



# Gifford Park's Pride

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

January 2003

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

## GPNA Honors Sue Wilwerding as 2002 "Neighbor Of The Year"

The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association chose **Sue Wilwerding** as the "Neighbor of the Year" for 2002. The award was presented to Sue at the GPNA's 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Banquet hosted by Creighton University Medical Center on December 6. Usually we try to keep the award a surprise to the recipient but since Sue is involved in so many GPNA activities it would have been nearly impossible to keep it a secret from her.

Sue has been doing our neighborhood newsletter for the past 6 years (that's 12 issues/year X 6 years = 72 newsletters!). We had 6 different editors in the first 7 years of the GPNA. From the beginning, the newsletter has been the best communication tool and most important function of the neighborhood association. Anyone who has had the responsibility of newsletter editor knows this is a very challenging job.

The process to produce our monthly newsletter requires Sue to be involved, know what's going on in the neighborhood, attend most GPNA meetings and events, schedule her time to meet deadlines, get and write articles, incorporate photos, be accurate with information, deal with last minute changes, proofread, handle computer issues, and get the final copy of the document to Creighton University for printing. Once printed, we distribute the newsletter – during odd-numbered months 1,500 copies are hand-delivered by our dedicated volunteers to everyone within our GPNA boundaries; during even-numbered months 400 copies are mailed to GPNA members and people on our complimentary list. We have to time the newsletter printing and distributing so that the information gets into **your** hands before the first meeting each month. That's obviously a big responsibility to have each month for the past 6 years!

We're not the only ones who think Sue does a great job. **Sibyl Myers** who writes the "Backyard" column (neighborhood updates) for the **Omaha World-Herald** for 25 years, shared some of her thoughts about Sue and the newsletter. Sibyl says she "borrows" GPNA articles

*continued on page 3*

**Note: No January Meeting!**

**Next Meeting  
Thursday, February 6**

**Creighton University  
Medical Center**

## New Location For Free Tax Help

The site for the annual free tax assistance has been moved to the Lay Apostolate Center at **St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 40<sup>th</sup> & Webster St.** This makes our site even more accessible this year. Tax help will be available starting **February 3<sup>rd</sup>** on Monday afternoons & evenings and Saturday mornings through the end of the tax season in April. Everyone is welcome! IRS representatives will provide free tax help for our neighborhood for the 9<sup>th</sup> year in a row. Processing of basic tax returns and electronic filing will be available again this year. Walk-in appointments are welcome, but priority will be given to those who call to schedule an appointment. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call **551-3629**.



**Happy  
New  
Year!**



**See Page 4 For Holiday Highlights**

**GPNA OFFICERS****INTERIM PRESIDENT**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

Vicki 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

**HISTORIAN**

Eva Swanson 345-1707

**KELLOM SCHOOL LIAISON**

Dana Carlton 346-4575

**MEMBERSHIP**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**NEWSLETTER**

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

**NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION**

Mike Bacomo 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

*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 Interim President's Column**

In last month's newsletter Peter Cihunka, our president for the last 1.5 years, announced he was resigning due to unplanned events taking place in his life. He said it is perhaps the most difficult thing he has ever had to do, but felt it would not be fair to the GPNA because he is unable to give the attention this position requires. Peter went on to thank everyone for their support and the opportunity to work for the neighborhood. He finished his President's Column article by talking about the benefits of volunteering, and how "you get MORE out of it than you put into it". We are very sorry to see Peter leave the GPNA and the neighborhood, but his circumstances are quite different from the time when he first took on the position 1.5 years ago after also serving as vice president for a year. These circumstances are VERY positive events in his life and we hope for the very best for Peter and his family.

I want to mention some things about Peter that we are going to miss a lot. He was a natural leader and an excellent public speaker with a great sense of humor – anyone who attended the recent Holiday Banquet got a taste of these talents. His top priority was public safety on 33<sup>rd</sup> & California and he worked toward improvement in this area, including patrolling our streets on the watch group. We have continued to increase our membership and get new people involved in the organization, both top priorities of Peter's. Of course as president, he participated in most GPNA events and activities and ran our general membership and board meetings nearly every month over his term - this is not an easy task. Peter involved himself in a number of important issues affecting the neighborhood that required a lot of time and effort. As he mentioned above, it's not an easy job, especially when you consider it's an all-volunteer organization, but "you do get MORE out of it then you put into it". Peter, thanks for all your efforts and service for the GPNA, there's not many people that would have (or could have) taken on this responsibility to begin with. Good luck!

With 2003 here, I want us all to think about the opportunities we have to make a difference in our neighborhood. Please read the following events and activities we have planned for 2003 and let us know if you would be interested in helping in any way. Annual events include the Easter egg hunt, spring cleanup, Sun Dawgs (we hope!), Show Wagon, youth tennis program, neighborhood-wide garage sale, fall cleanup, pumpkin patch, haunted house, Holiday Banquet, caroling, and lighting contest. I also just got word that Gifford Park has been chosen to host "Music in the Park" in late August! Some other on-going activities include free tax help (during the tax season), neighborhood walks (spring through early fall), watch group patrol (every Friday and Saturday night), community garden, tool lending, general membership meetings (first Thursday of each month), board meetings (third Thursday of each month), newsletter distribution (odd-numbered months), and others.

Many of the events and activities listed above are things we have done for years, but we need new people and ideas to keep them interesting year after year. If none of the items above get you excited about getting involved, would you consider any of the following: writing a newsletter article or editorial; help make calls to neighborhood residents on upcoming events; participate on developing a neighborhood/business district master plan? Or how about sharing your ideas and talents with others in the neighborhood?

It's easy to learn more about these GPNA activities – come to any of our monthly meetings, or call any of the phone numbers listed on this page. A final note, I will be "interim" president until our June elections, so please contact me if you have any questions regarding neighborhood issues (phone 342-6006, e-mail [foster3413@cox.net](mailto:foster3413@cox.net)).

by Chris Foster

## Sue Wilwerding . . . continued from page 1

and passes information on to the rest of Omaha; Sue includes activities from surrounding neighborhoods; many other neighborhoods do not do a newsletter consistently; doing a newsletter takes a lot of time and is hard, grinding work each month; people like to see names and pictures - it shows everyone that our neighborhood is alive and active, this builds momentum and inspires people.

Sue does a lot more than just the newsletter. She participates in most of the GPNA events and activities including the cleanups, bike rodeo, tennis program, block party, easter egg hunt, neighborhood walks, the holiday banquet, and more. She also has quite a life outside of the GPNA. Sue is a native of Omaha and has been married to her husband Terry (and lived in the neighborhood) for 27 years. Their son Steve, 23, is a Creighton graduate, and their daughter Julie, 19, is currently attending Creighton. Sue graduated from Creighton in 1974. She was a faculty member and taught as a Medical Technologist for Creighton/St. Joseph Hospital through the 1980's. Sue has worked as a Medical Technologist for Creighton/St. Joseph Hospital for the past 28 years. She is an avid sports fan and participant. Sue has golfed for the past 15 years and serves as her ladies' league chairman. Besides golfing, Sue enjoys bowling, walking, and is a self-proclaimed "recreational shopper". She is a big sports fan of the Cornhuskers and Bluejays.

Sue somehow balances family, work and the GPNA, and she is able to keep everything in perspective. She is extremely valuable to this neighborhood and a great friend. Congratulations from all of us in the GPNA, and good luck to you and your family in 2003!

*by Chris Foster*

### Editor's Note:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the GPNA for naming me the Gifford Park "Neighbor Of The Year" for 2002. It was indeed an honor, and I am very grateful. There are many people in the GPNA ( and you know who you are) who work tirelessly for the betterment of our neighborhood, so I feel a little undeserving to be singled out.

Working on the newsletter has been a great experience for the past 6 years - it has provided me the opportunity to serve the community, and I've learned a

lot in the process. (I wish I would have paid more attention in Grammar and Composition classes!)

I have many people to thank for their help on the newsletter. **Chris Foster** deserves a lot of the credit for the quality of information that is found within the pages of each newsletter. He contributes many of the articles and pictures, as he has his finger on the "pulse" of the neighborhood. His dedication to the neighborhood is truly inspirational. **Loretta Zuck** at Creighton's Medical Copy Center prints the newsletter every month, and she always gets the job done in time no matter how busy she is (and how late I deliver it!) Everyone who contributes articles to the newsletter does a great job - I'm very impressed with the number of talented and knowledgeable people who live in this neighborhood, and are willing to share their time and expertise with the community. My son **Steve Wilwerding** has been very helpful in getting me out of the many computer jams I've gotten myself into over the years. And last but not least, thanks to my husband **Terry Wilwerding**, my chief photographer and proofreader, who has been unfailing in his support, and his example of dedication to community service has provided the impetus to get me involved in the Association and it sustains my continuing efforts as newsletter editor.

## Lilly's California Bar 510 No. 33rd St.

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

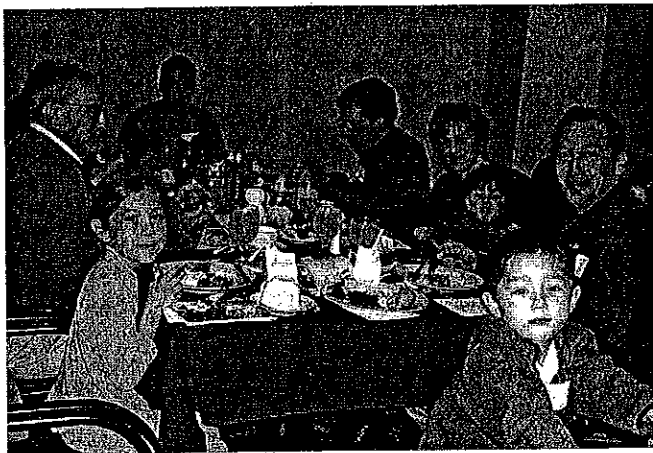
4913 Underwood Avenue  
558-5000

Personal Injury Law  
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## GPNA Holiday Banquet A Festive Event

On Thursday, December 5, GPNA members gathered in the beautifully decorated Becic Dining Room at Creighton University Medical Center for the 14th Annual Holiday Banquet. Those in attendance were treated to a delicious dinner courtesy of **Creighton University Medical Center** and **Sodexo Marriott Food Service**. A special feature at this year's banquet was smoked and fried turkey prepared by **Rodney Hay** - it was a bit hit! Special guests included City Councilman **Jim Vokal**, Captain **Thomas Warren** and **Stacy Henry** from the Northeast Police Precinct, State Senator **Chip Maxwell**, Mayoral assistant **Steve Scarpello**, **Kevin Fasana** from Project Impact, **Tom McGinn** and **Peg Watkins** from the Parks and Recreation Department, Principal **Jo Kubik** from Kellom Academy, and **Sheila Haggas**, Head of School at Duchesne Academy. After dinner, everyone enjoyed **Terry Wilwerding's** slide presentation highlighting 2002 GPNA events. A surprise presentation was made by Councilman **Jim Vokal** to President **Peter Cihunka**, who served as Master of Ceremonies - a check for \$1000 from **Walgreen's** made out to the GPNA. **Chris Foster** then presented the "Neighbor of the Year" award for 2002 to **Sue Wilwerding**. To culminate the evening, a drawing was held for door prizes, which were graciously provided by **The Wolf House**, **Subby Anzaldo**, and **Ron & Vicki Frey**. A holiday floral arrangement, which was displayed on the name-tag table, was presented to Creighton University Medical Center as a token of appreciation for all that the hospital does in support of the GPNA.

The GPNA would like to thank Creighton University Medical Center (**Phil Gustafson**, **Carol McCormick**, **Bob Beehler**, **Ed Finan**, **Cathy Horne**, & **Rodney Hay**) for hosting this annual event. Our sincere thanks also goes to **Walgreen's** for their generous gift and to the door-prize donors. Thanks also to the GPNA Holiday Banquet Committee: **Dana Carlton-Flint**, **Peter Cihunka** (great job as MC!), **Chris Foster**, **Jean Peck**, and **Terry & Sue Wilwerding**. And special thanks again this year to **Ron**, **Vicki**, and **Erik Frey**, committee chairs, for the outstanding effort they all put forth making sure all the details were handled and that everyone had a great time!



## Gifford Park Holiday Caroling

Once again, the Gifford Park neighborhood was graced with the beautiful sounds of holiday caroling. The brave group met at California Tacos at 6:30 pm on Friday, December 13, for the event. The first leg of the musical tour led through the business district at 33<sup>rd</sup> & California, where we harmonized with employees and patrons of **California Tacos**, **Robinson's Garage**, **Lilly's California Bar**, **J-N-J Grocery & La Tiendita**. After several requests for encores, we continued to Webster Street where songs were parlayed to appreciative residents. Braving the temperate elements, we continued around to California Street on our way back to California Tacos for piping hot apple cider and holiday treats graciously donated by **Vicki Frey**, **Eva Swanson**, **Sue Wilwerding**, **Cynthia Shuck**, **Kathleen Wilwerding**, **Jean Peck** and **Sallie Foster**.

P.S. Thanks to **Bob and Darryl Hutton**, **Chris Foster**, **Miguel Lupricio**, and **Eric Noll** for putting up holiday lights in Gifford Park and the business district!

*by Ron Frey*



# **GOD'S LITTLE CHILDREN'S CHILDCARE II**

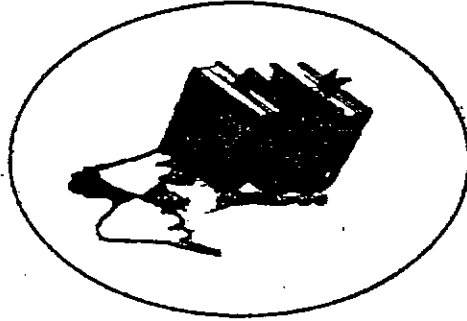
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**(402) 614-0232**

**Corporate Office**

**(402) 342-7494**

**Closed on Sunday**

## Bats In The Belfry

Are there bats in your belfry? Well, maybe not, but how about your attic or basement? Bats in your bedroom at night are s-c-a-a-a-r-y!

Actually, bats are very beneficial creatures who consume lots of flying insects in the summertime, but when the days get shorter and nights get colder, bats seek nice warm places for shelter and sometimes that is our homes. Hundreds of bats used to live in "Jobbers' Canyon" in downtown Omaha, but when most of the buildings were torn down, the bats moved west. The Gifford Park neighborhood with its big old trees was a perfect place for them.

Bats are almost blind and get around with a kind of sonar system. They swoop to collect insects. They do not attack people. They have no bone structure like other animals so they can squeeze into houses through very tiny openings.

Bob at the **Nebraska Humane Society** discussed bats with me and had some advice. If you have a bat in your home - - DON'T PANIC. Turn on the lights and you might find it clinging to your wall, curtains, drapes, or pictures. You can then capture it yourself while wearing a thick glove and picking the visitor off. Take it outside and let it go, or carefully move it into a plastic container or coffee can with lid and carry it outside. Be sure to wear a heavy glove because, if provoked, a bat can bite and a bat bite can be serious.

If you don't dare take the bat out yourself, call the **Humane Society** at 444-7804, ext. 1. They will send someone out to remove the creature. The Humane Society cannot hunt for bats in your home, but will gladly take one that can be seen. If the bat is in your bedroom, the Humane Society has an emergency service and will come as soon as they can, 24/7. Sometimes just by leaving a door open while the bat is flying, it will leave on its own, seeking fresh air. (The intruder will either fly out, or two more will fly in!)

Be aware that if you have a motion-sensitive alarm system, a bat can set it off just by flying past. Although bats generally sleep in cold weather, our recent warm days have awakened some bats and you could have an unwanted visitor!

*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

## 2002 Holiday Lighting Contest Winners

This year there were many entries to the holiday lighting contest! Once again, people really made the Gifford Park neighborhood a festive place. **Cynthia Shuck, Ron Frey** and his son, **Erik, Diane Kaye** and her son, **Max** made up the volunteer judging panel. Each of the finalists won gift certificates to **California Tacos**, courtesy of **Brad Bogard**. We want to thank everyone for making the decisions so difficult, because there were so many beautiful lighting displays. If you didn't win this year, don't despair because you may next year—or you could become one of the judges! Here are the 2002 winners:

3426 Webster  
3702 Cass  
3636 Burt  
131 N. 35<sup>th</sup> Ave  
3323 Cass  
424 N. 34<sup>th</sup> St.

*by Ron Frey*

## Looking to Buy or Sell Your House?



Call a realtor that lives and knows  
your neighborhood.

**Matt Mancuso**  
740-6929

**Century 21 Wear**  
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### *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



### 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). Christmas trees **will not be collected** as part of Omaha's garbage service. Volunteers will be available at the sites from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 4 & 5 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 (South 69th St. and Mercy Road entrance - east of entrance gate - lot #6)
- 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 4 and 5. Share the Christmas spirit and ask a neighbor if you can help them get their tree to a recycling site. Thanks for making Christmas tree recycling part of your holiday tradition.

## California Tacos & More

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Closed Sunday



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

8:00 AM - 10:00 PM Sunday

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

The 17th annual **Cathedral Flower Festival** will be held on **January 25th and 26th** at **St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 701 North 40th St.** Local florists participate and fill the Cathedral with beautiful flowers and plants of all kinds, and a variety of musicians and vocalists perform as well. Admission is free. See the **Omaha World-Herald** for information on times the exhibit is open. What a great way to brighten up a winter weekend!

The **Friends of Joslyn Castle** have scheduled two events this January. On **Sunday, January 19**, the **2003 Friends of Joslyn Castle Concert Series** will feature **Lucinda Sloan**, a mezzo soprano, who will perform her rendition of Franz Schubert's *Winterreise*. The afternoon event will begin at 3:00 pm with an optional tour, and refreshments being served at 4:00 pm. The concert will begin at **4:30 pm** and a post-concert reception will start at 5:30 pm. The admission fee for members of the Friends of Joslyn Castle is \$12, and for non-members \$15. On **Saturday, January 25** and **Sunday, January 26**, join the Friends of Joslyn Castle for a special display of the work of **John McDonald**, premier architect of Joslyn Castle, Joslyn Art Museum, and many Gold Coast mansions. Relish the beauty of the Castle during a self-guided tour after you've enjoyed the exquisite display of flowers at the Cathedral. Cost: Adults, \$6; Seniors/College students, \$4; ages 5-12, \$3.

**Neighborhood Builders** will be holding its 7th annual Leadership Sessions each Saturday in **February (1st, 8th, 15th, and 22rd)** from **8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** at **Creighton University Medical Center's Becic Dining Room**. Topics include Building on Neighborhood Assets, Utilizing Community Resources, Planning & Effective Management, and Neighborhood Problem Solving. Neighborhood Builders is a joint community effort led by the **Neighborhood Center, United Way, UNO**, various neighborhood associations, businesses, and private citizens. The goal of this program is to help build stronger, healthier neighborhoods by assisting in developing positive leadership. Registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Call **Deidra Andrews** at **561-7581** to register or for more information.

Please keep the **Vipond** family in your thoughts and prayers as **Roger** has been very ill. The Viponds are longtime GPNA members and are great neighbors.

Just a reminder: there will be **NO** January GPNA general meeting. However, we will have our GPNA board meeting **Thursday January 16** at **7 pm** at **California Tacos**, and as always, anyone is welcome to attend as we discuss upcoming activities and issues affecting our neighborhood.



**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          |

### 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. 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 snow-storm**. 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).