



Gifford Park's Pride

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

June 2012

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Cultural Event a Huge Success

by Eric Purcell

On May 12, Gifford Park Neighborhood Association and Omaha Public Schools partnered to host a cultural celebration at Yates Community Center. What a fun, boisterous, eclectic and smile-filled afternoon it was! After a yummy meal of fried chicken, chips, veggies and cookies, we all piled into the gym to enjoy several songs and dances by members of the Bhutanese and Karen communities, as well as songs by the preschool students at Yates. Following the performances was an outdoor carnival and a cricket demonstration. Cricket really was a huge hit and all of us learned how to play the first team sport brought to the Americas! To round out the day we all squeezed back into the gym to learn how to contra dance. That was a sight to see! By the second and third dances, however, people were getting the hang of it and having a really great time! It was hard to get a good count on how many friends, neighbors and Yates students were there, but it was somewhere in the 150-175 range. A big thanks to OPS for partnering, Tyler Magnuson for leading the contra dancing, Bhaskar Krishna for doing the cricket workshop and everyone who volunteered to help pull this off!



Cricket players pause for a picture. For more pictures of the Cultural Event see page 4.

Next General Meeting
Thursday, June 14

Topic:
Nottingham Apartments (33rd & Burt)
Renovation Plans
Dan Fox, Presenter

7:00 pm
Creighton University
Medical Center
Morrison Seminar Room

Neighborhood-wide Garage Sale & Garage Sale at 33rd & California, Saturday June 9, 9 AM to 3 PM

The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (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 402-933-1960 or Chris 402-290-8187. We will sell items in the business district at 33rd & California on Saturday June 9, 9 AM to 3 PM, with proceeds going to the GPNA and Community Garden. This is a great way to get rid of your items and make some extra money for yourself or the GPNA and at NO COST to you!



2012 GPNA OFFICERS

President

Luther Larson
330-3286

Vice President

Jeff Spiehs
457-9979

Secretary

Jill Westfall
213-3105

Treasurer

Dana Carlton-Flint
346-4575

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At Large

Darryl Hutton 706-7597
Travis Lavender 605-321-8142
Eric Purcell 719-5108

Business

Martin Janousek 558-4070

Landlord

Chris Foster 290-8187

COMMITTEES

Community Garden

Chris Foster 290-8187

Membership

Travis Lavender 605-321-8142

Neighborhood Market

Martin Janousek 558-4070

Newsletter

Jill Westfall 213-3105

Newsletter Distribution

Chris Foster 290-8187

Park

Sandy & Roger Freeman
345-2668

Public Relations

Dana Carlton-Flint 346-4575

Spring Clean-up

Jeff Spiehs 457-9979

Neighborhood Watch

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

From the President

By Luther Larson

It seems that whenever I mention to an outsider that I live in Gifford Park I typically hear, "That is such an active neighborhood association." I then respond, "Yes, it is a great association," but then add, "It is a great place to live!" The goal of the association is to make Gifford Park a great place to live, work, and play. With this in mind, I would like to challenge us all as members of GPNA to come up with ways to change the outside perception from a simple appreciation of the efforts of the GPNA and its members to a feeling of "I want to live there."

In order to transform this outside prospective, I would suggest that we need to focus on the word "neighborhood." This means as members of GPNA that we need to know our surrounding neighbors, offer neighborly help, and be there looking out for each other. These actions by my surrounding neighbors is what has me saying "Gifford Park is a great place to live." It is not the activities of the neighborhood association that make a great neighborhood, but the neighborly actions of those people that live around us. Let me know of any suggestions that you may have for an activity that GPNA could pursue that would get more neighbors doing those neighborly things.

Luther

Spring Clean Up

by Jeff Spiehs

The 30th annual spring clean up was held on Saturday, May 19. Veteran Gifford Park residents said that turn out for the clean up was lower than normal. The day went very steady and smooth. The Neighborhood Association is thankful to the volunteers from Flatland Church who drove around picking up items from our neighbors that could not physically make it to the park, as well as cleaning up some alleys. We are also grateful to NP Dodge for their help cleaning up the park during the clean up day.

Being someone that is relatively new to Gifford Park, helping with the Spring Clean Up was a great way to meet a lot of you. I was encouraged by the amount of engagement from all the neighbors. When I drive around Gifford Park, everything looks so much cleaner! The pride we all have for our neighborhood is apparent, and infectious.



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.

Tennis Block Party 2012 Highlights

Hot weather greeted over 50 youth participants and over a dozen volunteers at the annual Tennis Block Party held Wednesday, May 23 in Gifford Park. Youth learned the basic tennis skills along with rally courts, and we finished up with watermelon and cookies for everyone. Many thanks go to our dedicated tennis instructors: Ric & Jane Hines, Don Gildon, Jim Wilson, Roger Freeman, Travis Lavender, Jeff Spiehs, Jonathan Braden, Laurie Bolte, Jackie Foster, and Vince Emery. Again this year we asked some of the older youth participants to help with our rally courts. They did a great job! Thanks Stanley sisters (Dawn, Crystal, Justine, and Witney), Marcus Anderson, and Yusuf Abdirahman. Thanks also to our other volunteers Betty Slayden, Tyffaney Slayden, Kayleen Slayden, Jim Wilwerding, Bob Hutton, Darryl Hutton, Chris & Sallie Foster, Aleta Stevens - they helped with multiple tasks including registration, signage, setup, taking pictures, and food. Senator Gwen Howard had some inspiring words for everyone. Thanks Gwen! Special thanks once again to Jane Hines for doing additional behind the scenes work.

We are offering to the older youth the opportunity to continue on playing tennis with several instructors on Wednesdays (10-11 AM for ages 9-11, 11 AM to Noon for ages 12 & over) starting June 13 – July 25 (no tennis July 4) at Gifford Park. Anyone interested, please contact Chris at [402-290-8187](tel:402-290-8187) for a registration form, or you can show up at the tennis courts.



Gifford Park Neighborhood Market

By Martin Janousek

It's time to start thinking about taking a Friday evening stroll through the business district. On June 8th the **Gifford Park Neighborhood Market** will officially start. The market stalls will be in the empty lot across from the Community Bike Shop from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm every Friday evening from June 8th to September 28th. This would be a great time to meet some of your other neighbors, see what's for sale that week and possibly make it an evening by having dinner in one of our local restaurants – Marrakesh Restaurant or California Taco.

If you're interested in being a vendor or know someone who would please have them contact Martin at 402-558-4070.



2012 Youth Garden Schedule Saturdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

June 9 Plant Your Plot (and stake your plot)
 June 16 All about compost & water conservation
 June 23 What's the Buzz About Busy Little Bees?
 June 30 Weather
 July 7 Snakes and Reptiles
 July 14 Sound of Music
 July 21 Tree Walk
 July 28 Cooking Matters
 August 4 Hula Hoops
 August 11 Canning & Preservation
 August 18 Bugs & Insects
 August 25 Pizza Garden Harvest PARTY! (Big Muddy Farm)

Cultural Event May 12, 2012 Yates Community Center

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Community Garden Update

By Chris Foster

Our annual Season Opening event was held Saturday morning May 12th, at the community garden (35th & Cass Street). We had a variety of family activities including Youth Garden program registration; information on community garden, Teen Market Garden and Big Muddy Urban Farm; free library cards and books; children's take home project (Mother's Day painted potted plant), face-painting; music; garden items giveaway; free seeds, plants and refreshments. Many thanks to all our volunteers and donors: Mike Caban, Rose Carlson, Jackie Foster, Jenny Waltemath, Katrina Adams, Frankie Hamburger, the Stanley girls (Dawn, Crystal, Justine, Witney),



Youth Garden Program Update

A bustle of activity is happening at the Gifford Park Youth Garden (GPYG) program at the Gifford Park Community Garden (35th & Cass St.). The 2012 program is each Saturday morning from 10:00 to 11:30 AM May 19th through August 25th. We still have a few youth plots available for anyone interested in participating. The program teaches youth of all ages how to grow our vegetables, prepare, eat, and share our har-

vest 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 week to provide snacks, lead lessons, and simply share their time with participating young people. Please contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net) or Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) if you would like to volunteer or have questions about GPYG program.

Chris & Sallie Foster, Ivy Dow, Ricky Green, Big Muddy Urban Farm, Indian Creek Nursery, Omaha Public Library, County Extension Office, Teen Market Garden, and folks who provided treats. We continue to have work nights each Wednesday 6 to 8 PM through the growing season. During these times water and garden tools will be available for plot renters and anyone else interested in helping maintain the community garden – there is never a shortage of weeding! It's a good time to stop by the garden to see what's growing or see neighborhood friends. At this time we have all 32 family plots filled. Contact Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) for garden plot information, and Chris Foster (402-290-8187, foster3413@cox.net) for any other community garden questions.



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TOOL LENDING HOTLINE

Call Chris 290-8187

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



Community Bike Project Omaha

By Sara Adkisson Joyner

May was a great month at Community Bike Project. In addition to helping the community ready their bikes for the summer months ahead, we took some time for cycling art and fashion as well! In early May, CBPO held a bicycle-inspired art show at The New BLK Gallery downtown. Over twenty local artists donated their time and work to raise funds and awareness about CBPO. We had a great turnout and thank everyone who came down to show their support.

Working together with Omaha Bikes, LiveWell Omaha and Bancroft Street Market, CBPO also helped to sponsor a Bicycle Fashion Show. This was an evening of fashionable bikes and bike fashion at Bancroft Street Market. Gifford Park's very own Stuart Shell even made an appearance on the catwalk! Very nice.

And, now for the sad news...with the month of June comes the departure of Community Bike Project's

beloved and fearless leader, Matt Martin. Matt is following his heart (and his fiance!) to Portland, Oregon in mid-June. During his tenure at CBPO Matt has proven to be a dedicated force in advocating for cycling, community and transportation equality in Omaha. He has transformed Community Bike Shop into Community Bike Project and has fostered countless valuable connections within our community. It is our hope to continue the work that Matt has started, and I'm sure he will be checking in from Portland from time to time. His shoes will be big ones to fill, but we wish him all of the luck in the world in his future pursuits!



Flowers Grow Again

The 13 Gifford Park Business District Flower Pots have been planted and the flowers are enjoying our recent rains and cool weather. We had some initial vandalism at a couple of the flower pots but overall they seem to be doing well. Having the flower pots in the business district has been good for the neighborhood and we've received many compliments from visitors to our neighborhood over the years.

A big Thank You needs to be given to those businesses that were able to donate money this year for flowers. If you have a chance, please stop by their businesses and thank them personally. Keeping the business district vibrant and looking good is important for everyone in Gifford Park. We want to thank Mulhall's Nursery for their past generosity with the flower pot project. We also had Jay Genoa, a neighborhood resident, donate a new flower pot this year to bring the flower pot total to 14. Jay was instrumental in helping us purchase the original 13 flower pots years ago. Thank you Jay! We're currently debating if we should use this new pot to replace an older damaged one or use it in a new location. Keep your eyes out to see what ends up getting decided. Have a great spring and we hope to see you in the business district.

Thank you to the following businesses for donating money for the flower pots.

Blueline Coffee
California Bar
California Taco
Cass Gas & Shop
Charles R. Kilgore Atty.

Gifford Park LLC
KnJ Grocery
Marrakech Restaurant
Robinson's Garage



Gifford Park Free Soccer Program



For: Youth (4 to 7 years old)

Dates: June 13, 20, 27, July 11, 18, 25

Where: Gifford Park (33rd & Cass St.)

Time: 6:30-7:30 PM

The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association is offering a FREE summer soccer league and will provide goals, balls and instructors. Parents and others are welcome to help.

To be enrolled, YOU MUST complete the form shown below and return it to Eric Purcell 3152 Chicago St, Omaha, NE 68131. Special prize for those who attend every lesson and demonstrate good sportsmanship. There is limited space available so please be on time. Call 719-5108 for more information.

Registration/Permission Form - Bring this form (completely filled out) with you to the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association summer soccer league.

Youth's Name: _____ Parent/Guardian Name _____
 Street: _____ Street: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____ City, Sate, Zip: _____
 Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Home Phone: _____
 School: _____ Work Phone: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the child named above, I hereby give my full consent and approval for my child to participate as a member of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program. I understand that there are certain risks of injury inherent in the practice and play of this sport, as well as related activities incidental to my child's participation, and I am willing to assume these risks on behalf of my child. I hereby certify that my child is fully capable of participating in this sport and that my child is healthy and has no physical or mental disabilities or infirmities that would restrict full participation in these activities, except as listed below.

I hereby waive, release and hold harmless the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program, and the City of Omaha, Nebraska, its Officers, coaches, sponsors, supervisors and representatives for any injury that may be suffered by my child in the normal course of participation in this sport and the activities incidental thereto, whether the result of negligence or any other cause. Further- more, I give consent to any necessary medical treatment in case of emergency. I permit the taking of photos during Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program activities for publication and use as the program deems.

Signature of Parent/Guardian:





Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
 PO Box 31462
 Omaha, NE 68131



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Membership Application

The GPNA Membership year runs from January 1 to December 31.

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

Today's Date: _____

Name (person 1): _____ Email: _____

Name (person 2): _____ Email: _____

Name (person 3): _____ Email: _____

Name (person 4): _____ Email: _____

Name (person 5): _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Volunteer Opportunities! I'm interested in helping with....

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <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 Liason | <input type="checkbox"/> Call Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday Banquet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Lending | | | |