



Gifford Park's Pride

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

August 2006

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

National Night Out To Be Held Tuesday, August 1st

The 23rd "National Night Out" (NNO) has been scheduled for **Tuesday, August 1st**, from **5:30 - 8:00 PM**. This unique crime/drug prevention event is sponsored by the **Omaha Police Department**, is part of **Citizen Corps**, and all are invited to be part of a nationwide event. NNO has proven to be an effective, inexpensive, and enjoyable program to promote neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships in the fight for a safer nation. The benefits the community derives from NNO extends well beyond the one night.

This will be the fifth year that the GPNA has participated in the National Night Out celebration. On Tuesday evening, August 1, 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.

The GPNA plans to include many of the same activities as at last year's event - including food, refreshments, jazz, firetruck, face painting, clown, inflatable rides, water balloon toss, information booths, (health, safety, neighborhood), health screening, Omaha Public Library table (sign-up for library cards), and much more. Scheduled to make an appearance is **McGruff**, the Crime-Fighting Dog. Help is needed before, during, and after the event. For more information or if you would like to volunteer to help at this exciting neighborhood event, call **Cynthia 556-2090** or **Chris 342-6006**.

August in Gifford Park = Tennis

For the 13th consecutive year, the **GPNA Youth Tennis Program** will be held every **Wednesday** evening in **August (August 2,9,16,23,30)** at the tennis courts in **Gifford Park**. There will be two sessions; **6:00 - 6:45 PM** for **4-9 year olds** and **6:45 - 7:30 PM** for the **10 to 18 year olds**. Instruction focuses on the fundamental strokes in tennis, such as the forehand, backhand, serves, and volleys. Registration forms are available at **J'N'J Grocery** and **California Tacos** or participants can sign up on the first night of the program. Help for both the registration process and the instructional sessions is needed to make this a great experience for the kids. For more information, or if you would like to help with any or all of the sessions, call **Chris Foster** at **342-6006**.

Next General Meeting
Thursday, August 3
7:00 P.M.

Speaker: To be Announced

Creighton University Med Center

Executive Meeting
Thursday, August 17
7:00 P.M.
Via Christe
3636 California St.

Pilot Project Calls For Visible Street Addresses On Homes And Businesses

A pilot project encouraging metro Omahans to mark their homes and businesses with visible street addresses is gaining strong support from Omaha's emergency response organizations. A special committee called "**Address It Now**" has launched the program in six mid-city neighborhoods to identify homes and businesses without visible addresses and to encourage and support owners to affix them. "These neighborhood leaders have demonstrated there is a problem of street addresses missing from many homes and businesses," said **Ron Abdouch**, executive director of the Neighborhood

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**Music In Gifford
Park**
Wednesday, Aug. 16
7 - 8 p.m.

Omaha Brassworks

Free Ice Cream Treats!

GPNA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Cynthia Shuck 556-2090

VICE PRESIDENT

Open

RECORDING SECRETARY

Open

TREASURER

Open

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

Chris Foster 342-6-006

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

Open

From The President . . .

As many of you may know, my personality does not lend itself to motivational speech making and presidential proclamations, but the GPNA faces a crisis. I am in the position to first extend a broad appeal to residents of Gifford Park to get involved in GPNA leadership. Unfortunately, if volunteers do not step forward and get active at the executive board level, then restructuring and dissolution of the GPNA is imminent.

You might be asking "What Happened?" Here is a recent history. The GPNA Executive Board consists of five elected officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary) as well as fourteen Neighborhood Service chairpersons. They meet once a month to discuss issues facing the Association as well as any special activities or projects taking place throughout the calendar year. Of those nineteen executive board seats, five are currently vacant. (This is where I mention the Board reluctantly accepted resignations from both the Vice President and the Treasurer last month.) Of the fourteen remaining chairs, five are duplications, which means two people are covering seven chairs between them. This leaves nine people to organize every activity GPNA sponsors!

This is a tremendous feat considering we are one of the most active and lively neighborhood associations in Omaha. I would like to personally thank each and every one of those individuals (and their spouses) ever listed in the grey box on the newsletter's inside cover for volunteering to help with GPNA activities. Without a renewable workforce, fresh ideas, new faces, alternative perspective, and diverse life experiences the current Executive Board can no longer exercise prudent decision making on behalf of Association members.

The Executive Board places before Association members at the August meeting a discussion of the following changes:

- 1.Regular meetings shall be held quarterly instead of monthly.
- 2.Executive Board meetings shall be held quarterly instead of monthly (most of the work is done at the committee level which usually involves getting together with Chris Foster to divvy up the responsibilities)
- 3.Activities such as the National Night Out Block Party and the neighborhood Fall Clean-up, which are under-funded and under-staffed shall be considered for elimination.

I know living in Gifford Park requires a healthy dose of motivation, idealism, hard work and for some, faith. This is one of the few great neighborhoods in Omaha that is still affordable. Help us enrich and impact the lives of neighbors living in Gifford Park.

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 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.

Bob & Roger - Special Guys

Bob Hutton and **Roger Freeman** are two special guys in our neighborhood who continue to do good stuff everyday. Much has been said and written over the years about their volunteer accomplishments, but it's worth mentioning again because they demonstrate how we can all use our skills, talents and community spirit to make our neighborhood a better place.

On almost a daily basis, Roger, with help from his wife Sandy, pick up litter in and around Gifford Park, and talk to kids (and adults) about respect and better behavior. Roger has been called the "caretaker" of Gifford Park. Of course he

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Address-It-Now . . . *continued from page 1*

Center for Greater Omaha. "They're calling on all Omaha neighbors to fix the problem today." Abdouch said the focus now is the six neighborhoods, "but this is any idea with citywide implications. All property owners everywhere should get going on this right away."

The Address-It-Now (A-I-N) project is funded by the mayor's Neighborhood Crime Prevention Grant and its goal is to significantly increase the number of houses and businesses where addresses are displayed and visible from a distance. A-I-N committee members, who include neighborhood leaders, city emergency response departments, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the Neighborhood Center, believe that visible street addresses greatly increase property owners' chances of quick response to 9-1-1 calls for police, fire, and other emergency responders. The committee has put together a variety of education and public relations materials encouraging property owners to comply. They're also designing plans to support owners who need help in getting visible addresses affixed.

Police Chief **Tom Warren** said, "In the never-ending fight against crime and violence, seconds can make the difference between life and death. When our cruiser officers have to hunt around to find a street addresses, seconds sometimes become agonizing minutes." Warren urges property owners "not to waste one more second - mark your home or business with a visible street address today." Similar recommendations came from Mayor **Mike Fahey**, Fire Chief **Rob Dahlquist**, and 911 Center Director **Mark Conrey**.

The Committee also is providing a simple "How-to" list of helpful hints:

Use numbers four inches tall & a half-inch thick

Numbers should contrast with background

Mount them high - above the entrance is best

On the house - not the curb

Remove property & shrubbery obstructions

Always "light addresses at night"

Alley? Addresses there help emergency responders, too

Check visibility every three months

Free Kindergarten Traffic Training

The 54th Annual Kindergarten Traffic Safety Training Program will be held at the **Westroads Mall** from **August 7th** through the **11th**. There will be two sessions each day. The registration table will be inside the mall by the entrance to Dick's Sporting Goods by the Westroads Campground. The morning session registration is at 9:30 a.m. and the afternoon session registration is at 1:00 p.m.

The children will be divided into small groups and escorted by uniformed police officers. They will learn about playing and staying out of the street. They will ride a yellow school bus and be instructed on proper etiquette while on the bus. They will meet a talking traffic light who tells them about the different colored lights and symbols that help them cross the street. The children will meet safety patrol crossing guards dressed in orange vests just like the ones that will be at their school in the fall. They will also meet some Omaha firefighters and learn about the ABC's of fire safety.

Please pick one session and bring your soon-to-be kindergartener to the Westroads for an hour of fun that may save their life.

Reprinted from the OPD Community Resource Center Newsletter

Bob & Roger . . . *continued from page 2*

always helps out with cleanups and the summer tennis program. Roger goes above and beyond, sometimes paying kids out of his own pocket to pick up litter and cut weeds in the park.

Bob continues to use his vast talents in a positive ways. One example is the Community Garden – Bob routinely waters everyone's plot, including the Youth Garden area, which has been vital during this summer's dry weather. He recently installed (with help from his son Darryl) two "gord" trellises (made with heavy duty wire mesh and rebar) for kids to enjoy. Bob continues to maintain our "tool lending" mowers. Bob is a "Jack-of-all-Trades, Master-of-All".

Both Bob & Roger have a great attitude and community spirit. They will tell you these neighborhood activities help keep them in great shape – would you believe they are both in their 70's! How about we help these guys and our neighborhood during the next cleanup or litter pickup. Or better yet, find opportunities where YOU can use your own talents or skills to make our neighborhood a better place.

by Chris Foster

What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

We plan to have a neighborhood-wide garage sale in September (no specific date set yet). The GPNA will pay for an ad in the Omaha World-Herald prior to the event. The purpose is attract people to come to the Gifford Park neighborhood for garage sales – so it's a great chance for you to make a little money. Also, if you would like to donate usable garage sale items to the GPNA, please call **933-1960**; we will sell items with any of these proceeds going to the GPNA.

We wanted to share a very positive e-mail the GPNA received. "Not sure how to tell the 'right' people, but just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy the beautiful planters in the neighborhood. They always make me smile as I drive past them on my way to work in the morning. What an awesome mix of plants in them!! Thanks." - **Mary Beth Johnson**.

Please keep longtime GPNA member **Bob Ford** in your thoughts and prayers, Bob has been ill recently. You may know that Bob is a brother to Jan Franks. You have probably seen him helping with GPNA events as well as picking up litter and cans in the park and surrounding streets. Hang in there Bob!

Please keep the **Tanner** family in your thoughts. **Jack Tanner** has been ill recently. Bette and Jack are longtime GPNA members and make regular donations at cleanups. You may have seen Bette helping out at the Tennis Program the last several years. They have lived in the Gifford Park neighborhood for many years and are great neighbors.

Restore Omaha, a conference, exhibition and tour, is planning another great event November 3-5, 2006 at the University Of Nebraska at Omaha's campus and other Omaha sites. Volunteers are needed to help identify topics and speakers, to recruit exhibitors experienced in preservation and restoration work, to help organize a tour of homes and to help promote and market the event. We are also looking for anyone interested in having their home on the Sunday "Tour of Homes". If you are interested in serving on one of these committees or just have suggestions for the 2006 conference, contact **Kristine Gerber**, conference director, at 614-0056 or eventive.marketing@cox.net. Mark your calendars! More information will be coming soon on Restore Omaha.



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 30

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 | Tall Cleanup |
| School Liaison | Wash Group | Youth Activities | Neighborhood Walks |
| Tool Lending | Call Committee | Tennis Program | Holiday Banquet |

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



**TOOL
LENDING
HOTLINE**
Chris 342-6006

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