



Gifford Park's Pride

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

January 2004

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

GPNA Chooses Roger Freeman as 2003 Neighbor Of The Year

"We thought the GPNA newsletter would be a good way to make all the residents and people who use Gifford Park aware of the wonderful volunteer job Roger Freeman has been doing. Before the snow came, every Sunday you could see him with his rake and trash sacks cleaning up the park. When he is finished you see no broken glass or litter. He never brags or complains, just gives you a friendly greeting and big smile. We want to give you a big pat on the back, Roger, and thanks a bunch." - Vera & Jim Horton, Gifford Park residents for 52 years

The letter above speaks volumes about what being a great neighbor is all about, and that is why the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association chose Roger Freeman as the "Neighbor of the Year" for 2003. The award was presented to Roger at the GPNA's 15th Annual Holiday Banquet hosted by Creighton University Medical Center on December 4. With help from his wife Sandy, we were able to keep the award a secret from Roger until the banquet presentation. Roger and Sandy's family were also able to attend.

There is much more about Roger and Sandy we wish to share. Roger grew up in Boston before joining the Air

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During the announcement of the 2003 GPNA Neighbor of the Year Award, Chris Foster presents Roger Freeman with an official GPNA hat and t-shirt.

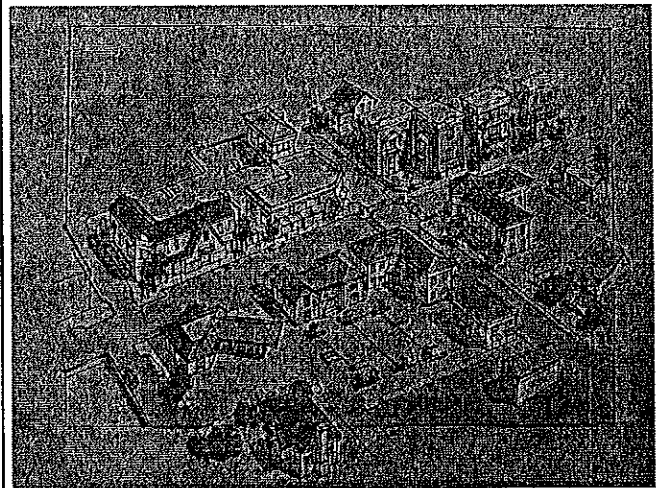
Note: No January Meeting!

Next Meeting

Thursday, February 5
7:00 P.M.

Creighton University
Medical Center
Dining Rooms A, B, & C

33rd And California Street Of the Future?



This sketch by HDR represents the ideas for renovation of the 33rd and California Street area suggested during the Destination Midtown workshops this fall. The master plan process is nearly done with the final document to be completed around April 1. The Midtown Neighborhood Association (MNA) is being formed to have representation from each of the neighborhood associations in the master plan study area during the implementation phase of the project.

Happy New Year!

GPNA OFFICERS**PRESIDENT**

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Chris Foster 342-6006

WATCH GROUP

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

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.

From The President . . .

I was thinking about my house the other day. It is turning 90 years old. Of course I have more projects to work on than I have time or money for. But in many respects, there are things about my house that fit in well with our neighborhood.

I went to the library and looked up the old city directories, year after year, to see who was living in the house. Then I went to the register of deeds and looked back to see who owned the houses. It turns out that for almost 80 years, this house was owned by the same family, different generations.

But for the first few years of the house, it must have been rental property, for several people lived there, but they weren't the same people as the owners. Then recently it became rental property again briefly, before we bought it. Many houses in our neighborhood are, or have been rental property. There's no shame in that. But that doesn't doom the property to strictly a rental destiny.

There are large houses and very small houses in our neighborhood, so we have always had residents with a diversity of economic statuses. I like that because it keeps a neighborhood down-to-earth. If you've ever been to an upscale neighborhood, it's pretty to look at, but the neighbors can be snooty. I don't think Gifford Park is that way at all. In fact, I can think of many people who live here that would do almost anything for you.

As we think of the future of Gifford Park, we have to envision its future in light of its history and its present. We may set a goal to try to increase home ownership, but we will always have rental properties. There is nothing wrong with that as long as our property owners and their residents are good neighbors.

We have long time residents and residents who come and go. Some are well off and others struggle paycheck to paycheck. The businesses we try to recruit to our business district should meet the diverse needs of a diverse neighborhood. That makes it difficult to simply look at another business district and say, "We should have that here!" It may not be well-tailored to the needs of Gifford Park's residents.

This means that we have to listen closely to you, the people who live here. I welcome your comments and outlook on what you envision for the future of Gifford Park. Email me at rfrey03@yahoo.com, and let me know what's on your mind!

by Ron Frey

Free Tax Help Coming Soon

For the 10th year in a row, the GPNA will provide free tax assistance for neighborhood residents. At the present time, plans are being made to locate the site in the Lay Apostolate Center at St. Cecilia's Cathedral again this year, but please consult the February newsletter for the exact location and times for the sessions. The sessions will begin in February and continue through the end of the tax season in April. Last year, a total of 154 returns were processed, with most being electronically filed. For any questions, or for more information, call 551-3629.

Roger Freeman . . . continued from page 1

Force in 1953: He was stationed at Rheimmain Air Force Base in Frankfurt, Germany during the Korean War (84th Air Rescue Unit Detachment to the 60th Troop Carrier Wing). Roger moved to Omaha from New York City in the summer of 1975 because he was tired of the big cities. In October 1975, he started work with Omaha Public Schools (OPS) as a supervisor in Student Transportation. In 1979, Roger met Sandy, who had been living at 3317 Cass St. (their current address) since 1965. Sandy has worked at OPS for 27 years as secretary in the Human Resources/Administration Department. Roger has a son who is an attorney in Seattle. Sandy has a son who is an Omaha police officer and a daughter who is Director at Providence Medical Center in Wayne, Nebraska. Roger and Sandy have 9 grandchildren.

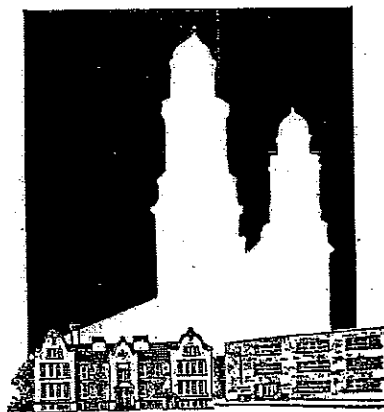
Besides being chairman of the GPNA Park Committee and keeping the park picked up (he is basically our park caretaker without getting paid), Roger frequently walks the neighborhood picking up aluminum cans and trash. He obviously sees and talks to a lot of people and knows when something is out of place. On one of his typical Sunday morning routes this past fall, Roger found a missing brass memorial plaque that we feared was stolen from the community garden. Anyone who knows Roger also knows it was no surprise that he would be the one to find it!

Roger is a great mentor for younger people in our neighborhood. He has a great sense of humor, yet he also has a way of encouraging and even challenging others to do better, especially in the area of litter cleanup. You've seen Roger involved with other GPNA activities including the spring and fall cleanups, tennis program, newsletter delivery, and putting up holiday lights in the park and 33rd & California business district. His hobbies include tennis, racquetball, handball, hockey and photography. Believe it or not, Roger is 71 years old -- he says he exercises 1 to 2 hours three times a week and drinks lots of water to stay healthy.

We very much appreciated Roger's comments at the banquet. He said a lot of nice things about the Gifford Park neighborhood and encouraged people to actively participate in improving our area. However he couldn't resist taking a couple "jabs" at long time friend and former City Councilman Subby Anzaldo -- it was a classic moment and great humor for everyone. We are very lucky to have great neighbors like Roger Freeman who are so dedicated to the Gifford Park neighborhood year after year. Congratulations from all of us in the GPNA, and good luck to you and your family in 2004!

by Chris Foster

St. Cecilia Elementary School



opens full day kindergarten
for 2004-2005 school year.
Call 556-6655 for further details.

A sound investment in your children's Faith
and future. Day care, extended care, pre-school,
half and full day kindergarten, and grades 1-8.

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

Serving the Gifford Park
Community since 1937
Lilly Estes,
Proprietor

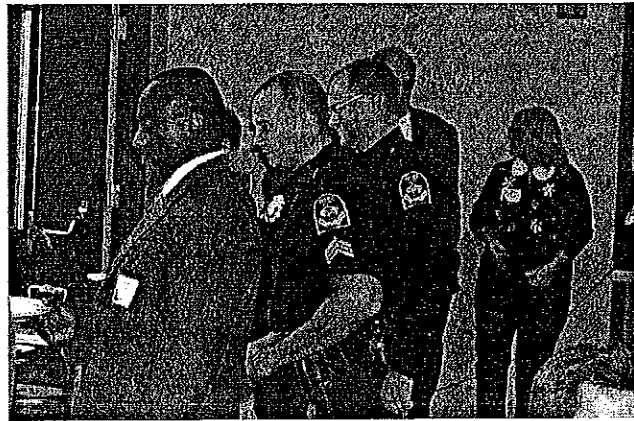


Charles R. Kilgore Jr. Attorney At Law 4913 Underwood Avenue 558-5000

Personal Injury Law
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Auto Accidents
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2003 Holiday Banquet Highlights

The 15th Annual GPNA Holiday Banquet was held on Thursday, December 4, in the Becic Dining Room at Creighton University Medical Center. The room was festively decorated with bright green tablecloths and brilliant red poinsettias. A holiday floral arrangement on top of the podium was presented to CUMC as a token of the GPNA's appreciation for the hospital's support. According to GPNA president **Ron Frey**, who was the Master of Ceremonies for the evening, approximately 150 people attended the event, and they were treated to a delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings, served by **Sodexo** personnel. After dinner, a slide presentation highlighting 2003 GPNA events was shown. **Chris Foster**, past president of the GPNA, presented **Roger Freeman** with the 2003 GPNA Neighbor of the Year Award, and a drawing was held for many wonderful door prizes. As is true with most successful events, there are a large number of people to thank for their time and effort in making this such a delightful evening. Thanks to **Creighton University Medical Center (Phil Gustafson, Ed Finan, Chris Hyers, Carol McCormick, & Cathy Horne)** for providing the meal, **Sodexo** for providing the personnel to set up and serve the dinner, and **Rodney Hay** for preparing the "out of this world" fried and smoked turkey again this year. Thanks also to the **GPNA Holiday Banquet Committee (Ron & Vicki Frey, Cynthia Shuck, Kate O'Brien, Jean Peck, Chris Foster, and Terry & Sue Wilwerding)** for taking care of all the many details that are involved in putting on an event such as this. We appreciate the donations of door prizes to the banquet; thanks to **David Staenberg (The Wolf House), Subby & Janice Anzaldo, Jim & Liz Vokal, Brad Bogard (California Taco), Loren Johnson (J N J Grocery), and Sheila Haggas (Duchesne Academy)**. It was another great GPNA Holiday Banquet to remember!



(Top left) Rodney Hay visits with Paul Farrand and his daughters and the Peck family as they wait for the Holiday Banquet to begin. (Top right) Thomas Warren, who was appointed captain of the Omaha Police Department earlier in the day, and officers from the Northeast Precinct take their turn in the buffet line. Past and present meet at the Holiday Banquet: current GPNA president Ron Frey and "first lady" Vicki Frey chat with past-president Jim Wilwerding (bottom left) while current city council representative Jim Vokal and his wife Liz sit with past councilman Subby Anzaldo and his wife Janice (bottom right).



2003 Holiday Lighting Contest Winners

Once again this year, it was great to see so many homes decorated with lights and other holiday displays - it was fun to drive around the neighborhood and see the beautiful decorations. But on December 18th, it became somewhat of a difficult task, because a panel of GPNA judges had to choose the winners of the annual lighting contest, and there were so many great displays to choose from. The following are the 2003 winners:

137 North 37th St.
3210 Cass St.
3405 California St.
132 North 35th Ave.
142 North 36th St.
3413 Webster St.
424 North 34th St.
715 North 36th St.

Many thanks to the "judges" - Mike Caban, Cynthia Shuck, Chris Foster, Donna Smaley, George Gantt, Dawn Stanley, and Wendell Stanley (a big thanks to Wendell for driving the group around in his van - it was a lot of fun!) The winners received gift certificates to California Tacos courtesy of owner Brad Bogard.

Thanks also goes to Darryl Hutton, Roger Freeman, Jim Wilwerding, Rob Parolek, and Chris Foster for putting up holiday lights in the business district and Gifford Park this season. Thanks also to Glenn Burns for use of his truck and man lift to speed up the process of hanging lights. And thanks to the local business owners for the "extra" electricity needed to have them on during the holiday season.

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

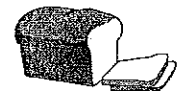
GROCERY STORE



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

What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

The 18th Annual Cathedral Flower Festival will be held on **January 24th and 25th** 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. It's a breath of spring in the middle of winter!

The **Neighborhood Center** will be holding its 8th annual **Neighborhood Builders Leadership Development** program each Saturday in **February (7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th)** 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 & Organizing, and Neighborhood Problem Solving. A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. Neighborhood Builders is a four-week program for emerging and experienced leaders. Through a series of hands-on workshops and discussions, the program develops leadership qualities in people so they can be more effective in helping their communities achieve their goals. The deadline to register for this year's program is **January 16.** For an application or for more information, contact **Priscilla Beaugard** at **561-7583** or email her at pbeaugard@mail.unomaha.edu. You can also obtain more information regarding Neighborhood Builders and access the registration form by visiting the Neighborhood Center's webpage at www.neighborhood-center.org.

On **Sunday, January 18, 2004**, members of the **Omaha Chamber Music Society** will provide a delightful evening of entertainment in the beautiful music room of **Joslyn Castle, 3902 Davenport St.** Featured artists are **Nester Herzbaum**, flute, and **Jim Compton**, bassoon. The concert will begin at **4:30 p.m.**, with an optional tour of the castle at **3:00 p.m.**, refreshments at **4:00 p.m.**, and a post-concert reception at **5:30 p.m.** Admission charge is **\$12** for members of the **Friends of Joslyn Castle** and **\$15** for non-members. Make your reservations by calling **Annette Huff** at **551-3023**.

You now have another reason to visit California Tacos - **FREE** wireless internet access. Longtime GPNA member **Tom Rose** helped with setting up this new service. Contact **Brad Bogard** for more details.



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 Laws

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 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).