



Gifford Park's Pride

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

March 2012

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Spring has (Almost) Sprung at the Community Garden

By Chris Foster

Warm weather and ample moisture from February snow and rain certainly gets folks thinking about spring and garden projects. In the Gifford Park Community Garden, located at 35th & Cass, we are getting ready for the new planting season and plan a few minor changes to the garden layout. We will expand the youth garden area to the east fence to allow more space between youth plots as plants grow during the summer. As for the rental plots, we will have 32 plots available: \$15/year for the 23 larger 5ft x 15ft plots, and \$8/year for the 9 each smaller 5ft x 8ft plots. At the present time we have a waiting list for new requests for plots, please contact Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) for more information on plots.

Mike Caban will handle plot coordination and Chris Foster (402-290-8187, foster3413@cox.net) will coordinate other projects and activities. We hope everyone pitches in to help with ideas, projects, maintenance, and overall participation with the community garden in whatever capacity they feel comfortable. Here is a list of some known and potential projects/events/activities that we plan to do:

- Garden orientations (get folks familiar with different parts of the garden)
- Expand youth garden plots to the east fence (increase space between youth plots)
- Bike rack install (pour a small slab of concrete)
- Season Opening event (tentative Saturday, May 12, 10 am - Noon)

(continued on page 6)

**Next General Meeting
Thursday, March 8**

**Guest Speaker:
City Councilman Chris Jerram**

**7:00 pm
Creighton University
Medical Center
Morrison Seminar Room**

Upcoming Events

**GPNA Meeting
March 8 7:00pm**

**Easter Egg Hunt
April 7 12:00 noon**

**Community Garden Opening
May 12 10-12:00 noon**

**Cultural Celebration
May 12 12-4:00pm**

**Spring Clean Up
May 19 9-2:00pm**



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Spring Clean-up

Jeff Spiehs 457-9979

Neighborhood Watch

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

From the (Vice) President

By Jeff Spiehs

What is community cohesion? And if you do know what it means, do you have any idea what it looks like, and how it is implemented in Gifford Park? I spend most of my working days thinking about this idea. I like to believe that it could be described as a place where diversity is valued and appreciated, in which similar life opportunities are available to all.

Diversity and opportunity are very important. One doesn't have to look for too long to recognize that Gifford Park is a diverse neighborhood. The U.S. Census Bureau information would back up any claims that you may have spoke of in casual conversation about the diversity.

As far as opportunity, and I am talking about jobs, and education. I think that Gifford Park is has great potential and some hidden gems that help provide avenues to opportunity. Just look at the park and the garden in the next several months to see these gems in action.

I think the work the residents of Gifford Park have done has been fantastic. There are more and more opportunities for neighbors to come out of their homes and be together popping up all the time. As we are heading into spring, the sun stays out longer, and as neighbors are outside more hours of the day, this is the prime time for community cohesion to be strengthened because of the hard work and dedication of those who have given many years to Gifford Park.

I was attracted to Gifford Park because of the many opportunities that the neighborhood provides its residents to come together. The tennis program, Easter Egg hunt, community garden are just a few of these events.

Coming up soon, will be a cultural event that will give us all an opportunity to learn from a great asset in Gifford Park – the community center in the Yates Elementary building. Hopefully, as we all think about community cohesion, and appreciate the diversity that is in Gifford Park, we will also think about the power we all have to provide equal opportunity to all of our friends and neighbors.

Often, we will find that we have much more to learn than to teach, and we receive much more than we can ever offer back when we give of our time and talent to the sake of the neighborhood.

Mark your Calendar for the Gifford Park Neighborhood Cultural Celebration

in partnership with Yates Community Center
Saturday, May 12 12:00-4:00 pm
Event will include food, performances,
tours of Yates Community Center, and more.



Editor's note: If you have news of interest to the Gifford Park Neighborhood, we encourage you to submit an article for the monthly newsletter. Editorials are subject to approval by the GPNA Executive Board. Please include your contact information. Articles may be submitted by email to jill.lynn.westfall@gmail.com.

Alcohol Outlet Beverage Sales Ordinance

Supporters of the LOCAL Campaign continue efforts to make Omaha a safer and healthier place by working to get an ordinance adopted that addresses negative consequences associated with too many poorly managed alcohol outlets. We feel that the problems associated with too many alcohol outlets are adding to the decline of our neighborhoods, reducing the economic viability of our community and contributing to the violence in our streets. We want to work in partnership with the city to get a zoning ordinance adopted to ensure Omaha has more authority over the environment around alcohol outlets to better reflect community standards.

We believe that the ordinance would do two things: provide the city with some say over where new alcohol outlets are placed which will in turn provide buffer zones around sensitive use areas, such as churches, schools, hospitals and treatment facilities; and also provide standards of operation for the new and existing businesses to ensure they remain good corporate citizens.

The Campaign is in the final stages now. A draft of the proposed ordinance has been submitted to the City's Planning Department and Legal Department.

We ask that you help us by:

- Show your support and join in the effort
- Call your City Council representative to encourage his/her leadership on the ordinance
- Attend the City Council hearing when the ordinance goes up for a vote (date To Be Announced)
- Tell your family, friends and colleagues to do the same

If you want to join us on Facebook, go to <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=205345659487523>.

Also you can follow regular updates on our LOCAL Campaign website, <http://www.thelocalcampaign.com/> by providing your email on the lower right-hand corner of the site. We appreciate your support!

Crime Update

Both the Northeast and Southeast precinct Captains said that auto break-ins are up in our area.



Here's what you can do to avoid being a victim:

1. Lock your car
2. Do not leave valuables visible in your vehicle
3. Be aware of your surroundings. Do not put valuables in your trunk if you can be seen doing that.
4. Report suspicious persons or activity to 911. It is better to be safe than sorry.

Dana Carlton-Flint
NE Precinct Advisory Council Representative

Teen Market Garden Informational Meeting

The Teen Market Garden enters its 4th year this spring. Dive into the basics of urban gardening and entrepreneurship from product selection and marketing, to pricing and selling. Interested Mentors and perspective teen participants: please join us to discuss the program commitment and any questions. Parents Welcome! Contact Cynthia Shuck ([402\) 556-2090](tel:4025562090) for more information.



Good Neighbors

By Rose Carlson

This month's Good Neighbors story comes from long-time resident and neighborhood historian, Eva Swanson. She writes:

"I've told this story a number of times, but perhaps it bears repeating. Twenty-some years ago while I was living on Webster Street along with my parents, I needed help.

My folks, who happily lived to be 101 and 98 years old, needed constant care. They weren't sick, but just needed someone with them. My only outside activity was church (Augustana Lutheran). On Sunday mornings and an occasional weekday evening, neighbors – Marie Fell, Leo Wilwerding, Mary Kay Begley, and Adrian Hernandez – would come and sit with my folks while I was away.

Later, after my dad had died, my mother broke her hip. The first evening home from the hospital as I was helping her from the living room to the make-shift bedroom in the sunroom she fell against me, trapping me in an armchair. I finally wriggled myself and her out, and the next day I told the folks across the street (Patty and Sam Dodson) about my plight. They immediately said that one or the other of them would come over every night and help me get my mother into bed. They did this for about six months. I couldn't have gotten along without them.

This is what good neighbors are about. I could never repay these folks for their help, but have tried to be a good neighbor myself."

Please share your Good Neighbor stories with us! Call Rose Carlson at (402) 342-9335 or emailrhcarlson@yahoo.com.



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



558-5000



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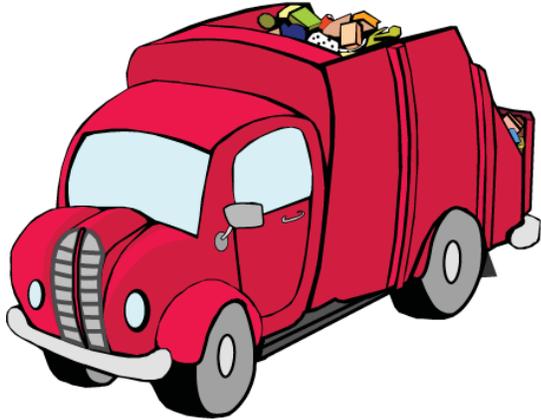


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**Mark your calendars!
GPNA Spring Clean Up
Saturday, May 19
9:00 am-2:00 pm**



Save the Date

**23rd Annual GPNA
Easter Egg Hunt
Saturday, April 7 Noon
Gifford Park**



Youth Garden Program Plans for 9th Year

By Chris Foster

The Gifford Park Youth Garden (GPYG) program will be kicking off its 9th year at the Gifford Park Community Garden (35th & Cass) growing young gardeners. The program teaches youth of all ages how to grow vegetables, prepare, eat, and share our harvest with others. Plus, we'll be creative with art, music, and poetry; explore our natural environment; and have fun while working together and getting our hands dirty. GPYG relies upon parents and volunteers each and every week to provide snacks, lead lessons, and simply share their time with participating young people. On February 18, our GPYG volunteers met at Yates Community Center to begin planning for this year's program which is scheduled for each Saturday morning from 10:00 to 11:30 AM May 19th through August 25th. At the meeting there were lots of great ideas and discussion.

A big thanks to Big Muddy Farms (<http://bigmuddyfarm.blogspot.com/>) for their ideas, enthusiasm and energy. They will be growing a pizza garden for their CSA and teaching our Youth Gardeners. Also excellent ideas from everyone regarding the community garden in general. Please contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net) or Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) if you have any questions about GPYG program.



Gifford Park Community Garden in February 2012. Gardeners neighborhood-wide anxiously wait for the ground to thaw so they can get their hands dirty!

Community Garden

(continued from page 1)

- Youth Garden Program (Saturdays 10-11:30am, May 19-August 25)
- Pot Luck Dinners
- Wednesday evening work parties
- Theme garden maintenance (rose, butterfly, senses, perennial, front wall, herb, bushes, etc.)
- Compost bin setup/turn over compost pile
- Planting projects: espalier fruit trees, berry bushes, move strawberry patch, etc.

Let me know if any of the above interests you, and if you have any questions or ideas with the community garden, contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net).

Community Bicycle Project Updates

By Matt Martin, Executive Director, Community Bike Project Omaha

Spring is just around the corner--although it's hard to tell with the mild winter we've had--and the Community Bike Project is gearing up for another big year. Here's just a bit of what's in store!

Our shop will be returning to normal hours soon, so starting with March 7, we're back to our regular schedule of Wed/Thurs nights 6-8pm and Saturdays noon-4pm. I'm also around much of the time during the weekdays, so never hesitate to come by and knock on the door during business hours if we can help with something.

We just recently held a beer-tasting fundraiser over at the Pizza Shoppe in Benson, co-sponsored by Lucky



Bucket, where we raffled off a tandem bike to two lucky winners. We'll be having lots of other special events throughout the year, so be sure to stay tuned.

Our next special event is an exciting art show in May at The New BLK. We'll be displaying lots of local art and having a live sculpture competition. Details will be coming soon, so check the CBPO website and next month's GPNA newsletter for more information.

Would you like to learn more about working on your bike? Our popular bike repair & mechanics classes continue through the spring and summer. You can check out the schedule on our website and sign up on the Metro Community College website under Continuing Education.

We're always looking for volunteers and donations, so stop on by and chat with us about how you can get involved or drop off that old bike gathering dust in your garage. Have any suggestions on what we should be doing? We'd love to hear (and would love it even better if you can help turn your ideas into reality!).

Thanks Sue Wilwerding for 15 Years Editing Our Newsletter

By Chris Foster

At our December GPNA Holiday Banquet we recognized Sue Wilwerding for 15 incredible years of newsletter editor duties for producing the “best” neighborhood newsletter hands-down. Sue “retired” and handed over the reins to our new editor (and GPNA Secretary) Jill Westfall. Jill is already doing a great job filling those “big shoes” with her first publication of the January/February newsletter, a big 12-page effort...I’m sure there are some things Sue won’t miss too much!

Sue’s commitment to producing a consistently high-quality and high-content publication EVERY month was amazing. Sue has the record for most times our GPNA board has mentioned her name for ‘Neighbor of the Year’...even though she had already received this award in 2002! At that time (in 2002) Sue had already been doing our neighborhood newsletter 6 years. From the beginning of the GPNA, the newsletter has been the best communication tool and most important function of the neighborhood association. Any of our other editors who have had this responsibility knows this is a very challenging job.

It’s not just our neighborhood that think Sue did a great job, back in 2002 the late Sibyl Myers who wrote the “Backyard” column (neighborhood updates) for the Omaha World Herald for 25 years, shared some of her thoughts about Sue and the newsletter. Sibyl said, “she (Sibyl) borrows GPNA articles and passes information on to the rest of Omaha; Sue includes activities from surrounding neighborhoods; Many other neighborhoods do not

do a newsletter consistently; Doing a newsletter takes a lot of time and is hard, grinding work each month; People like to see names and pictures - it shows everyone that our neighborhood is alive and active, this builds momentum and inspires people.”

Sue does a lot more than just the newsletter. She has participated in many of the GPNA events and activities including cleanup, bike rodeo, tennis program, block party, Easter egg hunt, neighborhood walk, holiday banquet, and more. She also has quite a life outside of the GPNA. Sue is a native of Omaha. She has been married to her husband Terry (and lived in the neighborhood) for 36 years. Their children Steve and Julie are both Creighton graduates. Sue and Terry have a one year-old grandson. Sue graduated from Creighton in 1974. She was full faculty and taught as a Medical Technologist for Creighton/St. Joseph Hospital through the 1980’s. Sue has worked as a Medical Technologist for Creighton/St. Joseph Hospital for the past 37 years. She is an avid sports fan and participant. Sue has golfed for the past 25 years and is quite good – she recently had a hole-in-one! Besides golfing, Sue enjoys bowling, walking and is a self-proclaimed “recreational shopper.” She is a big sports fan of the Cornhuskers and Bluejays.

Sue somehow balances family, work and the GPNA, and she is able to keep everything in perspective. Sue and Terry are extremely valuable to this neighborhood and great friends. Good luck in your “retirement”!

 **Nextdoor** Gifford Park

Join Nextdoor Gifford Park, a private website for our neighborhood.

Share local recommendations. Lend, borrow or give away. Keep the neighborhood safe. Stay informed.

<https://giffordpark.nextdoor.com>

**Happy
St. Patrick's
Day!**



What's Happening In the Neighborhood...

Hootenanny

Sunday, March 4th, 5pm, The Waiting Room Lounge 6212 Maple Street, TICKETS: \$5 at the door; The latest Hootenanny features several performers including Matt Cox, Gerald Lee, Jr., Kate Williams & Lincoln Dickison, the Southpaw Bluegrass band and Matthew Cronin of "Rawr...Shhh!" Music will begin at 5pm, food will be available for sale, and it is open to all ages (kid-friendly but NOT kid-focused). Proceeds from the \$5 cover will go to the **Big Muddy Urban Farm** and **Sweet Thyme Farm** to help build a hoop house, raised beds and other needed infrastructure.

Green Neighborhood Council

The Nuts and Bolts of Solar Energy & Organizing a Solar Buying Co-Op Workshop

When: Saturday, March 10th from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Where: First Unitarian Church (3114 Harney St.)

This will be the second in a series of workshops co-sponsored by the Green Neighborhood Council (GNC) and the Nebraska Solar Energy Society (NSES) to provide information about solar energy and, for those who are interested, to work with one another and with local experts to organize a solar buying co-op.

To learn more please visit: www.greenomahacoalition.org and click on "Neighborhood" and then "Solar Buying Co-Op."

Membership Application

v2009-08-30

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):	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail (1):	<input type="text"/>
Name (2):	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail (2):	<input type="text"/>
Name (3):	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail (3):	<input type="text"/>
Name (4):	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail (4):	<input type="text"/>
Name (5):	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail (5):	<input type="text"/>

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 | | | |