



Gifford Park's Pride

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

Jan/Feb 2013

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

2012 GPNA Holiday Banquet Highlights

By Chris Foster

We were near full capacity with about 125 GPNA members, family, and guests who attended our 24th Annual Holiday Banquet held Thursday, December 17 at Alegent Creighton Health in the Becic Dining Room. Everyone seemed to enjoy the evening. Many thanks to everyone who helped--from sending out invitations to clean-up--to make this another very nice celebration! Again this year we displayed neighborhood and GPNA memorabilia, this included history scrapbooks (created by our historian Eva Swanson), old newspaper articles, picture books of past events, GPNA recognition awards, watch group information, and picture boards of our 2012 Youth Garden Program.

Emcee and "past" GPNA president Luther Larson kept the evening fun. This year's theme was "gingerbread," Dana Carlton-Flint put together our table decorations. The 2012 events & activities slideshow ran during the first half of the evening – thanks Sallie Foster for taking another year's worth of neighborhood activity pictures. Musicians from Big Muddy Urban Farm & Friends lead the audience in a GPNA rendition singing of "The Twelve Days of Gifford Park" and provided GREAT music during the event.

The GPNA recognized some of the special volunteer efforts including the newsletter, 20+ years of the tool lending program, community garden, Youth Garden program, Teen Market Garden, free Tuesday food drop-off, Friday Night Neighborhood Market, LOCAL Campaign for the new alcohol ordinance, and all the recent park improvements including the new playground. We highlighted the Neil & Mary Liberty family for their spirit and tradition of creating community by going all out in decorating their home for Halloween and Christ-

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**Next General Meeting
Thursday, February 14**

**Speakers:
Capt. Scott Gray, NE Precinct**

Rob Moore, Neighborhood Blueprint

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



2013 Restore Omaha Conference Aims to Inspire and Teach Attendees to Restore Older Properties

How do you make a historic home more functional yet still tie into the neighborhood's character? Where can I get funding for a remodel project? How do you properly clean an older home?

Answer to these questions and more are at the eighth annual Restore Omaha Conference, Saturday, March 2, at Metropolitan Community College's South Campus, 27th and Q streets.

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2013 GPNA OFFICERS

President

Eric Purcell
719-5108

Vice President

Travis Lavender
605-321-8142

Secretary

Jill Westfall
213-3105

Treasurer

Dana Carlton-Flint
346-4575

Board Members

At Large

Ricky Green 301-3936
Darryl Hutton 706-7597
Mark Trampe 332-6188

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

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Newsletter

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Newsletter Distribution

Chris Foster 290-8187

Park

Sandy & Roger Freeman
345-2668

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From the President

By Eric Purcell

I nearly made my first big mistake as the new GPNA president a couple of weeks ago. As you know the neighborhood clean up day is a big event each Spring that many of us look forward to. Getting trash picked up and cleaning out places that have become eyesores always feels good. This year the deadline to register was January 22 by 4:00pm...and I missed it by 30 minutes! I wasn't extremely concerned as I assumed there would be a grace period, but I was a bit nervous nonetheless! What if Gifford Park would not be included in this event this year!? Well, I'm happy to say we are going to have our annual neighborhood clean up day! Save the date for April 13.

Despite an early scare, I'm really excited to take on this role of leading the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association. I'm sure I'll make more mistakes, but I'm eager for the opportunity to serve the neighborhood in this way. The best thing about this neighborhood is that there is already so many great things going on and amazing people who are making those things happen. I don't think that will stop for a long, long time! What I also love about this neighborhood is the fact that we are always looking to improve and giving space to people who want to make that happen.

A few ways we're looking to improve our neighborhood this year are through working with the city on Turner Park North. The final plans for the S-curve

on Dodge will greatly impact what we are able to accomplish here, so we are actively involved in this conversation.

Another topic up for investigation is the possibility of a neighborhood school for Gifford Park. Recently this topic was reignited when OPS suggested that Yates would possibly be reopened in 2014. That possibility is again tabled, especially with all of the chaos that has hit OPS, but the conversation is nevertheless activated! Our desire is to engage in this conversation, offer our thoughts and be a part of positive change. It seems that historically the changes made have adversely affected our neighborhood in this regard. What would a positive solution look like? There are lots of ideas and we want our neighborhood to be a part of the conversation. The last thing we want is for a poor decision for our neighborhood to be made simply because we weren't engaged.

One of my personal hopes for this year is to engage more of our neighbors in the activities and leadership of the neighborhood. We're one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Omaha and yet our Neighborhood Board and Association do not always reflect this diversity. How can we accomplish this together?

So, here's to another great year in Gifford Park!

Community Garden/Youth Garden

This is the time of year folks start thinking about gardening. We are starting to plan for community garden projects and the youth garden program. Stay tuned for more updates in our March newsletter as spring approaches. If you have any questions or are interested in becoming involved with either the community garden or youth garden program, contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or orfoster3413@cox.net), or Mike Caban (402-341-4722 or caban3321@cox.net).

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.

Maud Boutique celebrates six months

By Lynn Mills

February 9th will mark the six month anniversary of Maud Boutique opening. It's been so nice having people coming in from the neighborhood to say hello and check out the fantastic space. If you haven't been in yet, I encourage you to come see the space; it's come a long way from what it was just a few months ago. This time last year the space was still under construction, and in the meantime I was busy putting together a business plan. So much effort went into both endeavors, and without Martin and Rob Janousek and Chris Foster's hard work the space wouldn't have been what it is today. Now I couldn't ask for a better space for Maud Boutique.

I've loved having the opportunity to meet long time residents of Gifford Park. They have shared their stories of how 33rd Street was a real business hub back in the day, which is one reason I love this location, along with the fact that my husband and I, along with our children, have been living in Gifford Park for 24 years. It has such a diverse history, a strong neighborhood association, and great neighbors along 33rd. I can really visualize the area becoming an eclectic business district.

Many exciting things have been happening in the boutique. I've had art shows featuring local artists, an evening of food, wine and great conversation for the neighborhood ladies, and an event in the back



<http://maudboutiqueomaha.com/>

Coming soon in back of Maud Boutique, Soul Kitschn Studio & Gallery. www.soulkitsch.com

featuring vintage clothing, music and food from the Mad Men period. The shop will be featuring events like these in the future.

There will be many new developments for the boutique as well, like the new studio and gallery in the back. The grand opening of Soul Kitschn Studio & Gallery will be February 22 6-9pm. Proprietor Cheryll Wallace will also be having an art opening in the main gallery, entitled The Soul of an Image: The art of Susan Murphy and Cheryll Wallace. That evening there will be a trunk show in the boutique. Local clothing designer Leah Casper, who was featured in Omaha Fashion Week, will have her clothing on display. You will be able to meet her and order an original design from her! We'd love to have you!

I look forward to the new year at Maud's and all our events, and to meeting new people. I hope you'll stop down and check out the shop, and have a happy new year!

RESTAURANT month

FEBRUARY 1 - 28

Proceeds benefit



Delicious food and heartwarming generosity – a powerful combination helping local families stay safe this winter!

www.midtowncrossing.com



MIDTOWN CROSSING



2013 Restore Omaha Conference

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The conference opens with a reception Friday, March 1, at the Scottish Rite, a 1914 Neoclassical Revival style building at 20th and Douglas streets designed by John Latenser and restored throughout. From 7 to 10 p.m., attendees can tour the building and enjoy complimentary wine, beer and hors d'oeuvres.

Saturday's conference runs from 8 to 4 p.m. and includes the keynote lecture, educational sessions, live demonstrations, exhibitor floor, lunch, and the Restore JAM!

To attend both the reception and conference, the cost is \$60. Conference only is \$40. Register before Feb. 22 and receive \$10 off. For more information and to sign up visit www.restoreomaha.org or call (402) 578-5618.

Be a part of the 2013 Restore Omaha Conference and present your historic restoration project. You can share almost any project:

- Reglazing wood windows;
- Refinishing you hardwood floors;
- A kitchen remodel; or
- An entire house renovation.

You have 5 minutes to present 5 slides to the audience. That's all there is too it! And for participating you will receive One Free Admission to the Restore Omaha Conference (a \$40 value).

If you're interested, please contact us via email at info@restoreomaha.org or leave a message at Restore Omaha hotline 402-578-5618.

2012 GPNA Holiday Banquet Highlights

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mas holidays. And GPNA president-elect Eric Purcell announced our "Neighbor of the Year" – the Steve & Rose Carlson family. Rose thanked everyone for the recognition and said "When we first moved to Gifford Park, I didn't know neighborhoods like this existed anymore." (see 'Neighbor of the Year' article in this issue).

We again offer our sincere appreciation to Alegent Creighton Health for their enormous support by hosting this event complete with a buffet of traditional holiday fare and dessert! Darryl Hutton and Terry Wilwerding were our event "photographers." Jeff Spiehs and Travis Lavender greeted folks, took memberships and handled the collection of canned food donations (145 lbs to the Food Bank).

Throughout the evening door prizes were given to lucky neighbors, and children also received presents – all donations came from GPNA members and VIP's - Senator Gwen Howard, Senator-elect Sara Howard, Councilman Chris Jerram, Subby & Janice Anzaldo, Paul Mileris, Chris & Sallie Foster, Mike Caban, and Bob Hutton (note: again this year Bob Hutton made hand-carved wooden ornaments for gifts). Thanks Jill Westfall and Mike Caban for coordinating the children's present giveaway. Until the 25th Annual Holiday Banquet when we will again share a meal together, we'll see you around the neighborhood!



Check out pages 10 and 11 for more photos from the Holiday Banquet!

The Steve & Rose Carlson Family - 2012 GPNA Neighbor of the Year

The GPNA honored the Carlson Family as our 2012 'Neighbor of the Year' at the 24th annual GPNA Holiday Banquet hosted by Alegent Creighton Health on December 17th, 2012. The Carlson family includes parents Steve & Rose, and daughters Ana, Elena, Luci, and Maria. The Carlsons moved into the neighborhood 9 ½ years ago (please see related story by Rose Carlson in this issue), shortly after this they agreed to take on newsletter distribution duties (counting, folding, stuffing/labeling/stamping/mailing out newsletter). They have been very involved with the community garden including season opening events, spring preparation, fall garden cleanups, garden tours and pot luck dinners. Of course most of you know the Carlsons participate and volunteer in the Youth Garden program providing support in all aspects – checking in children, plot assignment, planting, teaching, planning, organizing, tool shed management, providing food, and helping children picking produce. Under the direction of Cynthia Shuck, Ana and Elena have been part of the “backbone” of the Teen Market Garden, an entrepreneurial gardening program for neighborhood teenagers. The family has been part of the Neighbor-

hood Market selling their goods for last several years at the Gifford Park Neighborhood Market on 33rd & California, and Midtown Crossing Farmers Market the last 2 years. The daughters have all participated in the Gifford Park Youth Tennis program, with older daughters Ana and Elena helping teach younger kids. Rose has been involved with our Yates/Neighborhood School effort. In 2011 as part of her school class project, Rose wrote “Go Green in Gifford Park” (a magnet school idea for a neighborhood school utilizing existing local neighborhood residents/diversity/programs/resources, with focus on teaching citizenship) – wouldn't this be interesting to see happen someday in our own neighborhood school? The Carlson daughters were also part of the “Webster Street Kids” group that created their own newsletter! Steve & Rose home-school their daughters, with the oldest two having gone off to college last year. Steve is a counselor at South High School, and Rose still finds time to volunteer at Saint Cecilia Cathedral Grade School (she was featured last year in the Omaha World Herald for volunteering to help 4th grade students repair school uniforms). Besides the family's great volunteer work, they are always so inviting to neighbors, asking “would you like to come into our home for a snack or refreshment?” Congratulations Carlson family!



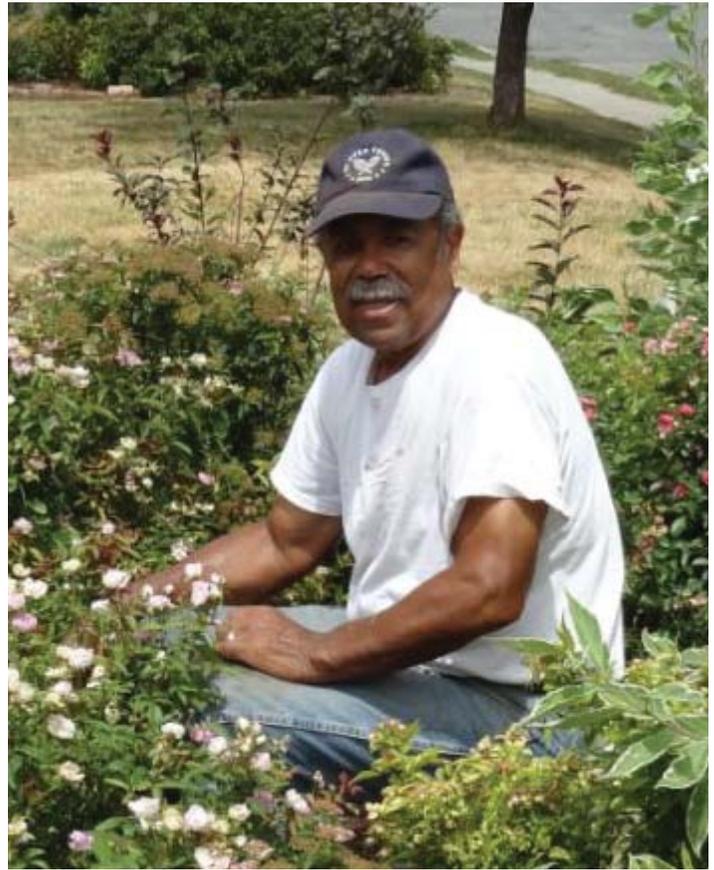
Roger Freeman Celebrates 80th Birthday

By Chris Foster

Roger Freeman, our resident “Gifford Park caretaker”, celebrated his 80th birthday January 17, 2013. Anyone who has been around Gifford Park or lived in the neighborhood for even a short time has seen or talked with Roger. If you cannot get along with Roger then you cannot get along with anyone! His smile, helpful & positive attitude, and great sarcasm help make our neighborhood a better place. To me and many other folks, Roger is a mentor, leader, neighbor, and most of all, a great friend. Back in 2003 at the GPNA Holiday Banquet I had the privilege to present Roger with the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association’s ‘Neighbor of the Year’ award – knowing his great sense of humor, we kept the award a secret from him until the night of the banquet, he was quite surprised and took it in stride! I wanted to share in this newsletter some things about Roger that touch this neighborhood and the people who live here. (Some of this information was originally printed in the January 2004 newsletter highlighting his award, but it’s worth repeating).

“We thought through the GPNA newsletter would be a good way to make all the residents and people who use Gifford Park aware of the wonderful volunteer job Roger Freeman has been doing. Before the snow every Sunday you can see him with his rake and trash sacks cleaning up the park. When he is finished you see no broken glass or litter. He never brags or complains, just gives you a friendly greeting and big smile. We want to give you a big pat on the back Roger, and thanks a bunch.” – February, 2002 from Vera & Jim Horton, Gifford Park residents for 52 years at that time.

The above letter speaks volumes about what being a great neighbor is all about. Roger grew up in Boston before joining the Air Force in 1953. He was stationed at Rheimmain Air Force Base in Frankfurt, Germany during the Korean War (84th Air Rescue Unit Detachment to the 60th Troop Carrier Wing). Roger moved to Omaha from New York City in the summer of 1975 because he was tired of the big cities. In October 1975 he started work with Omaha Public Schools (OPS)



as a Supervisor in Student Transportation and retired after 33 years. In 1979 Roger met Sandy, who had been living at 3317 Cass St. (their current address) since 1965. Sandy worked with OPS for 27 years as Secretary in the Human Resources/Administration Department. Roger has a son who is an Attorney and State Senator in Washington State. Sandy has a son who is an Omaha Police Officer and a daughter who is a critical nurse in St. Paul, MN. Roger and Sandy have 7 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild.

Besides being chairman of the GPNA Park committee and keeping the park picked up (he and Sandy are basically our park caretakers without getting paid), Roger frequently walks the neighborhood picking up aluminum cans and trash. His route includes roughly from 30th to 36th from Farnam to Burt. He obviously sees and talks to a lot of people and knows when something is out of place. On one of his typical Sunday morning routes in the fall of 2003, Roger found a missing brass memorial plaque that we feared stolen from the community garden. Anyone who knows

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I didn't know neighborhoods like this existed anymore...

By Rose Carlson

It was June of 2003. My husband had accepted a job with Millard Public Schools, and we had three days to buy a house in Omaha before heading back to New Mexico to close on the house we had just sold, pack up, and move.

Naturally the real estate agent showed us houses in Millard. It would have made sense to be near Steve's work place, especially since we had never lived in a city before and felt quite overwhelmed. We tried to like the houses the agent showed us. But we didn't. We just weren't suburban, ranch-style, house-on-the-cul-de-sac folks. "Maybe something.....older?" we ventured, not really knowing what it was we didn't like, or what it was we were really looking for.

Near the end of the second day the agent started moving east into the older parts of town. We perked up. But it wasn't until we walked into the beautiful St. Cecilia's Cathedral that we knew. "Find us a house within six blocks of this church," we told him. There were three for sale in that radius. Only one of them was in Gifford Park, and at the time I didn't even know what a "neighborhood" was, that they had names, or that something very special was going on here.

After we moved in, several neighbors brought cookies and offered to help. People were home during the day. It was apparent that their lives were primarily here in the neighborhood. Family and community were emphasized over career and wealth. People walked to work, walked to school, walked their dogs. Sat on the front porch on summer nights. Retired folks watched out for the kids, many of whom quickly befriended our four daughters. I didn't know there were still neighborhoods where parents could just send their kids out to play on the block.

One summer I bought plastic cups and painted the kids' names on them with nail polish because they all needed drinks every two minutes. Several summers they put on plays in the backyard and we hosted potlucks afterwards. They had a lemonade stand. They sold various creations door to door. They painted a clubhouse. Other parents entrusted their kids to us, and I felt fortunate to be able to do the same.

There was the warm evening when our dentist, tooling up and down the block on his moped, stopped where we were chatting with other neighbors. "Lemme see that tooth," he said to my oldest, who had recently had a little dental work done. How many kids have had that setting for a follow-up visit?

Occasionally a kid shows up at my door with a measuring cup. "My mother needs a cup of sugar". (Or two eggs, or a 4 ounce box of raisins....fill in the blank.) I love it that they feel they can ask. I love it that people here bake. I love it that I always have what they're looking for. Because they have what I was looking for, although at first I didn't know it: a place my kids can always call their home. Not just because their parents are here. Not just because their house is here. But because they have been given an example of community in a sense that few children in the twenty-first century will ever understand and experience.

I don't know if it was fate, luck, chance, or prayer that landed us on 3413 Webster St. Maybe all or none of the above. But I know that the location of the house we chose has been one of the biggest blessings our family has ever been given. And I'm very, very thankful.



Roger Freeman Celebrates 80th Birthday

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Roger also knows it was no surprise that he would be the one to find it!

Roger is a great mentor for younger people in our neighborhood. He has a great sense of humor, yet he also has a way of encouraging and even challenging others to do better especially in the area litter cleanup. He sometimes pays kids a few bucks to pickup litter in the neighborhood. Roger says he first started picking up the park in the late 1980's when the late Jack Atkins used to do this duty. He and Sandy also have brought many stray animals to the Humane Society. You've seen Roger involved with other GPNA activities including the spring and fall cleanups, tennis program, newsletter delivery, and putting up holiday lights in the park and 33rd & California business district. His hobbies include tennis, racquetball, hand-

ball, hockey and photography. Roger exercises 1 to 2 hours three times a week and drinks lots of water to stay healthy.

Sandy was born in Omaha. She went to grade school at Field Club School and attended high school at Central. She was a violinist at Central and likes to play the piano today. Sandy enjoys doing things with their 9 grandchildren. Roger says Sandy is an excellent cook and baker. It is also quite apparent that Sandy does ALL the work so that Roger can play – I don't think Roger would argue with this fact!

Congratulations on all of your accomplishments, Roger, and thanks for serving your country and your neighborhood! And Happy 80th Birthday!

GPNA Memorabilia and History

If anyone has any neighborhood memorabilia or history items (pictures, videos, books, awards, articles, other items) please contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net). The GPNA has collected and inherited items over the years and we would like to better organize some of the neighborhood and GPNA history that tells quite a rich, interesting and on-going story. Our GPNA historian Eva Swanson did a wonderful job of capturing information into our "History Book" and two large scrapbooks. We would like to build on this good work.

Thanks Luther!

By Chris Foster

On behalf of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association I want to give a big thank you to Luther Larson, our president the past 2 years! Luther not only lead the GPNA as president but has been very involved and "hands-on" with most of our organization's events and activities (many long before becoming GPNA president) including membership, neighborhood & park cleanups, park improvements (benches, bike racks, bike sculpture, doggie-doo containers), Easter egg hunt, community garden, rain barrel workshop, Yates Cultural event, neighborhood survey and master planning, Dodge Street S-Curve, GPNA meetings, Restore Omaha Conference, flood victims donations,

garage sale, holiday banquet, and newsletter delivery. Luther and his wife (and "first lady") Deb graciously hosted all GPNA board meetings in their beautiful home, many meetings went long! Besides the GPNA, Luther is a longtime Information Systems Manager for Mutual of Omaha (he frequently walks to work!). Also Luther & Deb have been working on restoring an old house near 34th & Webster, they have been doing much of the work themselves during their "free" time. Serving as GPNA president can be quite demanding at times, we appreciate the great deal of time and commitment Luther & Deb have given to our neighborhood. Luther & Deb, enjoy your "retirement," you've earned it!

News and Notes

Donation and Scholarships Awarded to Gifford Park Youth Tennis

Many thanks to the Omaha Tennis Association (OTA) Development Fund for awarding seven junior scholarships totaling almost \$1,000 to participants of the Gifford Park Youth Tennis program. The funds will help pay for 12 weeks of indoor tennis lessons last fall at Hanscom Tennis Center for youth who demonstrated good sportsmanship and a committed interest to improve their tennis skills. Our sincere thanks to the OTA for their support for youth tennis in and around the Gifford Park neighborhood. And thanks to Fred & Marcia Backer for their generous donation of \$100 to the Gifford Park Youth Tennis program!

Open Gym at Yates

My family is new to the area and not used to this weather yet since we moved here from New Orleans, Louisiana in the late summer. As winter set in, I found myself longing to be active and run around. I love being active and from those I have met in the neighborhood so far, it seems many of you like to be active as well.

So thanks to Susan Mayberger at Yates School, any resident in Gifford Park who is over the age of 16 has been granted use of Yates' gymnasium every Tuesday evening from 6pm-8pm until the end of April. We gather to play basketball and indoor soccer, so I hope you can come out and join us in the coming weeks. We began a couple weeks ago and it has been great to get some exercise while getting to know our neighbors better and staying warm! Hope to see you soon!

Your New Neighbor,
Dave Collie
(504) 908-6890

2012 Gifford Park Budget

Income	
Donations	
Easter Egg Hunt	500
Garage Sale	400
Flower Pots	400
Tennis Program	300
Other	1000
Grants	5000
Newsletter	1000
Membership	1000
Total	9600
Income	9600
Expenses	11254
Balance	-1654

Expenses	
Easter Egg Hunt	500
Garage Sale	100
Flower Pots	400
Tennis Program	300
Board Fund	1000
Market	54
Banquet	400
Cultural Event	500
Operating Expense	300
Soccer	100
Website	200
Supporting Organizations	200
501c3	900
Meeting snacks	300
Grants	5000
Newsletter	1000
Total	11254

Holiday Banquet 2012



Travis Lavender and Jeff Spiehs welcome guests (and renew memberships!)



Guests enjoy holiday dinner catered by Alegent Creighton.



Gingerbread people by Dana Carlton-Flint decorated our tables.



... with all of the trimmings
... on Health



Chris Foster shares the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association year-in-review.



Neighborhood residents and friends enjoy dinner and conversation.



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 | | | |