



Gifford Park's Pride

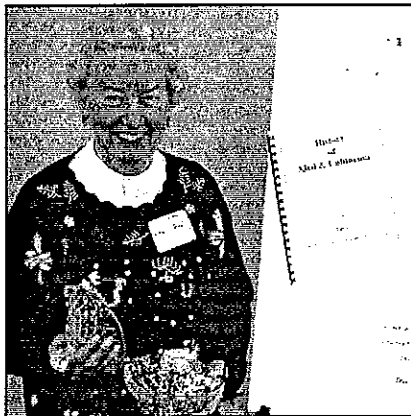
Gifford Park Neighborhood: A Great Place to Live, Work, Learn and Play

January 2001

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Eva Swanson is GPNA'S "Neighbor Of The Year" for 2000

This year's "Neighbor of the Year" award went to our historian, **Eva Swanson**. Eva was recognized for her tremendous work uncovering all kinds of interesting people, places and stories right here in the Gifford Park neighborhood. Many people have enjoyed reading Eva's articles in our neighborhood newsletter for years. This fall she produced a wonderful book called **History of 33rd & California and History of the GPNA**, which is now available for a very reasonable price. Besides keeping our neighborhood's history alive, Eva has made many other contributions to the GPNA including cleanups, Easter egg hunts, Halloween haunted houses, newsletter, garage sales, neighborhood walks, picking up litter, and attending nearly every GPNA monthly meeting. She was recently featured in the **Omaha World-Herald** for presenting historical details about our neighborhood to a Neighborhood Builder's tour on Ollie the Trolley. Eva's parents Elmer and Elsa moved into the house where Eva currently lives in 1923 – the day they were married. In 1991, a former neighbor Rose Blumkin donated \$100 to the GPNA in honor of Elmer (who turned 100 years old) and his daughter Eva. We are grateful that the Swanson's chose the Gifford Park neighborhood to live in many years ago.



*"Neighbor of the Year"
Eva Swanson is holding a crystal dish which was presented to her at the Holiday Banquet as a token of the GPNA's appreciation for all of her efforts in its behalf. Pictured to the right is her latest project, **The History of 33rd and California and the History of the GPNA***

Next Meeting

Thursday, January 4
7:00 P.M.

Guest Speakers:
J.L. Schmidt
Elizabeth Chase

**Nebraska Lied Main
Street Program**

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

Guest Speakers To Discuss Main Street Program

J.L. Schmidt and Elizabeth Chase will present information at the GPNA general meeting about the Nebraska Lied Main Street Program and how it could benefit our neighborhood. Their primary mission is revitalization of downtown main street districts, like our 33rd & California area. There are currently 12 designated Main Street communities in Nebraska. Designated communities are selected annually through a competitive application process. The Main Street Program provides technical assistance, training, and other services and uses a four-point approach to accomplish a community's goals – organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring. Our guest speakers will talk specifically about 33rd & California and present a slideshow including photos taken of our business district. As always, refreshments will be available courtesy of St. Joseph Hospital. Make it a New Year's resolution to attend GPNA general meetings this year!



**For more on
the Holiday
Banquet
see page 6!**

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Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

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Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

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Dana Carlton 346-4575

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.

The President's Column

I hope everyone has made it safely through the holidays despite the rough weather in December. Of course the big event in December was our annual Holiday Banquet hosted for the twelfth year in a row by our great friends at St. Joseph's Hospital. It was nice seeing a great turnout of GPNA members and our honored guests who help us strive for a better community. We also had the neighborhood history books on hand at the banquet. Our historian **Eva Swanson** created the books. Come to the next meeting to buy a book at only \$6 for black & white and \$12 for color. There's more highlights about the banquet in this newsletter.

Unfortunately I have no news to report regarding the Chandler murder tragedy that happened November 12 at 521 N. 33rd St. The homicide unit at this time cannot give out information about the case or the mother's condition, since the case is still under investigation. The sargeant handling the investigation did ask that anyone with any information please call the **homicide unit (444-5656)** or **CrimeStoppers (444-STOP)**. As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the GPNA donated \$100 to CrimeStoppers and \$100 to help the Chandler family. Crimestoppers will try to air another story about the case soon.

Police have given special attention to the 33rd & California area recently. It would not be appropriate to discuss specifics, but it has involved several different operations to reduce crime. Incidentally, police have reported more problems at 521/523 N. 33rd St. in recent weeks. Also during the last week of December, police have focused on ticketing and removing dead storage vehicles in our neighborhood. Call the **Mayor's Action Line (444-5555)** to report these or other parking violations, because they can lead to serious safety issues for people trying to walk under tough winter conditions. The GPNA thanks **Lt. Swircinski, Sgt. Osire and Sgt. Cook** for their efforts in keeping our neighborhood a priority. Please keep in mind, in many cases the most effective way to prevent crime is for YOU to observe and report even minor violations.

I hope you plan to attend our next meeting as we will have a presentation by the Nebraska Lied Main Street Program. There is specific information about the program on page 1. This is a good time for our neighborhood to think about what we want our neighborhood to be in the short and long term. Overall I believe our neighborhood has done a pretty decent job of maintenance items like cleanups, code and parking violations, weeds & litter, watch group, tool lending, etc. – in fact we do as well as any neighborhood in the city. To have a stronger neighborhood and increase participation there has to be opportunities for people to want to get involved in many different areas. The Gifford Park neighborhood is one of the most diverse in the city – socially, ethnically, economically, age-wise, culturally and housing-wise. These dynamics present the GPNA with tough challenges, but also great opportunities for growth. My hope is, at the very least, the process of learning about the Main Street Program will encourage people to become more involved with the GPNA and our neighborhood.

by Chris Foster

**For City Services, Information, or Complaints
Call: Mayor's Action Office
444-5555**

What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

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 will be available this year. Walk-in appointments are welcome, but priority will be given to those who call to schedule an appointment. Dates will be announced in the February newsletter. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call **551-3629**.

Great news! **California Tacos** is taking over the old "Spot" building next to the current location at 529 N. 33rd Street. Restaurant owner **Brad Bogard** has already begun fixing up the "new" addition. He expects to open the added space in the next couple of months. Thanks Brad, for expanding so more people can enjoy California Tacos food and atmosphere.

The 15th annual **Cathedral Flower Festival** will be held on **January 27th and 28th** at **St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 701 North 40th St.** Local florists deck the entryway, aisles, altar, side chapels, and other nooks and crannies of the cathedral. Admission is free. See the **Omaha World-Herald** for information on times the exhibit is open. Take a break from this cold winter and experience a preview of spring!

Neighborhood Builders will be holding its fifth annual Leadership Sessions, which will be held each **Saturday** in **February, 2001 (3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th)**. Topics include Building on Neighborhood Assets, Utilizing Community Resources, Planning & Effective Management, and Neighborhood Problem Solving. Neighborhood Builders is a joint community effort among Omaha's Weed and Seed Strategy, UNO, various neighborhood associations, businesses, and private citizens. The goal of Neighborhood Builders is to help build stronger, healthier neighborhoods in the City of Omaha's North, South, and Central communities by assisting in developing positive leadership. Registration for the sessions is necessary and will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please contact **Lisa Brubaker** at **595-1214** to reserve your space today!

At the January general meeting, we will once again have a drawing for five free tickets to "**Amazing Grace**" at the **Omaha Theater Company for Young People** in January. The GPNA thanks **Mary Theresa Green** for providing free tickets each of the past several months.

The GPNA thanks the **U.S. Mission, 3216 Cuming St.**, for providing toys, clothing, and household items to those families in need of assistance this Christmas.

Snow Removal Information



A **Snow Emergency** means that no vehicles may be parked on the streets where you see an Emergency Snow Route sign. Crews will plow these streets first and the mayor will announce when the snow emergency is over. If cars are left parked on an Emergency Snow Route during a snow emergency, the cars will be subject to a fine and may be towed at the owner's expense. Radio and TV stations will broadcast all necessary information.

Omaha's Municipal Code requires **all sidewalks to be shoveled within 24 hours after a snowstorm**. Walks left unshoveled may be cleared by City crews at the expense of the property owner. For more information, or if you have a comment or complaint, please call the **Street Maintenance Office** at **444-4919** (24 hour line).

California Bar & Pkg. 510 No. 33rd St.

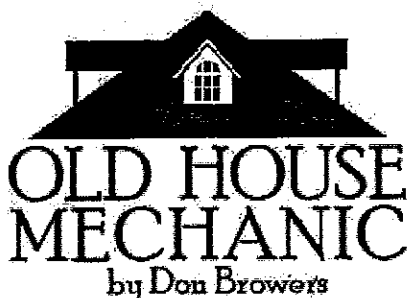
Serving the Gifford Park
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Charles R. Kilgore Jr. Attorney At Law

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Personal Injury Law
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Gifford Park's Pride is pleased to announce the addition of a new series of articles starting in this month's issue. Don Browsers has written home repair articles for other neighborhood newsletters such as the Dundee - Memorial Park Association Newsletter, and he has graciously consented to let us begin running his articles in our newsletter. Don is very knowledgeable, and always provides interesting insights along with his repair tips. We certainly have plenty of older houses in our neighborhood, and we look forward to being able to run Don's articles when space allows.

"You need an old house mechanic," the old-timer wheezed. "Just a plumber or a carpenter or a painter or a whatever won't do. You need someone who can do a little bit of everything." In what was apparently a sustained period of insanity my wife and I decided that we really wanted to live in and restore an old house. We had only taken possession of our "Dundee Gem-In-The-Rough" as the real estate listing boasted and here we were knee deep in scavenged plumbing parts at an architectural salvage yard. The yard owner seemed more intent on dispensing advice than on selling old house parts. To be sure the point wasn't missed, he repeated s-l-o-w-l-y, "an old house mechanic."

So, that was the genesis of this column more than eight years ago. My modest goal is to share a few tips, some nuggets of information that may be helpful to the old house owner. And I try to cover the field - plumbing, painting, carpentry, you name it. Along the way we'll talk about old house living, sources for old house parts and services, and answer your questions. Please do use the contact information at the end of this column. This column is the most interesting and the most fun when it's interactive.

If you have any clever methods you've developed to restore your old house or just to cope with some of the maintenance headaches, this is a great place to share them. I'll also try to answer your questions about old house repair. If I don't have the answer, I'll find someone who does. I defer to the pros often, because I'm just like you, a do-it-yourself homeowner with no particular training in any of the building trades. I'll do my best to help you tackle projects yourself or to give you the background to better deal with the repair people you hire.

I'm really pleased that my column is now appearing here in the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association newsletter. (Look, Mom, I'm syndicated! I wonder if Dave Barry started out this way?) Omaha has so many great neighborhoods with unique old houses-Dundee, Ak-Sar-Ben, Benson, Field Club, Gifford Park, and more.

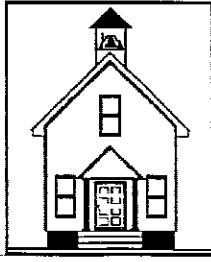
While this is not normally a cooking column, here's an old family recipe: Brass Hardware Stew. While this recipe won't do for a holiday dinner, it will get your tarnished, paint-spotted hinges, doorknobs, and other hardware shining brightly with a minimum of work.

After you've removed the hardware drop it into an old cooking pot. (I use an old enameled Dutch oven I picked up at a garage sale for 50 cents.) Cover the hardware with vinegar and place on the stove over a low heat for 15 to 30 minutes. Take out the hardware a piece at a time and liberally shake on some ordinary table salt. Then rub with a fine grade (00 to 0000) steel wool. The tarnish and paint should easily wipe off. If it doesn't, let it stew a little longer in the hot vinegar.

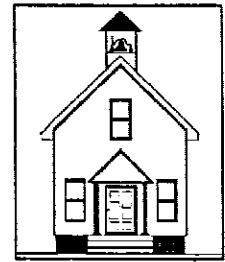
Be careful not to get the vinegar so hot that you scald your hands and by all means wear sturdy rubber gloves. Also, don't let the hardware stay submerged in the vinegar overnight. Vinegar is an acid (although a very weak one) that will etch the soft brass and even permanently blacken it.

After the tarnish is gone, dry each piece of hardware with a cloth or paper towel. A quick application of a brass polish like Brasso and a swipe with a clean cloth and you'll have a very nice shine.

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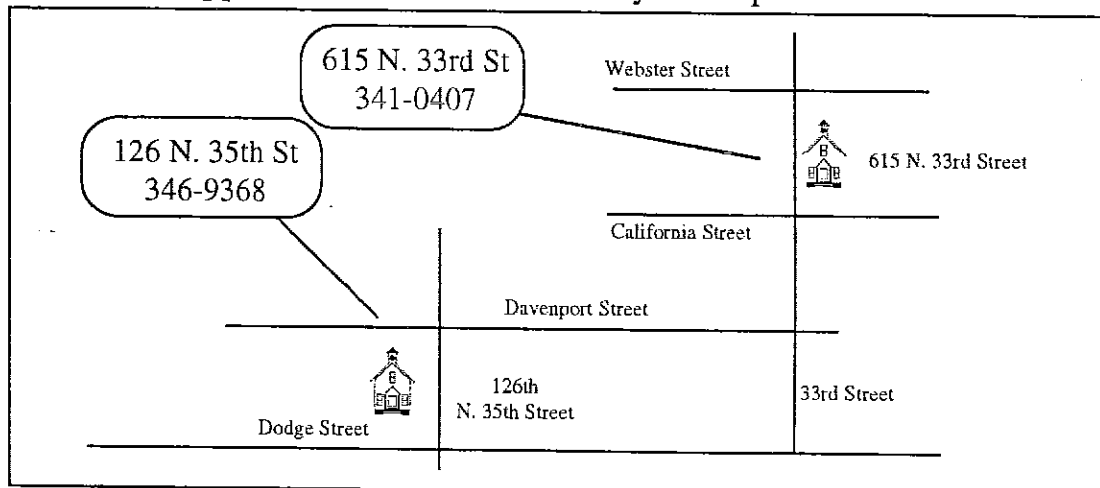
NEBRASKA CHILDCARE CENTERS*



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- * 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



Holiday Banquet 2000 Highlights

St. Joseph's Hospital once again outdid themselves at this year's annual Holiday Banquet held Thursday, December 7. The estimated 120 people attending this year's event were treated to a wonderful meal, elegant table settings, a fun program, and great door prizes. The delicious turkey dinner was again hosted by **Leann Kelly** and her staff for the twelfth year in a row. **Carol McCormick**, Director of Operations at St. Joseph's, welcomed everyone and accepted a Christmas wreath (from **Indian Creek Nursery**) given to the hospital by the GPNA in appreciation not only for hosting the banquet but also for all of the other assistance St. Joseph's provides to the Association throughout the year. **Patrice Pittman** and **Pattie Dappen** were instrumental in making sure the details were handled. Unfortunately, **Rich Stanko**, St. Joseph's Hospital CEO, was unable to attend, but the GPNA wishes to extend our sincere gratitude to Rich and the hospital.

Dinner was served after **Mel Beckman** offered an opening prayer. After dinner, a wonderful slideshow was presented, put together by **Terry Wilwerding**, complete with music. Our honored guests were introduced after the slideshow. Before the annual "Neighbor of the Year" award was presented to **Eva Swanson**, the **Wilwerding** family was presented with a very special "Family of the Decade" award for the outstanding efforts they have given to the Gifford Park neighborhood and the GPNA for the past decade and beyond. The Wilwerdings' incredible support of nearly every GPNA activity and event demonstrates the commitment they have to our neighborhood. Leo and Marlene were also recognized for their upcoming 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Ron Yates and **Harry Dirgo** gave **Chris Foster** special recognition for his dedication to the GPNA. Chris' name was added to the "Everest Survivor's Award" which is displayed at California Tacos. This award was created several years ago and signifies outstanding contributions to the GPNA. Chris expressed his appreciation for having his name along side Ron and Harry's.

The hard work and effort by many volunteers helped make this year's banquet an enjoyable event. Besides the individuals mentioned above, the GPNA would like to thank **Sue Wilwerding**, **Candy Bacome**, **Eva Swanson**, **Nadja Wilwerding**, **Kathleen Wilwerding**, **Julie Kalkowski**, **Marlene Wilwerding**, **Sallie Foster** and **Peter Cihunka**. Very special thanks goes to **Jean Peck** who organized the calling committee and helped with table decorations, and to **Ron**, **Vicki** and **Erik Frey** who helped with table decorations, the reception table, and many other last minute details that made the evening run smoothly.

The finale of the evening was the awarding of door prizes, which were generously donated by **Loren Johnson**, **Brad Bogard**, **Subby Anzaldo**, **Mary Theresa Green** and **Dana Carlton**.



The Wilwerding family was honored as the GPNA "Family of the Decade" for all of their contributions of time and talent to the Association. The "patriarchs", Leo and Marlene, five of their ten children and their spouses, have all been active in the GPNA for a number of years.



Chris Foster (center) received the "Everest Survivor's Award", a symbol of significant hard work and dedication to the GPNA. Presenting the award were former recipients Ron Yates (left), past president of the GPNA, and Harry Dirgo (right), the 1999 Neighbor of the Year.



A record crowd of over 120 people attended this year's Holiday Banquet. Winners of one of the many wonderful doorprizes were Mike and Candy Bacome, who are very active members of the GPNA.

Photos by Chris Foster, Terry Wilwerding, and Eva Swanson

Old House Mechanic . . . continued from page 4

Naturally, if you've stewed your brass hardware, then there's only one thing left to do—bake it!

I apply a thin (I emphasize thin) coat of tung oil varnish applied with a clean, soft cloth. The results are even better if the finish is applied to the brass while it's warm. I set my oven to low heat—250 degrees—and then put the hardware in it on an old cookie sheet (another garage sale bargain). About 15 minutes of baking will do, again be careful—the brass should be warm, not hot to the touch. Then simply apply the tung oil with the cloth and let it dry overnight.

You can also coat the brass with clear lacquer from a spray can, but go easy. A light coat is all that is needed.

To finish off my list of old family recipes for brass hardware—did you know that Worcestershire sauce will work as a brass polish? It does a good job, but always leaves me hungry for a thick, juicy steak.

Connections: If you have a question or a subject you'd like addressed in a future column write to me at:

The Old House Mechanic 5207 Cuming Street Omaha,
NE 68127 or call: 556-6638
or e-mail: dbrowsers@home.com

California Tacos & More

Homemade Mexican Food

342-0212

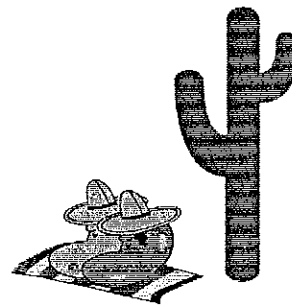
33rd & California Street

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

Closed Sunday



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&
More**



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Friendly Service

3301 California Street -- 422-1058

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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



Christmas Tree Recycling Information

The City of Omaha Public Works Department - Environmental Quality Division is once again providing collection sites for Christmas tree recycling (the trees will be ground into mulch). Volunteers will be available at the sites from **10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 6 & 7** for those who need assistance unloading trees. Please remove the following from the tree before bringing it to the collection site: nails, ornaments, plastic bags, wires, tree stands, and lights. Wreaths and evergreen roping, or wire-connected strands of evergreen **will not** be accepted. Flocked trees are acceptable. The following three sites closest to the Gifford Park area are:

Ak-Sar-Ben (69th St. and Mercy Road entrance - east of entrance gate)

Orchard Park (66th Street north of Hartman Avenue)

Brown Park (U Street between 15th and 18th Streets)

The sites listed above will be open through **January 12** - please do not deliver trees after this date. In addition, the **City of Omaha Maintenance Facility at 11th and Locust Street** will accept trees, but only from **10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on January 6 and 7**.

Holiday Light Contest Winners

This year it was my pleasure to help judge the many houses in our Association who so festively decorated their residences for the holidays. It reminded me of when I was younger and my whole family used to pack into the family truckster and drive around Omaha looking for good displays. There were many good displays this year, but a handful stood out from the rest:

- 621 N. 36 St.
- 3405 Webster St.
- 315 N. 31 St
- 3403 California St.
- 321 N. 36 Ave

I personally was looking for displays with good taste, character, and originality. I want to thank everyone who decorated their houses this year - it makes the neighborhood look just a little more festive. Some of the houses that deserve mentioning are: **3413 California, 3512 California, 3514 California, 3508 California, 716 N. 36 St., 204 N. 35 Ave,** and most of Webster Street west of 34 Street. Thank you again and enjoy a safe, happy New Year!

by Peter Cihunka



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)

E-mail Address: _____

Can we contact you for help on any of the following items? (please circle areas of interest).

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Cleanup/Beautification | Tennis Program | Block Captain | Tool Lending |
| Membership | Youth Activities | History | Newsletter |
| Neighborhood Walks | Park | Merchants | Newsletter Distribution |
| Social Activities | Trees Planting | Watch Group | Meeting Program |
| Landlord/Tenant Issues | Calling Committee | Public Relations | School Liaison |

Dead Storage Vehicle Ordinance

After a snowstorm, it's easy to see vehicles that haven't been moved for awhile. In the winter, this situation makes it difficult for snow plows to clean the streets properly. In any kind of weather, vehicles must be moved at least every 48 hours if they are parked on the street. If they are not moved, police can ticket and tow them to the impound lot. The cost to retrieve the vehicle from the impound lot is a minimum of \$75 plus \$15 each day the vehicle remains in the impound lot. Police have recently stepped up enforcement of this ordinance. Please be a considerate neighbor and move your vehicle at least every 48 hours.