



Gifford Park's Pride

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

August 1997

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

National Night Out Scheduled for Tuesday, August 5th



Tuesday, August 5, 1997, is America's 14th Annual National Night Out. The goals of National Night Out are to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support for, and participation in, local anti-crime programs, strengthen neighborhood spirit

and police-community partnerships, and send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back. Last year's NNO campaign involved citizens, law enforcement agencies, civic groups, businesses, neighborhood organizations, and local officials from 9,000 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories, Canadian cities and military bases worldwide. This year's campaign slogan will again be "Give Neighborhood Crime & Drugs a Going Away Party." The Omaha Police Department urges all Omaha residents to participate by becoming involved in outdoor activities between the hours of 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM and by turning their outside lights on from 8:00 PM to 10PM. Millions of Americans nationwide will be participating in this promotion to send a message to criminals that we want safe neighborhoods.

Information courtesy of the OPD Community Resource Center.



Harry Dirgo and neighborhood "inspectors" check out the resurfacing work at 32nd and Webster. The streets from 30th to 33rd, Cass to Burt will be paved this summer.

***Membership Notice! If you have NOT renewed your 1997-1998 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 7
7:00 P.M.**

**St. Joseph's Hospital
Glassed-In Dining Room**

FREE PARKING

Historically Speaking...

Henry W. Yates

(The following is a reprint of an article in the **GPNA Pride**, September 1992, written by Judi Caban.)

Henry Whitefield Yates was an early resident of our neighborhood and a pioneer Omaha banker and businessman. Born in Maryland on January 1, 1837, his family moved to Washington D. C. when he was quite young. As a grown man, he was often quoted as saying that he "had the advantage of being born poor." Although the extent of his formal education was only three years of public school attendance, he was chosen from all the school children in Washington to deliver the 4th of July oratory at Arlington Cemetery, where he met and was congratulated by President Millard Fillmore.

After working for ten years as a clerk in a small store in Washington, at the age of 21 Henry took

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GPNA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

VICE PRESIDENT

Mike Bacome 344-3233

RECORDING SECRETARY

Shirley Bates 345-8430

TREASURER

Jean Peck 344-0722

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

ADVERTISING

Dar Sweazy 345-0125

CLEAN-UP

Chris Foster 342-6006

COMPLIANCE

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

COURTESY

Candy Bacome 344-3233

GRAFFITI

Maureen Calabro 345-7238

HISTORIAN

Eva Swanson 345-1707

LITTER - BUSINESS DISTRICT

Rich Exline 341-4388

MEMBERSHIP

Chris Foster 342-6006

NEWSLETTER

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Mike Bacome 344-3233

PARK

Mike Bacome 344-3233

PARKING VIOLATIONS

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Anne & Linda Chapman 348-0464

WATCH GROUP

Ron Yates 558-6027

WEEDS & LITTER

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

A Message From The President

When I was recently elected president, I had no plan for what would be done this year. Certainly we would continue the committees we have had in place, but I did not have any ideas about how the association could be improved. Since being elected I have attended a number of meetings with representatives of other neighborhood associations with the intention of getting ideas about improving our group, but instead came away from the meetings with a greater appreciation for what our association has accomplished.

Perhaps one area where improvement could be realized would be greater emphasis on the social aspects of the association. A great deal of importance has been placed on conducting the business of the association in the past, and I do not think this emphasis was misplaced, but I can't help thinking that the association could better serve the needs of its members if more members took the opportunity to get acquainted, as well as provide input towards improving what we do. The monthly general meetings are an excellent opportunity to do both. To better accommodate a larger turnout, St. Joseph's Hospital has set aside the large meeting room for our group. If you have ideas about making the meetings more interesting or useful to members, or if you would like to have a particular speaker at the meeting, please let me or one of the officers know, and we will try to accommodate your wishes.

On another note, I recently participated in the neighborhood watch group for a couple of weekends. I was surprised and impressed by the small number of problems we observed. Regular members of the group advise that this seems to be more the rule rather than the exception. In conversations with other area associations, it seems they have much greater and more persistent problems than we do. I believe this reflects positively on the value of the watch group. While we presently have enough participants to cover the two nights we patrol, a few additional people willing to spend an hour or two on Friday or Saturday night would allow the present members to take a night off occasionally. If you are interested, please let me know, and I will arrange a ride-along with the regulars to allow you to see what is being done.

In closing, I would like to thank the chairpersons of the standing committees for their time and efforts. The work of the association is largely accomplished through their dedication. I look forward to working with them, and with you, during the coming year. Hope to see you at the meeting.

by Jim Wilwerding

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 Sue Wilwerding (342-2795) or Chris Foster (342-6006) for information regarding the newsletter.

Business Owners, Police and GPNA Discuss Concerns

A meeting was held on July 23 to discuss problems and solutions in the 33rd & California Street Business District. About twenty people attended including **Captain Don Thorson, Lt. John Friend**, local business owners, and GPNA members. It was noted that everyone attending had many of the same public safety concerns. Several specific addresses were brought up many times as being persistent problem locations. Possible solutions were discussed and several action items were agreed upon by the group - most importantly - increased police presence in the business district. It was also noted about the good efforts of **Omaha Police Officers Michael Paul and George Merithew**. Another meeting is scheduled in August to discuss the progress.

Historically Speaking...Henry W. Yates

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his savings and headed west. He obtained a bookkeeper position with Nave McCord & Co., a wholesale grocery company based in St. Joseph, Missouri. In 1861, Nave McCord decided to establish a branch in Omaha. The steamer, "Omaha" was chartered and loaded with goods needed by overland immigrants, and with Mr. Yates in charge, sailed on the Missouri river to Omaha, a journey which took 11 days. The new store was located at 14th and Farnam Streets, and did a good business. In 1862 Henry resigned his position and returned to St. Joseph to marry Miss Eliza Samuel, who had been called the "prettiest girl in the state" by the governor of Missouri. The new Mrs. Yates was a 2nd cousin to Mary Todd Lincoln, wife of Abraham Lincoln, and the Yates visited in Washington several times during Lincoln's presidency.

Mr. Yates returned to Omaha in 1863 as assistant cashier for the First National Bank, located at 12th and Farnam Streets. The bank was a small frame building and a box nailed to the floor and fastened with a padlock served as a safe. As most of the business of the day was conducted using gold dust, a shelf ran along one wall to hold pans of gold dust. Mr. Yates was among the several bank employees who slept at the bank to serve as guards.

In 1882 he resigned from the First National Bank, and with the financial help of his father-in-law, founded the Nebraska National Bank, where he served as president until his death at the age of 78 in 1916. In addition to his career in banking, Mr. Yates also had many other business and civic interests. He was vice-president of the Omaha Electric Light and Power Company, a director of the Nebraska Telephone Company, and had interests in several smaller businesses. He was one of the original incorporators of the Omaha Library Association, was a member of the first Board of Trustees of the Brownell-Hall School, and served as senior warden for Trinity Episcopal Church for 48 years. He also served as a trustee for Clarkson Hospital.

In 1887, Mr. Yates purchased a 2 1/2 acre plot bounded by Davenport and Chicago Streets on the south and north, and by 33rd Street and 31st Avenue on the west and east. A large mansion named "Hillside" was built on the site. Mrs. Yates sold a portion of the Hillside land that had been used as a pasture to the Omaha School Board for the sum of one dollar, on the condition that it be used for a school to be named after her late husband. Mrs. Yates retained the rest of the property and the house which she occupied until her death at the age of 89 in 1929. Mr. and Mrs. Yates are buried in the Prospect Hill Cemetery.

(Next month's **GPNA Pride** will contain an article describing the Hillside mansion and some of the festivities held there.)

by Eva Swanson

Editor's Note - Addendum to the article on Norman Korney, GPNA Pride May 1997: Robert Root advises that Mr. Korney was the custodian at Henry Yates Elementary School during the 1930's.

What's Happening in the Neighborhood ...

James Severa, Terry Wilwerding, Linda Chapman, Leo Wilwerding, Clair Eischeid, and Sue Wilwerding were all winners of door prizes at last month's GPNA general meeting. Gift certificates to **California Tacos and More** and **J 'N' J Grocery** were the raffle prizes awarded. Plan to attend the next meeting on **Thursday, August 7th, at 7:00 PM at St. Joseph Hospital** in the Glassed-In Dining Room. As always, refreshments will be served.

The GPNA sends its sincere condolences to long-time members **Mike and Candy Bacome**. Candy's father passed away recently.

Thanks to **Rich Exline** for recently painting over graffiti on the tennis backboard in Gifford Park. This is good timing with the upcoming tennis program in August. Thanks Rich!

The GPNA Office is getting some improvements thanks to **Bob Hutton and Jim Wilwerding**. Bob donated some nice-looking carpet and Jim did some interior painting.

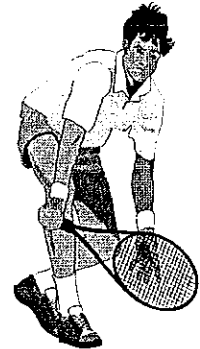
Kids will be headed back to school in the next few weeks, so please be extra careful when driving on our neighborhood streets.

A big thanks to the **City of Omaha** for another great summer of the Sun Dawgs kids program in Gifford Park. Special thanks to **Dan Bagely** and **Mike Feit** for supervising kid's activities. This program means alot to our neighborhood.

4th Annual Gifford Park Free Tennis Lessons



For: Youth ages 6 to 15
Dates: Every Wednesday in August
 (August 6, 13, 20, 27)
Time: 6 - 7 p.m.
Where: Gifford Park Tennis Courts
 (33rd & Cass St.)



The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association is offering **FREE tennis lessons** and will provide tennis racquets, balls and instructors for each lesson. Parents are welcome to help.

To be enrolled, YOU MUST complete the registration form available at J'N'J Grocery or California Tacos & More. Bring the registration form with you to the tennis lessons. Call 342-6006 for more information.



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 _____

*** For more information call 342-6006

Signature _____ Date _____

Have You Renewed Your Membership?

Yearly GPNA membership dues are only \$5 for Single, \$8 for Family and \$25 for Business. Your membership helps support this newsletter, neighborhood cleanups, youth activities, watch group equipment, tool lending and many other worthwhile programs. The 1997/98 membership year began June 1 - please send in your membership today! Call 342-6006 for more information.