



Gifford Park's Pride

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

June 1999

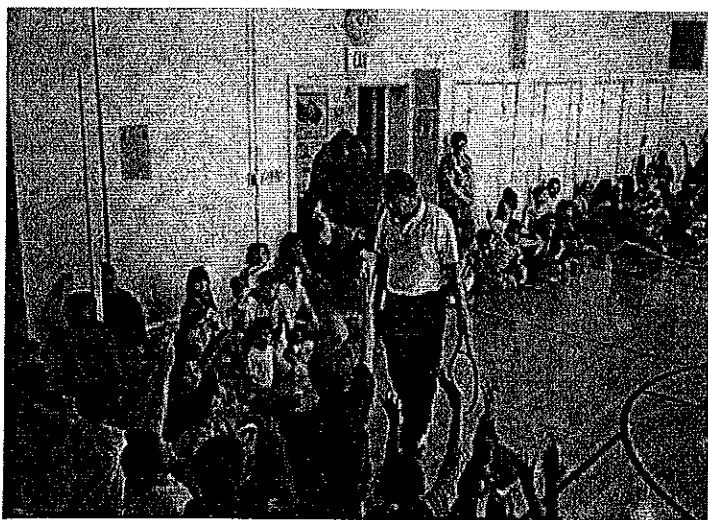
A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Tennis Blitz Hits Yates, Gifford Park

Over 200 students and teachers were introduced to tennis at Yates Academy on Thursday, May 13. Two of Omaha's top tennis pros, Ed Hobbs and Rick Faust, ran the clinic in the school gymnasium. A volleyball net was used for the tennis net. Both students and teachers participated - the students enjoyed seeing their favorite teachers try to keep a rally going. Thanks to Ed and Rick for putting on a great program. Thanks also to Yates Academy Principal Jo Kubik for the last minute scheduling and coordination.

Two days later on Saturday, May 15, Gifford Park hosted a free 1 1/2 hour tennis blitz which thirty five children attended. Because of the hot and humid weather, everyone was pretty tired at the end. Many thanks to the volunteers who kept the kids busy: **Chris, Sallie, Jackie, Jenny, and Willie Foster, Leo, Terry, Jim, and Julie Wilwerding, Roger Freeman, Betty Tanner, Gary Bothe, Pam Brady, and Betty Sladen.**

Remember, Sun Dawgs starts soon and tennis racquets and balls will be available to use from the Sun Dawg shack. Also, the GPNA plans to do the annual summer tennis program in August. See page 4 for pictures from the Gifford Park tennis lesson.



Tennis pro Ed Hubbs searches for volunteers from the student body at Yates Academy for his next demonstration. Over 200 students learned some fundamental principles of the sport.

Next Meeting

**Thursday, June 3
7:00 P.M.**

**Election of Officers
for 1999 - 2000**

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

Note: No July Meeting

Nominating Committee Proposes Slate for 1999/2000

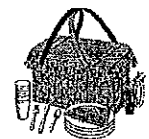
The following individuals have been selected as the proposed slate of officers of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association for the 1999/2000 year-long term:

President:	Chris Foster
Vice-President:	Brad Bogard
Recording Secretary:	Jean Peck
Treasurer:	Sandy Saner

This slate will be placed in nomination at the June general meeting for a vote, so please plan to attend.

Reminder: You must be a GPNA member to vote!

*Have a Safe and
Fun Summer!*



GPNA OFFICERS**PRESIDENT**

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

VICE PRESIDENT

Chris Foster 342-6006

RECORDING SECRETARY

Jean Peck 344-0722

TREASURER

Sandy Sauer 341-8939

COMMITTEE CHAIRS**ADVERTISING**

Dar Sweazy 345-0125

CLEAN-UP

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

COMPLIANCE

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

COURTESY

Candy Bacome 933-7506

GRAFFITI

Maureen Calabro 345-7238

HISTORIAN

Eva Swanson 345-1707

MEMBERSHIP

Chris Foster 342-6006

NEWSLETTER

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Mike Bacome 933-7506

PARK

Mike Bacome 933-7506

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

YATES ACADEMY LIAISON

Dana Carlton 346-4575

From the Desk of the President

Well, here we are in June. As you all know, we will be holding the election of officers this month. As such, this will be my last article as president.

In many ways the past two years have gone by quickly. Two Holiday Banquets, four cleanups, two Easter Egg Hunts, two tennis programs, and forty-odd meetings, general and Board, came and went. Along the way I got to know many of our members, along with many people in various city agencies. I thought about thanking the people who have taken an active part in assuring the success of the Association, but found I ran out of room rather quickly. In particular I would like to thank my wife, Kathleen, for being understanding and supportive of my efforts as president. Most of the rest know who you are. The success the Association experienced in the past two years has largely been through the efforts of these people. When you read the newsletter, look at the names on the first inside page, where it lists the officers and the various committees. When you read an article about a particular activity, note the names of participants. These are the people who consider the activities of the Association important enough to dedicate their time and efforts towards achieving success. If you don't see your name there, think about getting more involved, especially if you think that the Association is not addressing some particular concern. We are always looking for ways to improve our neighborhood, and people willing to make the effort to facilitate these improvements.

The big disappointment in May was the passage of the School Bond. According to the plan, neighborhood students will now be assigned to Kellom School, which will probably require busing, and the Yates building will be used for special education students. Yates School has been a neighborhood school for many generations, and it is sad to see that tradition come to an end. It is hard to see how busing our students to a school outside their neighborhood will provide them with a better education, and removing them from their neighborhood is likely to reduce the positive social aspects of school. The closing of the school to neighborhood students is certainly not good for the neighborhood. I guess the best that we can hope for is for the Omaha School Board to reconsider this decision at some time in the future, and provide a neighborhood school for our children. As we continue to attract young families with children, the need will only increase.

I would ask everyone in the area to get more involved in addressing the graffiti problem. As I walked to work this spring, I noted graffiti in a number of areas. I tended to think that the folks in the specific areas would notice it too and turn it in. Apparently not, since some of it sat for weeks and weeks. Now, whenever I see it, I turn it in. Usually the city seems able to get to it in a few days. While I don't think graffiti signals a takeover of the neighborhood by gangs, I think it is undesirable for a couple of reasons. First, it may give the wrong impression to visitors thinking of moving into the area. Second, taggers may see it as a barometer of how committed residents are to maintaining an area. If you see graffiti, note the location, color, and what it says, if it is legible, and call the Mayor's Hotline at 444-5555. The call takes maybe 30 seconds.

There is a theory in neighborhood improvement circles, referred to as the "broken

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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.

From the Desk of the President . . .

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window" theory. It says that if you have a broken window in a building, and you don't fix it, pretty soon all the windows in the building will be broken. The theory goes much beyond windows, of course. If one resident in an area parks a car on the sidewalk, and nothing is done about it, pretty soon you see more. If one lawn goes unmowed, and nothing is done about it, soon you'll see more. Unlicensed cars beget more. Junk cars will accumulate if there is no intervention. Graffiti that is not removed will generate more graffiti. While most of these problems tend to be trivial, taken collectively they can be indicative of the quality of life in a neighborhood. Also, as one officer related to me during the crime survey along 33rd Street, criminals tend to be adaptive. If criminals perceive that an area is lax on law enforcement, or residents don't appear to be concerned about what happens to the neighborhood, they see an opportunity for expanded criminal activity. Many of the above problems might constitute positive indications for criminals, just as surely as they constitute negative indications to people who live here or are thinking about living here.

Come to the meetings, if for no other reason than to get acquainted with the other members. If you have neighbors who are not members, encourage them to join. When you see a problem that is not being resolved, do something about it.

Hope to see you at the meetings.

by Jim Wilwerding

What's Happening in the Neighborhood . . .

Two churches near the Gifford Park neighborhood are offering a variety of programs this summer. For over 25 years, **Augustana Lutheran Church, 3647 Lafayette Ave.**, has offered a summer program for youth that includes field trips, swimming and skating, indoor and outdoor games, music and art, faith stories, career days, nutritious snacks, and much more. The dates for this summer's **Project Embrace** will be **June 14th - July 30th**. Costs will be \$40.00, with scholarships available. Children ages 5-7 will meet in the morning and children ages 8-13 will meet in the afternoon. For information and registration, contact **Gwen Watson** at 551-4728.

continued

What's Happening in the Neighborhood . . .

continued

First Central Congregational Church, 421 South 36th St., will be holding a **Vacation Church School** from **June 17 to 20, 1999**. All are welcome - come for art, games, drama, songs, and fun. Activities will be provided for all ages, including adult programs and nursery care. Hours are June 17 & 18: 5:30 - 8:30 p.m., June 19: 4:00 - 8:00 p.m., including a celebration party, and June 20: 9:15 - noon, wrap-up activities as part of regular church school and worship. A light supper will be provided each evening. Registration fee is \$2.00 per person or \$5.00 per family. Registration forms are available in the church office or by calling **345-1533**.

Again this year, First Central is presenting a series of noon organ concerts every Tuesday in July. The **Tuesday Noon Concerts** are free and begin at noon. For those who want to stop for lunch before the concert, the church will have brown bag lunches available for \$5.00 beginning at 11:15 a.m. First Central's Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ was restored and rededicated last year, and is known as one of the finest pipe organs throughout the region.

City of Omaha Parks & Recreation Sun Dawg Summer Fun Youth Program

Monday - Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Beginning June 14- August 6

No Cost Activities for kids
ages 6 - 15 include:

**Fun, sports, games, reading, arts
and crafts, trips,
camp programs, swimming and
more.**

See you
at the
**Gifford Park
Sun Dawg
Shack**



Tennis Blitz Hits Yates, Gifford Park . . . continued from page 1



Some of the participants at the one day lesson show off their tennis racquets. Who knows if the next Pete Sampras or Venus Williams is starting his or her tennis career here on the Gifford Park tennis court? Thanks to all those members and neighbors who contributed their used racquets to the tennis program.



The Gifford Park Tennis "Pros" (Volunteer Instructors) gather on the court for a group picture. The volunteers had a great time participating in drills with the kids and giving them some basic tennis instruction. Thanks to Chris Foster who was involved in both the Yates and Gifford Park events.

Have You Renewed Your Membership Yet?

The GPNA 1999-2000 membership year begins June 1. If you have been a member of GPNA in the past, we appreciate your support and hope you will renew your membership if you haven't already done so. If you have not been a member, we encourage you to consider joining. Your membership helps pay for this newsletter, neighborhood cleanups, youth activities, and other worthwhile programs. **Please join or renew your membership today!**

Weeds...how tall is too tall?

City of Omaha code states that weeds (or any vegetation) cannot be over 18" tall. The following steps can be taken if this code is violated:

- A complaint can be filed by anyone
- A City Inspector will send the property owner a 10 day notice to cut the weeds
- If the owner does not respond, the address is put on a mowing list
- Property will be mowed and the owner will be charged according to the size of job



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) *continued on page 4*

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 _____