



Gifford Park's Pride

Gifford Park Neighborhood: A Great Place to Live, Work, Learn and Play

February 1995

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Community Policing Effective In Gifford Park Neighborhood

Community Policing is a *concept* that the GPNA embraces as a way to solve problems that lead to crime in our neighborhood. At our last GPNA meeting in January five members of the Omaha Police Department attended and very positive communication took place between police and neighborhood citizens. The statements below reflect the view of the GPNA regarding Community Policing:

Mayor Daub has indicated his belief that Community Policing is social work. Community Policing is not social work. The Omaha community would not expect police officers to become involved in such things as food stamps, welfare, entitlements, etc. The Police Department has worked on developing plans and has expended funds to learn more about this concept. It is feared that Mayor Daub has not thoroughly examined the information obtained and Community Policing as it is practiced in Portland and other communities.

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Two Guest Speakers At Next Meeting

Jerry Flood, Superintendent of City Maintenance for Omaha, will be a guest speaker at the next GPNA meeting Thursday, February 2nd, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph's Hospital, dining rooms A, B, C. Jerry and his department have been a major reason for the continued success of the Citywide Spring Cleanup program held in April for each of the last several years. Jerry will talk about functions and programs of his department and will be happy to answer any questions and concerns.

Also, Mark Leflore, Umoja District Executive, is scheduled to talk about Boy Scouting coming to our neighborhood this year. An article in last month's newsletter described the upcoming scouting program in more detail. For more information, contact Mark Leflore at 431-9272 ... or, better yet, attend the next meeting.

Next Meeting

Thursday, February 2nd
7:00 P.M.

Guest Speakers:

Jerry Flood, City Maintenance Supt.
Mark Leflore, Umoja Boy Scouting

St. Joseph's Hospital
Dining Rooms A, B, & C

FREE PARKING

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Ron Yates 558-6027

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Leo Wilwerding 345-1433



Neighborhood Master Plan Update

Those attending the most recent general meeting of the GPNA approved a plan to hire Martin Shukert to develop a master plan for the Gifford Park Neighborhood. Mr. Shukert is former head of the Omaha Planning Department and now president of Martin Shukert Associates. His fee for developing the master plan is \$7,500 of which GPNA member, Vic Gutman, has agreed to lead the effort in fund-raising.

Once the money is raised, Mr. Shukert will conduct neighborhood workshops, giving us an opportunity to voice our ideas and comments in developing the plan. It is our hope that the neighborhood master plan will guide us for the future of the Gifford Park Neighborhood.

Anyone interested in getting involved in the Master Plan project, please feel free to contact Chuck Kilgore, Chairman Community Development Committee at 558-5000.

Reminder:

Free Tax Help and GPNA Open House

Don't forget to stop by for our Open House on **Saturday, February 4th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at the GPNA Office located next to J'N'J Grocery, 33rd & California Street. **Everyone is welcome!** Again this year an I.R.S. representative will provide free tax help for our neighborhood from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Processing of basic tax returns and possibly electronic filing will be available (**certain information is required for electronic filing**). Walk-in appointments are welcome, but priority will be given to those who call first to schedule an appointment. Representatives from the GPNA, neighborhood information, free tax help, and refreshments, will be available - so stop by. Free tax help will be available at the GPNA Office on the following Saturdays:

February 4th, 11 a.m.. - 2 p.m.

February 11th, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

April 1st, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

April 8th, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.



To schedule an appointment or to get more information about either the tax help or the GPNA Open House, call 342-6006.

GPNA Members In The Media

Several GPNA members have been seen in the newspaper and on TV. Our own **Harry Dirgo** had his picture on the front page of the Omaha World Herald (January 18th) with a story about the closing of the South Omaha Airport (where Harry keeps his 1934 Fairchild airplane). **Tom Rose** appeared on the nationally televised Dateline NBC program, which did a story on a Welfare Reform Program that teaches building and construction skills. **Ron Yates** was interviewed on the local news on January 17th regarding Community Policing. **Leo Wilwerding's** newsletter article "The 10 Commandments of Being A Good Neighbor" recently appeared in the Omaha World Herald's Metro Extra.

Editorial Corner *Readers are welcome to submit their letters for the Editorial Corner to any GPNA Executive Board member prior to the Executive Board meeting held the third Thursday of every month. The Executive Board has final approval for all editorials appearing in this section. Full name and address must be included on all letters submitted. The views and opinions stated are not necessarily those of the GPNA or the Executive Board.*

Neighborhood Observations

by Terry Wilwerding

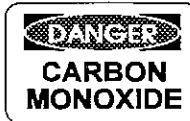
As the GPNA moves (stumbles, advances, shuffles, rushes) into another year, there are couple of things which I would like to speak about. The first concerns the people who run the GPNA. We sometimes think that these people owe it to us or the neighborhood to do the everyday work that keeps the Association running, but in fact they are just public spirited people who have as little or less time than you or I. Think what it would take for you to organize the monthly meetings, put together this newsletter, plan the Christmas party or run one of the cleanups. These are all done by volunteers who get little recognition and sometimes a fair amount of grief for their trouble. Undoubtedly, the GPNA would cease to exist tomorrow without their selfless efforts. So the next time you meet one of the people whose names are on the cover of this newsletter, you might offer them a word of thanks.

I recently went through the training provided by the Omaha Police for those people who participate in neighborhood watches. Just as informative as the training were the conversations of those in other neighborhood watches. One interesting fellow I talked to was from West Omaha. When I told him of where our neighborhood was, he inquired how our neighborhood watch decided which of the numerous crimes to report, then asked if we had to drive armored cars while on patrol. Yuk yuk yuk. In fact after talking to him, I found that they have a big time burglary problem and cars left outdoors disappear fairly regularly. These problems are not unheard of in our neighborhood, but I don't think that we have nearly the crime problem that many outsiders think.

It would be easy to credit the neighborhood watch with our lack of a big crime problem, but in fact it probably is as much the watchfulness of many of our neighbors and the stability of the neighborhood which are major contributing factors. In any case, after talking to those in other neighborhoods, I felt pretty good about where I live.

As a final note, our neighborhood watch is on the streets every week, but we could really use some new faces. An hour a week of your time could help us a lot. If you are interested in going along some night, contact one of the officers or come to one of our regular meetings for details.

Winter Is Danger Season for Carbon-Monoxide Poisoning



Carbon Monoxide, or CO, is an insidious gas that has no odor, color, or taste. It is a byproduct of heaters and other devices that run on flammable fuel such as gas and oil furnaces, space heaters, gas clothes dryers, water heaters, fireplaces, wood stoves, gas ranges, charcoal grills and automobile exhaust. Besides having an annual checkup of central heating-equipment by a qualified technician, you can help reduce the CO threat in these ways:

- Keep furnace filters clean
- Don't use a flame-type space heater in an enclosed space
- Make sure furnace chimneys are clean
- Clean clothes-dryer lint filters regularly and check outside vent openings occasionally to make sure it is not blocked by lint
- Never use a barbecue grill indoors or attempt to heat a residence with the burners or oven of a gas stove
- Don't let a car idle in an attached garage

Symptoms of low-level carbon-monoxide poisoning are much like flu symptoms and include headaches, nausea, diarrhea, dizziness and fatigue. Suspect CO if the symptoms are relieved outside the home, or if several members of a household have the same symptoms. CO detectors are sold at home centers, hardware stores and department stores. They typically cost between \$40 and \$60 - a bargain if it helps saves lives!

NEEDED:

HELP WITH NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

The GPNA is looking for anyone, any age, interested in delivering newsletters in the Gifford Park Neighborhood.

Call 558-6027

Editor's note: If you have something that would be of interest to the people of our neighborhood, we encourage you to submit an article for our monthly newsletter, Gifford Park's Pride. Deadline for submitting articles and editorials is the third Thursday of each month. Editorials must be approved by the GPNA Executive Board. Articles can be left at the GPNA Office, please include your name and phone number. We will accept articles stored on IBM compatible disks. Contact Chris Foster at 342-6006 for information regarding the newsletter.

Community Policing Effective in Gifford Park Neighborhood



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The Gifford Park community has many hours invested in training and heartily endorses the community policing concept. Since the Police Department, the GPNA and other groups have made serious efforts toward this program, a change of administration should not be allowed to derail this worthwhile effort. The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association has been working with the Police Department for approximately five years and has experienced neighborhood improvements due to these cooperative efforts.

Community policing, pro-active policing, good old-fashioned police work... the title that one chooses to give a program is not as important as the actions and results of the effort.

The Omaha Police Department has special units to deal with specific problems, i.e. Gang Unit, Swat Team, STOPP Unit and others. Although crime is a general category, it is a large problem which continues to increase and should be addressed in a special way by using all available resources.

A police officer has training and education, utility belt supplies, body armor, radio equipment and other supplies, materials, etc. to enable an officer to serve and protect the community. One would not expect an ill-equipped, untrained officer to do a good job. The community policing effort is yet another productive tool to assist officers.

The community policing concept allows law enforcement officers to utilize many resources such as the zoning board, code enforcement, fire department, health department, county attorney's office, housing authority, neighborhood associations and concerned citizens.

When various governmental agencies network to solve problems, a more expedient solution may be obtained. For example, if a problem exists in a house in a neighborhood such as drugs, prostitution or gang activity, rather than waiting to accumulate evidence for particular crime and arrest, the solution may lie in utilizing the health department, code enforcement, zoning

board or other agency to cite civil violations which will force the owner to solve the problem or vacate the premises.

We encourage Mayor Daub and his crime commission to examine the Portland Plan and wait for the final report from the Chief's steering committee. The Gifford Park community has a good working relationship with the officers who serve our area. Please allow the entire city to share the pride and security that comes with knowing the face behind the badge. A good police force becomes even better with support from the community.

Special Thanks to the following members of the Omaha Police Department who attended our last GPNA meeting:
*Deputy Chief Steve Coufal
Captain Tony Infintino
Sergeant Tom Zoucha
Sergeant David Allen
Officer Dave Bianchi
Officer James Paul*



GIFFORD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



Membership Application

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: (day) _____ (evening) _____
Referred by: _____ () New Member () Renewal

ANNUAL DUES -- \$5 (Single), \$8 (Family), \$25 (Business/Institutional)

****Please note: All new and newly-renewed memberships will expire June 1st.**

If paying by check, make checks payable to GPNA
Mail to GPNA: 532 North 33rd St., Omaha, NE 68131

The Gifford Park Neighborhood ... A Great Place to Live, Work, Learn and Play!