



Gifford Park's Pride

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

May 2002

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Community Garden Grand Opening To Be Held May 4

The Gifford Park Community Garden, located at 3416 Cass St., will have several activities on **Saturday, May 4** from **11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** (rain date is Sunday, May 5 - same time) to help introduce the project to neighborhood residents – **EVERYONE** is welcome! Activities planned are free food and refreshments, "Ask the Master Gardener" and lots of gardening and planting information provided by the County Extension, hands-on arts & crafts for kids, neighborhood information, and information about how to be part of the Community Garden project including registration for a garden plot on site. We plan to build a tool shed within the next month or so to store garden tools and supplies (we have a need for garden items if anyone is interested in donating). Please call **Chris 342-6006** or **Annemarie 342-1340** for more information about the Community Garden.

Next Meeting
Thursday, May 2

6:45 P.M. - Ice Cream Social

7:10 P.M. - Guest Speakers

State Senator Chip Maxwell

Jim Anderson
City Planning Department

St. Joseph Hospital
Becic Dining Room

Show Wagon Coming To Gifford Park For Third Year In A Row

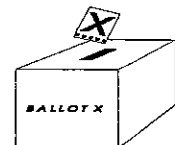
Gifford Park will be the site of two Show Wagon performances again this year. A District performance will be held **Thursday, June 13**, and the Regional Finals are scheduled for **Wednesday, July 10**. Both performances will begin at **7:30 p.m.** Entry forms are available by calling **Karin Madden** at **444-5612**. More information will be provided in upcoming newsletters and neighborhood meetings.

The Show Wagon program is a competition for youth ages 1-18 to show off their talents on stage, whether it be singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, juggling, magic tricks or any other talent you wish to perform. There are 5 different age divisions and participants can come from anywhere. **Wouldn't it be nice to see talented youth from our own neighborhood participate?** Mark your calendars and come out on both dates to enjoy an evening of music, dance and other talents at Gifford Park. Bring your blankets and chairs and enjoy the show!

Plenty Of Good Reasons To Attend May GPNA Meeting

Do you like cake and ice cream? Do you want to ask State Senator **Chip Maxwell** about issues discussed at the legislative session? Are you interested in hearing **Jim Anderson** from the Planning Department talk about a City Master Plan for our Gifford Park neighborhood? Or how about finding out more about upcoming activities like neighborhood walks, Show Wagon, Sun Dawgs and Community Garden? We encourage **EVERYONE** to attend the next general neighborhood meeting **Thursday, May 2** at **St. Joseph's Hospital** in the **Becic Dining Room** (see the meeting schedule above for details).

Don't Forget To VOTE!
State Primary Election
Tuesday, May 14, 2001



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**

Dad Sweazy 345-0125

CLEAN-UP

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Chris Foster 342-6006

COMPLIANCE

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

HISTORIAN

Eva Swanson 345-1707

KELLOM SCHOOL LIAISON

Jean Peck 344-0722

MEMBERSHIP

Chris Foster 342-6006

NEWSLETTER

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Mike Blacome 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

WELCOMING

Vicki Frey 344-0757

The President's Column

Spring is here and it looks like it will be a good one. My grass is actually green! I would like to thank the person who planted the seed in my yard last year without me knowing... it sure did make a difference.

There is a lot going on in the neighborhood association this time of year. We are currently looking for new leadership within our organization. We are always looking for "fresh blood", new ideas. An organization will go stagnant and eventually fail with out the influx of new ideas. Does anyone remember the USSR? If you would like to offer up your input, advice, leadership, or advice please call me: **341-7293**.

This time of year also brings about an increase in **ALL** kinds of activity in our neighborhood. I know that most of us are tired of being cooped up from the winter and are ready to let loose a little bit: get outside and work on the yard, the house, clean up the weeds, etc. Well, it works that way for our "undesirable" elements too (I bet you thought you did NOT have anything in common with them, didn't you?). If you have been down to 33rd Street lately, you know what I am talking about. I am not saying that everyone who "hangs out" there is an "undesirable" element; however, I am a realist and I know most of you are too. In the last few weeks, there have been major drug busts in our neighborhood. At one such bust, the police seized 10 illegal weapons and professional surveillance equipment. Let's take a minute to recognize two things: first, **thank you** Northeast Precinct for getting that "stuff" out of our neighborhood. Second, the Police **CANNOT** do it all by themselves.

We have **DRUGS** in our hood. We have illegal **DOG FIGHTS** going on in our hood. **WE** need to take care of our own. The sad part is that most of the "undesirables" do **NOT** live within our neighborhood. They come from somewhere else and mess up our living space! How does that make you feel? What if I came over to your house, took off my shoes, propped my feet up on your nice coffee table, smoked in your clean house, drank all your beverages, ate all your food, insulted your spouse, used profanity in front of your kids, kicked your dog, tossed your cat, and used your toilet **WITHOUT** putting the lid down when I was done. Now, how does that make you feel?

Last year, I stood up at a general meeting and asked everyone to go out of their way and make an extra trip by 33rd & California St. or some other "active" area every day. It only takes a few minutes. If you see something illegal, call it in! Wait until you blocks away if you wish, **NO ONE** will know who you are. Do you think I always want people to know I was the one who called? **NO** way! I have the same concerns as all of you do; member and non-member alike, owner and renter, parent or non-parent. Please make that extra trip, it **WILL** make a difference.... I promise!

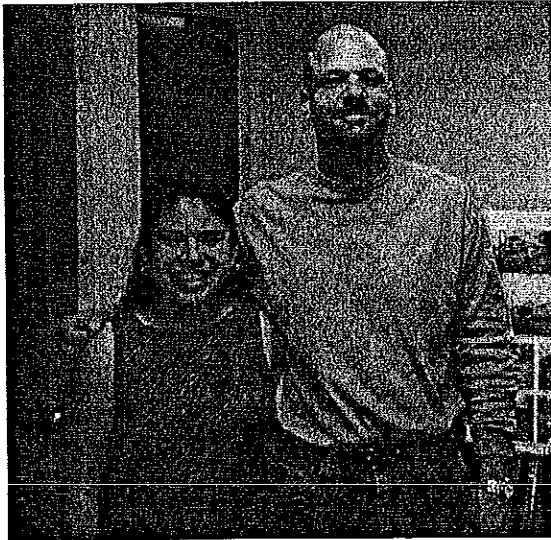
Do not underestimate the power of talking to your neighbors. Go outside! Sit on your porch. I know I am less apt to do something I should not do if I know I am being watched. Leave your porch light on overnight. These small things can make a huge difference. Start by looking out for the neighbor to your left. Next week, add the neighbor to the right. Then the whole street. If we all just look out for our own street, we can change things. If anyone is interested in being some of that fresh blood I mentioned earlier, I definitely welcome your input...on this topic especially.

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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.

Ayala Honored At April Meeting

Raquel Ayala received special recognition from GPNA President Peter Cihunka at the April General Meeting for her community service efforts. Raquel is currently a student at Benson High School, and she and her family live near Gifford Park. She has helped with a number of GPNA events, including the tennis program, Show Wagon, and Gifford Park Day. She also translates the neighborhood newsletter and event flyers into Spanish. Raquel is involved with the Upward Bound program (Penny Boykins, Assistant Director of Upward Bound was present at the meeting also) and she is starting a Latino Cultural Committee at Benson. According to Chris Foster, GPNA Past President, Raquel is "someone you can always count on - she's always willing to help with GPNA events - she's got a great attitude, and balances family, school, job, and community service - an excellent role model for other youth and adults." Thanks, Raquel, for all that you do, and keep up the good work!



Nominating Committee Formed

Five GPNA members were named to the 2002-2003 Nominating Committee at the April Executive Board Meeting. These members will be responsible for issuing a slate of candidates for the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The slate will be announced at the May general meeting and will be voted on at the June meeting. If anyone is interested in serving in any of these positions, or would like a "job description" for any of these offices, please contact Chris Foster 342-6006 or Terry Wilwerding 342-2795.

President's Column . . .

continued from page 2

Does this story sound familiar? "One day we were all sitting around the office talking about what we did for the weekend. I told my buddies that I painted my kitchen and cleaned up the woodwork in my house. I went on to brag about how my house had all the original woodwork. Oak of course. In great shape, just beautiful. Then a co-worker asked me where I live. I hesitated and answered... "In the Cathedral area".

by Peter Cihunka



TOOL LENDING HOTLINE



Mike 933-7506

Chris 342-6006

Mowers - \$5

Rent for most tools - \$3



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

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Main Street Program Discussed At April GPNA Meeting

Information regarding the Main Street program was presented at the April general GPNA meeting. Discussion centered around issues regarding neighborhood improvement with the focus on revitalization of the business district and potential opportunities for improvements. Also presented was a summary of the March 20 Main Street meeting that was attended by the area "stakeholders" who have a direct impact on the future of our neighborhood. Representatives included property and business owners from the 33rd & California business district, major surrounding businesses and institutions, City Government, GPNA board members, and other surrounding neighborhood association presidents. We plan to have our next Main Street/Neighborhood Improvement meeting with the "stakeholders" in mid-May to discuss specific improvements and get further commitment to move forward. Call **Chris** at **342-6006** for more information.



Happy Mother's Day!



OLD MARKET

SATURDAYS
May 4 - October 12
8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
11th and Jackson

WEDNESDAYS
June 12 - August 14
4 to 8 p.m.
11th and Howard

NORTH OMAHA

SATURDAYS
May 25 - September 21
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Urban League Parking Lot at 30th and Lake

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Old Omaha
Association



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Meet the Candidate:

Danielle Talkington

Vote May 14th for Talkington



**Papio-Missouri Natural Resources District (NRD)
Board of Directors, District 6**

- Environmental chemist with 15 years professional experience
- Master's degree with Natural Resources Specialization (May 2002)
- Resident of District 6 for 10 years
- Youth mentor, researching "Youth as resources to the community"

GOD'S LITTLE CHILDREN'S CHILDCARE II

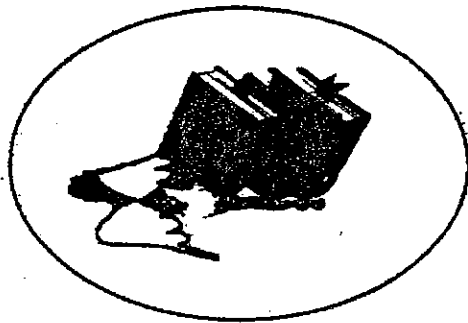
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Corporate Office

(402) 342-7494

Closed on Sunday

Memorial Day At Prospect Hill Cemetery

Memorial Day is a day to remember fallen heroes and departed love ones. Many of us will visit cemeteries in and around the area. After that is done, plan to attend the Memorial Day ceremony at **Prospect Hill Cemetery**. This cemetery at 33rd and Parker is almost within walking distance of the Gifford Park neighborhood. It is the oldest cemetery in Omaha and is the resting place of many early Omaha residents including **Byron Reed, James Woolworth, Andrew Hanscom, Phineas T. Hitchcock, Andrew Poppleton, Ezra and Joseph Millard, John Redick, and Henry W. Yates.**

This year's celebration at Prospect Hill will take place at **11:00 a.m.** on **May 27**. The Prospect Hill Preservation Brass Ensemble will give a concert beginning at **10:45 a.m.**, followed by the flag raising by the Civil War Reenactment Color Guard, which will also give a 21-gun Victorian-type musket salute. The speaker for the event will be **Joan Hennecke**, well-known Omaha actress who recently starred in "The Foreigner" at the Dundee Dinner Theater. She will tell the story of the **Reverend Reuben Gaylord**, who was the first Congregational minister in Omaha. At the conclusion of the program the band will lead the way to one of the more ornate monuments – that of **Dan Allen**, a riverboat gambler. His life consort, **Anna Wilson**, whose "house was not a home" is also buried there. The band plays "When the Saints Go Marching In", and someone places a yellow rose on the large tombstone of Anna Wilson.

Another interesting monument is that of the Four Boys. Four broken columns of varying lengths mark the common gravesite of four boys, ranging in age from 10 to 14 years. Out rabbit hunting in 1884, the lads died when they discovered and somehow blew up an abandoned powder magazine. The broken pillars signify their broken lives.

Take the time, bring your lawn chairs, and attend this unique Memorial Day service and look for some of these interesting gravesites. A walking guide is available so you can find the sites. Parking is available inside the cemetery from the entrance on Parker Street.

by Eva Swanson

Want to
Advertise in
the Gifford
Park Pride?

call
345-0125

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

Neighborhood Walk Schedule - 2002

We invite all of you to join us as we tour our neighborhood and visit all our neighbors. Many of these walks will focus on cleanup efforts around the neighborhood as well. All walks will begin at 8pm unless otherwise noted. Listed below is the walk schedule and location where we will be meeting to begin our walk. If you have any questions, please call **Peter 341-7293**.

May 10: Meet at 32nd & Burt St.: TAC
Building Parking Lot

May 24: 30th and Cass St.: Green space

June 07: Gifford Park (upper)

June 21: Gifford Park (lower)

July 05: Duchesne Academy

July 19: Community Garden
34th and Cass St

August 02: 36th and Burt St.

August 16: 36th and Davenport St.

August 30: Gifford Park (lower)

September 13: 7PM Gifford Park

September 27: 7PM Gifford Park:
Taco Night!

Looking to Buy or Sell Your House?



Call a realtor that lives and knows
your neighborhood.

Matt Mancuso
740-6929

Century 21 Wear
391-5912

Your Neighborhood Realtor

Call for a free market analysis of your home. I can value, sell and buy you a new home. For any of your real estate needs feel free to call me.
Matt 740-6929/345-8611

Summer Camps To Be Held At Creighton

The National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) will be held at Creighton University June 5 – July 12, from 7:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m., Monday – Friday. Since 1968, the NYSP has combined sports instruction with exciting educational programs for youth ages 10-16. Enrollment is open to all youngsters in the community whose parent(s) or guardian(s) meet(s) Department of Health and Human Services income guidelines, at no cost. Activities include swimming, basketball, football (touch or flag), softball, track and field, soccer, volleyball, baseball, bowling, and golf. Top-quality sports equipment is provided by the program. Field trips to locations such as the Henry Doorly Zoo are also part of the program. Community leaders bring information to participants on subjects such as alcohol and other drug-abuse prevention, nutrition and personal health, career opportunities and job responsibilities, higher education and community concerns, and math/science instruction. NSYP participants also receive an NSYP T-shirt, a daily USDA-approved meal, transportation to campus (if necessary), a medical examination, accident/medical insurance coverage, and interaction with college students and staff. For more information, call 280-1752.

Creighton will also be holding the **Junior Wheelchair Sports & Recreation Camp August 5 - 9**, 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Kiewit Fitness Center on campus. This no-cost camp is geared for youth, ages 6-18, of normal intelligence with physical disabilities that would require a chair for athletic participation. In addition to sports, campers are exposed to a variety of leisure activities and field trips. Lunch, drinks, snacks, transportation and sports chairs (if needed) are provided. For more information, call **Karin Madden at 444-5612**.

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342-0212

33rd & California Street

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Closed Sunday



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

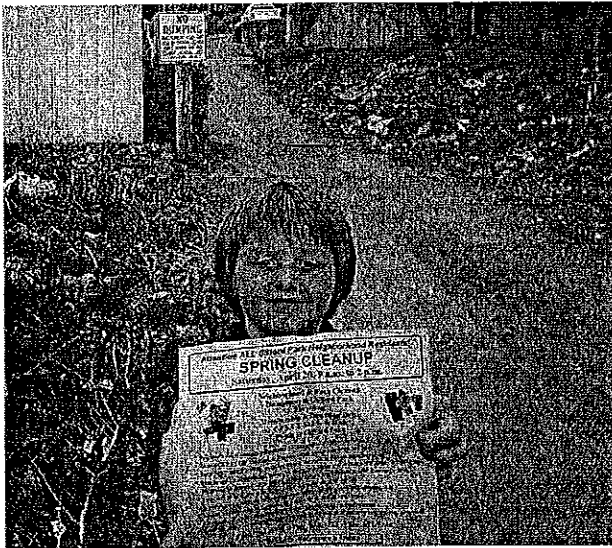
7:00 AM - 11:00 PM Friday thru Saturday

8:00 AM - 10:00 PM Sunday

GPNA 2002 Spring Cleanup

The annual GPNA Spring Cleanup was held on Saturday, April 20th in Gifford Park. Although it was a bit chilly, the rain held off until after the cleanup was over. There was a steady line of cars to the parking lot all day, with loads of trash that filled nearly 4 compactors. Approximately 50 tires were taken from the neighborhood to the disposal location at Holy Name School. Over \$550 in memberships, donations, and scrap items and over 5 tons of scrap metal was recycled.

Special thanks to **Peter Cihunka** for heading up this year's cleanup. Things went smoothly and everyone seemed to have a good time. Pete worked his magic in holding off the rain until just after the cleanup was done! The only hold up was the time waiting for additional compactors - but what do you expect when you have the best neighborhood cleanup crew in the city?



Upper left: 8 year-old Royce Allen Thomas, who lives near 31st & Cotage Grove, helps distribute Spring Cleanup flyers a few days before the cleanup. This picture was taken at the vacant lots just east of 33rd and Cass. The "No Dumping" sign does not seem to be deterring people from throwing out their trash all over the lot. Upper right: A typical scene at a Gifford Park spring cleanup: a busy compactor and a lot of scrap metal. Lower left: The "crew" takes a well-deserved lunch break. Lower right: Rich Exline usually comes back to his old neighborhood to help with the cleanups. Here he is assisting Kristine Vanderlinden and Kelli Reinbold in cleaning up the 33rd and Cass St. vacant lots. Kristine and Kelli just joined the GPNA that morning and they were already pitching in to help. Thanks, Kristine and Kelli, and thanks to everyone who helped!

What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

Unfortunately, the GPNA will NOT receive any compensation for damages resulting from the incident in March when someone drove a stolen car through part of the southwest part of the park, destroying three of the newly planted trees. GPNA member **Jan Franks** pursued the matter with the Police and City Prosecutor Marty Conboy, but in the end there is not much anyone can do since the vehicle was stolen.

The GPNA welcomes **Stacy Henry**, the new Community Resource Specialist for the Northeast Precinct. She is the direct liaison to our neighborhood. She can be reached at 444-3367. There is a meeting **Wednesday, May 15 at 6 p.m.** at the **Northeast Precinct, 30th & Taylor**. The purpose of the meeting is to establish a relationship between neighborhood association leaders and the Police. Stacy along with **Captain Thomas Warren** will be on hand to discuss issues.

Many thanks to IRS volunteers **Jackie Foster** and **Pat Prochaska** who provided free tax help in our neighborhood again this year. Yates Elementary School was the site. They processed a total of 66 returns this year, most electronically filed.

Doesn't the park look nice this spring with all the new trees from our planting project completed last year? It's worth mentioning again that this project involved many people, but special recognition goes to **Kate Schumaker** and **Dave Mooter** with the Nebraska State Arboretum, which provided a \$14,000 grant; **Joel Long** with the Omaha World Branching Out Program, which provided a \$3,500 grant; **Pat Slaven**, Park Planner with the City of Omaha, who met a number of times with the GPNA to create the park master plan; and finally **Scott Farrington** with Indian Creek Nursery, who was a pleasure to work with every step of the way. It is because of their efforts and vision that Gifford Park will continue to be the focal point for activity in our neighborhood for many years to come.

The GPNA thanks the **Omaha Community Foundation** for approving our grant proposal for \$700 toward our Fall Cleanup event. The money will help pay for trash compactors/dumpsters, food, pumpkins and other supplies.

City Sprouts and farmer/grower **Rebecca Bloom** is hosting a Spring Plant Sale on **Saturday, May 11 and May 18, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** at the **Urban League of Nebraska Family Resource Center at 3040 Lake St.** Vegetable starts, flower starts, and flower baskets will be available. For more information, call **Nancy** with City Sprouts at **451-7054**.

Make plans to join **Friends of Joslyn Castle** at the annual **Spring Gala on Friday, May 17**. A truly elegant event, the Gala features dinner and a silent auction. The evening begins at **6:30 p.m.** with cocktails. During cocktails, a silent auction will feature spectacular "must-have" summer, picnic, and gardening items. Dinner will be served at **7:30 p.m.** Tickets are \$85 per person (\$55 tax deductible). The funds raised from the Spring Gala will be used to support the preservation, restoration, and ongoing community use of the Castle. Completed in 1903, the Castle took eleven months to build and cost \$250,000. The home of George and Sarah Joslyn is one of Nebraska's most remarkable residences. The Castle is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a designated local landmark. Call **595-2199** to make your reservations early. Space is limited.

The Douglas County Historical Society will open an exhibit May 1 at Heartland of America Park, 8th and Douglas St., that features four themes on the history of Omaha and Douglas County. The exhibit, which is free and open to the public during visiting hours at the park, will be housed in a 60-linear foot case located under the shelter along the north shore of the Heartland Park lake. The themes include Thomas Cuming and the Territorial Capitol, Tall Buildings of Omaha, Omaha's Park and Boulevard System, and Omaha in 1902. The exhibit will continue through April 2003.

The GPNA sends its best wishes for a speedy recovery to Past President **Leo Wilwerding**. Leo is recuperating from recent heart surgery.

Need Your House Painted? Paint-A-Thon May Be Able To Help

You could have the exterior of your home painted at absolutely no cost by volunteers from Omaha area businesses, congregations, and service clubs. The 14th Annual **Brush Up Nebraska Paint-A-Thon** is looking for low-income elderly and disabled homeowners whose houses need a new coat of paint. Homeowners who may be eligible can apply for this service by filling out an application form, which is available at any **Wells Fargo Bank** or by calling **First Call For Help, 444-6666**. An independent selection committee of housing and human service agency professionals will review the applications. The application deadline is **June 7**. Those homes that are selected will be painted by a team of volunteers on **August 17**.

The Paint-A-Thon was established in 1989 as a community service to older adults and disabled homeowners who are unable to physically or financially paint their homes. Since the program began, volunteers have painted over 1300 houses. The Paint-A-Thon is made possible through the financial support of a large number of area businesses.

GPNA Boundaries

The boundaries of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association are the Interstate on the east, 37th Street on the west, Dodge Street on the south and Cuming Street on the north. Anyone living, working, or having an interest in this area is welcome to join.

**Join
the Gifford
Park
Neighborhood
Association
Today!**

2002-2003 Membership Year Begins

The membership year for the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association officially runs from June 1, 2002 through May 31, 2003, and any membership purchased now will be good through May 31, 2003. It's a new beginning for Officers, Executive Board Members and residents. It is truly exciting to have new people volunteer to help. We will have new officers to give the organization a great start.

If you have been a member and supported the GPNA in the past, we appreciate your support and hope you will renew your membership. If you have not been a member, we encourage each of you to consider joining. Your membership helps pay for this newsletter, neighborhood clean-ups and beautification projects, youth activities, social activities, neighborhood watch equipment, tool lending and many other worthwhile programs. Please join the GPNA today.

In addition, it would be nice if all members act as ambassadors of the neighborhood association by greeting and welcoming new people. If we hope to become a better neighborhood, we also need to revert to old-fashioned values. We need to take the time to be there for one another; to look out for and protect one another. We need to support the GPNA, attend meetings and help guide the direction of the area in which we reside. We need to encourage our neighbors to participate also. It doesn't have to take much time. Try to make a difference – together we can.



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 |