



Gifford Park's Pride

Gifford Park Neighborhood: A Great Place to Live, Work, Learn and Play
www.giffordparkomaha.org

July 2007

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Youth Garden Program In Full Bloom

June has been a very busy month at the Garden! One look as you pass by confirms that the children of Gifford Park have been actively engaged. The following is a brief summary of what we have done the past 5 Saturdays in June and what we are planning for July and August. As always, thanks for the endless support from the friends of the Youth Garden. Here's a sample of our activities:

On June 2nd, *Week 3* of the program, we planted our individual plots with seeds and seedlings either with parental or volunteer supervision. Thanks to **Indian Creek Nursery** and **City Sprouts** for donating numerous tomato, broccoli, and pepper plants. We loved planting every single one, and they are really growing! Also, we sowed pans of annual rye grass in preparation for the *Week 4* take-home project. Each week includes tending to our plots by pulling weeds and watering, and June 9th was no different. **Kate Bodmann** helped us start weeding and planting the gourd tunnel, while **Sarah Newman**, our bird expert, led the cleaning, filling, and construction of a variety of bird feeders. We brought back our pans of grass to create fantasy play gardens from miniature toys, treasures, and natural materials, too.

Week 5, June 16th, seemed to be one of the hottest, busiest, yet most productive of the season. We landscaped the side yard, moved OmaGro, and completed the planting of the gourds and vines, as well as the remaining donated vegetable plants in the shared youth plots. **Dana Carlton-Flint** earned special thanks for donating supplies, expertise, and time in helping nearly every adult and child present make at least one boutonniere for our Father's Day project. They were absolutely handsome! Additionally, thanks to **Diane Kaye** for providing lots and lots of beautiful flowers from her yard for the activity.

Have you seen who's been hanging around the Garden? During *Week 6*, June 23rd, adults and children alike donated clothing, shoes, and accessories and collaborated to create numerous scarecrows. (Do you know how many there are? Let Dana know for a special prize.) Drop by and see what we

continued on page 4

Reminder: No July Meeting!

**Next General Meeting
Thursday, August 2
7:00 P.M.**

Creighton University Med Center

6th Annual Neighborhood Block Party To Be Held August 7

Mark your calendars and help celebrate **National Night Out** Tuesday evening, **August 7**, at 33rd & California. 33rd 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.

We plan to do many of the same activities as last year's event - including food, live music, rock-climbing wall, firetruck, face painting, information booths (health, safety, neighborhood), and much more. New this year: we plan to add a Bike Rodeo and teach bike safety - the Community Bike Shop will organize this activity. Detailed information will be available when a flyer comes out later in July. For more information or if you would like to help, call **Chris 342-6006** or **Stuart 216-1235**.

Tennis Program Set For August

For the 14th consecutive year, the **GPNA Youth Tennis Program** will be held every **Wednesday** evening in **August (August 1,8,15,22,29)** at the tennis courts in **Gifford Park**. Instruction focuses on the fundamental strokes in tennis, such as the forehand, backhand, serves, and volleys. The session for ages 4-9 will be held from 6 to 6:45 P.M.; the session for ages 10-18 will be from 6:45 - 7:30 P.M. Look for more information in the August edition of the newsletter. Registration forms will be available at **K'N'J Grocery** and **California Tacos** later in July. For more information, or if you would like to help with any or all of the sessions, call **Chris Foster** at **342-6006**.

GPNA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Open

VICE PRESIDENT

Stuart Shell 216-1235

RECORDING SECRETARY

Mary Ledbetter 342-4866

TREASURER

Dana Carlton-Flint 346-4575

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COMMUNITY GARDEN

Chris Foster 342-6006

COMPLIANCE

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

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Jean Peck 344-0722

MEMBERSHIP

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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

Dana Freeman 850-9611

Thanks, Cynthia!

How time flies when you are having FUN...I don't know if our recently "retired" GPNA President **Cynthia Shuck** would exactly describe the past two years this way, but the Gifford Park neighborhood was as active as ever, and it's a sure sign of a strong community. Cynthia was very involved with just about all of our neighborhood events and activities, including leading the spring and fall cleanups, several tree-planting and greening projects including the Destination Midtown Identity garden, Neighborhood Scan program to inventory housing code issues, National Night Out Block Party, Easter Egg Hunt, grant writing, Holiday Banquet, neighborhood walks, newsletter articles, and newsletter distribution. During the past two years Cynthia led all our monthly GPNA general and executive board meetings, setting the agenda and lining up speakers.

Cynthia also stayed active promoting the GPNA with other key organizations and activities including Midtown Neighborhood Alliance, Destination Midtown, AddressItNow Campaign, Restore Omaha, Omaha Neighborhood Scan Program, Neighborhood Builders and Activate Omaha. Obviously she was being stretched in many directions, all in the name of a strong Gifford Park neighborhood. Besides serving as GPNA Vice President for two years, she was the first woman GPNA president and the youngest as well.

Cynthia's commitment to our "Grow in Gifford Park" mission is also evident in her work in the community garden and youth garden program, where she has spent many of her Saturday mornings during the growing season the past several years helping kids learn about gardening. Since she moved into the neighborhood just five years ago, Cynthia has obviously had a big impact on our neighborhood. She plans to stay involved in the GPNA and continue focusing on "greening" projects in our neighborhood. Cynthia, your great spirit and commitment to community involvement, greening, the environment, and other noble causes gives all of us in Gifford Park a lot to look forward to – thanks for serving as President of the GPNA - GOOD LUCK!

by Chris Foster

Windorskis Remembered

The family of **Jim & Ruth Windorski** held a celebration of their parents' lives Sunday, May 27 at NP Dodge Park in Omaha. Jim & Ruth were pioneer members of the GPNA and very active in the area. Jim was the first GPNA President (named Chairman back in 1988). There were a lot of memories presented in the way of pictures of Jim & Ruth; also as it should be, many of the guests that attended had quite a few "do you remember..." and "how about the time that...". Prior to moving back to Minnesota, Jim & Ruth resided at 528 N. 32nd Street. Twenty-four family members felt it fitting to say by their words honoring Jim & Ruth: "No farewell words were spoken, no time to say goodbye, gone before we knew it, and only God knows why".

by Bob Hutton

Looking Good!

The 9 large flower pots planted in the 33rd & California Street business district are beginning to really take off. 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 toward beautification in the area. Weeding and watering is being done by employees of several local businesses. We thank the following people and businesses for contributing: **Brad Bogard (California Tacos), Ketaw Bereded (K'N'J Grocery), Lilly Estes (California Bar), Dale Robinson (Robinson's Garage), Gifford Park LLC, Glen Burns, Melrose Apartments, Jim O'Brien, Chuck Kilgore, and Shelterbelt/SNAP Theater.**

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

What's New, Pussycat?



Kitten season is here. Kittens are born year-round. But between March and November, a kitten population explosion far exceeds available homes.

How can you help, if you notice a pregnant or nursing mother cat? Please feed her with moistened "kitten chow," and provide plenty of water. If you can trap the mother pregnant, to give birth indoors, that's best. If the kittens are born outside, when they are old enough to walk, they'll follow Mama, and you can see how many kittens there are. The Nebraska Humane Society (NHS) says, don't separate outdoor kittens from their mother before six weeks of age, for the best chance of survival. (8 weeks if possible for indoor births.) Unless you know that you can catch the mother and all the kittens at once, wait to trap them until six weeks of age—except in an emergency, if they have lost their mother. Then, humanely trap the whole family, spay Mama, vaccinate and de-worm the kittens, and do your best to find loving homes for all.

([Feline Friendz, 778-1111, felinefriendz@yahoo.com](mailto:felinefriendz@yahoo.com); Coalition for Animal Protection, 490-0111; Gifford Park Cats, 553-3736; or your veterinarian can advise you at every step, especially if you are raising unweaned kittens who have lost their mother.) The younger the kittens, the easier to tame. If Mama is too wild to remain an indoor cat, you can re-release her and feed her as an outdoor cat after spaying, vaccinating, and ear-tipping. 90% of feral kittens are tameable and homeable as indoor cats. The others, when old enough to spay/neuter, may also be released and fed as outdoor cats.

Unfortunately, the optimism of early spring at the NHS—the hope that this year's kittens would not exceed capacity—was premature. All area shelters have more cats and kittens than they can cope with. Please do not surrender feral cats or kittens to The Humane Society, as they would be destroyed at this time. Please secure assurances for the safety and future even of TAME cats or kittens before surrendering them to any shelter at this time.

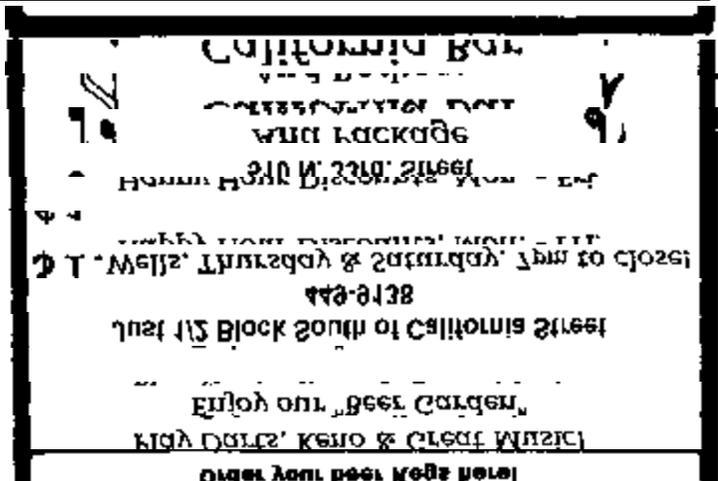
When seeking homes for kittens—or dogs or cats—never post "free to good home" ads. Instead, always require a donation—perhaps \$25. (If you wish, you can use it to help other animals or donate it to an animal welfare group.) The reason? "Bunchers" scour classified ads and bulletin boards for "free" animals, pretend to adopt them, and instead sell them to laboratories to be experimented on—often through "grade B dealers" as middlemen. (Pets may be stolen from backyards for the same purpose.) Typically a buncher will not pay money for an animal; asking a

donation therefore helps weed them out. The solution to the kitten population explosion? As always, spay/neuter; don't let an unfixed animal roam; and never abandon a pet. (It's cruel and illegal.) Many kittens can't make it without our help. Predators, mothers too depleted to nurture, parasites, starvation, and harsh weather all threaten. But with our help, kittens born feral can make the most affectionate, playful, joyous pets and enjoy the happy lives they deserve.

by Clarinda Karpov 553-3736

Neighborhood Garage Sale Planned

Back by popular demand, we plan to have a neighborhood-wide garage sale on a Saturday in September (date to be determined). The GPNA will pay for an ad in the *Omaha World-Herald* to promote garage sales in the Gifford Park Neighborhood. If you would like to donate usable garage sale items (no clothes or shoes please) to the GPNA, please call **Neil 933-1960** or **Chris 342-6006**; we will sell items in the business district at 33rd & California, with any of these proceeds going to the GPNA. This is a great way to get rid of unused items and make some extra money for yourself or the GPNA at NO COST to you!



Charles R. Kilgore Jr. Attorney At Law

4913 Underwood Avenue

558-5000

Personal Injury Law
Worker's Compensation
Injury
Auto Accidents
Insurance Claims

Youth Garden . . . *continued from page 1*

accomplished! Special thanks to **The Leclair Family** of Blair for the donation of the old barn straw for the stuffing. We finished the day by making dolls from Hollyhocks and Bells of Ireland. Ask any Youth Garden participant how to make your very own.

June 30th, *Week 7*, was a summer celebration dedicated to flowers. **Chris Foster** and a few kids worked on landscaping a Youth Garden bed of Hollyhocks and perennial cut flowers for next year's project that incorporated a design suggestion from **Elena Carlson**. Everyone enjoyed a snack of edible flowers, like violas, mallow, bee balm, and oregano, on crackers and cream cheese. *Remember, we only pick and eat flowers in the presence of a knowledgeable adult and only those that we are sure are not contaminated by herbicides or pesticides.* Next, we twined fresh flowers around grapevines for crowns and flower garlands, in order to dance around a maypole. While every ribbon wasn't perfectly woven, all will agree it was great fun and looked fantastic. Thanks to **Clarinda Karpov** who looked lovely in a skirt customary for the activity and accompanied us with traditional May Day tunes. We again thank especially **Diane Kaye** for her generous donation of three buckets of cut flowers for our activities.

Finally, a general thanks to **Westlake Ace Hardware**, the extraordinary Saturday morning volunteers who help us learn each week, those who help keep our plots watered when it's especially hot, and donors of materials for our many projects and snacks each week. The youth of Gifford Park say, "Thank you!"

This month's Kids' Quotes is a **Stanley** Family story.

The eldest four Stanley girls are active participants in the Youth Garden program and sometimes bring their youngest sister, **Rachel**. Baby brother **Wendell** stays home with mom **Alyssa**. This year, **Dawn**, age 14, planted onions, potatoes, and carrots in her plot. She finds that her carrots have been most successful because the green tops have already sprouted more than an inch. **Crystal**, age 13, is growing banana peppers, chilis, and bell peppers in her personal garden. "The banana peppers are already growing," she informed me, and estimates they might be ready to harvest in the next 2 weeks. **Justine**, age 11, is also growing hot peppers, a carnival mix of peppers, and sweet peas. The hot peppers have been her most successful growers. **Whitney**, age 8, has little green tomatoes on her plants "the size of a pea." Do you see what might be a theme running through their gardens? They all like spicy foods, which can be attributed to their mother's cooking. She hails from New Orleans, LA, and their father is from Birmingham, AL. Gifford Park, we have Southern belles in our midst!

What can kids look forward to in July? Setting up a water bath, dust bath, and grit area for our many species of birds, making seed packets for a butterfly garden at home, harvesting herbs, and eating Dirt!

SCHEDULE

July 7th/Week 8- Birds Again!

July 14th/Week 9- Butterflies and Moths

July 21st/Week 10- Herbs

July 28th/Week 11- Worms and Composting (led by Dana & Stuart)

August 4th/Week 12- Insects (led by Tom Janousek)

August 11th/Week 13- Weather (led by Chris Foster)

August 18th/Week 14- Cooking in the Garden (led by Eric & Annemarie Noll)

August 26th/Week 15- Harvest Party!

A gentle reminder to all that the program starts promptly at **10AM**. If you are looking for a way to get involved in the community, we are always in need of adult volunteers and various materials for projects. Stop by Saturday morning, or contact **Dana** at **850-9611** or online at dana.freeman@gmail.com if you are interested in helping with snacks or getting on our email list. Come grow with the Youth Garden!

by Dana Freeman

P.S. Now open for two months, the **Community Bike Shop Omaha** at **525 N 33rd St.** has already helped numerous neighborhood youth learn how to repair their bicycles. We've also graduated two youth through our Earn-A-Bike program. Shop hours are **noon-4pm** on **Saturdays**. Volunteers meet on **Wednesdays** from **6-8pm**. Stop by during these times to work on your own bike or learn about volunteer opportunities! Contact **Stuart** for more information at **216-1235**.

GPNA Presidency Offers Challenges, Opportunities

At the time of this newsletter, the GPNA is looking for someone to be president. I'd like to share a few thoughts about our neighborhood's current challenges and opportunities, in case the position interests you. First, I do think there is someone out there (among our roughly 5,000 residents within our GPNA boundaries – Dodge to Cuming, 27th to 37th) who is right for the position, even if the timing is not perfect. As past president and knowing other past leadership, I'll be the first to say it can be demanding and even overwhelming at times in a neighborhood like ours with our diversity (ethnic, cultural, housing stock, socio-economic, age, profession/student, etc.), challenges with some of our city services, social issues, public safety problems, economic development and involvement in our business district, annual events/activities, current projects, new projects, time commitment from volunteers, shortage of new leadership, and other challenges. Having said this, I think GPNA since the beginning has maintained a great reputation for being committed to preserving and improving our neighborhood, while promoting a real sense of community. For anyone thinking of being GPNA President, we have always faced the above problems (many worse than today) - just ask any of our previous leadership.

Those are the challenges; how about opportunities? Here's a partial list: working with new Northeast Precinct Police Captain Dave Baker, Mutual of Omaha Development (Midtown Crossing), slow but steady improvement in our business district, Community Bike Shop, community garden and other annual activities, tree planting, neighborhood arboretum plan and other green master plan projects, Gateway Feature at 30th & California, a great GPNA newsletter and website providing more exposure of our neighborhood's attributes to the right people, families, businesses and even investors, Yates School opportunities, great young leaders like **Cynthia Shuck, Stuart Shell, Dana Freeman, Emerick Huber, Jill Westfall, Daniel Lawse**...and other "diamonds in the rough" ready to surface.

Ultimately the GPNA President's position can be anything you want it to be. Every one of the past presidents had their own way of leading – and all did a great job and we appreciate their tremendous efforts! My hope is that someone who is genuinely interested will step up and lead the GPNA, and all of us will support their efforts for the good of the neighborhood. I think any of the past GPNA Presidents would tell you how rewarding and worthwhile this position was, even if they didn't know if they were ready at the time. It's a chance to put your personality on our organization and help impact the future direction for the Gifford Park neighborhood – best of all, you have some of the best volunteers on board to make things happen...like they have since the GPNA began in 1988.

by Chris Foster

Field Club Neighborhood To Hold Historic Home Tour

The **Field Club Homeowners League** will conduct a **Historic Home Tour** and **Antique Auto Show** on **Saturday, July 14**, from **11 a.m. to 5 p.m.** Admission is \$10.00 per person; please no children below 12 - children 12-18 must be accompanied by an adult. The Field Club Neighborhood is located from 32nd Ave. to 36th St., Center to Pacific Streets, and is a registered historic neighborhood. The following homes will be included on the tour: 1624 So. 32nd Ave. (1896 Dutch Colonial), 1513 So. 33rd St. (1918 Arts & Crafts), 1140 Turner Blvd. (1910 Arts & Crafts), 3541 Woolworth Ave. (1913 Four Square), 1330 So. 35th St. (1907 Colonial Revival), 1130 Turner Blvd. (1908 Tudor Revival), 1136 So. 35th Ave. (1905 Arts & Crafts), and 1310 So. 35th Ave. (1906 Four Square). Three gardens will be on the tour as well: 3302 and 3335 Woolworth Ave. and 1119 So. 36th St.

Little Brothers - Friends of the Elderly (LBFE) is a national, non-profit, volunteer based organization committed to relieving isolation and loneliness among the elderly. We offer to people of good will the opportunity to join the elderly in friendship and celebration of life. LBFE Omaha administers programs consisting of friendly visits, holiday celebrations and meal delivery, birthday visits, advocacy and referral, and transportation assistance.

The staff and volunteers of LBFE offer true love and friendship to elders whom we refer to as "Old Friends" rather than clients. Our motto is *flowers before bread* recognizing the urgent human need for more than bodily nourishment. At LBFE, we believe that hearts starve as well as bodies and through friendship our elders' quality of life increases. All of our services are free to our Old Friends and designed to relieve the isolation and loneliness that can produce emotional pain and mental and physical deterioration.

If you or someone you know could benefit from having a friend through our organization, please contact **Chris** at **884-6641** or ccady.oma@littlebrothers.org. We would also welcome anyone who would like to volunteer.



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- Love to Learn.
- Help the Needy.
- Share and Cooperate.
- Learn Right from Wrong.

The Duchesne Preschool bases curriculum on the five goals above and includes specialist teachers in the areas of Spanish, art, music, computers and PE. We're now registering THREE-YEAR-OLD BOYS and GIRLS for the 2007-2008 school year with two, three and five-day options available. Call 558-6250 for more information or to schedule a tour.

www.DuchesneAcademy.org

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What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

Gifford Park was a host site for the popular "Music in the Park" concert series. This year **King Kool** performed on Wednesday June 13. They are an 11-piece "party band". Many thanks to the **City of Omaha, The Reader**, and the **Recording Industries Music Performance Fund** as administered by the **Omaha Musicians' Association** for sponsoring this event. We had free ice cream treats and lots of Frisbee in the park.

Sun Dawgs Update: Supervisors **Jessica Womac, Lavell Jackson** and **Aersenio Richardson** are heading up the Gifford Park site this year. Please consider stopping down at the Sun Dawg shack any weekday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to help with activities. Special thanks go to **Tom Lebeda** (Parks & Recreation Supervisor) for always paying close attention to our Gifford Park site. The GPNA wishes to thank the **City of Omaha** and other private donors who helped keep the Sun Dawgs program and for making it possible for Gifford Park to be a full-time site, this means a lot to our neighborhood.

Have you noticed the "Identity Garden" in Gifford Park near 33rd & Cass Street? GPNA volunteers **Cynthia Shuck, John Barna, Dana Freeman** and **Chris Foster** planted and mulched the 15 ft diameter flower garden, which has a nice cobblestone border. There is an iron sign installed in the middle. The garden material and sign were donated by **Destination Midtown** for the purpose of "identifying" the dozen neighborhoods within the Destination Midtown boundary with a common link – the identity gardens.

Many thanks to our Webmaster **Dan Bodmann** for scanning in many of our old GPNA newsletters, back to 1988 - the very beginning of the neighborhood association. This has long been a desire to have these scanned and posted for everyone's benefit. Dan will continue to upload old newsletters. We encourage everyone to visit the website (www.giffordparkomaha.org) and check it out - there are a lot of excellent articles. Thanks Dan!

Congratulations to GPNA newsletter editor **Sue Wilwerding** for winning the second flight of the Omaha Women's City 9-Hole Golf Tournament in June at the Player's Club at Deer Creek. What made it even more special, she won it in a 2-hole playoff. Way to go, Sue!

The GPNA would like to welcome **Dave Baker** as the new captain of the Northeast Precinct; Captain **Denise Cousin** has retired.

by Chris Foster



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

P.O. Box 91462, Omaha, NE 68131-0462



Membership Application

*Note: The GPNA membership year runs from June 1 through May 31

Today's Date: _____

Type of Membership: Single (\$10.00) Family (\$15.00) Business (\$25.00)

If Business, Name of Business: _____

Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES I am interested in helping out with... (Circle interests):

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Chairperson | Newsletter Delivery | Community Garden | Easter Egg Hunt |
| Membership | Book Club | Youth Garden | Boiling Cleanup |
| Social Activities | History | Tree Planting | Fall Cleanup |
| School Liaison | Wash Group | Youth Activities | Neighborhood Walks |
| Tool Lending | Cal. Committee | Lawn Program | Holiday Banquet |



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