



# Gifford Park's Pride

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

August 2003

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

## Neighborhood Block Party August 5

Mark your calendars and help celebrate the 20th annual **National Night Out, Tuesday, August 5, 5:30 to 8 p.m.** at **33<sup>rd</sup> & California**. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street will be blocked off from California to Cass for the event. **EVERYONE** is welcome to participate and have a good time. It's a great opportunity to get together and show your support for our neighborhood in a big way.

Citizens and law enforcement will be working together to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support for, and participation in, local anti-crime programs, strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships, and send a message to criminals, letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

The theme again this year is "**Dusk 'til Dawn, Leave Your Lights On!**" This theme serves as a reminder that maintaining a well-lit neighborhood by leaving outdoor lights on all night is one of the simplest, yet most effective, crime deterrents at our disposal, and it's not expensive.

We plan to have many of the same activities as last year's event, including food, ice cream, refreshments, Jazz music, parade, a firetruck and classic cars on display, face painting, a rock-climbing wall and moonwalk, hoop-it-up 3 on 3 basketball, information booths (health, safety, neighborhood), and much more. For more information or if you would like to help, call **Chris 342-6006, Ron 344-0757 or Cynthia 556-2090**.

## Next Meeting

**Thursday, August 7  
7:00 P.M.**

**Speaker: Ron Frey  
Gifford Park  
Placemaking Revisited**

**Creighton University  
Medical Center  
Dining Rooms A,B, and C**

## Sun Dawgs Have A Great Summer In Gifford Park

Many thanks to City Parks & Recreation Supervisors **Tom Lebida** and **Peg Watkins**, and Gifford Park Site Supervisor **Chris Thoms** (3<sup>rd</sup> year heading up the Gifford Park site) for doing such a great job this year down at the Sun Dawg shack. The kids kept busy all summer with a variety of fun activities. The GPNA wishes to thank the **City of Omaha** and all the private donors who helped keep the Sun Dawgs program, and for selecting Gifford park as a full-time site; this means a lot to our neighborhood.



**DUSK TIL DAWN**  
**LEAVE YOUR LIGHTS ON**  
**2003 National Night Out**

**GPNA OFFICERS****PRESIDENT**

Ron Frey 344-0757

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

Cynthia Shuck 556-2090

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

Eve Randone 343-1777

**TREASURER**

Vicki Frey 344-0757

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS****ADVERTISING**

Dar Swenzy 345-0125

**COMMUNITY GARDEN**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**COMPLIANCE**

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

**HISTORIAN**

Eva Swanson 345-1707

**KIBBOM SCHOOL LIAISON**

Jan Peck 344-0722

**MEMBERSHIP**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**NEWSLETTER**

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

**NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION**

Eve Randone 343-1777

**NEWSLETTER MAILING**

Mike Bacone 933-7506

**PARK**

Roger Freeman 557-2914

**PARKING VIOLATIONS**

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Cynthia Shuck 556-2090

**TOOL LENDING**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**WATCH GROUP**

Jerry Wilwerding 342-2795

**WEEDS & LITTER**

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

**WELCOMING**

Vicki Frey 344-0757

**From The President . . .**

I don't know if you've noticed, but our neighborhood is made up of little circles. You can see these circles everywhere. Anywhere people gather is a circle of communication. There's the circle that might gather around back yard fences to discuss gardening or yard care. Or, you might find a gathering at someone's front porch, or on the sidewalk, a corner, or in the alley. Your circle might be more formal, like the Community Garden participants, or very informal, like a group playing cards at California Tacos.

You may be involved in more than one circle in the neighborhood—in fact, most of us are. There might be a group of neighbors you talk to regularly. There may be another group of people in the neighborhood you work with or go to school with. These multiple circles interconnect us as a neighborhood. I believe that this network is integral to the success of Gifford Park. It is like a shirt of chain-link mail that creates strength and protection for all of us.

What do you talk about in your circles? You may discuss old home repair, or what to do about grub worms. Or, your group may talk about people or neighborhood problems. I know mine do. We might complain about a civic or neighborhood leader. Some of us point out how the city does or doesn't do this or that. I've observed that some cities do things ours doesn't. On occasion, we all need an outlet. Circles sometimes can help us express those feelings and move on.

I encourage you, though, to check the "negativity meter" in your group once in a while. The thing I've concluded about being negative is that it can become paralyzing. Sometimes it can be a crutch or an excuse. Have you ever noticed that the loudest complainer is often the one who does the least? Focusing on the negative often does not produce results.

The legacy I hope to leave is the positive. I believe Gifford Park is a GREAT place to live! I'm realistic enough to realize that there are issues and problems. Our resources and time are limited. I don't know about you, but I spend a great deal of my time trying to scrape out a living. I don't have a lot of time or money to devote to the enormous task of fixing all things wrong with Gifford Park neighborhood. I know you probably don't either.

But I do have a little time. I hope you do too! I have a few ideas, I hope you do too! I place a challenge before you and your circles: What small, positive contribution can you and your circle "own" that can make a difference for your neighborhood? You and your circle may come up with a plan and work it out!

For example, some of us met a week or so ago, to clean up the park. You know what I learned? It is a lot easier to clean the park before the city mows on Tuesdays than afterwards! Maybe your circle wants to help clean the park. Maybe you have a great idea for a social activity that your circle wants to help sponsor. Let's get our circles networking with each other and make a difference!

by Ron Frey



**TOOL  
LENDING  
HOTLINE**

**Mike 933-7506  
Chris 342-6006**

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



*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.*



# 10th Annual Gifford Park Free Tennis Program

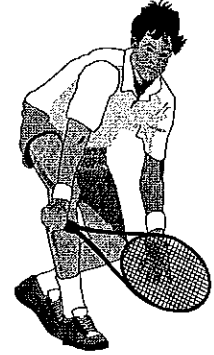


**For:** Youth (all ages)

**Dates:** August 6, 13, 20, 27  
(each Wednesday in August)

**Time:** 6 - 7 p.m.

**Where:** Gifford Park Tennis Courts  
(33rd & Cass St.)



The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association is offering **FREE Tennis Lessons** and will provide tennis racquets, balls and instructors for each lesson. Parents and others are welcome to help.

**To be enrolled, YOU MUST complete the form shown below and bring with you to the tennis lessons.** Special prize for those who attend every lesson. There is limited space available so call the phone number listed below for information.

**Call 342-6006**

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**Registration/Permission Form** - Bring this form (completely filled out) with you to the tennis lessons to be enrolled.

Youth's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Phone: home: \_\_\_\_\_ work: \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent or legal guardian of the child named above, I hereby give my full consent and approval for my child to participate as a member of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program.

I understand that there are certain risks of injury inherent in the practice and play of this sport, as well as related activities incidental to my child's participation, and I am willing to assume these risks on behalf of my child. I hereby certify that my child is fully capable of participating in this sport and that my child is healthy and has no physical or mental disabilities or infirmities that would restrict full participation in these activities, except as listed below.

I hereby waive, release and hold harmless the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program, and the City of Omaha, Nebraska, its Officers, coaches, sponsors, supervisors and representatives for any injury that may be suffered by my child in the normal course of participation in this sport and the activities incidental thereto, whether the result of negligence or any other cause. Furthermore, I give consent to any necessary medical treatment in case of emergency.

**Signature of Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Destination Midtown: Upcoming Public Workshops

The public meetings held in early July were once again well attended and some very good visioning ideas were discussed. It would be nice to see greater attendance and participation from GPNA members. With the "meat" of the project coming up, here's your chance as HDR will facilitate important public workshops with the following descriptions and planned timelines:

**Workshop #1:** Comprehensive/area-wide issues such as mobility, parks, open spaces, etc. (tentatively 4 days, last week in August)

**Workshop #2:** Neighborhood expo/symposium (code enforcement, crime, rehabilitation, etc.) and discussion of resources that are available to the neighborhoods within the study area (tentatively end of September)

**Workshop #3:** Design charrette for the core area (Dodge to Leavenworth, Saddle Creek to 24<sup>th</sup> St.) focusing on areas and issues derived from Workshops #1 & #2 (tentatively mid-November)

Following these workshops, HDR will prepare the master plan documents, review and revise the documents, and produce final documents by next spring. As has been communicated all along, everyone's input and participation is vital to this master planning process, and there are many opportunities over the next few months for you to help shape the future of our neighborhoods. For more information about Destination Midtown, contact 356-5000 or visit the website at

[www.omahachamber.org/destinationmidtown](http://www.omahachamber.org/destinationmidtown)

*by Chris Foster*

## Music In The Park Set For Aug. 31

The GPNA is excited to announce that the City and the Omaha Musicians Union have set a date for "Music in the Park" in Gifford Park. The date is Sunday August 31, 7 to 8 p.m. and the band will be Bittersweet, playing classic rock music. The GPNA is thinking of making this day an event including arts & crafts, and include maybe a cultural theme. Please let us know if you have ideas and/or would like to help with planning or volunteering for this potential event, call 342-6006.

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

## Great Talent On Display During Show Wagon Regional Finals

Some of the best talent around came to Gifford Park Tuesday evening, July 22, for the Regional Finals of the Show Wagon Youth Talent Competition. The Dennis Strawn Jazz Quartet was forced to stop part way through their performance due to a brief rainshower. However, the Show Wagon went on during a nice cool summer evening. Acts came from as far away as Glenwood, Iowa, and Plattsmouth, and of course we had local performers from our neighborhood. We wish to thank Roberts Dairy for providing the ice cream treats, and Brittney Rubek and Tiffany Slayden for handing out the treats. We greatly appreciate the House of Faith Church (33<sup>rd</sup> & Cass St.) for opening up their church restrooms for event participants. Special thanks go to Karin Madden (Florence Community Center Supervisor) who handles the City Show Wagon, Mark Cahey (Karin's supervisor), and Rick Weiner who handled the sound. Thanks also to judges Brian Kokensparger and Jan Franks (both are long-time GPNA members) – they had the toughest job. Once again the Wolf House guys helped with crowd control. Special thanks to Darryl Hutton who again helped out with a lot of items including staying to the end picking up the ice cream wrappers.

The GPNA extends a big thanks to everyone at the City Parks Department for their outstanding support of Gifford Park, from maintenance to the great activities and events like this summer's Show Wagon and Sun Dawgs programs. It's hard to quantitate how much a great park positively affects the quality of life for so many people.



"Adopt-A-Park" Saturday Cleanup  
August 16 - 9 A.M.  
Gifford Park Baseball Diamond