construction of highways. A highway doesn't cost a city much. A city council is, therefore, less likely to care, especially if it identifies the proliferation of expressways with progress.

Q.: Where do you go from here?

A.: Our aim now is to institute a \$50,000 campaign fund, not just to preserve Overton Park but park land threatened in a similar way throughout the country. We are negotiating with one of the best city planners in the country. We believe that Mid-Town Memphis not only deserves saving but developing to its full potential. Mrs. Henry Packer, our treasurer, 295 N. McLean, very sincerely welcomes any contribution toward these ends.

This interview with Dr. Smith presents the viewpoint of only one side. But since it is the side endeavoring to preserve life, it needs our support. The other side takes care of itself. An expressway through the park may, according to the article in Time Magazine, not be a complete loss. It states that the Supreme Court's "tough directive" was a significant victory for conservationists and that from now on highway builders would be more likely to consider environmental consequences. It seems ironic, however, that a 70-year old multi-purpose park located in Memphis might have to be sacrificed in order to give other parks in the country a better chance to survive.

WANTED TO RENT

Single professional woman desires roomy one-bedroom apartment or duplex to occupy May 15. Phone 276-8632 evenings.

Unfurnished two- or three-bedroom home in Snowden School area. Young architect and family want in-town location available for July occupancy. Price range \$125-\$150. Call Gerald Dunn evenings at 684-4948.

House or duplex to rent near Southwestern. Three well-educated girls in professional positions seek mid-town location. Will consider rent in the \$100-140 range. Call Virginia Anne Jones evenings at 275-7779.

HEARING CONTINUED

The hearing on the application by William Loeb to rezone the northwest corner of Jackson and North Auburn-dale from R-3 (duplex) to C-2 (commercial) has been deferred. Another meeting of the Planning Commission will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 15, in the Council Auditorium of City Hall.

Printing courtesy
Southwestern at Memphis

STAFF: editorial: john bruhwiler, george bradfute, rick thomas/copy: nancy lowe/art: warren lowry/advertising: golden shoemaker/typists: judy johnson, emma palmer, sallee bruhwiler/cover picture: lawrence anthony.

**DO BUSINESS
WITH OUR PATRONS**

SNOWDEN SCHOOL: IMAGINATION PAYS OFF

by George Bradfute

on Jackson at Evergreen

COUPON	<p>WITH THIS COUPON</p> <p>ONE HAIRCUT \$1.00</p> <p>EXCEPT SATURDAYS EXPIRES APRIL 30 FRED'S BARBER SHOP 1697 JACKSON</p>	COUPON
	<p>CASA DEL RICO</p> <p>HAIR FASHIONS</p> <p>MR. RICHARD DAVENPORT MON.-SAT. 9:00 to 5:00 EVE. BY APPOINTMENT LATEST SALON SERVICES 1695 JACKSON 274-4884</p>	
COUPON	<p>BUY A BAKED HAM FROM</p> <p>BOSI & SONS</p> <p>CHOICE MEATS AND GROCERIES FOR 20 YEARS ON JACKSON AT EVERGREEN</p>	COUPON
	<p>50¢ OFF!!</p> <p>YOUR NEXT NEW PRESCRIPTION WITH THIS COUPON BORG PHARMACY 1703 JACKSON AT EVERGREEN</p>	
COUPON	<p>HAVE YOU TRIED A DATE-NUT CAKE FROM</p> <p>JOHNS BAKERY</p> <p>1688 JACKSON 276-8431</p>	COUPON
	<p>BILL & JIM'S</p> <p>GULF SERVICE</p> <p>275-7568 MECHANIC ON DUTY U-HAUL</p>	
COUPON	<p>WES MYERS</p> <p>ESSO SERVICENTER</p> <p>272-7616 MECHANIC ON DUTY AT ALL TIMES</p>	COUPON
	<p>FIRESTONE STORES 1694 JACKSON AVE.</p> <p>FREE TIRE ROTATION</p> <p>BY APPOINTMENT ONLY</p> <p>274-5833 ASK FOR DAN OR RON</p>	

If faculty pride is an indicator of a good school, then Snowden ought to be just about the best. That's the impression I came away with after interviewing several teachers there recently. Statements of this pride range from "best in the city" from Frank Farino, Sr., principal, to a somewhat more guarded "junior high as good as the best out East" from a teacher. For the teachers' part it seems that much of this pride comes from the opportunity they have to use new teaching methods.

Take for example my visit to the Elementary School. The first grade classes of Mrs. Margaret Pitt and Mrs. Shirley Romine are arranged in learning centers, including one where small groups of students use their reading workbooks while receiving through headphones instruction pre-recorded by their own teacher. In a fourth grade class the teacher, Mrs. Peggy Reynolds, is working with the concept of allowing students to learn at their own pace. The visitor sees the chairs and desks arranged in groups. While the children in the different groups are obviously involved in different types of activities, they aren't rigidly confined (the headphones to the record player are wireless so the child can move to any part of the room). A variety of special activity centers are at the side of the room. After several years of teaching conventionally, Mrs. Reynolds finds this year that the students are all showing improved learning speeds.

A look at the sixth grade reveals another kind of innovation. There, three teachers, Mrs. Jeanine Cudd, Mrs. Earline Duncan, and Mrs. Nancy Hunt, share the responsibility in a team effort for the preparation of 96 students for junior high work. The students are grouped in three ability level, with each teacher teaching her subject (history-geography, mathematics, and reading) to students in each level. The goal is to permit each student to progress at his own level and to feel successful. A criticism often directed at this form of grouping is that the slower learners are deprived of the pacing provided by the swifter ones, but these teachers unanimously agree that this possible disadvantage is offset by the freedom of expression and opportunities for self-help which slower learners find when grouped with their peers. A key factor in the success of this kind of team teaching, they say, is that the teachers be willing and able to work together.

Miss Teresa Coleman teaches in a new facility called the resource room. Here about 20 students from the Elementary School (Junior High has a similar room) spend 30 minutes to two hours per day in special teaching and testing. These are students with average and above average intelligence who as a result of school board testing have been recommended for this special help to remediate learning weaknesses.

In the Junior High I was privileged to talk with four teachers whose responsibilities include guidance counseling, Mrs. Mary Chenoweth, Mrs. Phyllis Haire, Mrs. Aretha Shaffer, and Mr. Harry Blackford, and with the advisor to the Student Activities Council, Mrs. Dorothy Archer. Mr. Blackford put the Junior High enrollment at 618, with about 15 or 20 percent black students. About half the students come from Snowden Elementary, with the rest coming from Vollandine, Springdale, Hyde Park, and Klondike. Graduates go to Central, Northside, Tech, and Douglass High Schools.

Current budget restrictions, in addition to cutting down on the money available for instructional materials, have caused the school to lose one teacher, making the student-teacher ratio go up in the seventh grade. (An average of 30 students per teacher is maintained, though 25 to 35 is a permissible variation.) As a result, the seventh grade is now closed to transfers from outside the district.

When the counselors were asked about the problems they had with students, they said that most junior high problems are the result of the onset of adolescence in that age group and that the teacher's hope for the student to motivate himself toward school work as preparation for an occupation or career. As for inter-student friction, Mrs. Haire and Mrs. Shaffer agreed, practically all is within racial groups, that is, white with white and black with black.

As evidence of a good academic program, the counselors pointed with pride to the exploratory subjects offered the seventh and eighth grades. Here the student, in addition to the usual curriculum, spends one hour a day in one of the following subjects: conversational French, band, stringed instrument, science, mathematics, chorus, home economics, crafts and reading, shop and reading, and algebra (eighth grade). In the ninth grade special subject offerings are biology and, beginning next fall, geometry. As for scholastic achievement, in the recent National Educational Development Tests 30 Snowden students, an unusually large number, scored in the top ten per cent nationwide. Membership in the Honor Society stands at 59 this year, a record high.

Snowden's record in student activities is impressive, too. It is one of the few junior high schools to publish an annual, and one of the few to

SNOWDEN continued

hold a career day. The Honor Society sponsors a tutoring program--junior highs helping junior highs. Other projects are fund raising for charitable causes, a citizenship program, a Recognition Day for outstanding students, and participation in the Memphis patriotism contest.

BULLETIN The Board of Education announces an exciting new program for adults at Snowden School. Subjects include sewing, government, chess, mechanics, bridge, family relationships, and home decorating, all taught by experienced, professional personnel, at times convenient for adults. Only ten people are needed to form a class. Tuition is FREE. Registration: Tuesday evening, April 13, 7-9, ground floor lobby, Snowden School.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

-----The Snowden School P.T.A. will meet April 13 in the school auditorium. This month's program will be devoted to the installation of new officers and will start at 2 P.M.

-----Various recruiters are visiting Northside High again in April. The students will have the opportunity of talking with a representative from the Area Vocational School on April 13 and one from LeMoyne-Owen College on April 14.

-----Cypress Junior High will hold Honor Society induction on Friday, April 30. The program begins at 9:45 A.M. and is open to the public.

-----The Snowden Junior High Band will travel to Atlanta, Georgia in May for the Six Flags Over Georgia Band Festival. The 65 students who are members of the band were chosen from the nearly 200 Snowden students who study music under the direction of Mr. Jackie Thomas. They will play on May 6, the first day of the three-day contest, and face competition from 70 other bands in the junior high division.

-----Young Adult Fellowship Party at Evergreen Presbyterian Church, Sat., April 17 at 7 P.M. This will be for the 20-30 year age group and their children. It's open to the public and will feature skating, bridge, pool and other games. Refreshments will be served.

-----Elementary school students from Vollentine and Snowden will be competing in a city-wide Spelling Bee on April 17 at Memphis State.

-----The Southwestern Singers will put on a musical program at Evergreen Presbyterian Church, Sunday night, April 18 at 8 P.M.

-----Exhibition of drawings and paintings by Veda Reed in the Clough-Hanson Gallery at Southwestern from 2-5 P.M., April 18. The artist is an instructor at the Memphis Academy of Art.

-----Achievement tests for Snowden School students, grades 1 through 9, will be held during the week of April 19.

-----Women of the Church will meet at Evergreen Presbyterian on Tuesday, April 20. The group will be addressed by Dr. Frances H. Redmond, Assistant Director of Counseling at Southwestern. The theme of the meeting will be "Christian Higher Education".

-----Music program at Open Door Bible Church, Wednesday, April 21. The Grand Rapids School of Bible and Music will present a concert of religious songs.

-----Northside will induct new members into the Honor Society on Thursday, April 22 at the school.

-----XYZ Group (Senior Citizens) will meet at Springdale Methodist, April 22, at 11 A.M. There will be a guest speaker and covered dish lunch. The public is invited.

-----The Northside P.T.A. will meet on Thursday, April 22. The meeting will be in the library at 7:30 P.M. Students from the Speech Department will enact a segment from "Up the Down Staircase".

MEET THE NEIGHBORS

MISS BLACK MEMPHIS
by Rick Thomas



Among the notable residents of the Vollentine/Evergreen Community is Susan Currie of 1917 Edward Cove. Miss Currie, a senior at Catholic High School, was recently chosen "Miss Black Memphis." The contest, sponsored by the Collegiate Associates, was held at Hamilton High School on January 30. Judges based their decisions on the appearance, personality and talent of the entrants. For the talent division Miss Currie created and performed an interpretive dance entitled "The Evolution of a Black Woman." She will now travel to Chattanooga in August to compete in the "Miss Black Tennessee" contest. The winner there will vie for the title of "Miss Black America" later this year.

At Catholic High Miss Currie was chosen the school's Junior Miss. She belongs to the Drama Club and was a semi-finalist in the National Merit Scholarship Awards.

Miss Currie's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Robert Porter. Mr. Porter is employed as a beauty supply salesman and Mrs. Porter teaches at Cypress Junior High.

VECAA NEWS



REPORT FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

On March 22, the Education Committee met with Dr. Joe Westbrook, Area Supervisor for the Board of Education. Although many general issues were discussed to lay a foundation for future dialogue, such important questions as reinstating the previous racial balance at Vollentine, upgrading the curriculum at Northside and the "pairing" of schools (e.g., Northside and Frayser) were considered. It was discovered that a Negro assistant principal has been assigned to Vollentine and a white assistant principal to Snowden. This is another issue to be faced by the Education Committee. Dr. Westbrook is interested in working with VECAA to improve the school situation and will meet with this committee again on April 13.

REPORT FROM THE REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE

In recent days many neighborhood residents have been approached by real estate salesmen claiming they have a client willing to buy the resident's house. This comes at a time when many comparable houses are already for sale in the area. Such action, although by no means illegal, indicates that certain agents feel they can profit from the placing of additional "For Sale" signs. VECAA urges that any deals involving quick sales be thoroughly investigated.

VECAA MEMBERS TO LEAD DISCUSSION

A group from VECAA will put on a panel discussion at the April meeting of the Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association in order to present its approach to current urban problems.

-----Career Day at Snowden will be held April 23 for grades 7-9. The theme will be "Careers for the 1970's" and representatives from twenty different fields will speak to the students.

-----Northside students will be given the tuberculosis test by the Health Dept. at the school on April 23.

-----A Peruvian Indian will speak at the Open Door Bible Church on Sunday, April 25 at 7 P.M. Ester Morales, whose village was destroyed in the recent earthquakes, will give an account of the catastrophe.

-----Northside will hold Senior Week activities, April 26-30. Senior students will be presented awards for service and academic achievement and treated to a reception by the faculty.