



Gifford Park's Pride

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

October 1998

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

GPNA Fall Clean-up Scheduled For October 24th

The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association's annual Fall Clean-up has been scheduled for **Saturday, October 24, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.** in Gifford Park. As in the past, the Fall Clean-up is for GPNA members only, or people who donate their time or money to the clean-up. Activities planned include: **neighborhood and park clean-up, dumpsters in Gifford Park, membership and donation drive, recycling, Halloween pumpkins, and a park picnic.** We always need volunteer help with providing pickup trucks for hauling, monitoring/packing dumpsters, and especially picking up your own streets and yards.

PLEASE NOTE: It is very important for you to call the phone numbers listed below **BEFORE** clean-up day if you need a volunteer to pick up trash - we will prioritize hauling based on your call. There will be a \$10 handling charge for appliances that contain refrigerant (freon), and \$1 handling charge for each tire. **Tree brush will NOT be accepted** for the Fall Clean-up...save it for the Spring Clean-up. If you have excessive trash (i.e. several truckloads) we may request a small donation to help defray the cost of dumpster rental. Please call **Chris (342-6006), Terry (342-2795), Leo (345-1433), or Jim (551-1344)** for more information or if you can assist with this year's Fall Clean-up. Let's all pitch in and help spruce up the Gifford Park neighborhood before old man winter arrives (hopefully it won't be the day after the Clean-up this year!)

Next Meeting

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

**Guest Speaker:
Donald Carey
Omaha Police Chief**

**St. Joseph Hospital
Dining Rooms A,B, and C**

Historically Speaking...

Carl A. Swanson

The man who put Swanson TV Dinners in everyone's freezer, Carl A Swanson, lived for a time in the Gifford Park neighborhood: first at 3321 California from about 1908-1909 and then at 421 North 31st Street until about 1917. He was born in Sweden in 1873 and immigrated to the U.S. in 1896 wearing a tag saying, "Carl Swanson, Swedish. Send me to Omaha. I speak no English." Cora and Hanna, his older sisters, had followed relatives to Nebraska, and they had sent Carl money for his journey. He made the trip on \$68.

In the language of the day, he was a "green-horn"—one of the greenest. He worked on a farm until he had learned a little English. Then he came to Omaha to be a clerk in a grocery store. He also waited tables at the Merchant's Restaurant at 18th and Dodge.

Since young Swanson had a good head for figures, which he improved by study at night school, the grocer made him a bookkeeper. In 1900 he became a partner in a small butter and egg concern headed by John P. Jerpe, which had a total capital of \$456. The partnership grew

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Kids of the Gifford Park Neighborhood:

Have a safe and happy Halloween!

**See Page 4 for more information about
the PKA Fraternity Haunted House!**



GPNA OFFICERS**PRESIDENT**

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

VICE PRESIDENT

Chris Foster 342-6006

RECORDING SECRETARY

Jean Peck 344-0722

TREASURER

Sam Hansen 341-8939

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

MEMBERSHIP

Chris Foster 342-6006

NEWSLETTER

Sus 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

TOOL LENDING

Tom Rose 932-6191

WATCH GROUP

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

WEEDS & LITTER

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

From the Desk of the President

By the time you read this, summer will be officially over, though I tend to think that summer is over when school starts. So, here at GPNA that means that fall cleanup is just around the corner. As mentioned in last month's column, the cleanup is scheduled for October 24, 1998. I expect further details will be provided elsewhere in the newsletter. I hope we will see our usual crowd of volunteers, with some new faces added. We anticipate a picnic lunch in the park, and free pumpkins for the kiddies. Start gathering your excess treasure now. I have.

I would like to thank **Judy Johns** and **Officer Brian Smith** for speaking at the September meeting. Judy and Officer Smith work at the Community Resource Center of the Omaha Police Department, and provided some tips and information about how to report problems, how quickly to expect a response, and the types of problems that are usually experienced in neighborhoods. I understand that Judy was feeling a little under the weather the day of the meeting, so her extra effort in attending is greatly appreciated.

Barring unforeseen circumstances, we will have the new Chief of Police, **Donald Carey**, as our guest speaker at the October meeting. I am sure you have all read the extensive coverage of Chief Carey's past accomplishments with other police departments as reported in the **World-Herald**. I look forward to hearing his philosophy of policing, as well as any plans he may have for changing the way the police department operates.

Some of you may think I am overdosing on the police department, having speakers from the police department in consecutive months. I think it would be hard to overstate the importance of effective police operations in maintaining and improving the quality of life in our neighborhood. Certainly the prospect of gang violence can adversely impact us, and our major defense against gang violence is the police department. But we also rely on proper action from the police department in dealing with many of the major and minor annoyances in life as well. Junk cars, whether on private property or on public property, are controlled by the police department. Improperly parked vehicles are also under the control of the police department as are speeders, unlicensed vehicles being driven, and unlicensed drivers. Noise violations are also handled by the police department, as are domestic disturbances. If the police department is effective in being present in the community, most of the problems tend to be minimal simply due to the presence of the police. When problems occur, if the police department handles the problem expeditiously, then the negative effect on the community is minimized. On the other hand, if problems go unresolved, then our standard of living is diminished.

Based on the published stories about the new chief, I am optimistic that there will be a renewed emphasis on maintaining a police presence in the community. Certainly, since the chief has taken office, I have seen a significant number of officers patrolling in our area, something that was lacking in the past. Whether this is a consequence of Chief Carey taking office, or a byproduct of some other initiative, I can't say. But it is nice to see a police officer driving by every now and then.

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**TOOL
LENDING
HOTLINE**


Tom 932-6191

Mike 344-3233

Chris 342-6006

Ron 558-6027

Mowers - \$5

Rent for most tools - \$3



From the Desk of the President

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As mentioned last month, I tend to walk a fair amount. In addition to providing some exercise, this also provides uninterrupted time to think. I have been pondering from time to time about the direction the neighborhood association should be going. In some respects, I feel that I haven't really brought anything new to the group since being elected. For the most part, we have continued to do the same things that we have been doing. While I think it is important to continue the various monitoring and reporting activities, this apparently isn't enough to get much participation from the members, since the same people continue to do the same things. If you have any ideas about other activities the association should be doing, I would appreciate it if you would bring your ideas forward. This should not be construed as any criticism of the group's present activities, as I personally appreciate all the work that is being done, but I can't help thinking that there is room for improvement, so step right up and speak your peace. Of course, you will be asked to participate in any activities you suggest, but to paraphrase an old saying, if you want something done right, you need to do it yourself. I would also appreciate suggestions about future guest speakers, since I have just about run out of ideas.

Hope to see you at the meeting.

by Jim Wilwerding

Historically Speaking...Carl A. Swanson

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and prospered. The original store was at 318 South 11th St. In 1921 the company built a new building at 12th and Douglas, and Swanson bought out Jerpe. Under Swanson's leadership, the Jerpe Commission Company expanded, met the demands of the depression and war years, and developed oleomargarine, powdered eggs and canned chicken and turkey. They convinced Midwest farmers that chickens could be raised profitably in large numbers and that this could become a year-round production instead of a seasonal business. Sales kept rising and in 1942 total sales were 21.6 million. Swanson had two sons, Gilbert and Clarke, who joined the business in 1944 making it C. A. Swanson & Sons. As the market for convenience foods accelerated, they expanded into frozen foods, becoming the first to offer frozen TV dinners.

Carl Swanson died in 1949 at the age of 70. The sons carried on, with total sales passing \$100 million in 1955 at the time of the Swanson Company's acquisition by Campbell Soup Company. Mrs. Swanson, whose name was Caroline, died in 1954 at age 71. She was the daughter of German immigrants who made and sold women's hats. Besides the sons, they also had a daughter, Gretchen.

The Swanson name is very prominent in Omaha, as Carl contributed a great deal to Omaha life. There is a library, an elementary school, a dormitory at Creighton University, a Midland College Science Building, special section at Immanuel Hospital and Clarkson Hospital, and more named after him. Next time you open a chicken or turkey pot pie or a TV dinner you can remember that Swanson was just "one of the neighbors."

by Eva Swanson (no relation!)

What's Happening in the Neighborhood ...

The GPNA sends best wishes for a speedy recovery to long-time member **Ed Hendershot**, who is recuperating from leg surgery. **Chris Foster** reports that Ed is feeling better and is doing well.

Landmarks, Inc. is sponsoring its 4th annual bicycle tour of Omaha's historic parks and boulevards. The ride will be held **Sunday, October 4**, at **12:30 p.m.** starting at **Walnut Hill Reservoir**, 38th and Lafayette Ave. The cost is \$10, and both a short and long route will be available. All participants will be required to complete an accident and waiver release of liability form and wear a helmet.

St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 40th and Webster, will be holding its 25th annual festival, **Cathedralfest**, on **Sunday, October 4, 1998** from **noon until 7 p.m.** The festival features a raffle for valuable prizes, spaghetti dinner, ethnic foods, games and rides, crafts, white elephant and plant booths, and homemade items.

The GPNA thanks **Bonnie and Terry** of **B & L Thrift Store**, who help clean up the area south of 33rd and California.



Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands You Can Help

Take a little time to make a big difference in a child's life. In the time it takes to go to a movie or watch a ball game on TV, you can become a part of a child's life. Volunteer today to be a Big Brother or sister. Please call us at **330-2449**. You give a little - they get a lot. Big Brothers Big Sisters is also looking for girls between the ages of 7-15 from single parent families to be little sisters in the program.



4th Annual Haunted House

Where:
PKA House
3100 Chicago St.

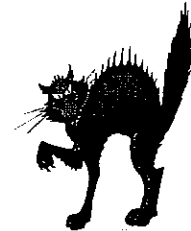


When:
Thursday, Oct. 29
7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

hosted by:
*Pi Kappa Alpha (PKA) Creighton Fraternity
Gifford Park Neighborhood Association*



All Neighborhood Children
And Parents Are Welcome to
Stop By For Refreshments
And Trick-or-Treats!



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 _____

This is the last issue of the GPNA newsletter you will receive in the mail if....

you haven't renewed your GPNA membership for 1998-1999. The cost is minimal - \$8 for a family, \$5 for an individual, and \$25 for a business membership. This month's Fall Clean-up alone is worth the cost of the membership. Many other programs aimed at improving the neighborhood are also supported by your membership dollars. Please send in your membership now and show your support!