



# Gifford Park's Pride

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

August 2000

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

## Neighborhood Walk/Cleanup Scheduled For August 4

The GPNA is asking everyone to join us in our next neighborhood walk **Friday August 4, 7 p.m.** at **33<sup>rd</sup> & Cass**, next to the Kum & Go. While we walk we plan to pick up trash along 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and in Gifford Park, so you may wish to bring a pair of gloves if interested. We have had at least two neighborhood walks each month since April. We feel the walks are very effective in showing support for our business district and residents who live along 33<sup>rd</sup> Street.

We need people, male or female, young or old, who care about the Gifford Park Neighborhood and want to learn what happens in our neighborhood at different times of the day and night. We need to let our presence as a group be felt. This may just make us all more aware of the activities taking place in our area. The purpose is to walk and observe our neighborhood streets in a non-confrontational manner. Remember, if you have any doubts about your safety, there is safety in numbers. If interested in being called for participating in future walks, please call **Peter Cihunka 341-7293**, **Mark Saner 341-8939** or **Chris Foster 342-6006**.

## Gifford Park Hosts Show Wagon Regional Finals

It was another nice evening in Gifford Park on Monday, July 17, for the regional finals of Show Wagon 2000, a youth talent competition. Our neighborhood was fortunate to be selected by the City Parks Department to be a host site for two Show Wagon events this year. A good crowd enjoyed talent from all over the city, including local competitors. For many in the neighborhood this was the first time we have seen what a great event this is. Many thanks to **Cis Carlson**, City of Omaha Parks & Recreation, for organizing and heading up the Show Wagon program. Thanks also to **Rick Weiner** who handled sound, and **Jeff Painter** who helped with setup. Many thanks to **Mike Flagg** and **Mollie Batten** with **Roberts Dairy** for again providing the frozen treats. Also helping from the GPNA were **Peter Cihunka**, **Sherry Sutton**, **Jim Wilwerding**, **Brad Bogard** and **Raquel Ayala**. We are hoping the City will give us the opportunity to host Show Wagon again next year.

Kids: See the last page for information about the free tennis program in Gifford Park this August!



## Next Meeting

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

**Election of Officers  
for 2000 - 2001**

**Speaker: Representatives  
From The Omaha Housing  
Authority  
Topic: Section 8 Housing**

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

## Nursery Selected For Park Planting

**Indian Creek Nursery**, located at 303 N. Saddle Creek Road, was selected by the GPNA as the contractor for tree and shrub planting in Gifford Park. Planting is expected to begin in September with most of the project completed this fall. As most of you hopefully know, the GPNA received grants totaling \$17,500 for planting in the park - the Community Enhancement Program (a cooperative program of the Nebraska Department of Roads, the Nebraska Forest Service and the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum) awarded us \$14,000 for tree and shrub planting in Gifford Park, and the Omaha World Herald Branching Out Program awarded us an additional \$3,500 for tree planting. **Kate Paul** and **Dave Mooter** with the State Arboretum and **John Long** with the Branching Out Program deserve many thanks for seeing this as a very worthwhile project and recommending the grant funds. **Pat Slaven**, City Park Planner, has worked very hard to develop the plan which included on-going input from the GPNA. Thanks go to **Rob Parolek**, who initiated discussion of the park master plan last year. The work by all those involved will mean significant park improvements to be enjoyed by our community for years to come.

**GPNA OFFICERS****PRESIDENT**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Peter Cihunka 341-7293

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

Vicki Frey 341-0757

**TREASURER**

Dana Carlton 346-4575

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS****ADVERTISING**

Dar Sweazy 345-0125

**CLEAN-UP**

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

**COMPLIANCE**

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

**COURTESY**

Candy Bacom 933-7506

**HISTORIAN**

Eva Swanson 345-1707

**MEMBERSHIP**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**NEWSLETTER**

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

**NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION**

Mike Bacom 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 551-1344

**KELLAM SCHOOL LIAISON**

Dana Carlton 346-4575

**Editorial Corner****A Word About Our Friends At The Northeast Precinct**

*The views and opinions stated are not necessarily those of the GPNA or the GPNA Executive Board.*

Last Friday, the GPNA walk group planned one of our bi-monthly walks. I arrived at the usual meeting place (the Kum n Go on 33<sup>rd</sup>) around 7:55; we normally meet there at 8 p.m. At about 8:05, I started to get a little worried because I was the only one there. It was at that moment that I looked down at 33<sup>rd</sup> & California and saw 4 uniformed police officers. They were performing a traffic stop, something they do from time to time to show a presence in OUR neighborhood. As I headed down to the intersection, Chris Foster and Mark Saner arrived along with 4 more uniformed police officers. In total, I counted 6 police vehicles (including a canine unit) conducting the stop on 33<sup>rd</sup> & California and stopping speeders at about 33<sup>rd</sup> & Burt. I remember my comment to Chris was "Wow - with everything they have going on right now, this was the last thing in the world I expected tonight." This, just days after the fatal shooting of a suspect by a police officer. The more I thought about it the less I was surprised. Over the last couple of months, the police have been much more visible in some of our "Problem Areas": increased bike patrolling, increased attention to the "club" in the room under the laundromat, and "The Spot", and now responding to our complaints of speeding on 33<sup>rd</sup> Street. I also had a chance to talk to one of the officers and let him know that we appreciate the efforts of ALL the officers at the Northeast Precinct; not only in our neighborhood but also in the entire area. I did this because I know that Park Ave. and Leavenworth as well as 24<sup>th</sup> and Lake are just 15 minutes walking distance from my house. They get paid and trained to do a very difficult job; a job that is constantly under scrutiny from everyone: the mayor, city council, and now eight committees to evaluate situations that involve an officer shooting. Unfortunately, it has become as easy to sit back in our living rooms and judge the performance of our public servants as it is to second-guess Frank Solich on a Saturday afternoon in September. I can tell you that I would much rather be Frank Solich on a Saturday than be keeping our streets safe at 1:00 a.m. on a Friday morning. No disrespect to Frank, just immeasurable amounts of respect for our FRIENDS who are assigned to the Northeast Precinct at 30th and Taylor.

*by Peter Cihunka*

**TOOL****LENDING  
HOTLINE**

**Mike 933-7506**

**Chris 342-6006**

**Mowers - \$5**

**Rent for most tools - \$3**

**Calendar of Events**

**Tennis Program – Wednesdays, August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 6 – 7 p.m. in Gifford Park**

**GPNA General Meeting – Thursday, August 3, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph's Hospital  
Neighborhood Walk and Cleanup of 33<sup>rd</sup> Street – Friday, August 4, 8 p.m.,  
meet at 33<sup>rd</sup> & Cass**

**GPNA Board meeting – Thursday, August 17, 7 p.m. at GPNA Office, 33<sup>rd</sup> & California**

**Neighborhood-Wide Garage Sale - September 9**

**Tentative Date For Gifford Park Day - September 16**

**Watch Group – Every Friday and Saturday night, 11 p.m., meet at GPNA Office, 33<sup>rd</sup> & California**

## August 1st: Turn Lights On For National Night Out

On **Tuesday, August 1st**, neighborhoods throughout Omaha are being invited to join thousands of communities nationwide for the "**17th Annual National Night Out**" crime and drug prevention event. From 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on August 1st, Omaha's Neighborhood Watch Groups will be locking their doors and spending the evening outside with their neighbors. National Night Out is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support for, and participate in local anti-crime efforts, strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships, and send a message to criminals that neighborhoods are organized and are fighting back. The Omaha Police Department Community Resource Center is sending one message to Omahans this National Night Out: *For less than a dime a day, you can help keep the crime away! Light is a deterrent to crime, so turn on your outdoor lights August 1st and keep them on at night throughout the year!* OPPD says a 150 watt bulb, burning 10 hours per night, will cost 10 cents a day. Cheap security! The Community Resource Center advises you this National Night Out to **turn on your porch lights August 1st, and leave them on all night long, all year round!**

*Information courtesy of the OPD Community Resource Center Newsletter*

## \$150,000 Winner at J'N'J Grocery

**Jason Hoff**, an employee of the **J'N'J Grocery Store** at 33rd and California Street, bought a winning ticket in the Cornhusker Cash Lottery game. It netted him \$150,000. Hoff, 21, had purchased 6 tickets the preceding day at J'N'J, winning only \$10. On Saturday, June 3rd, during a break from work, he purchased 4 more tickets, one of them a \$20 winner. Before returning to work, Hoff decided to buy one more ticket. "I knew I'd won the minute I saw it," Hoff said. His co-workers didn't believe he'd won \$150,000, but the following Monday, Hoff and long-time girlfriend **Jennifer Wille**, drove to Lincoln to claim the prize.

Wille, also an employee of J'N'J, is **Loren Johnson's** step-daughter. The winnings have allowed the couple to move forward with their plans together. An engagement ring has been purchased and a wedding date set for July 28, 2001. A new home is being built with a portion of the proceeds.

Since the announcement of his prize by the Nebraska Lottery, Hoff says that ticket sales at J'N'J "have gone through the roof," but he gives some level-headed advice to would-be winners. "Be smart with your money," says Hoff, "it doesn't last forever." It sounds like Hoff has a good idea of what is lasting. Being engaged and building a life together is certainly a step in the right direction.

*by Vicki Frey*

## City Parks Department Shines For Gifford Park

The GPNA wishes to send a big thank you to the entire City of Omaha Parks Department for its efforts, particularly over the last several months. First of all, to **Pat Slaven** with Park Planning who has worked on our park master plan since last year – the plan has led to a large grant for tree and shrub planting to begin this fall. Second, to **Cis Carlson**, Show Wagon Coordinator, who gave our neighborhood the opportunity to host two Show Wagon events this summer. Third, to **Tom McGinn** and **Peg Watkins** with Parks and Recreation for their work with the very popular Sun Dawgs program. They also spoke at our May meeting to provide information on summer programs for youth. Fourth, to **Jerry Flood** and **Ed Aldmeyer**, Parks and Maintenance, and **Willie Jenkins**, Operator in charge of Gifford Park maintenance, who have done a great job keeping grass mowed in the park. We also appreciate the efforts of Jerry and Ed over the years coordinating the citywide spring cleanup effort, which is vital to our neighborhood. Fifth, to **Tim Campbell** with the Mayor's Neighborhood Action Team who arranged for the Graffiti Van to clean up about a dozen spots in the park. Special thanks also goes to **Larry Foster**, who is head of the Parks Department. Larry has listened to our neighborhood's concerns and responded generously to our requests. And finally, the GPNA thanks **Mayor Hal Daub** for continuing these valuable park programs which help our neighborhood grow. In a time when people and the media tend to highlight the negative, our neighborhood has had very positive experiences with the City of Omaha Parks Department.

*by Chris Foster*

## Interested In Making A Few Extra Bucks?

Sure you are. Back by popular demand, we are having a neighborhood-wide garage sale on **Saturday, September 9**. The GPNA will pay for an ad in the **Omaha World-Herald** to promote garage sales in the Gifford Park Neighborhood. We will also place an ad in our September newsletter listing addresses of neighborhood garage sales for those who would like additional advertising. We plan to put up signs around the neighborhood to draw attention to the sale. If you would like your address listed in our newsletter (deadline August 20) or for more information, call **342-6006, 345-1433** or **341-7293**. This is a great way to get rid of unused items and make some extra money at **NO COST** to you!

### Gifford Park Sun Dawgs Have a Busy Summer

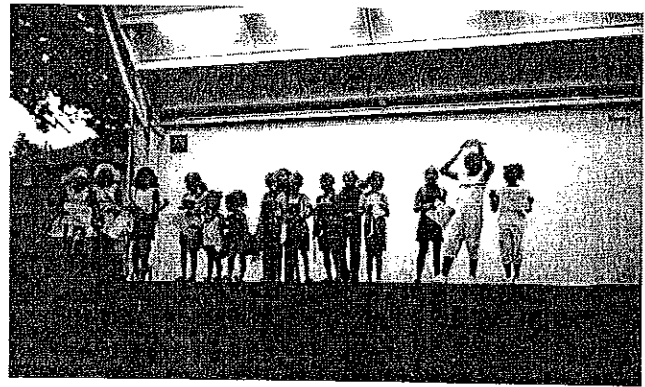
The Sun Dawgs Summer Youth Program had another great year with lots of activities for many neighborhood kids. This year we were fortunate to have two really great supervisors: **Paul Williams** and **Nichol Novacek**. Many thanks to **Peg Wadkins**, **Tom McGinn** and **Tom Lebida** with City Parks and Recreation. GPNA's own **Jan Franks**, who lives next to the park, helped with the program on a regular basis. Incidentally, our Gifford Park kids recently won the Sun Dawg kickball tournament at Elmwood Park.



### Your Assistance Is Needed

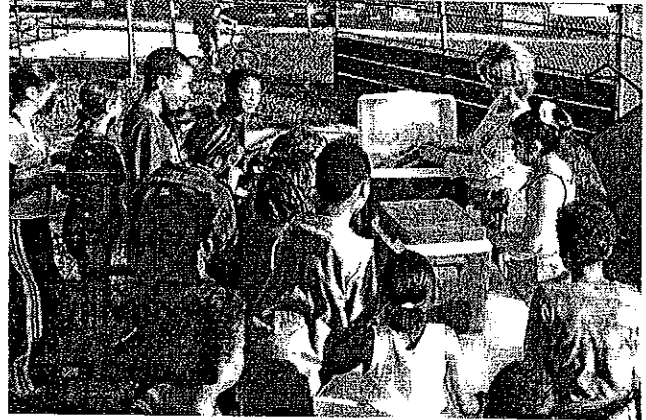
We need your help with two very important committees. First, our **Calling Committee**, headed by **Jean Peck**, needs volunteers to make calls to people informing them of upcoming events and activities like the Holiday Banquet, neighborhood walks, cleanups, etc. The GPNA keeps an updated membership list of names and phone numbers which are distributed to volunteers on the Calling Committee, with each person making a small number of calls. Helping on this committee should not require a lot of time and would be a big help to pass along information. For more information, call **Jean (344-0722)** or **Chris (342-6006)**. Secondly, our **Neighborhood Maintenance Program**, headed by **Betsy Noble**, needs block captains to monitor and document problems in their area. Each block captain will be provided a list of all property addresses along with the owner's name, which makes it very easy to document. To find out more, call **Betsy (344-3802)** or **Chris (342-6006)**. Both of these committees have a big impact on the growth and involvement of our neighborhood.

### Show Wagon Appearances in Gifford Park Enjoyed By Many



*(Above) The acts that appeared in the regional final held on July 17 received certificates in honor of their achievement. The kids did a great job and their performances were enjoyed by the crowd.*

*(Below) Sherry Sutton and Raquel Ayala help to distribute popsicles to those present at the Show Wagon presentation. Thanks to Roberts Dairy for providing treats at both Show Wagon sessions.*



### Graffiti Van Makes Stop in Gifford Park

On Monday, July 24, the City's Graffiti Van paid a visit to the neighborhood. Shown below, left to right, are **Jeff Nicola** and **Michael Hustig**, who removed graffiti in Gifford Park and some places along 33rd Street.



### What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

It's no secret that the more light there is in the right places deters criminal activity. The GPNA has committed \$862 to cover lighting costs for the next two years for three additional lights around 33<sup>rd</sup> & California. OPPD will install and maintain the lights, which should illuminate the areas needing it most. This coupled with upgrades to existing lighting (from 100-watt to 200 watt) will hopefully help people feel safer in our business district. Many thanks to **Ron Yates** who did all the leg-work to make these improvements happen.

With the recent rains we have had over the past month the GPNA is asking for your help in cleaning trash from clogged storm sewers. Keeping sewers free from trash and debris prevents more serious problems from occurring during a very heavy rain event, which can happen about anytime around here – it was just last August when parts of Omaha received over 10" of rain in less than a day.

A **Bemis-Joslyn Castle Neighborhoods Home Tour** will be held on **September 17th**, from **1:00 p.m. to 5 p.m.** The tour will cost \$8 per person and transportation will be provided by Ollie the Trolley. Proceeds will go toward planned park improvements in Bemis Park, preservation and maintenance projects at the Joslyn Castle, and landscaping and equipment improvements at Clarkson Park in the Joslyn Castle Neighborhood. The Joslyn Castle will be part of the tour in addition to neighborhood homes.

We need your ideas for a new logo that can be used on correspondence, newsletters, shirts, hats, etc. originating from the GPNA. We want a logo that identifies the character and symbolizes the mission of the GPNA and our neighborhood. Join us at our next general meeting, to be held August 3, and give us your thoughts. We will continue collecting all entries until the August meeting, at which time we'll put all the logo ideas to a vote. (We would like to receive entries by August 1 so copies can be made for all to view.) The current logo will be one of the choices. All entries can be sent to the GPNA, 532 N. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, Omaha, NE 68131. So put on your thinking caps and send us your best artwork and message statement. The winning entry will receive a \$25 gift certificate to California Tacos. Call 342-6006 or 341-7293 if you have questions.

### Gifford Park Day Tentatively Scheduled for September 16

Gifford Park Day has been tentatively set for **Saturday, September 16**. This event will be social in nature in order to get people together to celebrate and promote our neighborhood. Some ideas for activities to include which have been mentioned so far are a parade, food, games, sports, information booths, raffles, live music, arts & crafts, tug-o-war and others. The GPNA needs your help and ideas to make this a success. Please call **Pete (341-7293)** or **Chris (342-6006)** if you can help in any way.

### This Is It . . .

This will be your last mailed newsletter if you haven't renewed your GPNA membership for 2000 - 2001. All you have to do is fill out the membership form on the left and mail it in along with the appropriate membership fee. Or better yet, come to the August general meeting and turn it in there (you'll save 33 cents, and you'll be up-to-date with what is happening in your neighborhood). Thanks for your support!



**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 \_\_\_\_\_

**Mayor's Action Line**  
**444-5555**



# 7th Annual Gifford Park Free Tennis Program

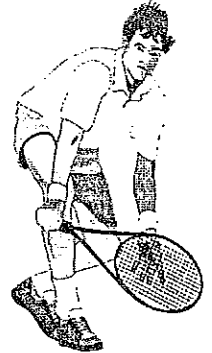


*For:* Youth (all ages)

*Dates:* August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30  
(Wednesdays)

*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 form shown below and bring with you to the tennis lessons.** There is limited space available so call the phone number listed below for information on enrollment for the tennis program.

**Call 342-6006**

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**Registration/Permission Form** - Bring this form (completely filled out) with you to the tennis lessons to be enrolled.

Youth's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Phone: home: \_\_\_\_\_ work: \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent or legal guardian of the child named above, I hereby give my full consent and approval for my child to participate as a member of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program.

I understand that there are certain risks of injury inherent in the practice and play of this sport, as well as related activities incidental to my child's participation, and I am willing to assume these risks on behalf of my child. I hereby certify that my child is fully capable of participating in this sport and that my child is healthy and has no physical or mental disabilities or infirmities that would restrict full participation in these activities, except as listed below.

I hereby waive, release and hold harmless the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program, and the City of Omaha, Nebraska, its Officers, coaches, sponsors, supervisors and representatives for any injury that may be suffered by my child in the normal course of participation in this sport and the activities incidental thereto, whether the result of negligence or any other cause. Furthermore, I give consent to any necessary medical treatment in case of emergency.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_