



Gifford Park's Pride

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

February 1996

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Neighborhood Crime Survey Results

In October and November, 1992, the GPNA Watch Group conducted a neighborhood crime assessment survey using *The Record* from the Omaha World Herald. At that time there were 31 reported incidents of activity involving our community over a thirty day period.

During the same time period in 1993, there were 15 reported crimes in *The Record*.

During December, 1995, the crime survey was again conducted for a thirty day period. The survey showed that individuals residing within the GPNA boundaries were sentenced for violations ranging from driving with a suspended Driver's License to Trespassing. The total within the GPNA boundaries was 14 which also included 1 robbery, 2 burglaries and 1 auto theft.

The parameters of the December, 1995 survey were expanded to include areas surrounding Gifford Park. This expansion included a fifteen block radius from 34th and Cass Streets which is approximately the center of our boundaries. You will be surprised to know that one address, 1702 Nicholas, had 21 reported incidents. This is more than the entire Gifford Park area incurred. Another address, 2400 N. 34th Street, had 7 incidents. Overall the area surrounding Gifford Park had 109 incidents recorded.

This indicates that we do not live in a vacuum. The areas surrounding ours impact us. **We must support our sister neighborhoods and any city-wide organizations that share our concerns.**

GPNA and Police Address Problems



On January 17th, several GPNA members met with Lt. Don Thorsen of the Omaha Police Department. The purpose of the meeting was for us to review the needs of the association including the following items:

- Better and more consistent enforcement of all laws via regular active involvement vs reactive involvement of Officers in our area
 - Do a weekly tour of the entire area to monitor level of compliance and daily alertness of police in the area to spot violations.
- Citations must be written immediately. Effect will be to establish a strong POLICE AWARENESS with our citizens.

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Next Meeting

**Thursday, February 1st
7:00 P.M.**

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

FREE PARKING

Historically Speaking...

Wohlner's Grocery

A small "L" shaped grocery store just east of the pharmacy at 3225 California had the reputation of having the finest meat-market in Omaha. People came from all over town to shop at Wohlner's California Grocery. Actually, most people shopped by phone for a home delivery. Albert Wohlner, an immigrant from Poland, opened the store when he returned from service in the Navy in World War I. He began in the grocery business as early as age 14 and had been a partner with a cousin, Sam Frohm, before the war. The store at 33rd and California opened about 1921 and relocated to 52nd and Leavenworth in about 1940.

Albert was married in 1924, and he and his wife, Mollie, lived for a while in the Shirley apartments between 33rd and 34th and California. They had two daughters. One daughter, Phyllis, married Sidney Swartz who went into the grocery business with his father-in-law. Now the grandson of Albert Wohlner, Mike Swartz, owns and operates the Wohlner Grocery at 52nd & Leavenworth. Three generations of grocers and still going strong when nearly all other independently owned stores have closed. This says a lot about the quality of the groceries and the integrity of the owners.

by Eva Swanson



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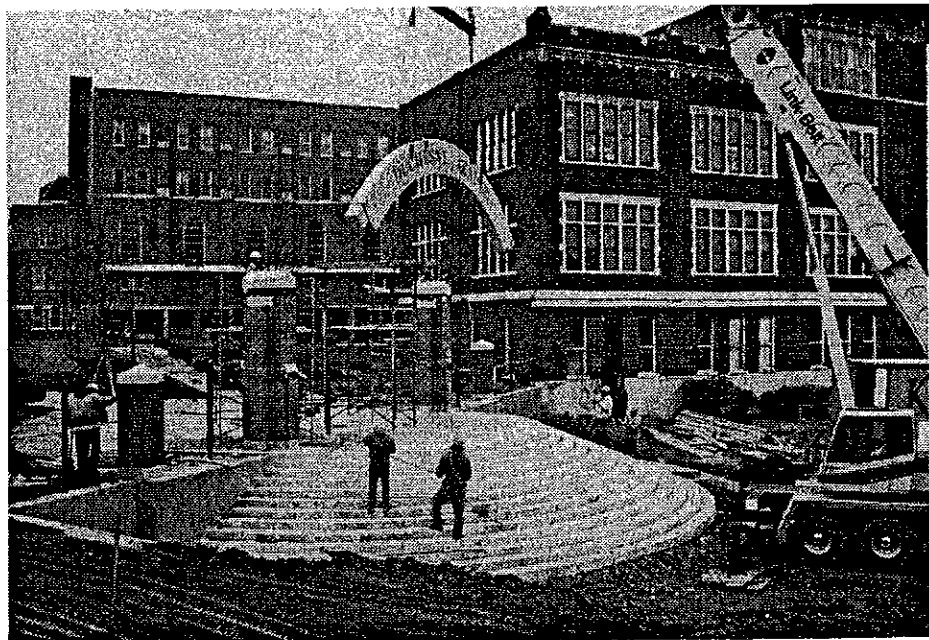
WEEDS & LITTER

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433



If You Need Information Regarding Recycling and Garbage Collection, Including Obtaining Additional Recycling Bins, Call:

**444-4500
492-9955**



What's Happening at Duchesne

This picture shows workers setting the precast archway sign at Duchesne Academy back in November. Seeding and final touchup painting will be completed this Spring. Installation of many exterior doors will begin later this month.



GPNA Applies for Hometown Pride Award

In January the GPNA applied for a cash award to help us purchase computer equipment for our neighborhood association. *Midwest Living Magazine* is giving out the prizes as part of their Hometown Pride Awards. Winners will be announced in the summer of 1996 and will be featured in the October 1996 issue. The magazine will award \$1,000 each to 16 communities in 12 Midwestern states. Keep your fingers crossed!

In Touch Service for Neighborhoods

Beginning in January, the following information will be available to all residents of Omaha by simply dialing 492-9955, waiting for the tone, and then entering the following 4-digit number of your choice. These numbers will also be printed in the Telecom USA directory which will be delivered to your home this Spring.

Police Department:

- Police News Update 6804
- Outstanding Warrants 6814
- General Crime Prevention/Safety 6813
- Northeast Precinct Neighborhood Information 6815

Neighborhood Groups/Associations News & Activities:

- Neighborhood/Business Watch Groups 6842
- General Information/All Neighborhood Groups 6843
- Gifford Park Neighborhood Association 6866
- Bemis Park Neighborhood Association 6844
- Ford Birthsite Neighborhood Association 6865
- Joslyn Neighborhood Association 6867
- Leavenworth Neighborhood Association 6868

GPNA and Police Address Problems

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Specifically, we discussed the following items:

- **Parking** - front yard parking; blocking driveways; dead storage on streets (inoperative, unlicensed, long term); dead storage in yards (inoperative and unlicensed); parking without permits; parking in No Parking Zones.
- **Loud Vehicle Control** - cars, trucks, cycles, without mufflers or defective systems; vehicles with boom boxes.
- **Parties and loud music.**
- **Crack down on unlicensed vehicles** - opportunity to check Bill of Sale and insurance coverage plus any violations.

The meeting was very productive as we shared our concerns with Lt. Thorsen. He is committed to working with the GPNA in all of these areas. We all agreed that the nuisance factor of frequent ticketing of violators will result in compliance even if dismissed after repetitions. Again a greater respect for the Police and the Law will occur. In addition, convictions in most cases can be a moneymaker for the City or School coffers.

On January 16, **Leo Wilwerding** and **Ron Yates** compiled a list of 52 vehicle violations in our neighborhood alone. As last month's article by Ron Yates stated "...parking and other minor violations are a precursor to major felony crimes...". The reason we feel minor violations should be addressed is to slow or eliminate the escalation of crime in our area. A recent newspaper article talked about "**Zero-Tolerance Policing**" in Houston, Texas. Under zero tolerance, no infraction is too minor for police action - not public urination, not trespassing, not even double-parking. The goal of zero tolerance is really the same as community policing: fight neighborhood disorder at the lowest levels in hopes of heading off more serious crime before it occurs. Crime is down significantly in several major cities implementing this approach.

The Omaha Police Department and the GPNA have worked together to make our neighborhood safer for all, and with Lt. Don Thorsen's leadership, we feel this effort will be as strong as ever.

Editor's note: *If you have something that would be of interest to our neighborhood, we encourage you to submit an article for our monthly newsletter. Editorials must be approved by the GPNA Executive Board. Articles can be left at the GPNA Office; please include your name and phone number. Contact Chris Foster at 342-6006 for information regarding the newsletter.*

Small World Daycare, Inc.

Small World Daycare, Inc. was formed in January 1994 by **Althea Jean James** and **Terry Ross**. Mr. Ross, a former Realtor, law enforcement officer, and social worker approached Ms. James, a community volunteer, and home daycare provider, with the concept of starting a daycare center. Mr. Ross, a friend of Ms. James' family, identified a need for a daycare in the Gifford Park neighborhood.

The first site, at 615 N. 33rd Street, was opened on March 5, 1994. This commercial store front was previously owned by Carl and Sheila Orand and operated as The Arctic Circle. Business was very good and the daycare soon filled. A need for additional space was realized. Richard Smith, owner of 619 N. 33rd Street, a vacant house, agreed to a lease. In January of 1995, the second daycare was opened. This daycare is operated strictly as an infant center.

Small World's focus is on providing a consistent quality service to inner city children. Small World is constantly striving to improve the quality of its service. If in the neighborhood, please stop by and visit with us. Our daycares are open 7 days a week from about 6 a.m. to midnight.

In an effort to encourage our business community to be involved in our neighborhood, the GPNA solicited this article from Terry Ross of Small World Daycare, Inc.

Free Tax Help Is Here

Mark your calendars for **FREE** tax help 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. Processing of basic tax returns will be available. Electronic filing will not be available this year. Walk-in appointments are welcome, but priority will be given to those who call to schedule an appointment. Free tax help will be available on the following Saturday dates:

February 3, 10, 24 - 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
March 30 - 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
April 6, 13 - 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.



For more information or to schedule an appointment call 551-3629.

