



Gifford Park's Pride

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

August 2007

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

CSO! To Hold Public Meeting

Clean Solutions for Omaha will hold a community meeting on **Thursday, August 23, 6:30 p.m.**, at the **OPS TAC Building, 3215 Cuming Street**. Omaha is faced with federal requirements to reduce the sewage overflows during wet weather into the Missouri River and Papillion Creek. The impact of these requirements is both long-term and financially challenging.

This is your opportunity to hear details of the preliminary plan to reduce sewage overflows and the costs involved. **PLEASE ATTEND.** Public input and dialogue on this project which affects the entire metropolitan sewer service area is vital.

For information online: www.omahacso.com
Phone hotline: 341-0235

Holy Name Housing To Host Festival

Holy Name Housing Corporation, the E.R. Danner Neighborhood Association, the Military Ave. Neighborhood Association, and the Neighborhood Action and Fact Association will host a festival on **Saturday, August 18, from 1 - 4 p.m.** in the east parking lot of **Holy Name Church, 2929 Fontenelle Blvd.** which will be free to the public. The goal of the festival is to celebrate "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" with activities that will include booths offering information on home improvement, safety tips, and resources for home owners and renters. The festival will include musical entertainment, children's activities, raffle prizes, and refreshments. Come learn more about the importance of neighborhood associations, learn home safety tips, and have a great time!

**Please Note:
The August General Meeting
Has Been Cancelled!**

Next General Meeting

**Thursday, September 6
7:00 P.M.**

Attention! Gifford Park Neighborhood Block Party

**** has been rescheduled for ****

Saturday, September 8

33rd & California Street

Main Event

Bike Rodeo

and more...

Health Screenings

Fitness demonstrations

Neighborhood Garage Sale

Food & Live Music

more details to follow



DUSK TIL DAWN

LEAVE YOUR LIGHTS ON

**24TH ANNUAL NATIONAL NIGHT OUT
TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2007**



Community Bike Shop Omaha
541-9943

Website: www.omahabike.org

Email: omahabike@gmail.com

Open Shop: 12-4pm Saturdays

Volunteers: 6-8pm Wednesdays

GPNA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Open

VICE PRESIDENT

Stuart Shell 216-1235

RECORDING SECRETARY

Mary Ledbetter 342-4866

TREASURER

Dana Carlton-Flint 346-4575

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

Stuart Shell 216-1235

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

Dana Freeman 850-9611

Youth Garden Corner . . . by Dana Freeman

Thanks to all of the Youth Garden friends for helping to keep our plots and the side yard watered, weeded, and healthy. We would like to extend an invitation to all of our friends to attend a **Harvest Party** on **August 26th at 10 A.M.**, as that will mark the conclusion of our program. Please mark this date on your calendar. Until then, we have much learning and growing in Gifford Park to do!

On July 7th, *Week 8* of the program, we revisited birds. Our on-site avian expert **Sarah Newman** presented a lesson relevant to both adults and children that was attended by our very own **Senator Gwen Howard**. We are an imaginative and crafty bunch, so we painted and made our own bird bath from terra cotta pots. Although it is awaiting installation of a dripper, check it out by the shed. It's beautiful. Our totally awesome gourd birdhouse take-home project was more than a year in the making. It was a family effort, and we have several special people to recognize. The gourds were grown by **Maury O'Brien**, Kate Bodmann's dad, since those in the Youth Garden did not have time to fully reach maturity last year. **Kate Bodmann** stored the three bags of gourds in her home until they were ready to be used. **Don Freeman**, Dana Freeman's dad, drilled the various-sized entrance holes in all of the gourds.

On *Week 9*, July 14th, we brought out the butterfly (and moth) nets! It is great fun to chase those fluttery fliers all around the Garden and of particular interest to our young gardeners. Other projects included mixing up a fermented goop and plastering it onto trees to attract moths at night and the weekly mashing up of fruit for the butterfly feeder tray. Thanks, **Cynthia Shuck**, for improving the existing Butterfly Garden by planting Butterfly Plant, a milkweed that is a feeding ground for numerous adult butterflies and a host for the Monarch's caterpillars. **Stuart Shell** and **Kevin Mercado** also situated a donated butterfly over-wintering house within the Butterfly Garden. Smaller versions of these butterfly houses created from recycled milk cartons served as our take-home projects. Each child was also given a packet of seeds compiled by **Brittany Story** to start their own butterfly garden at home. Improving the habitats of nature's pollinators is important to us!

July 21st, *Week 10*, was infused with herbs at the Garden. We sampled dill herb butter on bread and mint lemonade and peach sun tea served over mint ice cubes. Our lesson focused on herbal home remedies. We also harvested herbs, like sage and oregano, from the Herb Garden, bundled them, and stored them in the rafters of the shed. Have you seen them drying? We plan to use them in our Cooking in the Garden class. Our take-home projects included forming sprigs of herbs for culinary purposes and striking sun-catchers made from previously dried flowers. Thanks to **Natalie**, Sarah Newman's daughter, for helping us with those projects.

Thanks to our super Saturday morning volunteers who help us learn each week and donors of materials for our weekly projects, snacks, and poem challenge. Extra special praise to those not already mentioned above: **Sallie Foster** for taking hundreds of snapshots each week, **Chris Foster & Mike Caban** for their steady support and nimble knot-tying efforts, our "worker bee" and prize donor **Diane Kaye**. The youth of Gifford Park say, "Thank you!"

A gentle reminder to all that the program starts promptly at **10 A.M.** 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. We would gladly accept any donations of small lidded glass jars for bug vacuums and new or gently used items for prizes for the poem challenge. Stop by Saturday morning, or contact Dana at **850-9611** or online: dana.freeman@gmail.com if you are interested in helping with snacks or getting on our email list. Come grow with the Youth Garden!

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?

Many neighbors have cared for and rescued Gifford Park stray and feral cats and kitten families this summer.



Purrs to all, among them **Sandy Jones, George Jones, Pam Font-Gable, Tara, Cynthia Shuck, Chris Foster, Richard White, Michelle Trudelle** and her daughter **Brittany, Carol Crum, Sarah** of "Bottle Babies," and the anonymous neighbor in whose truck a litter of kittens was born and who kept it parked as a nursery until the kittens were old enough to toddle after their mother. Sandy Jones is fostering these kittens. When they are old enough to spay/neuter, at four-to-six months, if they are domesticated, Sandy will find them a loving indoor home; or, if they walk on the wild side, she will place them as indoor-outdoor cats with a caring farmer.

"The kittens are playful!" says Sandy. "Ping-pong balls are their favorite toys. These kittens will have a good life—but there are so many kittens out there! And there will be, until people commit to responsible spay/neuter. Abandonment is also a terrible problem. People who abandon an animal just don't think about the harm they're doing, the suffering they cause, or the problems they leave for the rest of us to solve."

Sandy had to move quickly to rescue the kittens, when her husband George saw that they were playing in the road at midnight. "I couldn't delay, because their mother had died. It was so sad, she came to the backyard as usual, but she was dragging herself, she was suffering terribly, and she couldn't eat or drink. It was antifreeze poisoning, and there's no cure." She may have been poisoned deliberately. "She was only six months old; this must have been her first litter." The little orange mama cat came to Sandy's backyard to eat when she was pregnant—and continued when she was no longer pregnant, but eating more than ever. Sandy couldn't tell where she had had her kittens, but when they were old enough, they started following their mother to her backyard.

Accidental antifreeze poisoning kills more than 10,000 dogs, cats, and wildlife each year—and hundreds of children. Its sweet smell and taste attract them, and even a very small dose causes immediate kidney failure and a slow and painful death from ethylene glycol, the chemical used in most antifreeze and engine coolants. Prevention? Always store antifreeze securely, and clean up spills quickly and thoroughly.

But can more be done? Oregon, California, and New Mexico have passed state laws requiring the addition of a bittering agent to antifreeze and coolant sold for household use: denatonium benzoate, the world's bitterest-known substance. According to the Doris Day Animal League (DDAL, founded by the beloved singer, actress, and animal advocate) "The Consumer Products Safety Commission encourages the addition of a bittering agent to a range of household products and hazardous liquids to protect the innocent from accidental ingestion." The DDAL reports mounting support for a federal law to require the addition of the bittering agent to antifreeze. "The bittering agent itself is safe, biodegradable and will not affect engines," writes Day. "It does no harm and can save thousands of domestic animals a year (mostly dogs and cats), hundreds of children a year, and uncounted numbers of wildlife, including endangered species. The cost is just pennies per gallon."

If you would like to help, you can contact your senators and congressperson and urge them to support such a federal law. (For more information, you can go to www.ddal.org.) "If we support a law for a bittering agent in antifreeze, we could avoid another tragedy," says Sandy Jones, "and the death of Orange Mama Cat will not have been in vain."

by Clarinda Karpov 553-3736

GPNA Aims For Tree-Lined Streets

GPNA former president **Ron Frey** ended his presidency by writing a \$10,000 winning grant to the **Nebraska Statewide Arboretum**. The Association demonstrated its commitment toward realizing one of the goals of the Destination Midtown Masterplan, namely **Green Street Corridors**. Seven residents and landlords participated in the Green Street Corridor project. They planted sixteen (16) trees along Davenport, California, 36th Avenue and 35th Street. The GPNA executive board voted to pay for 100% of the trees planted along California and Davenport as well as the 23 trees planted in Gifford Park over the past 2 years. Anyone who would like to help by watering the burr oak trees planted in the park is welcome to do so.

by Cynthia Shuck

Garage Sale Planned For Sept. 8

Back by popular demand, we plan to have a neighborhood-wide garage sale on **Saturday, September 8**. 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 as part of the Block Party/Bike Rodeo event, with any of these proceeds going to the GPNA and the **Community Bike Shop**. This is a great way to get rid of unused items and make some extra money for yourself or the GPNA and Community Bike Shop at NO COST to you!