



Gifford Park's Pride

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

September 2009

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Bike Night & Block Party Highlights

The Gifford Park neighborhood celebrated its seventh annual **National Night Out Block Party** and **Bike Night** on Tuesday evening, August 4. The GPNA and the **Community Bike Shop** organized the event which included closing 33rd Street from California to Cass Street to host a variety of activities that included something for everyone. Activities included: bike rodeo, repair and safety tips including helmet giveaway to kids, visit from the Police Department (including Mobile Command Unit) & Fire Department (including a firetruck), GPNA and Community Garden information booth, farmers market (Sweet Thymes and Teen Market Garden), rock-climbing wall, live music (local musicians – Honeybee, Food Not Bombs), free library books and cards, face-painting, food donated by Blueline Coffee for a Community Garden fundraiser which raised \$240, chalk “art”, and more.

We wish to thank the following organizations and individuals for their help and support – **Senator Gwen Howard**, Police Department (Former **Police Chief Buske**, Acting **Chief Hayes**, Crime Prevention Specialists **Bridgett Fitzpatrick** and **Stacy Henry**), Recreation (**Tom Lebeda**), Public Works, and Traffic departments.

And finally, because there are so many volunteers before, during and after the event, we don't have room in this article to name everyone. However we would like to recognize the extra efforts of those who went above and beyond the call of duty – **Darryl Hutton**, **Bob Hutton**, **Martin Janousek**, **Dana Freeman**, **Sue Freeman**, **Stuart Shell**, **Jill Westfall**, **Mary Bamesberger**, **Mike Caban**, **Diane Kaye**, **Max Kaye**, **Chris McClelland**, **Kay Scarpello**, **Katrina Jacobberger**, **Rob Parolek**, **Dana Carlton-Flint**, **Chris Combs**, **Cynthia Shuck**, **Tiare Weak**, **Tyler Magnuson**, **Ryan Shuck**, **Ben Spahn**, **Tom Thomas**, **Lloyd Canfield**, **Chris & Sallie Foster**, **Tim Wallace**, **Caitie Caughey**, **Brandon & Melissa Geary**, **Rachel Dick**, **Joe Francis**, **Lilly Estes**, **Jack Sutton** and **Glenn Burns**. **Target Stores** stopped by with about 15 representatives giving out free items. The weather was pretty descent considering it was early August. Thanks to all who made this a fun event.

by Chris Foster

Next General Meeting
Thursday, September 10
7:00 P.M.

Guest Speakers:
Chris Jerram
District 3 City Council
Representative

Ron Abdouch
Executive Director
The Neighborhood Center

Creighton University
Medical Center
Morrison Seminar Room

Board Meeting
September 24
at the Flint's

Patriots' Day
September
11



Kids Are Back
In School
Please Drive
Carefully!

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Sandy* & Roger Freeman 557-2914

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Dana Carlton-Flint 346-4575

WATCH GROUP

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

WEEDS & LITTER

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

WELCOMING

Julie Kalkowski* 342-2103

* denotes new officer, board, or committee member

President's Column

Wow...this year is flying by and I can hardly believe it is fall. So much has been accomplished and I am again amazed at the dedication my neighbors have to our community. Just this summer we had another successful garden year thanks to **Dana Freeman, Diane Kaye-Nordaker, and Mike Caban**. Lighting has been added to some hot spots thanks to **Darryl Hutton, Jim Wilwerding**, and a **generous donor**. The Park shelter has a new roof and fascia boards due to the efforts of past president **Cynthia Shuck** and myself. Neighborhood Night Out was a great time for neighbors to come together to visit and enjoy music, food, and activities. The tennis program is off and running again under the watchful eye of **Chris Foster, Luther Larson** and **Martin Janousek** filled out the Greenest Neighborhood survey (Gifford Park was #2 last year); hopefully with our sewer labeling we'll come in first this year.

We will soon be seeing new trees in the neighborhood funded by a grant MNA (Midtown Neighborhood Alliance) was able to secure to replace trees damaged in the June 2008 storm. Also I would like to say thanks to all of my neighbors who do things behind the scenes, work on picking up trash as they walk down the street, and those who keep up their properties and set great examples of what it is to be a good neighbor. My hat is off to you...keep up the good work.

by Dana Carlton-Flint

P.S. Let there be light! Thanks to an anonymous donor eight new lights have gone up in our neighborhood in various locations. The donations will fund these lights for 3-5 years depending on how many more locations are added to the existing eight. The most noticeable lights are in the interior of both parts of our park. Four lights have been added to the park interior making it safer to walk through, less attractive for loitering, and easier for law enforcement to see activity happening there. Thanks to our donor for making Gifford Park safer for our residents! Also thanks to **Darryl Hutton** and **Jim Wilwerding** for keeping this project on track.



**Fall GPNA Garage Sale Cancelled
Rescheduled For Spring 2010**

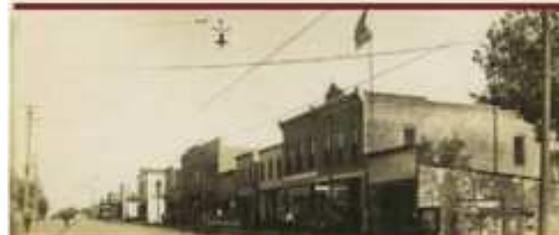


HISTORIC
Restoration
TOUR

Sunday, October 11, 2009 1-5pm
Tickets: \$10 each or 2 for \$15
Purchase tickets online or on tour day

Rain date: October 18
For more information, go to
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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)**.

16th Annual Tennis Program Highlights

Despite threatening skies on the last day, this year's 16th annual **Youth Tennis Program** had NO rainouts and excellent participation from kids and instructors. This year's program, held in Gifford Park, had fewer kids than in the past several years, but everyone agreed it was probably the most valuable for everyone involved. We had two age groups to better handle the number of kids on the limited court space. We had about a dozen volunteer instructors for the August Wednesday evening sessions. The kids learned each of the basic tennis and rallying skills. With the number of participants, we again used the old basketball court and set up mini-nets for the younger kids.

A BIG thanks goes to **Godfather's Pizza** again this year for giving us a deal on 10 pizzas for the event! Neighborhood volunteers provided delicious treats also. Many thanks go to all the wonderful instructors for their support and dedication to this program: **Rick & Jane Hines, Jim Wilson, Buddy Hogan, Jim Lang, Roger Freeman, Laurie Bolte, Kirk Peck, Michala Peck, Vince Emory, Jackie Foster, Chris & Sallie Foster, Jenny Foster, Don Gildon, Ryan Shuck, Ron Goodman, Calvin Webster, Lou Harrison, and Ashley Hinck**. Ashley and her family donated new tennis racquets for kids with perfect attendance and demonstrated good sportsmanship. Also during June and July, volunteer instructors **Lou Harrison, Kara Schuele, Brook Uzendowski, and Roger Freeman** provided tennis lessons on Wednesday mornings in Gifford Park; it was the second year for this free program.

Special thanks go to **Jan Franks, Bette Tanner, Betty Slayden, Tyffaney Slayden, and Kayleen Slayden** for helping with registration – the program could not happen without their help year after year. Thanks also to the **Omaha Tennis Association, the Nebraska Tennis Association, the United States Tennis Association, and the City Parks & Recreation Department** for their generous support over the years. GPNA members **Mike Caban, Ellen Price, Diane Kaye, and Jim Wilwerding**, also helped out in a variety of ways. If anyone who participated in the tennis lessons is interested in more advanced lessons this fall, please contact **Chris** at **342-6006**.

by Chris Foster

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Neighborhood Garden Produce Sale This Month

From tomatoes to cut flowers, basil to leeks, these are just some of the garden produce that's for sale in the 33rd Street business district.

For the next 4 Fridays starting **September 4th**, from **5:30 pm to 7:30 pm**, produce from our neighborhood gardeners will be for sale. Please come on down and see what the **Community Garden, Sweet Thymes Farm, and the Teen Market Garden** have grown. All produce is reasonably priced and the garden advise is free.

Helping The Community Garden One Dime At A Time!

We are pleased to announce that **Whole Foods Market Omaha** has selected Gifford Park Community Garden as the beneficiary of its **One Dime at a Time** community outreach program for October, November, and December 2009! For each bag reused at checkout, Whole Foods shoppers can choose to receive the \$0.10 refund as cash back on their grocery bill or donate the sum to the Gifford Park Community Garden. We encourage you to grab your reusable grocery bags, visit Whole Foods Market Omaha (**10020 Regency Circle**), and give your \$0.10 refund to the Gifford Park Community Garden over the next three months. Tell all your friends to do the same! Your generous support will help sustain and grow our adult and youth gardening programs for Midtown families. Together, we can make a difference One Dime at a Time!

by Dana Freeman

Are You Ready To Party?

Then the **Midtown Neighborhood Alliance (MNA)** would love to have you help them plan this year's 2nd annual **Celebrate Midtown** event on **Friday, October 23rd**, from **6pm – 12am** at the **Joslyn Castle**. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer some time and ideas please contact Deborah Knott www.skysthelimitad@cox.net or **212-7597** for more information. The planning committee meets every Wednesday at 5:30 pm at the **Healing Gallery** on **43rd and Cuming St.** (4225 Cuming St.). Please enter the building at the large gate off 43rd Street. If this year's event is anything like last year's held at the Joslyn Castle, it should a great evening.

Summer 2009 In Gifford Park





Community Garden News

Gifford Park gardeners and friends are invited to the last **Potluck** of 2009 on Saturday, **September 19**, at **6 PM**. We'll provide the meaty main course and encourage you to bring a side dish or dessert to share! The date has been changed from Saturday, October 3, to accommodate upcoming site reconstruction.

Gifford Park's **Teen Market Gardeners** have formed cooperatively the newest farmer's market in Midtown with growers of permaculture produce **Sweet Thyme Gardens!** (See page 3 for the details.) Come find out what locally-grown organic goods are fresh and in season! Free table space and chairs are available for you or your gardening group to use as new vendors. Contact **Cynthia (399-1470)** if you want to learn more about becoming a seller at Gifford Park's happening Farmers' Market.

Thanks to everyone who has generously provided items from Gifford Park Community Garden's (GPCG) new wish list of useful items that cannot be purchased due to budgetary constraints! Your financial and in-kind contributions supplement the garden's income from plot rental fees and ensure that GPCG and its programs are able to continue functioning at the same exceptional level. Contact **Dana (850-9611)** or dana.freeman@gmail.com if you have something you would like to share with us.

GPCG WISH LIST

mulch, yardwaste bags, daffodil bulbs, set of carpentry hand tools (e.g., hammer, screwdriver, wrench, tape measure), large tubs or containers (for potting and storing perennial plants during construction).

A Recycling Opportunity In The Neighborhood

Every weekend I see the home owners of Omaha put bags of yard waste on the curb to be taken away. It is my hope that the home owners of Gifford Park will donate that waste to me at **Sweet Thyme Farm** (located directly southeast of the Shelterbelt Theatre). I would love to recycle this waste back into my soil. Many common yard weeds and trees accumulate valuable nutrients in their leaves and can be composted to build soil or used as mulch in the garden and around perennials. Mulch also suppresses weeds and prevents the soil from drying out, which means less work for me. If you have no use for this yard waste, then consider donating it to me. Sweet Thyme Farm can serve as the neighborhood yard waste recycling center. You are welcome to drop it off at the farm; leave it at the gate at 32nd & California at the end of the drive directly east of the Shelterbelt (no plastic bags, please), or e-mail me at sweetthymefarm@gmail.com and I may be able to pick it up with my bike and trailer. As the saying goes: one man's trash is another man's treasure.

by Chris Combs

Now Open!

Coin Laundry
33rd & California St
(behind Selena's Grocery)

Open daily • 6am – 10pm

- All new equipment!
- **Huge capacity washers and dryers!**
- **\$1 buys 35 minutes** of dry time- almost $\frac{1}{2}$ drying minutes per quarter!
- Vending: A/C, Flat Screen TVs, Video Games & Free Wi-Fi



Enjoy WASH specials all day long!

- **\$1.00** wash dbl loaders
- **\$1.00 OFF** all 35, 40 & 60 lb washers

Ahora Abierto!

Lavandería
33rd & California St
(detrás de Selena's Grocery)

Abierto diario • 6am – 10pm

- Todos los **nuevos equipos!**
- **Lavadoras y secadoras extra grandes**
- **\$1 compras 35 minutos** de tiempo de secado- casi $\frac{1}{2}$ minutos de secado por 25¢!
- Bocados, A/C, juegos de video, TVs & Wi-Fi gratis



lavado especiales durante todo el día!

- **\$1.00 máquinas dobles de la carga**
- **Ahorras un \$1.00 en las lavadoras grandes**

Stanley Family At Home on Gifford Park Tennis Courts

If you see kids playing on the Gifford Park tennis courts, there is a good chance that their last name is Stanley. All six of **Wendall and Alyssa Stanley's** children play tennis in the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association's summer tennis program. "They wouldn't miss it for the world!" exclaimed Mrs. Stanley. In fact, all six children had perfect attendance this summer. As a result, each child took home a brand new racquet, compliments of the Nebraska Tennis Association.

Mrs. Stanley educates all of the children in their family home. "Tennis is a great way for the kids to get some exercise and to meet some of the other children in the neighborhood. We just love playing tennis at Gifford Park! My kids are down at those courts all of the time. While other kids are out carousing, my kids are playing tennis!" The Stanley kids know that they have to be home when "the street lights go on." Even the teenage girls!

Chris Foster (GPNA Tennis Program Director), are you reading this? Your efforts in developing tennis players at Gifford Park are really paying out some priceless dividends. Just ask the Stanley family!

by Jane Hines, Omaha Tennis Association

Charles R. Kilgore Jr. Attorney At Law 4913 Underwood Avenue



558-5000



Edible Arboretum In Gifford Park?

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association and **Midtown Neighborhood Alliance** received tentative approval to participate in the **Trees Omaha Initiative** (a grant program funded by the **Nebraska Environmental Trust** and coordinated by the **Nebraska Statewide Arboretum** with assistance from **Jack Phillips**.)

Trees Omaha encourages grass-roots citizen and volunteer involvement in the planting and care of high-quality trees. The success of the project hinges on recruiting and educating a cadre of volunteers that will serve as ongoing "Tree Keepers" for the betterment of Omaha Trees.

Our specific project will focus on Gifford Park and give the Gifford Park neighborhood the opportunity to explore the concept of an edible arboretum and continue its park restoration masterplan. Our hope is to extend the positive aspects of the Gifford Park Community Garden into the park and educate both adults and children about tree species, the importance of good stewardship, and appreciation of the land. If you are interested in this effort then contact **Cynthia Shuck 556-2090** and become one of the many eyes and ears of the forest.

by Cynthia Shuck

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He lives in Gifford Park



In My Opinion . . .

Editor's Note: The following article appeared in the editorial section of the Omaha World-Herald this summer.

On July 21st, the Omaha City Council voted to approve a liquor license to Midtown Gas, located at 1349 Park Avenue. According to the city's liquor rules, "The Council shall not grant any new license of any type or permit the transfer of an existing license to a location which is located within 300 feet of a city park." This business is 170 feet from Hanscom Park, well within the 300 foot rule. Because the city liquor rules would deny this permit, the council voted to suspend its rules, then voted to approve this liquor application and then had to vote the rules back in place.

The city council is allowed by law to suspend its rules, but we question if the council acted in the best interest of the residents of this community. The city also ignored state statute 53-177 that does not allow a liquor license within 150 feet of a home for elderly and indigent. Park North Tower, public housing for the elderly, is within 150 feet of this store. This blatant act of approving this license ignores the rules and statutes put in place to protect our neighborhoods. It could be argued that given the location of this new application and the nature of the neighborhood, these rules should be more firmly adhered to.

Like many of the neighborhoods in the eastern part of Omaha, the Ford Birth Site neighborhood association has been working diligently to improve their community for their residents and attract positive business growth. Having an off sale liquor business this close to a park and home for the elderly just creates additional problems, as statistics prove this type of business causes increased crime, public intoxication, panhandling and litter. One outcome is that the children, parents and elderly residents will be afraid to be in the park, staying away from the very place we set aside for them.

The council is approving liquor licenses as a means of business development for struggling neighborhoods that clearly need other services than just more alcohol. The actions of the city council clearly show that the liquor licensing process is an arbitrary system set up to serve the best interests of the businesses and not what it was mandated to do: to protect the health and safety of the residents and our community. If city officials can ignore their own rules what does that say to the residents they serve? It says we can put no faith in the system, that rules are enforced at the whim of the people in power and that the industry with the biggest wallet wins.

continued on page 7

Sowing Seeds In Gifford Park

As an adult volunteer helper at the Gifford Park Youth Garden Program, I always feel a sense of sadness every year when the final "Garden Day" arrives. I will miss our Saturday morning get-togethers until next spring. One gets used to seeing those little faces light up when they catch a butterfly, memorize a poem and receive an award, or watch in awe as a guest speaker talks about native snakes and pulls out a king snake from a sack, or teaches them the benefits of bees, or when they eat the first carrot they grew in their very own garden plot. There are so many things these children learn as the weeks go by; they keep on coming, and weeding and watering, and watching their little plants grow, and produce cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce, carrots, melons, peppers, and many other healthy foods. As the years go by one gets to watch them grow as well. Now some of the kids are older, and are actually helping with the week to week activities, and are members of the Community Garden Board of Directors.

Our sign says: GROW IN GIFFORD PARK. That is exactly what happens here, and those little faces will soon be grown-ups, and they will remember how to grow their own gardens, and not only that - they will remember that when they were young, some adults in their neighborhood taught them, and helped them learn to have fun in a safe and healthy way. They will, in turn, have learned the benefits of community service, and they will also feel the need to give back to their communities. Community service: it is a very long and proud American tradition that has been handed down from one generation to another. Those few little hours of pure unselfish delight produce so much good. I am so grateful to the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association for allowing me the opportunity to participate in such a wonderful and rewarding program. Thank you.

by Mike Caban

University Of South Dakota Students Returning This Fall

Our great friends from the **University of South Dakota** plan to come to our neighborhood the weekend of **October 3 & 4** to help us with a variety of duties in the Gifford Park Community Garden. The students have done great work helping the GPNA over the past three years. We encourage neighborhood folks to help out; more details in the October newsletter. Please note to save your cleanup items for the Spring Cleanup as there will be NO Fall cleanup. If you have questions, please contact **Chris 342-6006** or **Diane 341-4146**.

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342-0212

33rd & California Street

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Monday - Saturday: 11a.m. - 8 p.m.

Closed Sunday



In My Opinion . . . continued from page 6

There are changes that need to be made with the liquor licensing system locally and statewide. We cannot continue approving licenses just because one was handed out yesterday, and you certainly cannot approve licenses by ignoring city and state rules just to give the new owner a chance to make money.

The Alcohol Impact Coalition calls on the city and state to take a hard look at how they have been conducting business and remember they were put in power to serve and protect our neighborhoods and communities not just our businesses. Here are a few things that need to be addressed: residents need to be notified of city hearings for any liquor application in their area; residents' concerns must be given equal weight to businesses' concerns; that violations like sales to minors, serving intoxicated people or death/injury due to poor business practices must be taken seriously by city and state officials; that bad business owners or businesses who have been denied a license must be red flagged for a re-hearing and not automatically renewed each year; new applicants cannot sell liquor until the state grants a license; and no business can store alcohol at a location that does not have a current liquor license. Some of these ideas will be debated this fall when Senator Gwen Howard's bill, LB 605, comes back for discussion, but some of the other suggestions can be addressed locally by our city council if they are willing to make the changes. Perhaps is it time for the citizens of this city and state to insist on those changes and hold our officials accountable to upholding our current rules and laws.

by Margie Magnuson

Spokesperson, Alcohol Impact Coalition

AIC was formed over two years ago by neighborhood leaders tired and frustrated with the negative impact alcohol outlets were having in their area. AIC's mission is to develop a strategy that will minimize the impact of alcohol density, abuse, crime and negative impact in our neighborhoods and establish accountability in the licensing of alcohol outlets. We are not against banning all alcohol but have been focusing on businesses like convenience stores that do off sale and bad businesses with violations that can negatively impact neighborhoods.

Welcome, Students!

We have a large number of university students living in the area who have returned for another year of school. The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association has been working very hard with the city and police to improve the appearance and safety of our neighborhood. The goal of the GPNA is to improve the neighborhood and make it a better place for **all** residents, and we would ask our new student neighbors to become a part of this effort.

The largest part of being a good neighbor is consideration for others. First we ask students to be considerate in terms of noise, especially after 10 PM. Many families in our neighborhood have children or go to work early. Parties are another problem. Unfortunately, parties always seem to end up bigger and noisier than first planned, and the police have been more active in enforcing noise and underage drinking ordinances. Another difficult problem is parking. Our neighborhood has barely enough parking (like school), so you may not always be able to park directly in front of your residence. Please do not park on lawns, across sidewalks, or on the wrong side of the street (facing traffic). Besides making the neighborhood look bad, all of these are parking violations and are subject to ticketing. Also, please do not litter and help us to keep our neighborhood picked up. Many of us pick up trash that we did not leave and we ask that you would help us by doing the same.

Finally, consider coming to our monthly neighborhood meetings and perhaps joining our Association. A \$10 yearly membership will get this newsletter delivered to you every month, and you will meet your neighbors and many other wonderful people during our activities such as neighborhood cleanups and holiday events. We welcome students for the upcoming year, and we hope that you will help us continue to make the Gifford Park neighborhood a better place to live.

SNAP! Presents . . .

Speech & Debate, by Stephen Karam, is a savvy comedy that bristles with vitality, wicked humor, terrific dialogue and a direct pipeline into the zeitgeist of contemporary youth. The story centers around three teenage misfits in Salem, Oregon who discover they are linked by a sex scandal that's rocked their town. When one of them sets out to expose the truth, secrets become currency, the stakes get higher, and the trio's connection grows deeper in this searching, fiercely funny dark comedy with music. Speech and Debate runs now until September 13 at 3225 California Street. Curtain times are 8:00 pm Thursday, Friday and Saturday; 6:00 pm on Sundays. The September 13th show will start at 2:00 pm. The theater opens a half hour before curtain time. Reservation information and ticket prices can be obtained by calling **402-341-2757** or on the SNAP! Productions website: www.snapproductions.com.



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

P.O. Box 31462, 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)

Cleanups	Newsletter Delivery	Community Garden	Easter Egg Hunt
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Social Activities	History	Tree Planting	Fall Cleanup
School Liaison	Watch Group	Youth Activities	Neighborhood Walks
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