



Gifford Park's Pride

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

December 1997

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Historically Speaking....

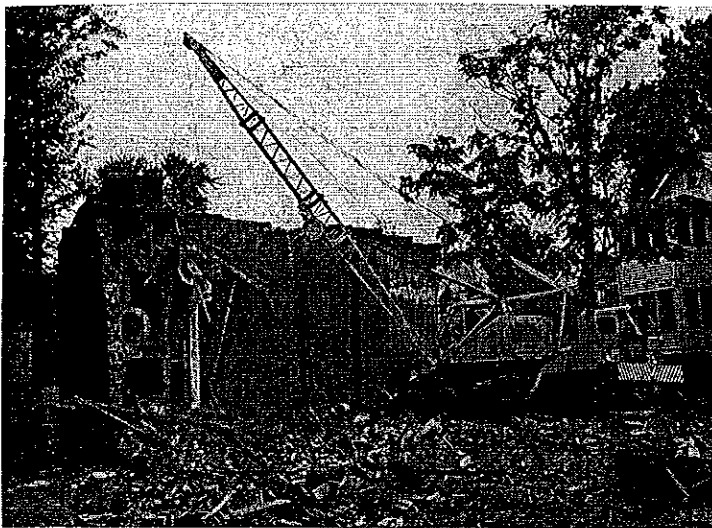
Going---Going---GONE!

The old Circle Theater in the middle of the block on 33rd between California and Cass has fallen to the wrecking ball. A big yellow crane appeared on Friday, the 17th of October and put a large hole in the middle of the building. On succeeding days a bulldozer and wrecking ball ate their way through until only the front remained, and that was leveled on Saturday morning, the 28th.

The theater was built in the late 1920's and enjoyed great popularity with its Saturday afternoon thriller movies of Tom Mix and Johnny Weissmuller and weekly "Bank Nights" and "China Give-aways." With the advent of TV in the 1950's, the theater declined and ceased operation in about 1953. The building became a dry-cleaning establishment and storage facility, but even that had long since closed.

What's next for the property?

by Eva Swanson



The Circle Theater finally fell victim to the wrecking ball last month. As of yet, there are no plans for the vacant lot.

Photo by Eva Swanson.

**Please Note:
Holiday Banquet Will Be
Thursday Dec 11
(No Meeting Dec 4!)**

**January Meeting:
Thursday, January 8
(No meeting Jan. 1!)**

Next Meeting

**Thursday, December 11th
7:00 P.M.**



Holiday Banquet

**St. Joseph's Hospital
Glassed-In Area of Cafeteria**

FREE PARKING

**See Page 3 for details on
the Holiday Banquet!**



GPNA NeedsYOU!

**How can you get involved in
YOUR neighborhood association?**

See Page 4 for details

GPNA OFFICERS**PRESIDENT**

Jim Wilwerding 351-1344

VICE PRESIDENT

Mike Bacone 344-3233

RECORDING SECRETARY

Shirley Bates 345-8430

TREASURER

Jean Peck 344-0722

COMMITTEE CHAIRS**ADVERTISING**

Dor Sweazy 345-0125

CLEAN-UP

Chris Foster 342-6006

COMPLIANCE

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

COURTESY

Candy Bacone 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 Bacone 344-3233

PARK

Mike Bacone 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 351-1344

A Message From The President

By the time you read this Thanksgiving will be over, and Christmas will be coming soon, but after reading the article last month, I thought a few additional people needed to be recognized and thanked.

Subby Anzaldo, our city councilman, is well-known to all our members, and has always advanced our cause in city government. He has also been instrumental in promoting our area when the plans for paving streets have been made. Certainly our neighborhood has been improved through his efforts.

Ken Taylor, from the city planning department, has been very cooperative and understanding when discussing the particular problems we face in our neighborhood in relation to code enforcement and violations of city ordinances. Enforcement activities from that department have also contributed to improvements in our neighborhood.

The **Omaha Police Department** has also been very helpful in identifying undesirable situations and working to resolve problems. In particular I would like to recognize **Captain Don Thorsen, Lieutenant John Friend, Officers Mike Paul and George Merithew**, and the many other officers who assisted in dealing with the problems around 33rd and California last summer, and who continue to work to address problems we face with disturbances and motor vehicle violations.

I know there are some members, and many non-members in the area, who feel that our efforts to improve enforcement of housing codes and motor vehicle regulations are inappropriate. I believe that these activities are crucial to improving the present quality of life in our area. We must also look to the future, and decide what we want of our neighborhood. I don't think we want dilapidated, run down houses. I don't think we want over-crowded housing, with cars parked on sidewalks and front lawns. I don't think we want junk cars parked in driveways, in yards, and on the street. I don't think we want litter piled in yards, nor do we want waist-high weeds growing in yards. I know I feel better walking or driving through the neighborhood when I see well-kept houses and yards. Perhaps more importantly, I suspect most people who consider moving into the neighborhood find these types of problems to be significant negative factors in the decision to purchase or rent in the neighborhood. If we are to continue to attract newcomers to the neighborhood we need to make and keep the neighborhood attractive. Where owners fail to keep property in a reasonable state of repair, or pile litter in the yard, or park vehicles in yards or across the sidewalks, or accumulate junk vehicles on property, we need to work towards improvements.

Our newsletter is called **Gifford Park's Pride**, and many discussions have been held at our meetings as to whether this is appropriate. I think it is. I don't mean pride in the sense of boasting, or exaggerating, but rather a quiet recognition of the positive aspects of our group and our neighborhood. I think the group has had a very strong positive influence on quality of life in our neighborhood, and through your continued efforts, will continue to do so. Happy Holidays to you all.

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.

*The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
requests your presence at the*

9th Annual Holiday Banquet

*to be held
at 7 p.m. on December 11th
at St. Joseph's Hospital
601 N. 30th Street
in the glassed-in dining room
south of the cafeteria.*

*St. Joseph's Hospital graciously
demonstrates its support of the
GPNA by hosting this annual event
for members. Food catering by
Marriott Host Services.*

*There is no cost - you just need
to be a GPNA member.*

SAINT JOSEPH HOSPITAL
AT CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER



What's Happening in the Neighborhood ...

The GPNA would like to thank **Ken Taylor**, city planning department, for speaking at the November general meeting. The December meeting will be the annual **Holiday Banquet** (see notice at left). Mark your new 1998 calendar for the January meeting, which will be held on Thursday, January 8 (there will be no meeting on New Year's Day, January 1).

Concerning the cleanup from the October snowstorm, if anyone still needs help moving fallen tree branches to the curb, please contact **Jim Wilwending** at 551-1344.

The GPNA sends its congratulations and best wishes to **Sandy Erickson** and **Mark Saner**. The couple was married on September 13th in Remsen, IA.

The GPNA offers its condolences to the family and friends of **Jerry Reiger**, who recently passed away. Jerry was a long-time member who participated in many GPNA activities.

Haunted House a "Scream"

For the third straight year, Pi Kappa Alpha turned its fraternity residence into a Halloween haunted house for neighborhood children on Thursday night, October 30th. Despite the snowstorm earlier in the week, over 100 kids showed up to tour the house and enjoy the treats and refreshments. The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association would like to thank the PKA fraternity from Creighton University for hosting the event, and several GPNA members who donated some of the treats and refreshments. For the Gifford Park neighborhood children, it was a night to remember!



"Ghouls" like this PKA fraternity member greeted over 100 neighborhood kids at the haunted house.

After The Storm

Weren't you glad to see that our area was included in phase one of the storm cleanup project? It was very gratifying to see the contractors going to work in our neighborhood picking up the mounds of branches and brush from the curbs. I wasn't sure that I would ever see the street from my house again. It certainly is nice to be able to walk on the sidewalk again, instead of walking in the street. If the contractor succeeds in completing the cleanup in the time projected, it will be amazing.

Personally, I spent some time Saturday picking up the small branches and leaves that were left after the contractor went by. I do not mention this as a complaint. Having hauled the equivalent of three to four pickup loads to the curb, I was left with a couple of garbage cans full, certainly a small fraction of the total. Expecting the contractor to pick up the hundreds (perhaps thousands) of truckloads of tree branches and then spend time sweeping and raking would be unreasonable. My front yard has finally returned pretty much to normal, so long as you don't look up, anyway. If you haven't yet taken the time to complete the cleanup, you would be doing the neighborhood a favor by finishing up the job that the contractors have started.

by Jim Wilwerding

Let There Be Lights

It's time to think about beautifying your neighborhood by putting up some outside Christmas lights. With the large number of decorations and lights now available, little effort is required and the cost is relatively low. Even a few lights in a window can do a lot toward brightening up your street. Please do your part to make **your** neighborhood a more attractive place in which to live.

YOU Can Help!

At the November GPNA executive committee meeting, three committees were created: Membership, Calling, and Meeting. Volunteers are needed to assist committee chairs with various tasks. The **Membership Committee** needs volunteers to help with the annual membership drive and assist in maintaining current membership files. If you are interested in helping with membership, please call **Chris Foster** at 342-6006. The **Calling Committee** is responsible for contacting members and reminding them of upcoming meetings or special events. The **Meeting Committee** will assist in selecting speakers and topics for the general meetings and contacting these individuals to make any necessary arrangements. If you are interested in helping with the Calling or Meeting Committee, call **Jim Wilwerding** at 551-1344.



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 _____