

# Friend in need indeed,

By GAYLE CUTLER  
Staff Writer

A man for all reasons.

That's the Rev. Jack Oliver's role in his Germantown neighborhood, where he has been named "Neighborhood Citizen of the Year."

"Whatever the reason, whenever he's needed, Jack's always there," said Cathy Foster, a member of Vine Street Baptist Church, where Oliver has been pastor for 14 years.

The German-Paristown Neighborhood Association honored Oliver March 1 at its annual potluck supper.

"I was very pleased," said Oliver, 46. "The recognition was quite an honor and quite a surprise."

But it was no surprise to members of the community, who said Oliver's dedication is inspiring.

"He's made a real difference in my life. His example of doing the Lord's will [in the

community] has made me a stronger Christian," said Wally Jeffries, of Goldsmith Lane, who is a member of Oliver's church.

"Jack is an absolute tremendously dedicated member of our association and our community," said Charles Devaney, of Schiller Avenue.

Oliver was selected in part because of his history of service to his neighborhood, said Devaney, who is president of the neighborhood association. According to Devaney, Oliver:

- Was the German-Paristown Neighborhood Association's president from 1980 through 1985 and is editor, publisher and circulation director of its bimonthly newsletter.

- Is president of the board of Covenant Housing Corp., a non-profit community group, which is renovating a house to sell to a low-income Germantown family.

- Operates a community clothes closet at his church and was instrumental in starting the Highland Avenue Kindergarten in 1985.

## Germantown pastor is citizen of year

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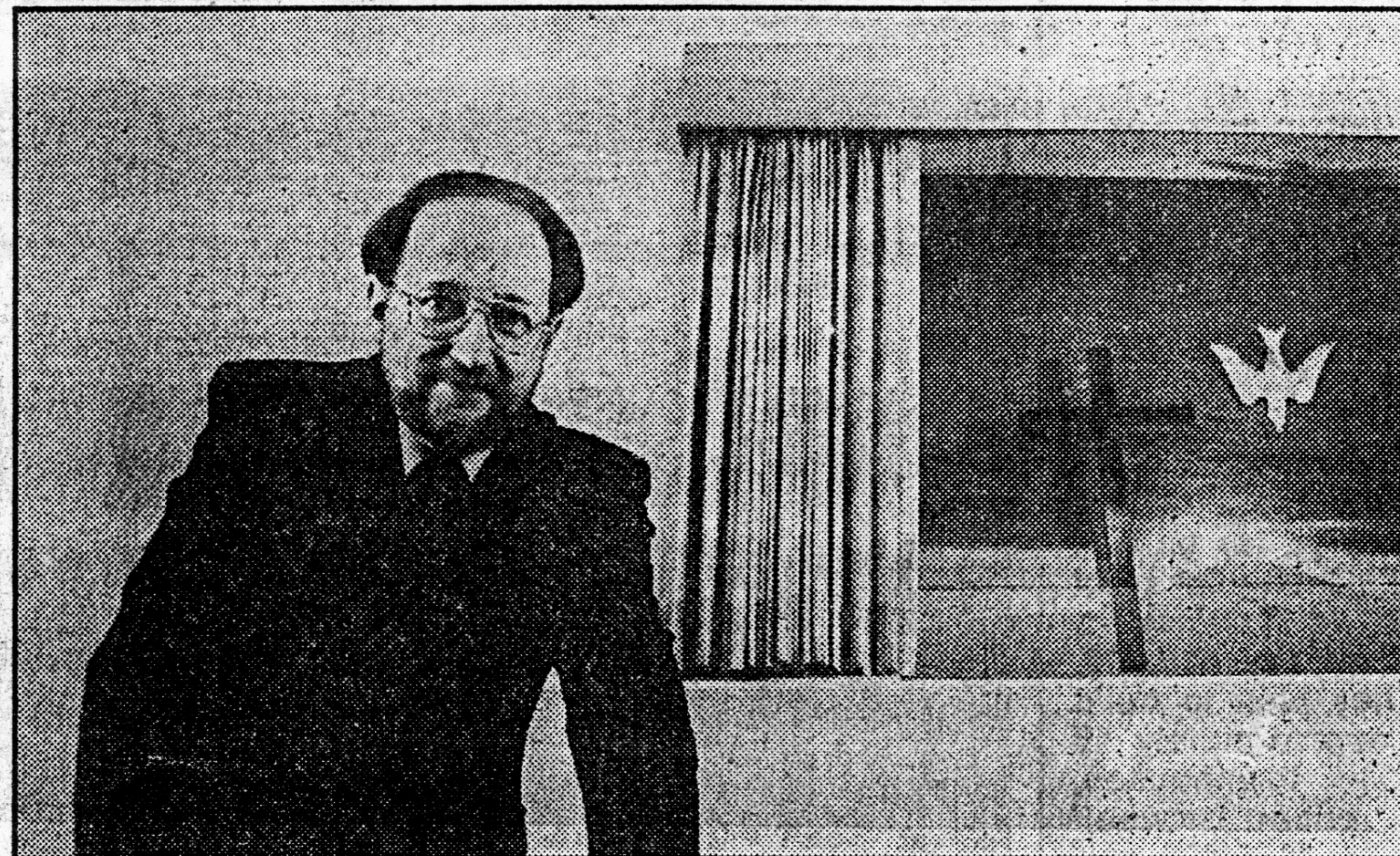
- Is in charge of renovating the neighborhood community center, at 1094 E. Kentucky St., which will be the new commodities distribution site as well as the site of a senior citizens' nutrition program. That pro-

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The Rev. Jack Oliver recently was honored by the German-Paristown Neighborhood Association as Germantown's "Neighborhood Citizen of the Year."

Staff photo by Tammy Lechner



# Germantown pastor is citizen of the year

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gram, which is scheduled to begin April 1 under Oliver's direction, will offer lunches and activities Tuesdays through Fridays.

"We're real excited about that," Oliver said.

John Davis, a member of Vine Street Baptist, said Oliver's concern for the elderly is one of the things that has endeared him to the community.

"There have been times when just him and another guy loaded, unloaded and sorted about 4,000 pounds of cheese for commodity distribution," Davis said of Oliver, who is 5-foot-4 and weighs 140 pounds. "If he didn't do it, it

wouldn't get done."

Davis, of Sils Avenue, who was a director of the day-care center operated at Vine Street Baptist, said Oliver is "extraordinary" with children as well.

"Jack went out of his way to know the kids and spend time with each of them, especially those from troubled families," Davis said. "Nobody asked him. He just did it."

Foster, a single parent who works part time and is a student at Jefferson Community College, has two children in the church's day-care center.

She often seeks counsel from the soft-spoken, easy-going pastor, she said.

"He always helps," Foster said. "I don't always have the money for the kids' tuition when it's due. But Jack understands. He tells me not to worry. That we'll work it out."

Oliver said he doesn't understand what all the hoopla is all about.

"I do what I do because I enjoy it. That's all," Oliver said.

Oliver lives off of Ellison Avenue with his wife, Marge, who is a secretary at Kentucky Baptist Convention. The couple will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary May 25.

For fun, Oliver works with computers and studies Civil War history.

"Whatever he does, he does with love," Devaney said. "We're awfully lucky to have him."