



Gifford Park's Pride

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

August 1996

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

National Night Out is August 6th



The 13th Annual "National Night Out" will be held on Tuesday, August 6th. It is expected to be the largest ever involving over 28 million people from over 8,800 communities. This annual community-building campaign is designed to heighten crime/drug awareness; generate

support for and participation in local anti-crime efforts; strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community relations; and send the message to criminals that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

When neighborhoods experience the pain and threat that ongoing criminal activity brings, there is usually no easy or simple solution. It takes neighbors working together, watching out for one another and cooperating with law enforcement officials. This is the message that this event is intended to send.

National Night Out is an excellent opportunity to become involved in your neighborhood, to activate your Neighborhood Watch Group and make a difference in your neighborhood that will last all year long.

The Omaha Police Department urges all Omaha residents to participate by becoming involved in outdoor activities between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m., and by turning on their outside lights between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. Examples of activities that groups have found to be successful are pot luck suppers, parades, skits, carnivals, ice cream socials, watermelon feeds, picnics, etc. Neighborhood fun and involvement by all age groups are important.

The theme for this year's National Night Out is "Give Neighborhood Crime and Drugs a Going Away Party."

Membership Notice!

If you have NOT renewed your 1996-1997 GPNA membership, this is the last mail-around newsletter you will receive. The mail-around newsletter is mailed to current GPNA members for February, April, June, August, October, and December. See page 4 for a membership application.

Next Meeting

**Thursday, August 1
7:00 P.M.**

**Guest Speaker:
To Be Announced**

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

FREE PARKING

3rd Annual GPNA Tennis Program Starts August 7th



Dates and times have been set for the third annual GPNA Tennis Program for all kids ages 6 to 15. The program will be each **Wednesday in August (Aug. 7, 14, 21, 28) from 6 to 7 p.m. in Gifford Park.** Tennis instructors, racquets and balls are supplied and the program is **FREE.** There will be instruction, drills, games and prizes -- so come on down for the fun. More information and enrollment forms can be picked up at J'N'J Grocery, California Tacos & More and the GPNA Office. Contact **Chris Foster at 342-6006** if you have questions.

Neighbor of the Month: Marie Fell

Marie Fell is our 'Neighbor of the Month' because she is a very special person in our neighborhood. Marie has lived at 3405 Webster for 35 years and had actually rented an apartment near 34th and Cass before that. She was born in Holstein, Iowa, which is 40 miles east of Sioux City. She was a Rural School Teacher for 10 years in Cherokee County, Iowa. She said it was a good way for students to learn from each other since the school was small and had grades one through

continued on page 2



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Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

VICE PRESIDENT

Mike Bacome 344-3233

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HISTORIAN

Eva Swanson 345-1707

LITTER - BUSINESS DISTRICT

Rich Exline 341-4388

MEMBERSHIP

Cynde Yates 558-6027

NEWSLETTER

Chris Foster 342-6006

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

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PARK

Mike Bacome 344-3233

PARKING VIOLATIONS

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Anne & Linda Chapman 348-0464

TOOL LENDING

Ed Hendershot 341-0475

WATCH GROUP

Ron Yates 558-6027

WEEDS & LITTER

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

Police Promotions



Congratulations and a job well done to two police officers in our Northeast Precinct who recently received promotions. **Don Thorsen** was promoted from Lieutenant to Captain. We have worked closely with Don on a number of concerns in our neighborhood and wish him the best of luck in his new position. **John Friend** was promoted from Sergeant to Lieutenant. John worked in the Youth Services Department. We appreciate the hard work you gentlemen have shown in our neighborhood. We look forward to working with you both in the future. Good Luck!

Landlord of the Month

When we started the Landlord of the Month column I thought that there would be a large (well, reasonable) number of nominees. The World Herald was so impressed with the previous columns that we were the lead story in the neighborhood news section. In any case, I need more nominees. Since I am not very familiar with the Southern and Eastern parts of our neighborhood, I need some help in recognizing outstanding landlords in those areas. Call me or drop a note (please) and we will take care of the rest.

by Terry Wilwerding, 342-2795

Neighbor of the Month *continued from page 1*

eight. She moved to Omaha in 1944. Marie worked for Epsen Lithographics for 27 years until 1972. She then worked as a bookkeeper at the Douglas County Gazette (a weekly newspaper serving the Valley, Elkhorn and Bennington communities) in Waterloo until 1978. Marie then moved to Oregon, and then in 1980 she moved to St. Helens, Washington — believe it or not Mt. St. Helens first erupted the day she moved in. She still recalls all of the volcanic ash settling on everything in the area. She also spent a winter in McAllen, Texas before returning to Omaha. While she was away two of her nieces and nephews lived in her house attending college and working. Today she has fourteen nieces and nephews.

Marie is known by neighbors as always being a cheerful, humble and gentle person. She enjoys bridge, gardening and traveling. San Francisco, Palm Springs and Virginia are her favorite spots. She has done alot of work over the years on her own house and yard by herself. Leo Wilwerding says, "Marie looks the same today as she did 25 years ago. Sadly, Marie will be leaving the neighborhood soon. Sandy Erickson recently hosted a farewell party for her with about 20 neighbors — Marie enjoyed it very much. She doesn't yet know where she will live but doesn't worry because she said she lives by the three 'F's', Faith, Family and Friends. We will miss you. Good luck and good health in the future!

Good News About Good People...Purse Snatcher Nabbed

While paying his debt to society, **Mark Andersen** may have paid a little extra. Andersen was on a work-release project when he and another witness helped police catch an alleged purse-snatcher. While taking a break from working on a home at 3202 California St., Andersen said, he heard neighborhood resident **Margaret V. Campbell**, 68, shouting and saw a younger woman walking away with a purse. He jogged after her and cornered her in a lot off an alley. The woman surrendered the purse and left. But Andersen said that when Margaret's son checked the purse and found money missing, Andersen and another witness chased the woman again and brought her back to police officers. Police said the purse-snatcher had \$76 in cash. The incident happened at about 3 p.m. Sunday, July 7, at 33rd and California Streets. She was booked for misdemeanor assault and obstructing an officer. Andersen has been on work release since April and works as a builder. Andersen said he was concerned about leaving his work site. "I'm on work release," he said. "I didn't know what I could and couldn't do." **Brien Hendrickson**, assistant warden at the work-release center in Omaha, said Andersen's actions were "a wonderful, wonderful, humanitarian thing to do." Mark, the GPNA appreciates your efforts.

What's Happening in the Neighborhood...

Everyone is encouraged to attend the August general membership meeting at **St. Joseph's Hospital, Thursday, August 1, at 7 p.m.** As always there will be plenty of refreshments. The guest speaker is to be announced.

Phase I of our street repair project is progressing nicely and will be completed soon. Curb replacement and asphalt resurfacing have now been completed for most of the construction area. As mentioned last month, Phase I encompasses nearly all streets between 33rd Street on the west, Dodge Street on the south, 29th Street on the East, and California Street on the north. Phase II is planned to cover the area east of 33rd from California to Cuming. **Swain Construction** is doing the work that includes replacing all of the existing curb, replacing any drop style curb inlets, and resurfacing the streets.

The GPNA wishes to thank **Digitronix** for repairing the association's computer. The main system board failed in late-July and Digitronix replaced it for **NO CHARGE!** Digitronix is located at 9005 F Street and they handle computer systems for business or home.

There is another good reason (besides great food, low prices and friendly atmosphere) to stop by **California Tacos & More** these days. Owner **Brad Bogard** has let the GPNA display our new 'Everest Survivor's Award' on the north wall among the other memorabilia. The award looks quite nice on a wood shelf made by GPNA member **Bob Hutton**. Thanks Brad and Bob!

Congratulations to **Paige Burton** and **Nichol Novacek** for winning certificates in box hockey at the city-wide Playground of Champions which is part of the Sun Dawgs summer fun program. **Nathan Johnson** also won the watermelon-eating contest in Gifford Park. Other activities in July included: a cookout and bus trip to the zoo (sponsored by the City of Omaha); tennis every Tuesday and Thursday in Gifford Park taught by coach **Leon Lewis** of **Tennis Our Way**; and swimming at Kellom pool every Friday.

School starts for children at **Yates Elementary School August 28**, but families new to the area need to register **August 14-28**. Also there will be a 'Safe Walk to School' program for kindergardeners **Monday, August 26, 6 p.m.** at the Yates School main entrance. With most schools starting this month please drive safely and watch for children.

The **Shelterbelt Theater's** next show, "A Day in the Life of Raymond Nothing", will be showing on the following dates on Friday-Saturday-Sunday nights: **Aug. 23-25, Aug. 31-Sep. 2, Sep. 6-8**. Shows start at 8 p.m. and tickets are just \$7. Call **341-2757** for reservations.

We want to wish a couple of our long-time members a healthy recovery from recent illnesses. **Mary Morgensen** and **Smokey Stober** are doing much better...in fact Smokey has been seen mowing his lawn - he says it's part of his therapy. Both live near the 35th Ave and Davenport area.

The GPNA wishes to offer sincere condolences to long-time resident and GPNA member **Harry Dirgo** and his family. Harry's brother, **Raymond Dirgo**, passed away July 7. Raymond was a 31-year veteran of the Omaha Police Department. He was born in Omaha and attended North High School. He served in the Navy during World War II. He enjoyed investing in the stock market, riding motorcycles and art. Harry said his brother stopped by the neighborhood to visit frequently.

Three new committees have been formed to help streamline our efforts. **Terry Wilwerding (342-2795)** will handle parking violations, **Jim Wilwerding (551-1344)** will handle weeds and litter violations, and **Rich Exline (341-4388)** will work on Litter Control in our business district.

About a dozen trees were planted on Davenport between 33rd and 35th Streets. **OPPD** provided over \$2,000 in grants and **Indian Creek Nursery** planted the trees. Please care for your trees especially during summer when weather conditions add stress to young trees. Keep trees staked, provide adequate water and keep wood chips or mulch around the base. The GPNA thanks **OPPD** for the grants.

A special thanks to **Omaha Police Officer Dana Taylor** for speaking on the Bike Patrol at our last meeting. The Police Bike Patrol has been in our neighborhood in July and will continue to be a presence.

We appreciate the **Omaha Police Department** for their efforts Friday night, **July 26 at 525 North 33rd Street**. Several arrests were made and drugs and money were seized. The GPNA Watch Group and other residents have reported problems recently at this location.

The next time you are around the **Duchesne Academy** property, notice the new shrubs and bushes planted around the signs located on the corners of the property. Duchesne has invested a great deal in landscaping improvements the past year, and it looks great.

TOOL LENDING HOTLINE

Tom 341-3955

Ed 341-0475

Ron 558-6027

Mowers - \$5 Rent for most tools - \$3



The following poem was written by Robert Foster of Bow, NH. Robert has followed the neighborhood activities through the newsletter each month and has been a big supporter of the GPNA Tennis Program. He wanted to share his thoughts about the Tennis Program and the GPNA volunteers. (Incidentally, since Robert is the grandfather of Chris Foster, he couldn't help from mentioning his grandson's name in the poem - I didn't even have to pay him!).

G.P.N.A.

*Many Plaudits to the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association are due
 For the work that falls on the shoulders of a few
 There is one energetic fellow named Chris
 Without whom Gifford Park would greatly miss
 In this project he takes great delight
 Giving it much thought day and night
 Getting help with the teaching of tennis
 Keeping the youngsters from becoming a menace.*

*It helps to develop people's neighborhood pride
 Especially with its appearance to the outside
 Hoping the interest will continue to grow
 Letting the citizens of Omaha know
 May Gifford Park's group serve as a sample
 How its efforts produce a rewarding example.*

Robert E. Foster - 1996

**Parking,
 Again**



The Omaha Police have expressed an interest in better enforcing the parking and vehicle laws in the Gifford Park Area, and they have asked for our help. As usual, we see a lot of vehicles parked across the sidewalk, which is not only illegal but inconsiderate of both pedestrians and especially the kids who play up and down the sidewalks in the summer. Cars cannot be parked on unpaved areas between the sidewalk and street. Paved areas between the sidewalk and street must display a current sign that signifies that the area is leased from the city for parking. Parking in unpaved front yards is also prohibited. And like the weeds of summer, the neighborhood has sprouted a large number of unlicensed vehicles, both driven and parked outdoors in yards. The men in blue have said that they are going to step up enforcement, and they have asked us for addresses of vehicles violating the above laws. If you have a problem vehicle in your neighborhood, call me and I will forward a list to the police contact person. **Vehicle violations are not only a safety problem, but they detract from the appearance and environment of our neighborhood.**

Thanks,
 Terry Wilwerding 342-2795



GIFFORD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
 532 N. 33rd Street, Omaha, NE 68131
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



(Please print clearly)

Membership year: _____ (Membership year runs from June 1 through May 31)

Type of membership: Single (\$5) _____ Family (\$8) _____ Business (\$25) _____

Name of business _____

Name _____ (Last) _____ (First)

Spouse _____ (Last) _____ (First)

Address _____ (Street) _____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip)

Telephone Number: _____ (Home) _____ (Work)

In case of an emergency notify: _____ (Name) _____ (Address) _____ (Phone No.)

May this information be included in the GPNA Neighborhood Directory? Yes _____ No _____

Signature _____ Date _____