



Gifford Park's Pride

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

April 2010

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Spring Cleanup To Be Held April 17

Spring is finally here, and that means it's time for the annual **GPNA Spring Cleanup**. This year's cleanup will be held on **Saturday, April 17th**, from **9 a.m. to 2 p.m.** Neighborhood volunteers will monitor the dumpsters (NO commercial hauling will be allowed!) Items **ACCEPTED** include furniture, appliances, metal, garage sale items, and trash. Items **NOT ACCEPTED** include paint, yardwaste, concrete, hazardous material, and oil. Tree brush vouchers through River City Recycling will be available on a first come, first serve basis. Tires may be dropped off for **FREE** at St. Vincent De Paul's (southeast corner of 22nd & Leavenworth). Tires will be accepted at the Gifford Park site for a fee of \$1.00 each; tires on rims will not be accepted. Appliances may be dropped off for **FREE** at South High School (northeast parking lot - 23rd & J). Appliances containing freon (refrigerators, air conditioners) will be accepted at Gifford Park for a fee of \$10 each. A small donation may be requested to pick up large hauls. GPNA members will get highest priority for hauling items. If you can help with our cleanup in any way or if you need help hauling please call: **Luther 330-3286, Chris 342-6006, or Jim 551-1344**. Please note: you may want to take advantage of the Spring Cleanup because there will **NOT** be a Fall Cleanup this year.

No April General Meeting

Activity: Membership Drive
Thursday, April 8, 2010

See President's Column (Page 2)
For Details

7:00 P.M.
Gifford Park Shelter

Executive Meeting
Thursday, April 22
At the Flint's

Community Bike Shop Omaha Wheel Building Workshop



We couldn't accommodate everyone who wanted to attend the previous workshop so we have scheduled another **Wheel Building Workshop**.

DATE: Monday April 12, 2009 from 6PM - 9PM

Learn how to build a bicycle wheel from a hub, a handful of spokes, and a loose rim.

Enrollment **IS REQUIRED** - we only have space for 12. To reserve a space, there is a \$5 fee/donation. We accept paypal — which automatically registers you, too.

For more information and online registration:

<http://www.communitybicycleshopomaha.org/events/20100412register.htm>



Neighborhood Garage Sale April 24

The GPNA will pay for an ad in the **Omaha World-Herald** on **Saturday, April 24**, 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** from **9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**, with any of these proceeds going to the GPNA and Community Garden. Also, we will be accepting garage sale items the week before at the Spring Cleanup (April 17, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.) in Gifford Park. This is a great way to get rid of unused items and make some extra money for yourself or the GPNA and at **NO COST** to you!

GPNA OFFICERS**PRESIDENT**

Dana Carlton-Flint* 346-4575

VICE PRESIDENT

Stuart Shell 216-1235

SECRETARY

Jill Westfall* 213-3105

TREASURER

Jackie Foster* 551-3629

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Sandy* & Roger Freeman 557-2914

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Dana Carlton-Flint 346-4575

WEEDS & LITTER

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

WELCOMING

Julie Kalkowski* 342-2103

* denotes new officer, board, or committee member

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).

President's Column

Hello spring!?! At least it seems like spring is on the horizon. After all we do live in Nebraska and the weather changes minute by minute. As for this minute spring has arrived in Gifford Park. With that being said the GPNA board has already been very busy getting things ready for the 2010 year. Along with many dedicated volunteers many of our current projects are already off and running or growing depending on which project they are working on.

A new project that I am currently working on is the **Neighborhood Gathering**. Gifford Park neighbors have said we have so many great project for the kids...what do we have for adults? Well we have an answer...the **Neighborhood Gathering**. Each month GPNA will host a members' event for our neighbors. These events will range from informal meet and greets, to picnics, to a softball game in the park complete with hot dogs and good clean fun. Watch the newsletter, check out the website, or become a fan of Gifford Park on Facebook so you will be able to attend the next **Neighborhood Gathering**.

First Neighborhood Gathering April 29th 7:00 at California Taco. Join us for nachos and great company. All members are invited to attend, non-members are welcome to stop over and become a member and join in on the fun and food. Memberships are \$10.00 for a single, \$15.00 for a family and \$25.00 for a business.

Second Neighborhood Gathering May 20th 7:00 at the Gifford Park Ball Diamond. Bring your mit, bring a bat, the game is on. That's right, it's a neighborhood softball game! Teams will be decided after members arrive. Hot dogs and lemonade will be available for free to members and for a fee to non-members. Even if you don't want to play...at least come and cheer on your neighbors. (volunteers needed...please call or email **Dana Carlton-Flint, 346-4575** or designwyim@yahoo.com . I don't know about all of you but I am very excited to meet more of my neighbors and perhaps engage in a friendly game of softball.

April General Meeting:

In lieu of our April General Meeting we will be conducting a door to door membership drive. Please meet us at **7:00 p.m.** under the Gifford Park shelter to get your block assignment. We will be pairing up, and for one hour we will go out into the neighborhood asking our neighbors to join the neighborhood association. Our members are what make this organization what it is, so come on out and help in this effort. At 8:00 p.m. the group will be reconvene at **California Taco** for refreshments. Please call ar email **Dana Carlton-Flint** if you are able to help - **346-4575** or designwyim@yahoo.com .

by Dana-Carlton Flint

GPNA Calendar Of Events

Thursday April 8th Membership Drive in lieu of General Meeting @7:00

Saturday April 17th Spring Clean-Up

Saturday, April 24th Neighborhood - GPNA Garage Sale

Thursday April 22nd Board Meeting at The Flint's @ 7:00

Thursday April 29th Neighborhood Gathering 7:00 (see president's column above)

Thursday May 13th General Meeting Speaker TBA

Thursday May 20th Neighborhood Gathering (see president's column above)

Thursday May 27th Board Meeting at The Flint's @ 7:00

For City Services, Information, or Complaints

Call: Mayor's Action Office

444-5555



Free Tax Help Available At Yates School

The site for the annual free tax assistance is **Yates School, 32nd & Davenport St.** Tax help is available every **Wednesday** through **April 7**, from **1 to 3:30 p.m.** Everyone is welcome! AARP representatives will provide free tax help for our neighborhood for the 16th year in a row. Processing of basic tax returns and electronic filing will be available. No appointment is necessary; individuals will be helped on a first come, first serve basis. Please call **Jackie** at **551-3629** for more information. To be able to provide assistance, persons will need to bring the following:

1. Valid Picture I.D.
2. Copy of prior year's tax return, if available
3. Unemployment compensation statements
4. Copies of ALL W-2, 1098, 1099 Forms and the amount of other income received by you and your spouse
5. Tax Identification Number (example: Social Security Number, Individual Tax Identification Number) for you, your spouse and any others shown on the tax return
6. All forms indication federal income tax paid
7. Dependent care provider information (name, employer, ID, Social Security Number)
8. All receipts or canceled checks if itemizing deductions
9. Form 8332 or copy of divorce decree for non-custodial parent claiming child
10. Proof of Account Number and Routing Transit Number of the financial institution for direct deposit into a savings or checking account

Have You Returned Your Census Form Yet?

The U.S. Census is very important to our community; every resident needs to be counted. Not only does the Census determine the number of U.S. Congressional Representatives Nebraska has, it determines the amount of federal assistance our community receives. Additionally, the U.S. Census is used to determine State Legislative Districts and local government districts and the distribution of State assistance.

Toll-free help lines are open seven days a week (8 a.m. - 9 p.m.) for individuals to get help with completing their questionnaire: English (1-866-872-6868) or Spanish (1-866-965-2010) or to request their questionnaire if they have not yet received it at their home address by April 12th.

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Enrollment begins in February!!

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www.duchesneacademy.org

AAARP Sponsors Document Shredding

Do you need help protecting your personal information from identity thieves?

Take advantage of the **Free Document Shredding Event** to be held **Saturday, May 15th**, from **9 am to 1 pm** at the **Center Mall, 42nd and Center Sts.** Four commercial shredders will be available in the Mall's top level east parking lot.

This free service, sponsored by the **AARP Nebraska Information Center** and **Shred-It**, will allow individuals to drive thru and drop off up to two containers of personal documents at the shredders, with unloading assistance. For more information call the **AARP Information Center, 398-9568.**



Gifford Park was a sea of children, colored eggs, and candy as the 21st Annual GPNA Easter Egg Hunt got underway on Saturday, April 3rd. For a recap on all the festivities, see the story on page 5.

Gifford Park Youth Garden Coming Soon

The crocuses are blooming outside, and the daffodils and tulips will soon follow. Green onions are spiking, and rosy red rhubarb nubs are emerging in the garden. Spring has finally come to Nebraska! It's time to emerge from hibernation and get back in our yards and gardens. Gifford Park Youth Garden (GPYG) will soon kick off its seventh consecutive season growing young gardeners. The final schedule and registration will come out with next month's newsletter, but everyone can look forward to another great summer of learning. We'll learn about local wildlife, explore farmer's markets, and ride the magic school bus on a field trip together.

Our community garden is special in its commitment to children's gardening, and we provide a replicable model of mentoring for others across the city. GPYG relies upon parents and community members each and every week to provide snack, lead a lesson, and simply share their time with participating young people. Please consider joining us **every Saturday morning from 10AM to 11:30AM beginning May 22** and giving your time, talent, or treasures to this educational program. The least you can do is stop by 35th & Cass Streets and see how much fun we're having!

GPYG relies upon grant-funding and the generosity of our community to continue providing this one-of-a-kind, free opportunity for young gardeners. Your financial and in-kind contributions ensure that GPYG is able to continue functioning at the same exceptional level. Did you know that a donation of \$5 would sponsor one child for one week at GPYG, or \$80 would sponsor that same child for the whole summer? Send me an email (dana.freeman@gmail.com) if you have a gift or skill you would like to share with us. We look forward to seeing you soon!

GPYG WISH LIST

prizes for poetry memorization
old microscopes
bird seed & feeders

Look for these garden-related events coming this spring, and thank you for continuing to support and grow Gifford Park Youth Garden.

- April 12 :: Gifford Park Market - interest meeting 5:30 pm @ California Taco
- April 15 :: Garden plot applications & fees due
- April 24 :: Neighborhood Garage Sale @ 33rd & California to benefit GPNA & GPCG
- May 1 :: GPCG Spring Garden Cleanup (not to be confused with the neighborhood cleanup)
- May 8 :: Garden Season Opening Event
- May 22 :: Youth Garden Week One
- June 5 :: Gifford Park Market begins in the business district

by Dana Freeman



AV Sorensen Community Center 4808 Cass St. 444-5596

Facility Hours

Monday – Thursday 8:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Friday 8:30 – 5:00 p.m.
Saturday 8:30 – 12:00 p.m.

Come in and check out our weight room!

Visit our web site at www.cityofomaha.org/parks

Coming this Summer!

A.V. Sorensen Community Center.

Summer 3v3 Youth Basketball

Wednesday's beginning June 23rd. Register before May 1st and receive a \$25.00 team discount. Limited space so register early. Grades 3rd – 10th. Call today for more information 444-5596.

Pilates & Yoga

Pilates – strengthen your core.

Monday 2:15 pm
Tuesday 6:30 pm
Wednesday 2:00 pm
Thursday 9:30 am
Saturday 10:00 am

Active Yoga – build a strong body

Thursday 6:30 pm
Saturday 8:30 am

Senior Yoga

Saturday 11:30 am

For more information call Cynthia at 391-5406.

All classes offered at A.V. Sorensen Community Center.

Thurs. 10:30 a.m. – Noon

Adult Pick up Basketball

Wednesday's 6:45 – 8:15 p.m.
Drop-in fee of only \$3.00 per person

Adult Tai Chi & Wellness

Tues & Fri 11:00 am – Noon
1x per week \$20.00/ 8 weeks
2x per week \$35.00 / 8 weeks

Contact Lucretia at 558-8299 for more information.

Pre-Ballet

Friday's 10:30 – 11:15 am Ages 3 - 5
Pre-Ballet is a wonderful introduction to ballet with creative movement for 3 – 5 year olds. Call us at 551-4200

For more information.

Adult Jazzercise

M/T/W/F 9:15 - 10:15 a.m.

Child care available for the above class

M/T/W/Th 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

M/T 4:20 - 5:20 p.m.

Sat. 8:30 a.m. Sun. 4 – 5 p.m.

Contact Sally at 333-9844 to register

Another Eggs-trordinary Day

Perfect weather of dry and warm 60 degree temperatures helped make our 21st Annual GPNA Easter Egg Hunt the most attended ever - over 325 neighborhood children participated on Saturday, April 3rd, in Gifford Park! This was the second year in a row we received from an anonymous dentist a wonderful donation of 300 each dental care packages (each included toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss) - volunteers gave one package to each child just moments before the actual hunt.

Volunteers, including the **PKA Fraternity**, picked up litter and raked portions of the park before putting out candy, treats and other prizes in the four age groups (0-4, 5-6, 7-9, 10-12. Thanks to **Roger & Sandy Freeman** for regularly picking up litter, and **Max Kaye** for helping also. As always, out of the thousands of pieces of candy, it took a matter of a few minutes for the kids to pick the park clean of goodies and prizes. There were many volunteers and donors who helped put forth extra effort – once again **Darryl Hutton** did a great job getting MANY donations from a variety of people and businesses; **Jan Franks**, her grandchildren **Brittany** and **Zach Rubek**, organized the candy. The **Slyden** family (**Betty, Tiffaney, Kayleen, and William**) spent many hours filling plastic Easter eggs, and provided many prizes as well. **Senator Gwen Howard** donated cute stuffed animals as special prizes.

Many thanks to all those who donated time, money, candy, and other items to make this a special event: **Whelan Law Office, Kilgore Law Office, California Tacos & More, Lilly's California Bar, Dana Praitus, Mrs. Kartanas, Robinson's Garage, Selena's Market, KNJ Grocery, Ideal Hardware, Hy-Vee, No Frills, Bakers, Walgreens, Oriental Trading Company, Robert's Dairy, Urban Village, Four Aces, Mike Caban, Bob & Virginia Hutton, Luther Larson, Lindsey Pockett, Tyler White, Terry & Sue Wilwerding, Rod & Dana Carlton-Flint, Chris & Sallie Foster, Diane Kaye and James Nordaker** (James picked up the candy). **Mike Caban** gets our MVP award for this year's event – he did a great job supervising the 7-9 year old group and actually had children singing Easter bunny songs, how about that? **Candy Bacome** once again played this year's Easter bunny and gave out treats to youngsters...and it was her birthday too!

by Chris Foster

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) is now on **Facebook**. The Facebook Page has reached 25 fans, so we are able to create a custom address to direct people to rather than telling them to search for the page. Tell your friends they can find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GiffordPark. Facebook will provide a great forum for all of us who love the neighborhood and want to share with others who have similar interests.

Alcohol Impact Coalition

The Alcohol Impact Coalition (AIC) has been a neighborhood voice on alcohol density and liquor licensing issues in Omaha for almost three years. Currently there are thirteen neighborhood associations in the coalition. Our 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. In the past three years we have seen small successes in getting our point across about over-saturation of licenses and a slow acknowledgement by a few city and state officials that additional changes are needed. It is like a dance of a good fighter; we step forward and take a few small jabs and then fall back to try to deflect the punches of the bigger opponent. The recent Walgreens applications to sell liquor that we opposed are the type of cases we have stood up to voice our concerns about - a business with a poor corporate record of sells to minors for tobacco and adding another liquor outlet in areas that already have anywhere from fifty to three hundred liquor outlets within a 10 minute drive of each other. Is there a public need to have access to alcohol on every street corner or every store you enter?

The AIC has been called lots of names. In the first year we were called well meaning neighbors but recently we have been referred to as abolitionists, vigilantes, and a bunch of neighborhood activists (said in a negative way). We are not a vigilante group looking to bring back prohibition, but we are active neighborhood leaders wanting to have a say in our communities. The neighborhoods in our coalition are not against restaurants serving alcohol, well-run bars that have good business practices in place or any other business that sells alcohol that are not negatively impacting the neighborhood. But we do have concerns about the over-saturation of liquor licenses in our neighborhoods without any consideration to how this effects the surrounding neighborhood. There is national and local research that clearly shows that when you have a strong concentration of off and on sale liquor outlets in a neighborhood, especially in struggling neighborhoods, these types of businesses can add to the decline of that neighborhood and bring additional crime and violence to the area.

In the past year, AIC has testified at city council hearings, state Liquor Control Commission hearings, and Nebraska Unicameral committee hearings on issues related to alcohol density, liquor licensing and asking for tougher city and state control of liquor rules and laws. We have worked with Creighton University and Project Extra Mile to conduct small research

continued on page 7



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APRIL 17 THROUGH MAY 22
 SATURDAYS 9:00AM TO NOON
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Gifford Park Community Garden Welcomes Spring

The longer daylight hours and warmer days are getting many people into the mood to get down and dirty with a little flower/vegetable gardening. Saturday, March 20th, was the first day of spring, and people are ready to be outside after our unusually harsh winter.

Some have already begun planting the hardier vegetables such as spinach, lettuce, radishes, and peas, even before the last danger of frost is over. Omaha's frost free date is Mother's Day weekend, which is May 8th & 9th.

All gardeners are eagerly anticipating the coming bounty of fresh, home-grown vegetables, far more delicious than any you can buy in the store – and more nutritious to boot. Nothing beats the taste of a ripe tomato that you've raised yourself and picked just hours before you eat it. My father has already started asking me when my tomatoes will be ready, and I haven't even planted them yet!

The next Community Garden meeting is set for **April 6th at 5:30 at Yates School**. Applications for Community Garden plots have gone out to prior participating gardeners. Please submit these applications at your earliest opportunity so that if you are interested in gardening this year, you do not miss out. If you never have gardened with us, please contact **Mike Caban @ 341-4722** for information, sign-up application, and to find out what plots are available.

I will be looking for all able bodied volunteers over the next few weeks to assist with getting the garden ready for another season. We had a very successful clean-up last fall with major assistance from our **PKA Fraternity** neighbors, but there is still lots to do to get ready for the official garden opening, May 8, 2010.

There is filling children's garden plots with dirt, cutting back last year's brush, as well as mulching the entire garden to ensure that it is showing at its best – these are just a few of the chores that need to be accomplished in the next month.

I welcome your involvement – whether you'd like to plant, advise other gardeners, participate in our Youth Garden, donate your time to the Teen Market Garden, or just learn.

This should be an exciting year for us. Everyone running the existing gardens has demonstrated a great deal of commitment to all programs, and there is excitement about taking it further. Community gardens get people more involved with their neighbors, which makes the neighborhood safer and also makes Gifford Park a better place for all of us.

by Diane Kay 341-4146

**Tennis Block Party - Wednesday May 26th -
Look for more info in the May newsletter!**

California Tacos & More

Homemade Mexican Food

342-0212

33rd & California Street

Dine In or Carry Out

Hours:

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

Closed Sunday



Alcohol Coalition . . . *continued from page 6*

projects on alcohol density differences in different parts of Omaha, the effects of having off sale liquor businesses located close to a city park and the availability of single can liquor in Omaha. We are still awaiting the final results of these studies but we realize that there are no clear cut solutions or easy fixes. We hope to continue to work with city and state officials to address the problems we see in our liquor licensing process and create guidelines for granting new liquor licenses in our community, all for the betterment of our neighborhoods.

The liquor industry has well paid lobbyists whose job it is to find ways to make it easier for businesses to sell liquor in this state. Neighborhood associations are volunteers who take time from their jobs and family to find ways to make their neighborhood a better place for residents. It is not a fair balance but with the continued support of neighborhoods we hope we can make some positive changes.

by Margie Magnuson

Editor's Note: On a related topic, **State Senator Gwen Howard** has written a letter to the members of the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission, dated March 31, 2010, expressing her "sincere disappointment" in granting Class D liquor licenses to Walgreen's outlets. She stated that "I am very disappointed that the Hearing Officer has apparently ignored the serious concerns raised by the neighbors who must live near these stores as well as 5 members of the Omaha City Council," citing that there are already currently 138 alcohol outlets in close proximity to the two Walgreen's outlets in her district. She went on to say that "if 138 outlets does not meet the public necessity, I do not know what number will." She also noted that "Walgreen's has had ample opportunity to show how they comply with the sale of restricted merchandise like tobacco. The testimony clearly showed that the management at these stores was seriously lacking in enforcing our laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco to minors."

What's Happening In the Neighborhood . . .

Give us your opinion! The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association along with **Destination Midtown** are in the final stages of releasing a neighborhood-wide survey. Working towards a May 2010 release, this survey will be conducted over the summer months with survey results being compiled in the fall. This survey is intended to develop an understanding from the residents, business owners, property owners and visitors what our neighborhood should consider when starting a master plan this fall. Watch this survey and additional information in our future newsletters, website and various locations around the neighborhood.

Congratulations to the **Leo Wilwerding** family on receiving the "Great Family Award" by **St. Cecilia's Grade School**. They were presented with the award at the school's annual fund-raising event "Comedy & Cuisine" on March 27th. The family has been involved in countless volunteer projects over the years, spanning three generations. Four of Leo and the late **Marlene Wilwerding's** children are active GPNA members: **Terry, Jim, Jean, and Mike**.

We want to give a big thank you to longtime GPNA member **Anne "Patches" Jernigan** for donating various garden tools and garage sale items. She responded to our newsletter article asking for these types of items. Patches also wrote this note: "Please accept these tools and garden gloves as a token of my appreciation for all the neighborhood association has done for me whenever I called for help. I hope they will come in handy for the neighborhood gardeners." They certainly will; thanks Patches for all your support since the beginning of the GPNA!

Yard waste collection has resumed as of April 5th - place in containers marked "YW" or special yardwaste bags.

Membership Application v2009.03.30

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

The GPNA Membership Year runs from January 1 through December 31.

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

Today's Date:

Name (1): E-Mail (1):

Name (2): E-Mail (2):

Name (3): E-Mail (3):

Name (4): E-Mail (4):

Name (5): E-Mail (5):

Address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Telephone:

Volunteer Opportunities! I am interested in helping out with...

Please indicate areas of interest:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleanup/Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Delivery | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Easter Egg Hunt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Block Captain | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Cleanup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree Planting | <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Cleanup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord/Tenant Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch Group | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Walks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Liaison | <input type="checkbox"/> Call Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday Banquet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Lending | | | |

Mail check or money order with this completed Membership Application Form to:

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 31462

Omaha, NE 68131-0462

For additional information about GPNA, please visit our website:

www.GiffordParkOmaha.org

