



Gifford Park's Pride

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

www.giffordparkomaha.org

June 2006

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Community Garden Youth Program Off To a Great Start

The Gifford Park Community Garden at 35th & Cass Street was host to lots of hands-on activities Saturday, May 13, for the annual Season Opening event. The activities included: bird-house building led again by **Bob Hutton** (in all, kids took home 39 birdhouses!); music which included **Ivy Dow** playing flute and **Christine Pane** playing violin; face-painting and birdhouse painting with help from **Dana Carlton-Flint** and **Jenny Foster**; "Ask the Master Gardener" presented by the **Extension Office**; free Library cards and books; plant & seed giveaway, and many refreshments supervised by **Annemarie Noll**, including delicious cupcakes made by **Senator Gwen Howard**. **Kate Bodmann (496-8419)** took registrations for the Youth Garden program and several new family garden plots. A special appearance by "The Green Man", played by **Clarinda Karpov**, added to the festivities. Another highlight of the day was the installation of a great new sign designating the history and mission of the community garden project. Thanks also to everyone who brought refreshments, including **Great Harvest Bread**. For more information on the community garden project, call **Chris 342-6006**, **Cynthia 556-2090**, or **Annemarie 342-1340**.



Next Meeting

**Thursday, June 1
7:00 P.M.**

Annual Ice Cream Social

Election of 2006-2007 Officers

**Executive Board Meeting
Thursday, June 15
7:00 P.M.**

**Yates Alternative School
32nd & Davenport St.**

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: **Note: No July Meeting!** :
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Spring GPNA Neighborhood Cleanup Recap

The weather gave volunteers perfect skies during this year's city-sponsored neighborhood spring clean-up. If you had a chance to stop by you might have noticed we missed a few things...namely **Chris Foster** and his merry band of litter-gathering youth. In his place, **Eric** and **Annemarie Noll** led the litter charge and site set-up in the lower park and **Bob** and **Darryl Hutton** filled in by unloading truckloads of trash but you can bet we all missed our fearless activity organizer Chris Foster this year! The clean-up was held Saturday, May 6, in Gifford Park. We filled three and a half compactors and collected over 35 tires; we saw nearly \$650 in membership renewals and donations; **Rodney Hay** provided super delicious barbecue pork sandwiches, beans, and chips for volunteers; **Diane Kaye** held down the membership fort; **Jim Wilwerding**, **Roger Freeman** and **Rodney Hay** took on special ops for pick-up requests; **Neil Liberty** and **Terry Wilwerding** joined them toward the end; **Sallie Foster** got the whole thing on film again.

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**Music In The Park
Wednesday, June 14
7 to 8 p.m. in
Gifford Park**



GPNA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Cynthia Shuck 556-2090

VICE PRESIDENT

Dan Bodmann 496-8419

RECORDING SECRETARY

Diane Kaye 341-4146

TREASURER

Kate Bodmann 496-8419

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Chris Foster 342-6006

COMPLIANCE

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

HISTORIAN

Eva Swanson 345-1707

KELLOM SCHOOL LIAISON

Jean Peck 344-0722

MEMBERSHIP

Kate Bodmann 496-8419

NEWSLETTER

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Chris Foster 342-6006

PARK

Roger Freeman 557-2914

PARKING VIOLATIONS

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Chris Foster 342-6006

TOOL LENDING

Chris Foster 342-6006

WATCH GROUP

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

WEEDS & LITTER

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

WELCOMING

Vicki Frey 344-0757

The President's Report

The GPNA received two grants this year from **Mayor Fahey's Neighborhood Grant Program**. The neighborhood improvement grant will go toward the purchase of flower pots for the business district and fund additional plantings for park entrances (\$1,000). The crime prevention grant will fund the purchase of a pocket pc and utilize the Omaha Neighborhood Scan program in an effort to increase parking enforcement (\$700).

The **Address It Now!** proposal also received funding from Mayor Fahey's Neighborhood Grant program and from the City of Omaha's funds allocated for Omaha Neighborhood Scan. Coupled with the printing and other assistance from OPPD, the group has approximately \$17,000 to use for its pilot project. The project is an educational campaign to significantly reduce the proportion of properties without any posted legal front address numbers in six neighborhoods (Gifford Park, Joslyn Castle, Miller Park-Minne Lusa, Ford Birthsite, Clairmont Heights, and Park East.) The project also seeks to increase the use of posted property addresses in the rear of homes at alleyways as well as raise awareness of using front and rear porch lighting as a means to reduce crime.

The **Midtown Neighborhood Alliance** received a \$3,500 grant from **Omaha Venture Group** to publish a 60-page pocket walking guide of midtown.

GPNA's site on the southwest corner of 33rd & Cass was approved this month to get a **Destination Midtown (DM) Identity Garden**. Indecision regarding adoption of a city-approved light fixture slowed progress on the project this spring but DM will file easements rights with the City of Omaha for all garden locations in the next couple of months.

The **Omaha Neighborhood Scan Project** was scheduled to present a panel discussion at the **Neighborhoods USA (NUSA)** conference in Kansas City on May 26. The conference session will provide attendees with an overview of the pilot program being tested in Omaha. The program, Omaha Neighborhood Scan, is an alternative approach to addressing neighborhood housing conditions. Scan relies on trained neighborhood residents working with their associations to identify and then address local housing code issues. Working internally, Omaha neighborhoods are educating their residents about housing code and maintenance issues, as well as encouraging residents to take care of housing code deficiencies without involving city government offices and personnel. During the past 12 months, approximately 4,000 properties have been rated in Omaha. Session leaders will provide information on how Omaha Neighborhood Scan operates and some of its impacts in neighborhoods. Presenters included: **Ron Abdouch**, Executive Director, Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha; **Heather Bloom**, Research Associate, Omaha Neighborhood Scan - University of Nebraska at Omaha; **Margie Magnuson**, Treasurer - Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association, **Russell Smith**, Director, Omaha Neighborhood Scan and Director, School of Public Administration - University of Nebraska at Omaha; and **Cynthia Shuck**, President, Gifford Park Neighborhood Association.

by Cynthia Shuck

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 mailed to the GPNA, P.O.Box 31462, Omaha, NE 68131-0462; please include your name and phone number. Contact Sue Wilwerding (342-2795) or Chris Foster (342-6006) for information regarding the newsletter.

GPNA 2006-2007 MEMBERSHIP RATES

Single - \$10

Family - \$15

Business* - \$ 25

***Landlords will be required to purchase a business membership**

Election Of Officers At June Meeting

Three out of four of the current GPNA officers have volunteered to remain in their positions for 2006-2007. **President Cynthia Shuck, Vice-President Dan Bodmann, and Treasurer Kate Bodmann** will have their names placed in nomination to be voted on by members at the June general meeting. Only current members of the GPNA are eligible to vote. At the present time, there is a vacancy for the position of Recording Secretary. If anyone is interested in this position and would like a "job description", please call **Cynthia 556-2090** or **Dan 496-8419**. The GPNA would like to express its heartfelt gratitude to the 2005-2006 officers for their hard work and dedication.

Business District Installs Flower Pots

Have you noticed the new flower pots in the 33rd & California Street business district? If you haven't, take a few minutes to walk through the area and check them out. This is a cooperative effort between the business owners and the GPNA to take a couple of small steps toward beautification in the area. This effort actually started last year when GPNA member **Jay Genoa** helped us get 4 large flower pots donated through **Mulhall's Nursery**. Then this year Mulhall's Nursery gave us a great deal on 4 more pots and donated plant material. The business owners funded the cost of the flower pots and more flowers. We also received funding from the Mayor's grant. So on May 10, **Indian Creek Nursery** supplied a truck and good dirt and filled all eight pots. That same evening, volunteers planted sweet potato plants, coleus, petunias, zinnias, vinca, marigolds, and canna (for height in the middle). Weeding and watering will be done by employees of several local businesses. We thank the following people and businesses for contributing: **Brad Bogard (California Tacos), Loren Johnson (J'N'J Grocery), Lilly Estes (California Bar), Dale Robinson (Robinson's Garage), Gifford Park LLC, Glen Burns (DragonFire Café), Melrose Apartments, Jim O'Brien, Chuck Kilgore, and Shelterbelt/SNAP Theater.**



California Tacos employee Charlie Rose wipes down one of the large flower pots that have been planted in the business district.

Spring Cleanup . . . continued from page 1

Gailen Williams ran the compactor and **Eric McGee** gets our MVP award for unloading it all and coordinating metal recycling; we offer many thanks to **Officer Kristine Berryhill** for arranging the tow of an unlicensed vehicle from the parking lot as well as writing parking tickets to several law-breaking residents from the nearby apartment building. Many thanks to **Mike Caban** for the coffee; **Sue Wilwerding** and **Vicki Frey** for the extra hand; **Jim Vokal** and **Subby Anzaldo** for the donuts; **Lily Estes** for the soda pop; **Eva Swanson** for the brownies; **Dan Bodmann** for making the final tire run to St. Adalbert's; **Kate Bodmann** for accompanying **Justin Evertson** (our favorite arborist from Nebraska Statewide Arboretum) on a tree ID walk down Webster Street, and everyone who helped out during the clean-up event. Special thank-yous go out to **Keep Omaha Beautiful** and the **City of Omaha's Quality Control Department** for funding the compactors and bringing in the barricades the night before. Great effort by all!

by Cynthia Shuck



Thanks to all the great volunteers and the cooperation of Mother Nature in the weather department, the annual GPNA spring cleanup went smoothly.



**Happy
Father's
Day!**



**Fly The Flag Proudly On
Flag Day - June 14**



Mayor's Action Line: 444-5555

What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

The GPNA sends its sincere condolences to the **Foster** family. Past GPNA President **Chris Foster** recently lost his grandmother **Alice Gourlay**; she was 95 years old. A memorial service was held earlier last month.

Please keep the **Baumhover** family in your thoughts. **Herbert Baumhover** has been ill recently. **Lois** and Herbert are longtime GPNA members and make regular donations at cleanups, and sometimes donate stuffed animals for children's events. They are great neighbors and have lived in the Gifford Park neighborhood for over 45 years.

We are very happy to report longtime GPNA member and volunteer **Jan Franks** recently had successful knee surgery. She is doing very well with her rehab – it's good to see her walking again, and we missed her at the Easter Egg Hunt.

Congratulations to **Erik Frey** on his graduation from Central High School. Eric is the son of **Ron & Vicki Frey**, former president and "first lady" of the GPNA. Erik has been a volunteer at many GPNA activities and has participated in several service trips through his church.



**TOOL
LENDING
HOTLINE**
Chris 342-6006
Mowers - \$5
Rent for most tools - \$3

Yates School Update

Two months ago we had mentioned in the newsletter that the GPNA had begun a dialogue with OPS about Yates School. At this point you may be so burned out on OPS articles you do not even want to read on...but I hope you do keep reading.

We are attempting to open a dialogue about the possibilities of Yates again becoming our neighborhood elementary school and would like your input and/or participation. I know that the timing is chaotic but it could be an opportunity as well. I feel that we have an integrated neighborhood that should be a model to others. Did you know that following the 2000 census we were listed as the most racially and economically diverse neighborhood in Omaha as reported by the *Omaha World-Herald*? I feel this should be celebrated and rewarded.

There are so many reasons I can think of why it would benefit OPS and our neighborhood to have Yates back. Instead of me telling you my reasons, I would like you to tell me what you think. Is this a worthwhile effort? What would having a neighborhood school *in the neighborhood* mean to you and your family? Please log on to our website

www.giffordparkomaha.com and go to the Yates blog and tell me what you think. You can also call me at **496-8419** or email me at katebodmann@giffordparkomaha.org if you would like to help with this effort.

Fun facts:

Did you know that in our neighborhood we have 411 kids in K-6 attending OPS schools?

Did you know that of those 411 only 163 attend Kellom, our "neighborhood" school?

Did you know that Mrs. Yates sold the property where Yates School is located to the Omaha School Board for the sum of one dollar in the early 1900's?

by Kate Bodmann

GPNA
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