



Gifford Park's Pride

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

October 2000

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Fall Cleanup Scheduled for October 28

The date for this year's annual GPNA Fall Cleanup is **Saturday, October 28**, from **8 a.m. to 2 p.m.** in Gifford Park. As usual, the fall cleanup is for GPNA members only, or people who donate their time or money to the cleanup. There will be dumpsters for hauling trash, a membership and donation drive, scrap metal recycling, Halloween pumpkins, and a park picnic for the helpers. Volunteers are needed to provide pickup trucks for hauling, assist in packing and monitoring dumpsters, and help make pickups. The cleanup day is a great time for everyone in the neighborhood to take a look around their yards and streets and pick up trash and other debris - especially before the winter sets in. The net effect is a nicer looking neighborhood - one that we can all be proud of.

The Omaha Community Foundation has approved a GPNA grant for \$500 to help defray the cost of the dumpster rental for the fall cleanup. A big thanks to **Jim Wilwerding** for writing the grant this year - these grants have saved the GPNA a lot of money over the last several years. The GPNA is looking for someone to be the chairman of the two yearly cleanups, starting in the spring of 2001. If you are interested, please call **Mike (341-8224)** or **Chris (342-6006)**.

PLEASE NOTE: It is very important for you to call the phone numbers listed below **BEFORE** the day of the cleanup if you need a volunteer to pick up trash - we will prioritize hauling based on your call. The following items **WILL NOT** be accepted: tree brush, appliances containing refrigerant (freon), and tires - save them for the spring cleanup. A \$5 fee will be charged for sofas and overstuffed chairs. Please call **Mike (341-8224)**, **Chris (342-6006)**, **Terry (342-2795)**, or **Leo (345-1433)** for more information or if you can assist with the cleanup.

Next Neighborhood Walk: October 6th

Please join us in our next neighborhood walk **Friday, October 6**, at **7 p.m.** Our starting point is next to the Kum & Go at **33rd and Cass St.** The primary areas usually covered during the walk are the 33rd Street business district and Gifford Park. The walks are an effective means of showing support and interest in the safety and well-being of the neighborhood - and it's a great way to meet neighbors, get a little exercise, and enjoy a crisp autumn evening. If you are interested in being called for future walks, please call **Peter Cihunka (341-7293)**, **Mark Saner (341-8939)**, or **Chris Foster (342-6006)**.

Next Meeting

Thursday, October 5
7:00 P.M.

Legislative Candidates' Forum

Scott Knudsen
Chip Maxwell

St. Joseph Hospital
Becic (Glassed-In)
Dining Room

Meeting To Feature Candidates' Forum For State Legislature

Plan to attend the next GPNA General Meeting on **Thursday, October 5** at St. Joseph Hospital in the Becic Room. The Becic Room is near the cafeteria and we plan to have signs to help everyone find the room. We will have a candidates' forum for State Legislature in District 9. State Sen. Shelley Kiel's decision to run for Congress has made this a very interesting race to fill her seat in the Legislature. The original seven candidates in May have been narrowed to two - **Scott Knudsen** and **Chip Maxwell**. The forum will start shortly after 7:00 p.m. GPNA Vice-President **Peter Cihunka** will be the moderator. The general election will be held **Tuesday, November 7**. We hope there will be lots of questions for the candidates to generate discussion on issues affecting our neighborhood. This is a very important race and the forum provides neighbors with a great opportunity to meet and talk with the candidates.

Happy Halloween!



GPNA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Chris Foster 342-6006

VICE PRESIDENT

Peter Cihunka 341-7298

RECORDING SECRETARY

Weki Frey 344-0757

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 Bacome 933-7506

HISTORIAN

Eva Swanson 345-1707

MEMBERSHIP

Chris Foster 342-6006

NEWSLETTER

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Mike Bacome 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

KEELOM SCHOOL LIAISON

Dana Carlton 346-4575

The President's Column

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer and stayed out of trouble. In mid-September my wife Sallie and I went on a week's vacation hiking in Utah and Arizona. When it's 105 degrees in the desert you try to think of anything to get your mind off of the heat. Of course my mind wandered back to the GPNA and came up with all kinds of great ideas for our neighborhood – none of which are possible! Well for this month's article I'll stick to what has happened and what is possible. First, I'd like to briefly reflect back on events and happenings that made for a busy and rewarding spring and summer for the GPNA and the neighborhood. Secondly, I want to share with you some positive feedback I received from a recent function I attended.

Looking back to this past spring and summer I wanted to recognize some of the volunteers and events that stick out in my mind. In April, Peter Cihunka and Mark Saner led the effort to begin doing neighborhood walks on 33rd Street to show support for the business district and let the bad guys know whose neighborhood it really is; Betsy Noble and Jackie Lynch completed work on "Neighborhood Maintenance", a program to recruit block captains to observe and document issues on their block; Shelly Rose ran another successful Easter Egg Hunt; Ron Frey and the PKA Fraternity organized a baseball clinic for kids; in May, we hosted a Legislative candidates' forum; Mike Wilwerding did another fine job heading up the Spring Cleanup; St. Joseph's Hospital hosted the 2nd annual bike rodeo with well over 100 kids and on the same day we had over 40 kids participate in the Tennis Blitz in the park; we organized a landlord meeting at St. Joseph's Hospital to discuss concerns, including hiring an off-duty police officer on 33rd Street; the GPNA was awarded \$17,500 in grants for tree and shrub planting in Gifford Park; in June three new GPNA Officers were elected; the Sun Dawg summer youth program started; Cis Carlson with City Parks & Recreation organized two Show Wagon competitions in Gifford Park; in July, Ron Yates helped get better lighting in the business district; in August, we had the annual tennis program including a party on the final day; Jim Kyler headed up a bike ride to the Wabash Nature Trail enjoyed by kids and adults; and in September, the GPNA helped organize a neighborhood-wide garage sale. Besides these specific events, the everyday maintenance is vital to the health of the neighborhood. Please read the names of the GPNA officers and committee chairpersons in the column on the left – these individuals are very dedicated neighbors who deserve more recognition than I can give in this article. Overall there was hopefully something for everyone, including some fun, some work, and experiences we can build on.

The second item I wanted to share with you is my experience at a recent function I attended September 19. The College of Public Affairs and Community Service at UNO invited four other neighborhood association presidents and myself to speak to 25 students in the School of Social Work. We were each asked to speak on community organization and development. I brought a copy of our newsletter and brochure for each student, which they found very interesting. I talked about where Gifford Park is located; the diversity; the structure and history of the GPNA; events and activities; meeting format; challenges and problems; and priorities & goals. I sensed the experience for them was a real eye-opener on the strength that a neighborhood association has in making a difference in the community. The students had lots of questions, especially on how to solve chronic and persistent problems, like a drug house that won't go away. I answered by saying it takes hard work and patience in dealing with the proper people in the appropriate manner. I added the GPNA tries to take care of the relationships (with police, mayor's office, government agencies, business owners, landlords, residents, etc.) we have developed over the years, and keeping these relationships strong is the best way to maintain our neighborhood association's reputation and integrity. Because of the

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TOOL LENDING HOTLINE



*Mike 933-7506
Chris 342-6006*

**Mowers - \$5
Rent for most tools - \$3**



What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

Thanks to **Tom Everson**, "Keep Kids Alive - Drive 25" Campaign, and **Mike Owen**, Nebraska State Department of Roads, for being our guest speakers at the September General Meeting. Both provided valuable information and answered lots of good questions from those attending.

The Gifford Park tree and shrub planting project is nearly ready to start. We have been working with **Scott Farrington**, Indian Creek Nursery, and **Pat Slaven**, City Park Planner, to proceed with staking the planting locations. We are still on target to complete most of the project this fall. We again want to thank **Kate Paul** and **Dave Mooter** with the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, and **Joel Long** with the Omaha World Herald Branching Out for awarding the GPNA grant money to do the project. As mentioned last month, we rescheduled Gifford Park Day to April or May of next spring. **Peter Cihunka (341-7293)** will head up this event, so please contact him with ideas or to volunteer.

At the September meeting, an overview was presented of the proposed interstate reconstruction project affecting our area. The project is expected to start in early 2003 with construction to last 3 years. Major bridgework will be involved; two bridges that currently go over 30th Street near the Holiday Inn Express will be removed because they have not been in use for years. The GPNA has contacted the City Parks Department to look into using this property for recreation or in some other way that would benefit our neighborhood. Cuming Street will become a major two-way thoroughfare. The dangerous on-ramp at Burt Street will be removed. Creighton University has indicated they would like to close (or significantly reduce) Burt Street east of 30th Street to provide more green space and put in a pedestrian walkway where Burt Street is now. The Downtown Convention Center and Arena will also have an impact on the project. A public hearing is planned for next spring or summer as details are worked out.

At our September General meeting, **Bob Hutton**, our tool lending repairman, asked if anyone has storage space in a garage or shed to store eight to ten lawnmowers that need repairing for the GPNA tool lending program. The storage space needs to be accessible to Bob so that he can work on the mowers at various times. Please contact him at **341-2742** or **Chris 342-6006** if you or anyone you know can help.

Our neighborhood historian **Eva Swanson** is compiling articles for a book to be titled History of 33rd & California. It will also include a section titled "History of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association". The plan is to have a completed copy on hand for viewing at the October 5th General Meeting. There will be a charge for the book, mainly to cover printing costs for the copies.

Hopefully those who participated in September's neighborhood-wide garage sale made a little money and got rid of some stuff. We'd be interested to know if you thought it was a good idea and worth doing again - maybe in the spring? Thanks to **Peter Cihunka** for putting up signs and **Leo Wilwerding** for securing an ad in the Omaha World-Herald.

The lucky winners of the free tickets to the Omaha Theater Company for Young People performances that were given away at last month's general meeting were **Mike & Candy Bacome** and **Jerry Preston & Brenda Smith**. Thanks again to **Mary Theresa Lawler** for making the tickets available to the GPNA.

Program Aimed At Combating Speeding

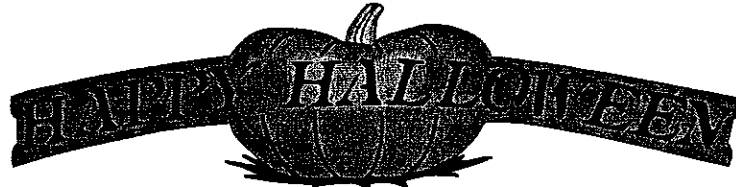
Have you noticed how many people are speeding through our neighborhood? It's not just Gifford Park either, it happens in cities and towns all over the country. One Omahan has decided to try and do something about it. His name is **Tom Everson**, and his concern spawned "**Keep Kids Alive - Drive 25**". He made a presentation at the September GPNA meeting. It's a simple premise - if you remind people to slow down, they usually will. The program utilizes signs, bumper stickers, and other items to spread the message. You may have noticed the sign in the yard at 3401 Webster. It works. It hasn't slowed everyone, but it has made a difference. In an effort to slow down our neighborhood traffic, the GPNA has made available limited funds to help spread the message. While funds last, GPNA will pay \$6 of the \$12.76 cost of a yard sign. It's a small price to pay to keep our kids safe. Contact **Brenda Smith** at **344-8604** or **TAHITIS26@aol.com** for more information or to order your yard sign.

President's Column

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hard work done by the past GPNA leadership, people notice the name "Gifford Park Neighborhood Association" - it carries weight. I found this experience to be very positive and wanted to share it with all of you, the GPNA membership - you're the ones who have built our reputation, and it's our challenge to keep it going. Hope to see you at the next meeting!

by Chris Foster



6th Annual Haunted House

Where:
PKA House
3100 Chicago St.



When:
Sunday, October 29
Ages 10 & under: 5 p.m.
All ages: 6 - 8 p.m.

FREE!

hosted by:
Pi Kappa Alpha (PKA) Creighton Fraternity
Delta Zeta Sorority
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 _____

Join The GPNA Now!

Your membership helps pay for this newsletter, neighborhood cleanups and beautification projects, youth activities, social activities, neighborhood watch equipment, tool lending, and many other worthwhile programs. Remember, you must be a member to participate in the upcoming Fall Cleanup October 28, and the Holiday Banquet December 7. Please join or renew your membership today!

Mayor's Action Line
444-5555