

The EVERGREEN NEWS

A Neighborhood Newspaper Sponsored by Vollintine-Evergreen Community Action Association

No Fuss for Fuzz

by Rick Thomas

There's a lot of talk these days about "crime in the cities." Older people allude to the "good old days" when you could walk the streets in safety and leave your doors unlocked. An increase--whether documented or imagined--in the number of burglaries, robberies, murders, and rapes are pointed to as evidence of our violent and, to some, disintegrating society. This is not to mention such quasi-criminal actions as divorce and illegitimate child birth. In a day gone by, people could choose to ignore the problem of crime and disorder but, today, the TV, the radio and the newspaper never let you forget what dangerous times we live in.

Memphis, of course, has not escaped the crimes and criminals that come with big city living. Although not known as the "murder capital" of the nation as it once was, our city still has its share of lawbreakers. On our streets, a crime against property or person takes place every 19 minutes, a burglary or robbery takes place every 53 minutes, and some parts of town are notorious for high assault and homicide rates. Memphis is well-known for other measures of social disorganization such as infant mortality and desertion, and its illegitimacy rate is one of the highest in the nation.

A Clean Record

As interesting as such facts are, crime and violence are usually not considered that important until they hit close to home. What, then, is the state of social disorganization in our neighborhood, the Vollintine/Evergreen community? Do we live in the quiet, peaceful neighborhood we like to think, or is the area taking on some of the qualities of other "inner city" neighborhoods?

If criminal statistics prove anything and if other indices of social disorganization are valid, we reside in one of the safest and most cohesive communities in the city. According to recent police department figures, our neighborhood is third of the city in number of arrests for law violations. This means our neighborhood has about one-half the crime rate of the city as a whole. The figures also indicate that the Vollintine and Chelsea

area is just as free of crime as the Southwestern and Sears area.

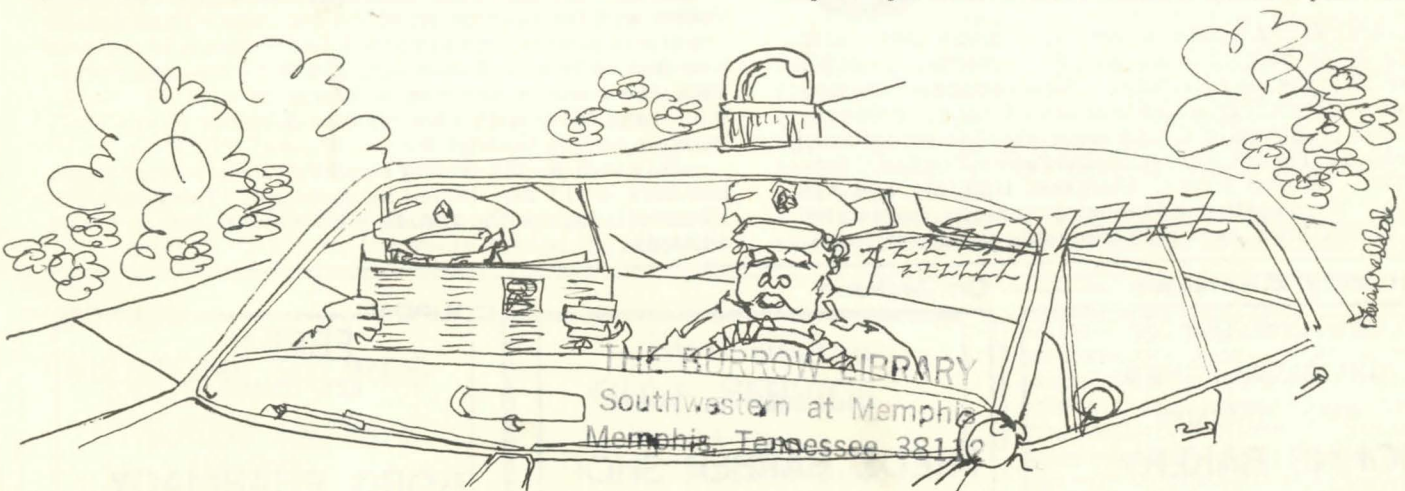
Examining specific crimes we find that homicides are nearly unheard of in the Vollintine/Evergreen Community, and at a time when juvenile delinquency is a national problem we are recording juvenile problems only half as great as the rest of the city, according to Juvenile Court records. Further, the part of the VECAA community east of McLean had a level of juvenile court cases one-fourth the city average.

Unbroken Homes

Not only does our neighborhood make a good showing when it comes to observing the laws, it also ranks low on other indices of social disintegration. Take marital separation, for example. In a city where 54 out of 1,000 marriages end in separation, this only happens in 11 or 12 marriages per 1,000 in the Vollintine/Evergreen community. The area north of our neighborhood also had a lower than average separation rate of 44/1000. More impressive than this, however, is the fact that the separation rate for a large segment of the community declined by half between 1960 and 1970.

Similarly, only one in ten children born in our community, according to the Health Department, is born outside of marriage. This rate is even more impressive for a city where a quarter of the births are illegitimate. Infant deaths, also according to the Health Department, are virtually unknown in the VECAA community. (The area between Vollintine and Chelsea, however, was slightly higher than the city average on this count.) This is another problem prevalent in Memphis not faced by our residents.

The only index of social disorganization that the Vollintine/Evergreen community ranked high on was divorce. This is not surprising in view of the high median age of the neighborhood residents. It is interesting to note that, while the city's divorce rate rose 50% between 1960 and 1970, the VECAA area's divorce level showed only a slight rise. It even declined in some parts of the



FUZZ continued
community.

A Place To Walk

Although the above figures indicate that the neighborhood is one of the safest, most peaceful in the city, they are possibly less important than the condition of the neighborhood as perceived by its residents. Do community members feel it is safe to walk the streets? Is the area getting more dangerous?

Vollentine/Evergreen residents questioned about this displayed a positive attitude. One woman in the 800 block of Evergreen who has lived in the neighborhood for 45 years says she can't remember a house robbery to amount to anything since 1932. Another woman, who has only lived here a year, felt safer in the 600 block of University than she would in any other part of town. In addition, more than one resident claimed that nowhere else in Memphis would they feel safe leaving their houses unlocked. Although some of the older residents express apprehension about their safety in the neighborhood, most of these fears are based on reports of crime in other parts of town, seldom on personal experience.

Police Bored

Another subjective opinion can be obtained from the people who deal most directly with lawbreakers, the city police. To them the Vollentine/Evergreen community represents the ideal neighborhood. Inspector R.J. Barger considers it one of the quietest sections of town and states that except for an occasional disturbance in Overton Park, law enforcement officers receive few calls. Even the area characterized by racial turnover was cited as an example of a law-abiding community. Lt. Sharp, the area supervisor, went so far as to say that patrolmen prefer to be stationed in other parts of town because of the lack of action.

It is hard to ascertain why the Vollentine/Evergreen community is practically free of crime and disorder. Perhaps the old relationship between crime and poverty is valid: the VECAA community is the only non-suburban neighborhood ranking in the top socio-economic third in the city — an unusual attribute for an inner city community. Or perhaps the high educational level of the community's residents makes them less prone to deviant behavior. Maybe it's because the neighborhood churches are so active in the community. Or maybe there just is something about living in a quiet, established, tree-shaded neighborhood that instills tolerance toward divergent viewpoints and respect for one's fellow man, both prerequisites for a peaceful environment.

NEWS continued

The Real Estate Committee is continuing its efforts at setting up block meetings. Last week their failure at this turned out to be to the neighborhood's credit when residents of the 700 to 900 blocks of McNeil decided such a meeting was unnecessary. All were determined to stay and, consequently, a block meeting was not needed.

Happenings

-----The Evergreen Open Golf Tournament will be held Saturday, August 7, for Evergreen Presbyterian Church members. This year's winner will be awarded a rotating trophy.

-----Guest speaker at Lindsay Memorial Presbyterian on August 15: The Reverend Dr. Carl Ramsay, Executive Secretary of the Cumberland Presbyterian Board of Missions, will address the Sunday morning service.

-----Evergreen Presbyterian Parents Day Program on Saturday, August 28. Every parent with a child holding an Evergreen activity card is invited to come and discuss this season's activities and view some of the results. Next year's recreational programs will be announced at this time. The Evergreen gym will be closed for the month of August. New activity cards can be purchased on August 30 and 31 from 3-5 p.m. Cards cost \$10 per year for non-church members while Evergreen members are charged \$1.

-----Little Flower begins new educational series. Every Thursday night sessions will be held in the rectory to hear taped talks by leading theologians. The 7:30 p.m. meetings will include discussion of the topics spoken on. One of the featured speakers will be sociologist Father Andrew Greeley of the University of Chicago.

-----Bingo games continued at Little Flower and Baron Hirsch. Contests are being held on Sundays at Little Flower and Mondays at Baron Hirsch. Games begin at 8 p.m. Refreshments are available and cash prizes are awarded.

Roofers' Delight

A quick look at neighborhood roofs shows that much damage still remains from April's hailstorm. Property owners are advised to consult their insurance adjusters before assuming no damage occurred. Roofers are bidding about \$21 per square for new 235 pound roofing with an added cost of \$5 per square if it is necessary to take off a layer of old roof. A square is 100 square feet, and it takes three bundles to cover a square.

VECAA News



Several VECAA members participated in a discussion on July 21 as part of Evergreen Presbyterian Church's program "Wednesdays in July." This particular session featured community organizations and the aims, achievements and problems of VECAA were aired in an informal discussion. Participants included Father Tom Kirk, John Bruhwiler, George Brown, Margaret Dichtel, and Kim Johnson. The question-and-answer session, moderated by M. J. Williams, was both enjoyable and educational.

Watch 5 And 7

In the city elections this fall, Vollentine/Evergreen voters will focus their attention on council and school board candidates for Districts 5 and 7. Most of the area bounded by Brown, Trezevant, North Parkway and Watkins lies within District 5 (Wards 36-1, 36-2, 36-3, 40-2, and 52-1) with the northeast corner (Ward 41-2) being a part of District 7.

This will be the first year that some school board members will be elected by districts. The Evergreen News will review the issues and candidates in future editions.

Community Businesses

On Jackson

COMPLETE LINE OF FINE BAKERY GOODS AND PASTRIES JOHNS BAKERY 1688 JACKSON AVE. 276-8431
--

HAIRCUTS \$1.75 CHILDREN \$1.25 FREDS BARBER SHOP 1697 JACKSON
--

COUPON FREE !! COUPON KEY CHAIN WITH THIS COUPON BORG PHARMACY 1703 JACKSON AT EVERGREEN

Ghetto Of The Mind

by John Bruhwiler

Cypress Junior High is a modern, air-conditioned plant across the drainage ditch just north of the Cabana Apartments. Although the school is in the neighborhood, few of our children attend it. Most of the students at Cypress live north of the Vollintine/Evergreen community, where the homes are somewhat smaller, a bit more crowded together, trees are fewer and brick gives way to clapboard. It is not really a dilapidated neighborhood, certainly not a slum in the cliché sense, and yet, Mr. James A. Barber, Principal, calls Cypress Junior High a "ghetto school".

Mr. Barber, a man of heroic physical dimensions, has a B.A. from LeMoyne-Owen, an M.A. from Tennessee State, an A.B.D. from the University of Tennessee, and years of experience as an educator. He concedes that his 1600 students (1599 black, 1 white) don't look like ghetto kids. They are generally smartly dressed and well behaved, including the 1100 children who are on free or subsidized lunches.

"Black" Attitude

What then maketh a ghetto school? Mr. Barber says "attitude". He says to the majority of his students "the school means everything -- or nothing". He believes a child's attitude toward school, society, life is greatly influenced by the environment in which he is brought up. The upbringing of these children, he says, has been completely black; black parents who are generally unaware of social change, black neighborhoods and black schools (Hyde Park, Shannon, Hollywood, Springdale). This means middle class life -- the values our society holds dear -- means little to them. Therefore, Mr. Barber says, he and his staff endeavor to make school a meaningful experience for the children. They try to treat the children as individuals, recognizing "the worth and dignity of each" as a human being, and using innovative techniques to help them realize their potential.

Team-Teaching

One of these innovative techniques is called "team-teaching". It is an adaptation of the ancient one-room school concept to a large plant. In theory, two teachers take charge of a single class for a specific time period, teaching subjects that can be related, such as language arts and social studies for instance. With removable partitions in the classrooms to create teaching modules, a class can be addressed in its entirety, in halves, work in small groups, even get individual attention.

Understaffed Classrooms

According to the teachers interviewed, however, classes are too large at present to allow for such a flexible teaching approach. Mrs. Holloway (white) who team-teaches with Mrs. Scott (black) says it took her a while just to develop vocal cords powerful enough to reach to the back rows of their class of nearly eighty students. Mrs. Scott said it simply wasn't feasible to conduct effective group studies with such a large class, and individual attention could be given to the very slow or the very quick only.

Mrs. Crawford (black) and Mrs. Culpepper (white) who have taught as a team five years agreed that eighty

GHETTO continued

students in a class could be trying and that sometimes they longed for a "traditional" classroom with "just" forty students. They admitted, though, that "modular flexible scheduling", even under poor conditions, allowed for the accommodation of slow or difficult children, caused fewer disciplinary problems, and got better academic results.

Indifferent Parents

Mr. Barber's contention that Cypress High was a ghetto school was confirmed by Mrs. Ezelle, one of the three school counselors. Mrs. Ezelle who has an M.A. from Columbia says that "attitude" is indeed a problem. "All the counseling," she says, "academic, social, emotional and vocational in order to meet the individual need of a student may not suffice if there is a lack of parental cooperation, which there usually is." She says the majority of the students' parents are indeed not aware of the potential today's schools hold for their children.

Dedicated Teachers

In summary, classrooms at Cypress may be overcrowded, but the students seem to be learning and enjoying the experience. With the present surplus of teachers, the student-teacher ratio may be reduced before long, and with the new directives from the courts, the school may also be desegregated sometime in the future. In any case, you get the impression Mr. Barber and his dedicated staff are making an effort to create in their students a realistic attitude toward the non-ghetto world.

For A City Beautiful

The Mid-Memphis Improvement Association, of the neighborhood just south of N. Parkway, has appointed Mr. Guy Ramsey, vice-president, to convene representatives of neighborhood associations, including VECAA, and environmental associations to explore a coalition to protect the residential neighborhoods of the city.

Viser Appointed

JOHN H. VISER, Jr., of 651 East Drive has been appointed by Mayor Henry Loeb to the Memphis Transit Authority. This three-member authority oversees the operation of the city-owned bus system. Mr. Viser is associated with Bluff City Distributing Company, an electronic supply firm.

Board Stirs

This summer the Memphis Board of Education has been using federal funds to ease problems related to school desegregation in the Vollentine/Evergreen community. The funds were awarded the school board under the Emergency School Assistance Program to be used for Community Communication Stabilization Projects. The grant, originating from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, is administered in Memphis by Mr. James Catchings. The headquarters of the program is Alcy Road School.

The ESAP program is composed of various projects, ranging from the training of teacher aides to the utiliza-

FIRESTONE STORES

FOR BETTER VALUE

274-5833

1694 JACKSON AT EVERGREEN

BILL & JIM'S

GULF SERVICE

275-7568

MECHANIC ON DUTY

U-HAUL TRUCKS AND TRAILERS

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BOARD continued

tion of computers for instruction poverty-area students. The problem being concentrated upon by VECAA area workers is the "exodus of whites from desegregated school districts."

The program is channeled through schools in various parts of the city and local ESAP workers are stationed at Vollentine and Northside. Conferences were held with principals to discuss the basic problems and needs of their respective neighborhoods, after which bi-racial groups were sent into the community to promote dialogue between area residents. David Field and Ora Rita Jackson, both teachers, were assigned to the VECAA area and have been working in cooperation with our community organization.

It is felt that communication between all sectors of the community will result in a better understanding of common problems and, hence, to a solution acceptable to all. Since education is considered an important issue in the Vollentine/Evergreen community, such a program should be of benefit to all of our neighborhood residents.

Welcome

While stationed in Memphis as an aviation machinist mate third class, MR. BRYAN BOSTON became a member of McLean Baptist Church and became so fond of it he decided to leave Levittown, Pennsylvania, and make our community his permanent home. He now works for Holiday Inn and lives at 1981 Crump.

MR. and MRS. JOHN DUGAY moved to 759 McNeil from the state of Florida. Mr. Dugay works for Owens Illinois Co. and his wife Margaret is a piano teacher who expects to take pupils in the fall. The Dugays have a son, John Ralph II, aged four, and are members of the Church of the Good Shepherd.

MR. and MRS. CHARLES COVINGTON are new residents at 1050 Oakmont, Number 4. Mr. Covington is associate pastor for youth at McLean Baptist Church and his wife BETTY is director of education there. The Covingtons are natives of Little Rock, were married in June, and are recent graduates of Baptist seminaries, he from Louisville and she from Fort Worth.

The guest house at 1876 Snowden has recently been occupied by MR. GILBERT J. HAMM. The 37-year-old Mr. Hamm returned to his home town to complete his education at Southwestern. He has spent five years in Sacramento, California where he was employed as the transportation director for a trucking firm. Mr. Hamm will be a junior at Southwestern, majoring in psychology. For a hobby Mr. Hamm collects traditional and contemporary Mexican art, making frequent trips South-of-the-Border.

MR. JOHN FRANK MILLER and his wife, CAROL, moved from the Binghampton area into the University Cabanas last month. Mr. Miller was recently discharged from the service with a Purple Heart for wounds received in Viet Nam. He is presently employed as a mail carrier, while his wife teaches home economics at Woodale High School. Mr. Miller's hobby is sports, especially basketball; although only 5' 8" tall, he was selected to the All-Memphis Basketball Team all three years in high school.

Wanted

Part-time female operator with following for McLean Beauty Salon. 60% commission, supplies furnished. 275-8752.

For Sale

1 oak twin bed with mattress and box springs. Matching dresser. \$75. 276-6553.

Attention

Vollentine Kindergarten Registration Day is Wednesday, 25 August. For information call Mrs. John Faber, 324-8458.

Meet The Neighbors



Eight Days A Week

by John Bruhwiler

Miss Margaret Dichtel calls herself "the neighborhood busybody", probably because she sometimes can't figure out how she keeps getting involved in everything that's going on both in our community and in the city at large.

Miss Dichtel, the second of six children, was born and raised in North Memphis. She is a graduate of Sacred Heart High School and Siena College, and she earned her Master of Science degree from the University of Tennessee School of Social Work.

Miss Dichtel's first job as a social worker was in Alabama, directing Girl Scout camps and training leaders. On her return to Memphis, she was hired by St. Peter's Orphanage where she was the first social worker employed by a Catholic agency in the State of Tennessee. In 1957 Miss Dichtel joined Family Service, an agency of Shelby United Neighbors, and moved from more specialized work to general counseling. Contrary to public opinion, family counseling is not restricted to the black and the poor; it comprises both races, and all ages and social strata. As part of her work, Miss Dichtel also supervises the progress of graduate students in social work. As for the success in her work, she says there is usually "success at some level".

Miss Dichtel spends a great deal of energy in work after 5 p.m. She is one of the founders of the Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association (MIFA) and a member of its Board of Directors. She was appointed by the City Council to the Memphis and Shelby County Human Relations Commission. She is very active in the National Association of Social Workers, past President of its West Tennessee Chapter, and currently President of the Tennessee Council of Social Workers. Miss Dichtel was also the first president of the Catholic Human Relations Council and the first chairman of the Vollentine/Evergreen Community Action Association. Of all her involvements in community efforts, Miss Dichtel considers her work with VECAA most enjoyable.

Everything Miss Dichtel does, she enjoys doing: cooking, gardening, sewing her own clothes, and working for the church. She is especially proud of the vestments she made for Little Flower where she also serves on the Board.

The church is dear to Miss Dichtel. Her work and involvement are motivated by a deep religious commitment, and the only people who might get away with calling her a "busybody" are her eighteen nieces and nephews, the two great nephews and her one little great niece.

Accommodations Needed

This September, Southwestern at Memphis may be in need of additional housing facilities for new out-of-town students, especially young ladies. Anyone interested in letting a room or an apartment within walking distance of the college is invited to send a description of the available accommodation (including name, address, telephone number, and rent) to the Office of Student Affairs, Southwestern at Memphis, Memphis, Tennessee, 38112.

Address correspondence to: John Bruhwiler, 883 University Street, Memphis, Tenn., 38107.

Send ads prepaid to Golden Shumaker, 1695 Autumn Ave., Memphis, Tenn., 38112. Tel. 276-6553. (Classifieds \$1.00, Business \$4.00)