



# Gifford Park's Pride

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

March 2000

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

## OPD Reorganization Affects Beat Patrol Officer Assignments

In our contacts with the police department we have often questioned the allocation of officers. Our members and the watch group observed problems more frequently on weekend evenings, and the response time to non-emergency calls was often several hours. We wondered if there shouldn't be more officers assigned to the weekend evenings to handle the perceived increase in workload. Recent crime analysis by the police department bore out our informal conclusion. There are more calls and more problems on weekend evenings. Because of the method of staffing required by the police contract, staffing on weekend evenings tended to be lower than at other times, meaning that fewer officers were available to handle more calls and problems.

At a meeting at the Northeast Precinct on February 22, Captain Pitman Foxall discussed some of the changes that will go into effect March 5. The goals are to reduce response times to calls and provide additional time for officers to be more pro-active. One aspect of the plan allocates four beat officers to each of two shifts. The beat officers will be expected to cover 7 general areas, rotating assignments on a random basis, and will be expected to spend most of their time handling observed problems rather than being tied to radio calls. Ours is one of the areas that will be given special attention. In addition, five officers and one sergeant volunteered to work from 5 PM to 3 AM 4 days a week (specifically including the weekend evenings) to help handle calls, and

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## Next Meeting

Thursday, March 2  
7:00 P.M.

## Guest Speaker:

**Jim Willett**

**Associate Vice President  
for Administration and  
Director of Facilities  
Creighton University  
The Creighton Campus  
Master Plan**

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

## Plans to Improve Gifford Park Unveiled at General Meeting

Pat Slaven, City of Omaha Parks Planner, presented a master plan to make major landscaping improvements in Gifford Park at last month's GPNA general meeting. The plan includes enhancing the park layout by planting street trees, evergreens, flowering ornamental trees, and low shrub beds. Other ideas to improve the park include changing the path of the walkways, removing the existing outdated play equipment, planting a flower bed south of the tennis court, and installing a basketball hoop for younger children like the one in the Joslyn Castle neighborhood's Clarkson Park. According to GPNA President **Chris Foster**, the implementation of this plan is dependent on receiving funding through a variety of grants, as no city money has been budgeted for this project. Phase I of this plan has been identified as tree planting, and the GPNA will apply for a grant from OPPD this March to begin the process. The GPNA would like to thank **Rob Parolek**, Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association President and neighborhood advocate, who "got the ball rolling" and worked with Pat to prepare this plan. See Page 6 for a blueprint of the Gifford Park Master Plan.

## 11th Annual GPNA Easter Egg Hunt



Saturday, April 22nd  
Noon (Sharp!)  
Rain or Shine  
at Gifford Park  
Children Ages 12 &  
Under

**Bring Your Easter Baskets  
& Be Ready To Hunt!**

**GPNA OFFICERS****PRESIDENT**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Brad Bogard 342-2520

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

Jean Peck 344-0722

**TREASURER**

Sandy Sauer 341-8939

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS****ADVERTISING**

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**CLEAN-UP**

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

**COMPLIANCE**

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

**COURTESY**

Candy Bâcome 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 Bâcome 933-7506

**PARK**

Roger Freeman 557-2914

**PARKING VIOLATIONS**

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

**TOOL LENDING**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**WATCH GROUP**

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

**WEEDS & LITTER**

Jim Wilwerding 551-1341

**KELLOM SCHOOL LIAISON**

Dana Carlton 346-4575

**The President's Column**

Spring is just about here and we have many items to let everyone know about. We hope you plan to attend the next neighborhood association meeting **Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at St. Joseph's Hospital** (dining rooms A, B and C – next to the cafeteria). Guest speaker **Jim Willett, Associate V.P. with Creighton University**, will talk about Creighton's master plans for their campus. As mentioned last month Creighton would like to close or at least significantly diminish Burt Street from roughly 30<sup>th</sup> Street to downtown. Cuming Street might be converted to two-way traffic. We all know the dangerous interstate entrance intersection on Burt Street – our neighborhood kids have to walk this route to Kellom. The University wants to make Burt Street greenspace for their campus and make it safer for students walking. The proposed downtown sports arena and convention center will require changes to streets, bridges and properties near downtown also. As many of you know Creighton University also owns a number of properties in our neighborhood, particularly east of 33<sup>rd</sup> Street. They do a good job of maintaining these properties. What do they plan to do with them? What direction is Creighton looking to build? Will there be a path for Kellom students to walk if Burt Street is closed? Come to the meeting and find out.

Also at the March meeting we will discuss the upcoming Spring Cleanup and any changes that might affect this operation. **Mike Wilwerding** has graciously volunteered to head up the cleanup again. Remember we need everyone's help in getting friends and neighbors on your own block to get involved in the cleanup. And I want to mention that again this year **Shelly Rose** has volunteered to head up the Easter Egg Hunt in Gifford Park on Saturday, April 22 at noon sharp. Shelly does a great job of recruiting the loads of candy from area businesses. Other topics we plan to briefly discuss are the (free) IRS Tax Help program, police activities, park master plan, youth activities and ideas for Gifford Park Day. As always anyone is encouraged to bring up any other topics or concerns that are appropriate for the meeting. **Everyone (including children) is welcome to attend, you do not have to be a member.** As always St. Joseph's Hospital provides refreshments. Call one of the phone numbers listed to the left if you need a ride, we will try to help.

A big thanks to **Pat Slaven, Omaha Parks Department**, for presenting diagrams of the Gifford Park master plan at the February meeting. Those attending had lots of questions and ideas. Pat will incorporate these into the plan. We have included a park diagram in this newsletter. Please contact us with your ideas so we can begin implementation of the plan this spring, starting with tree planting. One of the things the GPNA is hoping to do is to use Gifford Park for more events. In addition to neighborhood cleanups, Easter Egg Hunt, Tennis Program, Softball clinic, Sun Dawgs summer youth program, we would like to add baseball/softball league games, the Show Wagon, bike rodeo and a Gifford Park Day.

Let me focus on **Gifford Park Day** for a moment. The purpose of this event is to have a social event to get neighbors together, encourage volunteer involvement and promote the neighborhood. Some of the ideas being discussed are a bike parade, youth and adult games, a raffle, clowns, face-painting, chalk painting, information booths, food & drinks, music, a fire-engine, prizes, balloons, small rides, and a few others. We are excited about planning this event because there are many benefits to the whole neighborhood – but we need your help. During the upcoming meetings the GPNA will ask for input and volunteers to help prepare, so please consider participating in any way you can.

Seems like many times we talk too much about police and crime activities, and not enough about the positive activities. The nature and reality of our neighborhood is such that police and crime activities are a high priority to residents. The GPNA always takes public safety issues very seriously since it affects people's quality of life. We

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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.*

## GPNA Officer Finds Neighborhood Builders Program Beneficial

For the past 3 Saturday mornings I have been attending **Neighborhood Builders** sponsored by Omaha's Weed & Seed Strategy. The program is designed to develop leadership skills. I was reluctant to give up my Saturday morning but decided to give it a try to see if the program was worthwhile. The program is held at St. Joseph Hospital and coffee is served so I thought I had a good chance of making it there by 8:30 a.m.

I was very impressed at the first session. Mary Irwin facilitated the program. Her enthusiasm is contagious. The program was well organized and we had speakers from other neighborhood associations who had been "in the trenches" and who had done some work problem solving or organized neighborhood activities, etc. We also worked on asset identification and neighborhood networking. The last speaker was Mayor Hal Daub who assured us the Mayor's Office would be supportive of our efforts to improve our neighborhoods. He also let us know that he could be available for a neighborhood walk.

Since the first session was worthwhile, I tried the second session. This one was even better than the first. I attended three mini-workshops. The first one was "Media Relations", where I met Sibyl Myers from the Omaha World-Herald and Carrie Murphy from KMTV. The second one was on grant writing. The third workshop I attended was "Project Impact" presented by Mark Foxall from the U.S. Attorney's office. This project is aimed at reducing youth gun violence in Omaha and is patterned after the successful Boston Gun Project. I left with the feeling that if necessary, I could write a Weed and Seed grant. Mr. Foxall's workshop left me hopeful that there are programs that work to reduce gun violence.

The third Saturday session was on problem solving. This session was more about role-playing and one-on-one neighbor relations. Most of this material I had previously been exposed to. Omaha Police Captain Infantino of the Northeast Precinct did speak at the end of the meeting and told us that at shift change March 5, 2000, there would be several beat officers with one being assigned to the 33<sup>rd</sup> & California St. area. This was wonderful news.

The last session will take place Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, and will cover Planning and Effective Management, and there will be an awards presentation.

All in all, I have found the program worthwhile and I have gotten some very informative handouts and ideas from other neighborhood organizations.

by Sandy Saner

## Free Tax Help Is Here Again

### For the Sixth Year in a Row!

Free tax help will once again be available at the **GPNA office** located to the south of J-N-J Grocery, 33rd & California St. **Everyone is welcome!** IRS representatives will provide free tax help for our neighborhood. Processing of basic tax returns will be available. Electronic filing may be available this year. Walk-in appointments are welcome, but priority will be given to those who call to schedule an appointment. Free tax help will be available on the following dates:

**Saturdays: April 1, 8, 15 11 am to 1 pm**  
**OR** **By Appointment**

For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call 551-3629.



## Charles R. Kilgore Jr. Attorney At Law

4913 Underwood Avenue

558-5000

Personal Injury Law  
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## California Bar & Pkg. 510 No. 33rd St.

Serving the Gifford Park  
Community since 1937  
Wayne and Peggy Hill,  
Proprietors



## Historically Speaking... Henry Doorly

Henry Doorly, as in the Henry Doorly Zoo, was a resident of the Gifford Park neighborhood for a short time. He and his wife, Margaret, lived at 137 and 139 North 32nd Avenue from about 1909 to 1914. Doorly was publisher and president of the World Publishing Company and at his death was Chairman of the Board. He was born in 1879 in Bridgewater, Barbados, British West Indies. His mother's ancestors had lived there for several hundred years. His father's father came to Barbados with the British Army. Henry came to Omaha by way of South Dakota, Wyoming, and Oklahoma working as a surveyor and draftsman for the Union Pacific. Upon becoming engaged, his future father-in-law, United States Representative Gilbert M. Hitchcock, who was the founder and publisher of the World-Herald, persuaded him to work for the newspaper as a police reporter and then as want ad manager. He had found his life's work! The paper was floundering financially, but with Doorly's hard work in advertising it eventually gained solid footing. On the death of Senator Hitchcock in 1934, Doorly became publisher and president. Doorly served the World-Herald for 58 years and guided the newspaper through times of drought, depression and war.

Doorly was proud of his American citizenship. During a heated political campaign Senator George Norris attacked the World Herald because he said its publisher was "an Englishman". To that, Doorly replied, "The 'Englishman' has been an American citizen for a quarter of a century and so far there is no alphabetical law which makes it a crime or misdemeanor to be a naturalized citizen."

During his time as publisher Doorly was the driving force behind many World-Herald policies and projects. Among them:

- The fight for public power to Omaha from 1939-1946
- Scrap collection drives from 1942-43 which earned the World-Herald a Pulitzer Prize for public service.
- Soil Conservation Awards, 1944.
- Traffic Safety campaign of 1952.
- Campaign to build Children's Memorial Hospital, 1943-48 for which he donated substantially of his private funds.
- Establishment of World War II Memorial Park.

When Henry Doorly died in 1961, his widow and family members supported the drive for a new Omaha Zoo. The old zoo, Riverview Park, was becoming a disgrace to the city. The proposal for a new zoo was aided by an early gift from Doorly and an additional gift of \$750,000 by Mrs. Doorly in memory of her husband. The Henry Doorly Zoo was opened in 1966 and has a world-wide reputation for excellence.

by Eva Swanson

## Branching Out FREE Street TREE Planting Program 2000 Guidelines

The Omaha World-Herald's "Branching Out Program" with help from the Nebraska Environmental Trust and the City of Omaha will plant free trees. If you are interested in having a tree planted within 20 feet of the curb line at your property, the application form will be available to fill out at the March and April GPNA general meetings. The deadline for applications is **ARBOR DAY, April 28, 2000.**

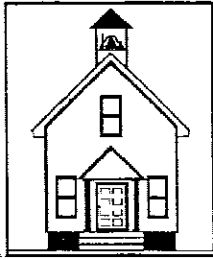
An inspector will look at the site. If the tree planting location complies with the guidelines which follow, the contractor will plant the tree starting April 1st. The trees will be 8 feet tall, bare root trees selected for their desirability as street trees.

### PLANTING SITE GUIDELINES

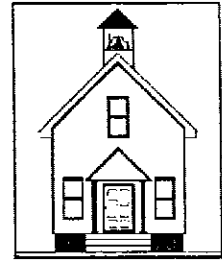
1. Trees will be planted along public streets within 20 ft. of the curb line.
2. The property owner is responsible to care for each tree after it is planted. A tree care pamphlet will be provided.
3. Trees will not be planted within 35 ft. of a street intersection or 15 ft. of a street light pole, under power lines, within 45 ft. of existing trees, closer than 3 ft. to any pavement, where there is new sod, or where construction activity is likely this year.

Tree species available include Catalupa, Tuliptree, Shamard Oak, River Birch, Crimson King Norway Maple, Red Oak, Ginkgo, Ohio Buckeye, and White Oak.

Trees are guaranteed for 2 growing seasons. If the tree dies it will be replaced the following spring; however the species available may differ. Replacements must be requested prior to March 1st each year.



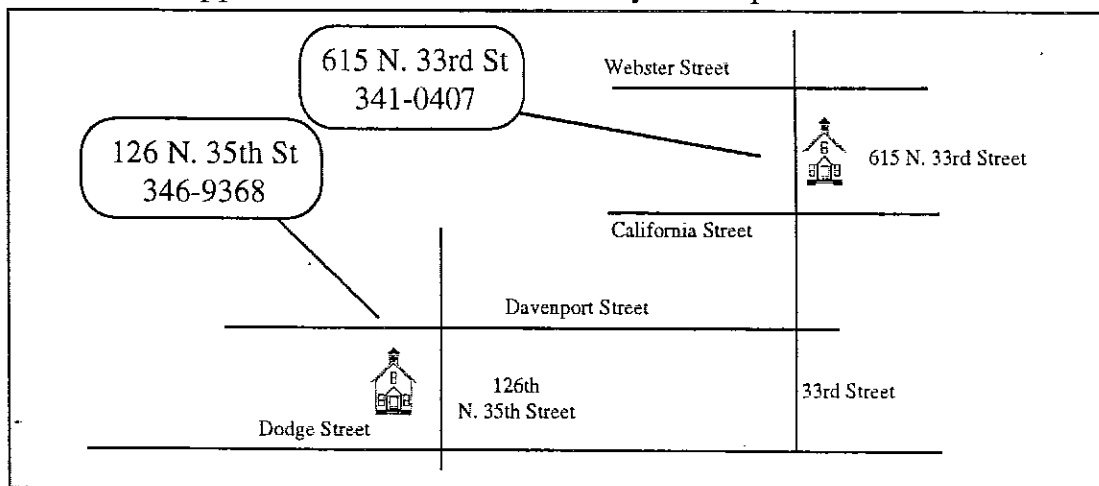
# NEBRASKA CHILDCARE CENTERS®








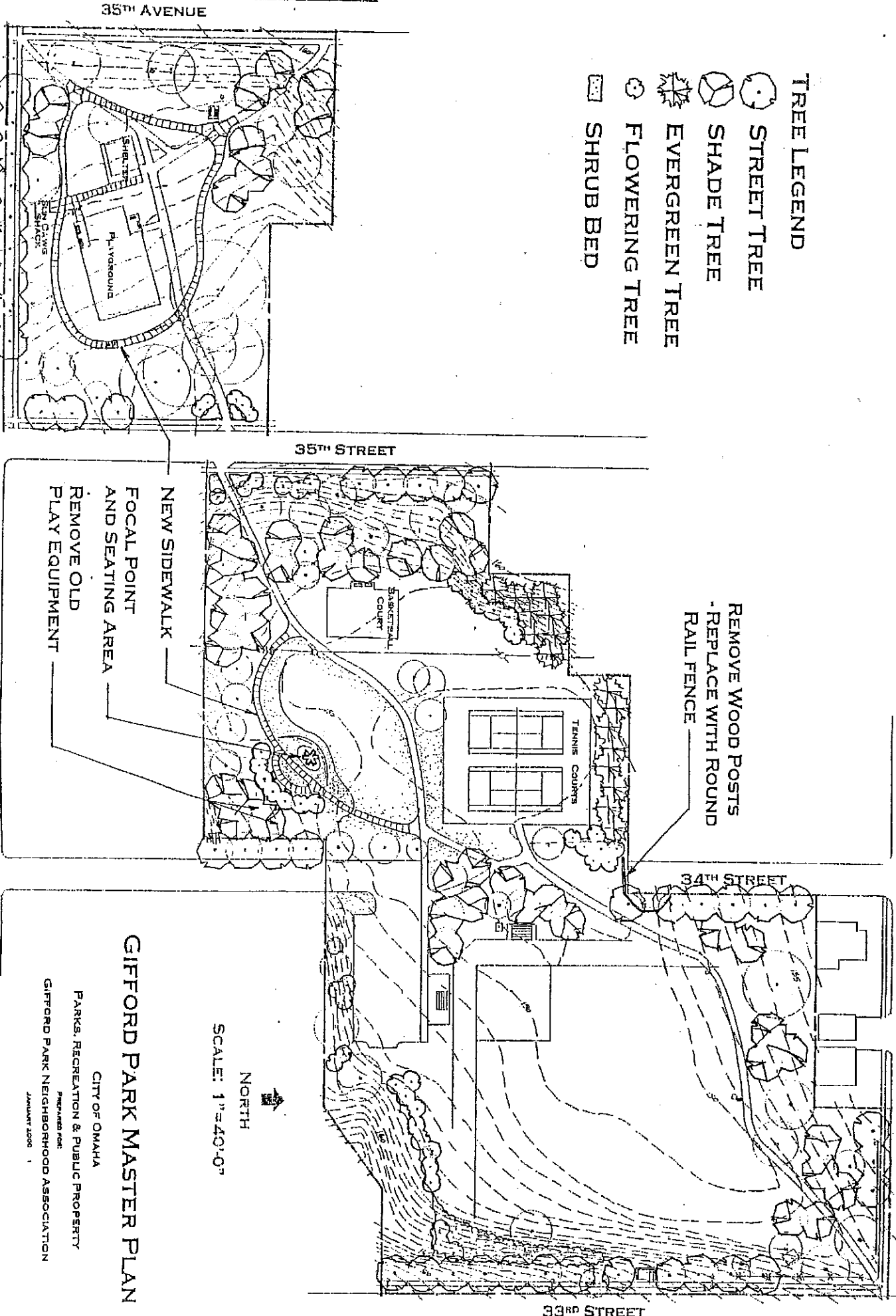
## Nebraska Childcare Centers offer:

- \* Quality childcare for children ages 6 weeks thru 12 years
- \* Developmentally Appropriate Activities
- \* Safe, State approved transportation
- \* U.S.D.A. approved food program including meals and snacks
- \* Client transportation to these schools: Kellom, Walnut Hill, Field Club, Dundee, Harrison, King Primary
- \* Saturday care at our corporate site

Appointments are not necessary so drop in for a visit



- TREE LEGEND**
-  STREET TREE
  -  SHADE TREE
  -  EVERGREEN TREE
  -  FLOWERING TREE
  -  SHRUB BED



NEW SIDEWALK  
FOCAL POINT  
AND SEATING AREA  
REMOVE OLD  
PLAY EQUIPMENT

REMOVE WOOD POSTS  
- REPLACE WITH ROUND  
RAIL FENCE

DAVENPORT STREET

NORTH  
SCALE: 1"=40.0'

**GIFFORD PARK MASTER PLAN**  
CITY OF OMAHA  
PARKS, RECREATION & PUBLIC PROPERTY  
PREPARED FOR:  
GIFFORD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
JANUARY 2000

**OPD Staffing...** *continued from page 1*

to act on observed problems as time allows. Response times for calls should decrease, and officers should have more time available to deal with observed problems. In addition, there will be a specific group in the Narcotics Unit that will be assigned to handling street-level drug dealing, which was previously handled by the Metro Unit. If successful, the changes will improve law enforcement and police presence in our area, which should in turn improve our quality of life.

*by Jim Wilwerding*

**It's Coming Soon...The Spring Cleanup**

Spring will be here before you know it (some may say it's been here all winter!) and that means it will be time for the annual GPNA Spring Neighborhood Cleanup. According to **Mike Wilwerding**, Cleanup Chairman, it is still too early for an exact date, but it's not too soon to start doing some spring cleaning in the house and yard with the cleanup in mind. As always, volunteers are needed to help make pick ups and fill the dumpsters. Look for more details about the cleanup in next month's edition of the newsletter.



**Happy St. Patrick's Day!**



**California Tacos & More**

*Homemade-Mexican Food*

**342-0212**

**33rd & California Street**

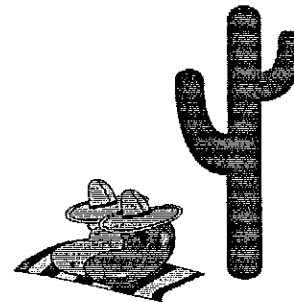
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**Monday - Saturday: 11a.m. - 9 p.m.**

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*California*

**Tacos & More**



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**7:00 AM - 10:00 PM Monday thru Thursday**

**7:00 AM - 11:00 PM Friday thru Saturday**

**8:00 AM - 10:00 PM Sunday**



