



# Gifford Park's Pride

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

July 2001

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

## Show Wagon And The Gravy-dippers Put on A Great Show Regional Finals Set For Wednesday, July 11, In Gifford Park

Gifford Park was host to Show Wagon 2001, a youth talent competition, and The Gravydippers Band on Tuesday evening June 19. Rain in the morning threatened to cause a cancellation of the stage events as it had on Gifford Park Day, but this time the evening turned out to be very nice, allowing the audience to sit on blankets, lawn chairs and even the grass on the northeast part of the park. Loren Johnson of J-N-J Grocery donated hot dogs, pop and arranged to have a hot dog wagon in the park.

About 15 Show Wagon acts came from all over, including local acts from the Gifford Park neighborhood. Acts included dancing, singing, rap, tap dancing, and others. The judges had difficult decisions picking the winners. Three of the judges, Brian Kokensparger, Mary Theresa Green and Kristin Pluhacek, live in our neighborhood. Thanks to all those who participated—your talent and hard work was enjoyed by all.

Many thanks to Cis Carlson, City of Omaha Parks & Recreation, for organizing and heading up the Show Wagon program, and giving Gifford Park the opportunity

*continued on page 3*



Reminder: No July Meeting!

Next Meeting  
Thursday, August 2

## Compactors Aid Spring Cleanup Effort

How about those trash compactors at this year's spring cleanup! They were awesome. About three compactors were filled at this year's cleanup, held Saturday, June 16 in Gifford Park. This is comparable to about ten or twelve 20 CY dumpsters that have been filled in recent years. The City Public Works Department ran the cleanup and it appeared to be a very efficient operation. Some of the other highlights: collecting 8 tons of scrap metal (most ever) and nearly 60 tires, signing up 35 memberships, and collecting nearly \$500 in membership fees and donations. Loren Johnson of J-N-J Grocery donated hot dogs and California Bar donated pop for the workers. Volunteers included Jim Kyler, Lloyd Canfield, Melvin Ziola, Roger Freeman, Jim & Kathleen Wilwerding, Ron & Vicki Frey, Linda Chapman, Mike & Candy Bacome, Terry & Sue

*continued on page 7*



**GPNA OFFICERS****PRESIDENT**

Peter Cihunka 341-7293

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

Vicki Frey 344-0757

**TREASURER**

Dana Carlton 346-4575

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS****ADVERTISING**

Dar Swartz 345-0125

**CLEAN-UP**

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

**COMPLIANCE**

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

**WELCOMING**

Vicki Frey 344-0757

**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

**KELLOM SCHOOL ELIASON**

Dana Carlton 346-4575

**The President's Column**

As I write my very first President's column, I can't help but feel excited about the opportunities that lie ahead; however, at the same time I know how Frank Solich must have felt when he took over for Tom Osborne. The GPNA has a winning program already established with long time assistant coaches (i.e. the Board). When I talk to other people around Omaha from other associations, they are ALWAYS amazed at how much we do every year within the neighborhood. At the same time, I am taking over for a local legend: **Chris Foster**. Chris performed his duties as President with an almost unparalleled level of dedication and devotion to the job. I am sure that over the next year there will be some questioning of my play calling; however, I can assure you that I will NOT call the option every time it is third and long (just in case you were wondering, I am a Husker fan).

Some of you may not know who I am, so please allow me to tell you a little bit about myself. My name is **Peter Cihunka**. I have been a resident of Gifford Park for 4 years; I was born and raised in northwest Omaha. I have been active with the GPNA pretty much since I moved into the neighborhood (I was actually recruited by **Tom Rose**). I have a strong passion for this neighborhood and consider myself a forward thinking individual. At the same time, however, I also believe that if is not broken, do not try to fix it. There are a lot of things about our neighborhood that are not broken.

As the new President, there are really three goals that I plan to devote myself to working on this year. I think they are all interconnected and will help to improve our neighborhood. The first is to continue the efforts to try to keep 33<sup>rd</sup> & California a safe place to live. We have made tremendous strides since the spring, but our work is NOT done! The reality of the situation here is that we, even more so than the police, I believe, are responsible to make sure our backyard is safe. We live here! I do not think it matters if you are a renter or a homeowner or an Association member or not. **We** are the responsible ones.

The second goal is to increase the level of involvement from all members of the neighborhood. I do not know if you have noticed, but we live in quite a diverse neighborhood. Many people of different backgrounds and ethnicity live here. Being in middle Omaha, we have a lot of transition that goes on here. Change can be a good thing and so can diversity. We need to take the time to learn about our neighbors; understand their concerns, wants, needs, and desires. I believe that as human beings we all share the same desires.

The third goal is to increase the membership of the GPNA. I believe in this organization; I believe in its purpose and its function. I know that there are some of you out there who do not share this belief. Call me, contact me. I am willing to listen to your concerns. If we did something in the past that turned you off to us, give me a chance to make it up to you. The truth is that there is strength in numbers. Whether you are a homeowner or a renter, we stand behind our members. Chances are you know a GPNA member, so if you are not comfortable contacting me, talk to your neighbor. I am not going to force you to join us, but I will do my best to help you make an informed decision.

Before I close, I would be remiss if I did not say **THANK YOU** to **Chris Foster** for the outstanding job he did as President over the last two years and **THANK YOU** for all your guidance, training, and the confidence you had in me over the last year. You are a good neighbor and an even better friend.

*continued on page 3*


**TOOL  
LENDING  
HOTLINE**


**Mike 933-7506**

**Chris 342-6006**

**Mowers - \$5**

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



### Presidents Column

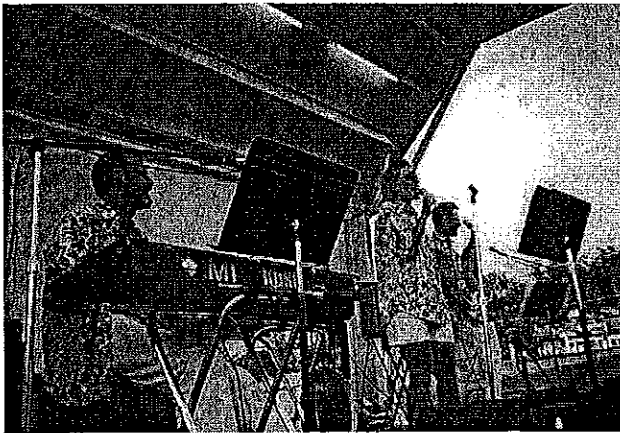
*continued from page 2*

I think that is enough for now. I look forward to sharing more in the months to come and working with and meeting all of you. Earlier I said you may not know who I am, but I will bet you have seen me. I usually walk my dog (95lb. yellow Labrador retriever) in the evenings. If you see me, say "Hi". Don't worry - the dog doesn't bite. Oh, in case you were wondering, neither do I.

*by Peter Cihunka*

### Show Wagon . . . *continued from page 1*

to host this great event for the second year in a row. Cis has done Show Wagon for the past 11 years and also from 1968-71. Thanks also to **Rick Weiner** who handled the sound, and **Jeff Painter** and **Chris Dragon** who helped with setup. Special thanks go to **Brad Bogard** and **Kent Windorski** for getting the food and pop started in quick order. Also helping were **Raquel Ayala**, **Ron & Vicki Frey**, **Betty Slayden**, **Tiffany Slayden**, **Kayleen Slayden**, **Terry Wilwerding**, **Peter Cihunka**, **Jim Wilwerding**, **Leo Wilwerding** and everyone who distributed flyers in the neighborhood. Remember, Gifford Park is also a host site for the regional finals **Wednesday, July 11 at 7:30 p.m.** (we may have food and additional entertainment prior to Show Wagon starting around 6 p.m.) - hope to see you there!



*The Gravydippers started the evening's entertainment by playing a variety of music from jazz to classic rock. Members of the band include Robert Glaser, Rod Griffith, Camille Metoyer, Bob Massaila, and Steve Shinger.*

### What's Happening in the Neighborhood

If you have been near Gifford Park lately you've probably noticed a variety of activities going on with the **Sun Dawgs Summer Youth Program**. This is great city program that affects many of the youth in our neighborhood. This year we have three very good supervisors running things; **Paul Williams**, **Allison Easterling** and **Chris Thoms**. Paul also supervised last summer. Many thanks to **Tom McGinn**, **Peg Watkins** and **Tom Lebida** with **City Parks and Recreation** who organize and run this valuable program. GPNA's own **Jan Franks** helps with the program on a regular basis. Stop down to the Sun Dawg shack weekdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and see what's going on or even lend a helping hand.

The GPNA was deeply saddened to hear about the death of **Leann Kelly** after a brief illness. Leann was a longtime food service employee at St. Joseph Hospital's cafeteria. She helped serve the buffet at all 12 GPNA Holiday Banquets. We will miss her wonderful hospitality and cheerful disposition. In other news from St. Joseph's, CEO **Rich Stanko** recently retired. Rich is a great friend of the GPNA and under his leadership the hospital's commitment to our neighborhood has been outstanding. The GPNA wishes Rich a healthy and happy retirement.

*continued on page 4*

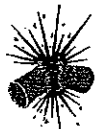
### California Bar & Pkg. 510 No. 33rd St.

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



### Charles R. Kilgore Jr. Attorney At Law 4913 Underwood Avenue 558-5000

Personal Injury Law  
Worker's Compensation  
Injury  
Auto Accidents  
Insurance Claims



Happy  
Fourth of  
July!



## What's Happening . . . *continued from page 3*

Officer **John Schmitt** with the Police Nuisance Unit gave a very interesting presentation at our June Meeting at St. Joseph's Hospital. He showed many slides depicting vehicle violations that can be reported to police and the **Mayor's Action Line (444-5555)**. The key is to understand the laws and ordinances and to use them appropriately when other solutions fail take care of the problem. The GPNA encourages everyone to accurately document problems and report them in a timely manner – it does make a difference!

Good luck to **Loren Johnson** on opening up a new **J-N-J Grocery** near 40<sup>th</sup> & Bedford. The store was completely remodeled over the past couple months. Loren says the neighborhood has been very positive. Stop by the new store if you get a chance.

As mentioned last month, all the trees and shrubs have been planted in the park. The GPNA met with **Pat Slaven**, City Park Planner, and **Kate Schumaker**, Nebraska State Arboretum, to review the planting project in Gifford Park. There are a few replacements and punchlist items for Indian Creek to complete, but all in all the plantings seem to be doing well. We need volunteers to help with weeding and trash pickup in the park on a periodic basis – call **342-6006** if you can help.

The proposed Assisted Living Center, which would be on the Duchesne Campus, was to go before the Landmark's Heritage Preservation Commission Board for a vote on June 13, but was postponed until July because several board members were unable to attend. The board will rule on whether physical changes to the building will impact the historic integrity of the neighborhood. The proposal is then expected to go before the City Council.

A group of GPNA volunteers are starting a "community garden" on a vacant lot at **3416 Cass St.** A handful of volunteers spent some time clearing trash, weeds, trees and branches from the lot. Plans are to map out where and what to plant yet this summer and till up those sections soon to get plants started. The goal is to create a similar community garden like the City Sprouts location at 40<sup>th</sup> & Franklin. Anyone interested in participating can call **Annemarie 342-1340** or **Chris 342-6006**.

The slate of individuals volunteering to be officers in the GPNA for 2001-2002 was presented before the June general meeting by **Terry Wilwerding**, chair of the Nominating Committee. The following nominees were elected unanimously: **Peter Cihunka**, President, **Terry Wilwerding**, Vice-President, **Vicki Frey**, Recording Secretary, and **Dana Carlton**, Treasurer.

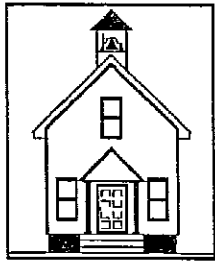
## Gifford Park Day Revisited

We didn't have enough space in last month's newsletter to provide details of Gifford Park Day, but better late than never. After the rainout on May 5, the event was held Saturday, May 12 in Gifford Park. Volunteers decorated bikes beginning at 11 a.m. At noon there were memorial tree dedications for **Laura Watson Dalton** and **Ed Hendershot**. **Joel Long** with Omaha World Herald Branching Out, **Subby Anzaldo** and former mayor **Hal Daub** spoke. The mayor then started the parade through the park with the **Condor Marching Band** leading the way. Light rain began to fall as the parade was ending, which forced cancellation of the Moonwalk ride and the music, and put a damper on a few other events. However, hot dog sales were brisk and the water balloon toss, tug-o-war, face-painting, Fontenelle Forest animal exhibit, police car, fire engine, and raffle were all a big success.

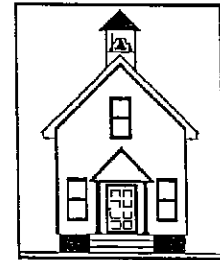
Many thanks go to: **Nebraska State Arboretum, Omaha World Herald - Branching Out, Omaha Police Department, Omaha Fire Department, City of Omaha Parks & Recreation Department, St. Joseph's Hospital, J-N-J Grocery, California Tacos, Roberts Dairy, Baker Rents, Robert E. Glaser & The Gravydippers, Condor Marching Band, Shelterbelt Theatre & Spot Productions, Omaha Theater for Young People, Fontenelle Forest Nature Center, State Farm Insurance - Don Tripp**, and the **Gifford Park Neighborhood Association**. Special thanks go to the many GPNA volunteers who helped with planning and organizing this event, in particular, event chairman **Peter Cihunka**. Due to the large number of volunteers who assisted, we will not print all the individual names, but your efforts are greatly appreciated.



*The rain failed to dampen the spirits of those who participated in the Gifford Park Day activities that weren't cancelled. Many of the neighborhood children (and GPNA president Chris Foster) had a great time taking part in an old fashioned tug-o-war on the tennis court.*



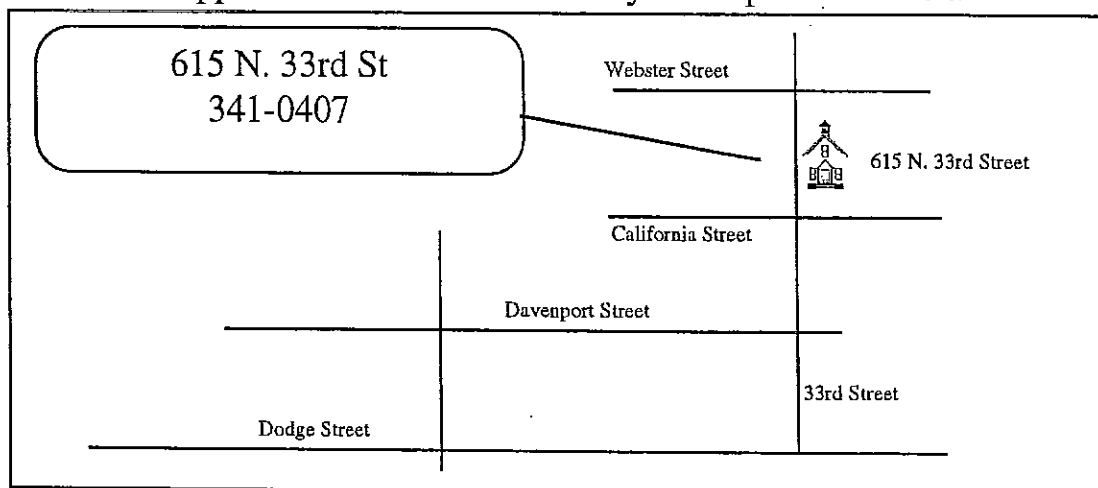
# NEBRASKA CHILDCARE CENTERS®

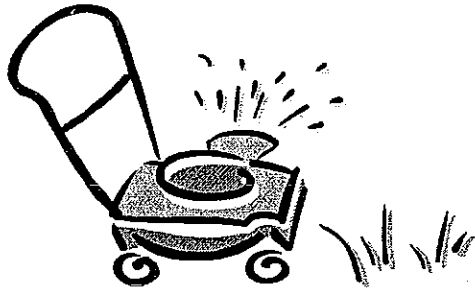


# 341-0407

- \* 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 local schools
- \* We accept Title 20

Appointments are not necessary so drop in for a visit.





# **TLC LAWNS**

Commercial and Residential Lawn Care

**598-8455**

**Terrence D. Ross**  
Owner

## RATES

	<u>Weekly Mowing</u>	<u>Aeration</u>	<u>Fertilization (per Application)</u>
4,000 sq. ft.	\$29.00	\$37.00	\$35.00
5,000 sq. ft.	\$34.00	\$41.00	\$40.00
6,000 sq. ft.	\$39.00	\$45.00	\$46.00
7,000 sq. ft.	\$45.00	\$50.00	\$52.00
8,000 sq. ft.	\$51.00	\$55.00	\$58.00
9,000 sq. ft.	\$57.00	\$60.00	\$63.00
10,000 sq. ft.	\$63.00	\$65.00	\$68.00

**CALL FOR FREE ESTIMATES**

3009 "R" STREET  
OMAHA, NE 68107

(402) 598-8455  
FAX 731-9778

**Spring Cleanup . . . continued from page 1**

Wilwerding, Steve Wilwerding, Leo Wilwerding, Eva Swanson, Rodney Hay, Peter Cihunka, Jean Peck, Billy Dooly, Raquel Ayala, Bob & Virginia Hutton, Dana Carlton, Rod Flint, Harry Dirgo, Chris & Sallie Foster and Katelin Reagan. Thanks also go to St. Joseph's Hospital, Keep Omaha Beautiful, the Omaha Police Department and the City Parks Department. Special thanks again to Mike Wilwerding for organizing and chairing the cleanup. Mike and his wife Nadja had their own home project going on that weekend – we appreciate your efforts. If anyone is interested in heading up future cleanups, contact Peter 341-7293 or Chris 342-6006 for more information.



*Having way too much fun in the membership tent were Linda Chapman and Kathleen Wilwerding. These ladies were in charge of sending out crews to make pick-ups and collecting donations and membership fees.*

**California Tacos & More**

*Homemade Mexican Food*

**342-0212**

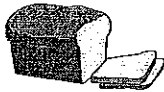
**33rd & California Street**

**Dine In or Carry Out**

**Hours:**

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

**Closed Sunday**



**J'N'J**

**GROCERY STORE**

*Fresh Meats -- Fresh Produce*

*Friendly Service*

**3301 California Street -- 422-1058**

**WE DELIVER!**



**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**

## Good Luck, Jim & Ruth Windorski!

If you have been in the neighborhood for a few years or have seen a copy of our history book, then you know the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association began in 1988 with a very special group which included **Jim and Ruth Windorski**. After thirty-seven years living at 528 N. 32<sup>nd</sup> St., Jim and Ruth are moving back to their origins near Blackduck, Minnesota in early July. Their children **Lance, Mark, Ellen, Ross and Kent** will continue to live in Omaha.

Jim was elected the first President of the GPNA in 1988 and Ruth was elected Recording Secretary. The Windorski's were active with nearly all functions of the neighborhood association and helped lay the foundation for many of the annual events and activities you enjoy today. Jim has worked remodel construction and Ruth has worked at J-N-J Grocery for many years along with raising their kids

On a personal note, Jim inspired me to become involved with the GPNA in 1989 with the neighborhood cleanups. I have consulted Jim and Ruth many times on issues affecting the neighborhood. I appreciate their candidness, experience, and insight, and I have tremendous respect for the leadership Jim and Ruth demonstrated in helping to put the GPNA on the map. We will miss you both and wish you the very best in Minnesota.

*by Chris Foster*

## Neighborhood Walk Calendar For July

All walks are scheduled for Friday evenings at 8:00 p.m.

**July 13** - Meet at Duchesne parking lot, 36th & California

**July 27** - Meet at Gifford Park baseball diamond

Questions? Call Peter 341-7293

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

**444-5555**

## Tennis, Anyone? GPNA Instructional Program Set For August

Get ready for the 8th annual youth tennis lessons in Gifford Park every Wednesday in August. Look for registration forms at **J'N'J Grocery** and **California Tacos** later in July. For more information, or if you would like to help with any or all of the sessions, call **Chris** at 342-6006.

## 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



18"



### 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      | Tree Planting     | Watch Group      | Meeting Program         |
| Landlord/Tenant Issues | Calling Committee | Public Relations | School Liaison          |