



Gifford Park's Pride

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

March 2013

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Spring has (almost) sprung in the GPNA Community Garden

This is the 13th year of the Gifford Park Community Garden, located at 35th & Cass, and we are getting ready for the new planting season. Last spring volunteers expanded the youth garden area to the east fence to allow more space between youth plots, and we added the three compost bins and a dirt pile bin. This past fall, berry bush trellises were added on the west side of the garden – we are thinking blackberry bushes will be grown here, maybe other berry bushes as well. As for the rental plots, we will have 32 plots available: \$15/year for the 23 each 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.

As mentioned Mike Caban will handle plot coordination and Chris Foster (402-290-8187, foster3413@cox.net) will coordinate various 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 Season Opening event (Saturday, May 11, 10 am - Noon)
- Youth Garden Program (Saturdays 10-11:30am, May 18-August 24)
- Pot Luck dinners

Continued on page 6

**Next General Meeting
Thursday, March 14**

**Speakers:
NP Dodge Real Estate
on the state of the local market**

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

UPCOMING EVENTS



**Easter Egg Hunt
March 30
12:00 noon
in Gifford Park**



**Spring Clean Up
April 13
9:00-2:00 pm
in Gifford Park**

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

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Darryl Hutton 706-7597
Mark Trampe 332-6188

Business

Martin Janousek 558-4070

Landlord

Chris Foster 290-8187

COMMITTEES

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Chris Foster 290-8187

Membership

Travis Lavender 605-321-8142

Neighborhood Market

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From the President

By Eric Purcell

If you're at all like me, you're starting to get antsy for Spring! Despite another mild winter, I'm still ready for warmer temperatures, gardens and shorts. I've bided a good deal of my time this winter reading Gaia's Garden and thinking about how I can apply some permaculture principles to my yard and garden. So I'm ready to start digging in the dirt!

As those warmer days inch closer, there's a few things we can all be thinking about and getting ready for. Soon the Youth Garden program will be starting up again at the Community Garden. March 9th there will be a planning meeting held at Yates Community Center. If you're interested in being a part of that, or in renting a plot from the Community Garden, give Chris Foster or Mike Caban a call. On April 13 we will have our annual Spring Cleanup Day. Mark your calendars and start getting ready for a good morning of picking up around the neighborhood. I'll probably be working in the alley behind my house again, as well as getting my own yard, garage and basement slicked up! On April 20th we will be having our second annual Cultural Celebration at the Yates Community Center in partnership with OPS. This was a fun event last year and we're looking forward to another great day!

Another little "spring clean" item is illegal parking. It has been brought to

the board's attention that there have been a lot of vehicles parking illegally in the neighborhood. Many of them are blocking sidewalks or parked facing the wrong direction. It doesn't seem like much, but something as simple as this can send a message that other larger issues will also go unnoticed. But when neighbors and friends take care of the little things, it sends the message that this is not a place to try to get away with more serious issues. On top of that, OPD has informed us that auto theft has been up. One of the main reasons for this is that car thieves have been masquerading as tow companies. They simply pull up to a car and haul it off. We generally trust that when we see a vehicle being towed, it is because it should be. Unfortunately, that is not always reality and in our neighborhood we may not look twice simply because so many cars DO park illegally. Maybe we can clean that up a bit this Spring too!

Finally, I'd love to invite anyone 16 or older to join us at Yates Community Center gym on Tuesday evenings from 6-8pm. We're starting to get a bit of a critical mass of folks coming out for basketball and soccer and its starting to get really fun! If you have questions about his call Dave Collie at (504) 908-6890.

See you in the neighborhood!

Please note that Midtown Neighborhood Alliance (MNA) will host a Mayoral Candidates Forum on Thursday, March 21st beginning at 6:00 pm at Field Club of Omaha 3615 Woolworth Ave. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/events/453137204757812/> for additional details.



Questions will be asked of each candidate that relate to issues affecting Midtown. You're encouraged to submit your questions for consideration to midtownneighborhoodalliance@gmail.com.

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.

Community Bicycle Project Update

It's difficult to believe, but springtime is almost here! We have been busy at CBPO readying a new fleet of bikes for the streets of Omaha. We have changed our new hours, so stop by and say "Hi" during our new times!

Tuesday 4:30-6:00 Closed Shop (16 & over) - This is a time for adult volunteers to get together and fix up some of the bikes we have in the shop. Volunteers may also bring in their own bikes for repairs at this time.

Wednesday 6:00-8:00 Kids' Night Plus (16 & under) - After much consideration and feedback from our volunteers, CBPO has decided to offer a night devoted to kids. If you like to work with children, we are looking for enthusiastic and patient volunteers to help our smaller cyclists learn some skills. Don't worry, we won't turn away an adult who needs a little assistance, but this will be a time for the kids to shine!

Saturdays 12:00-2:00 Open Shop - The good, ol' open shop we all know and love. Stop down and pitch in. You know we always need a helping hand!

On February 6, CBPO held our annual volunteer recognition ceremony, The Golden Spokes Awards, at the Pizza Shoppe in Benson. Three of our key volunteers received awards for outstanding volunteer commitment and service. The recipients were William La Roche, and Gifford Park's own, Aaron Haug and James Comeford! Thank you for making our community great!



Aaron Haug receives the Golden Spoke Award.



James Comeford receives the Golden Spoke Award.

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.



Restore Omaha 2013

On March 1 & 2 another successful Restore Omaha Conference brought together organizations, businesses and government entities to provide a “one stop shop” for attendees to gather ideas, products, contacts and solutions for their older property needs. This year’s event began with about 300 people attending the opening 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. Attendees toured this magnificent building and enjoyed complimentary drinks and hors d’oeuvres. Also at the reception, there was an important announcement about the formation of Restoration Exchange Omaha (combined merger of Restore Omaha, Landmarks Inc., Omaha Urban Neighborhoods organizations). The mission of Restoration Exchange Omaha will be to educate and motivate people to restore and preserve historic properties through: Education, Advocacy and Invigoration.

Saturday’s conference at Metropolitan Community College South Campus was attended by over 300 people and included the keynote lecture by nationally recognized urban planner Noré Winter, educational sessions, live demonstrations, exhibitor floor, lunch, and the Restore Jam where



The GPNA booth at the 2013 Restore Omaha Conference.

attendees were invited to share their current restoration projects in five minutes or less. Educational sessions range from V.I.P Tax Credits, brick and masonry restoration and architect John Latenser’s work, exterior painting and preparation, to restoration of the Nebraska State Capitol and where to find historic images of the area.

The GPNA had a booth at the conference promoting the good qualities of our neighborhood – thanks to GPNA volunteers Martin Janousek, Eric Purcell, Luther Larson, Paul Mileris, Bob Hutton, Darryl Hutton, Travis Lavender, and Chris & Sallie Foster. Several neighborhood volunteers (Paul Mileris, Luther Larson, Martin Janousek, Rob Janousek, Chris Foster) presented their own ‘old home’ restoration/fix-up projects at the Restore Jam at the end of the conference. And finally a big thanks to the entire Restore Omaha committee for organizing another great event! For more information, visit www.RestoreOmaha.org or call (402) 578-5618.

Better know a Board Member: Mark Trampe

With a new year comes new leaders on the GPNA Board. This month, we’re getting to know new at-large member, Mark Trampe:

“I’m originally from Norfolk, NE, but have been in Omaha since 2004 and living in the neighborhood for about two years. My wife’s name is Sara. I work at Hayneedle as web developer. I enjoy playing ultimate frisbee, building stuff, and pretending to be a runner. My favorite junk food is Cheetos.”



Good Neighbors

By Rose Carlson and Karen Heng

Several years ago Tom and Karen Heng, long-time Gifford Park residents, were shopping at Costco, stocking up on groceries, when Karen received a text from one of their teenage children at home. It was an alert that there would be difficulties unpacking the van because part of an old elm tree had fallen in the street and across their driveway,

They finished their shopping and came home to find that, yes indeed, there was a tree lying in their driveway. Their family made multiple trips back and forth from the street to the house to get the groceries in, while Tom went to the garage for a chainsaw. Karen took the little kids inside. When she next looked out, Tom had been joined by several chainsaws and tools with various neighbors attached. They made short work of the tree, sawing it up for firewood, which they divided among those who wanted it. No one waited for someone to "call the city", even though the tree had been marked to be cut down for some time.

Sure, a lots of guys will be glad for an excuse to wield a chain saw. But more than that, incidents like this illustrate the unique spirit of camaraderie, community, and companionship our neighborhood shares.



A New Seed Source in Omaha: Seed Sharing – Library Style

The Benson Branch of the Omaha Public Library is home to the pilot program “Common Soil Seed Library.” Any library member can check out open pollinated garden seeds. Ideally, gardeners will save seeds from their bounty



and return some to the library. Borrowers will not be hit with a late “seed” fee if they fail to return seeds. According to the Omaha Public Library, “Common Soil strives to provide a space where local gardeners, farmers and library customers can share open-pollinated seeds, as well as develop awareness and gain information about gardening and seed saving.” The Benson branch will also hold some spring workshops on saving seeds. These workshops include: Seed Saving 101, Seed Germination 101, Planning Your Garden for Seed Saving, and Early Season Seed Saving. Many thanks to Betsy Goodman who lives in Gifford Park and works at Blooms Organic Farm in Crescent, IA. She has been very involved with developing this program and will be teaching some of the classes – great work Betsy! For more information on the seed library and classes, call the library at 402-444-4846.

“A bad neighbor is a misfortune, as much as a good one is a great blessing”

~Hesiod

Community Garden Update

Continued from page 1

- Wednesday evening work parties
- Garden orientations (get folks familiar with different parts of the garden)
- Theme garden maintenance (rose, butterfly, senses, perennial, front wall, herb, berry bushes, etc.)
- Bike rack install
- Compost bin - turn over compost pile
- Planting projects: espalier fruit trees, berry bushes, parkway beautification

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).

Teen Market Garden 2013

By Cynthia Shuck

If anyone is interested in participating in Teen Market Garden then you'll be happy to learn there are three plots open this year and we're excited to introduce new faces to the joy of urban gardening and entrepreneurship. We plan to participate in two local markets. The first is Wohlner's Wednesday Market at Midtown Crossing from 3:00 – 7:00 PM and the second is Gifford Park's own Neighborhood market, which is every Friday night (June, July, August) from 4:00 – 8:00PM. We've been meeting every Saturday, 1:00 PM at my home (352 N. 35th St) to discuss planting plans and goals for the year. Come by this Saturday and see if this might be something that would interest you and your son or daughter. Cynthia Shuck, Director, Teen Market Garden in Gifford Park c. (402) 980-4190

Youth Garden Program Plans for 10th Year

By Chris Foster

The Gifford Park Youth Garden (GPYG) program will be kicking off its 10th year at the Gifford Park Community Garden (35th & Cass) growing young gardeners. This free program teaches youth of all ages how to grow our 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 March 9th 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 18th through August 24th. A big thanks to all the past volunteers for supporting this program year after year! We also look forward to working with Big Muddy Urban Farm (<http://bigmuddyfarm.blogspot.com/>) again this year, our young gardeners learned a lot from these young farmers. We will have GPYG signup at our Garden Season Opening event Saturday, May 11, 10 am – Noon. Stay tuned for more information. 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.



1913 Tornado Anniversary

(reprinted from *Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association March 2013 newsletter*)

This year marks the 100th year anniversary of the 1913 Easter Sunday tornadoes. There's a new NET Television documentary "Devil Clouds: Tornadoes Strike Nebraska," premiering Friday, March 22nd, at 7 p.m. CT on NET1/HD. The documentary was developed to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the 1913 Easter Sunday tornadoes which roared through Eastern Nebraska and Omaha - hitting the Joslyn Castle, Gifford Park, and Bemis Park neighborhoods particularly hard.

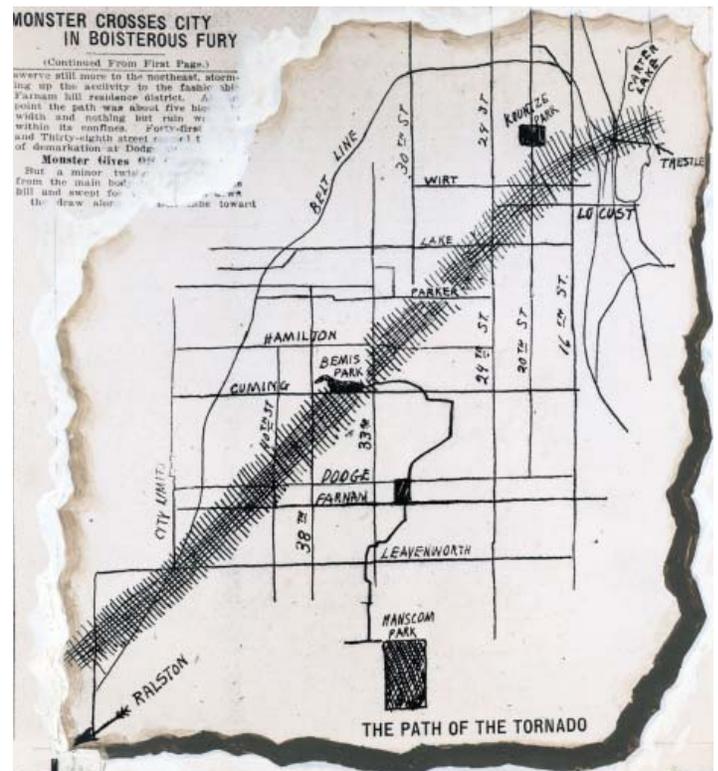
THE 1913 EASTER SUNDAY TORNADO - 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

by Marnie Corsaro

Omaha is nearing the 100 year anniversary of the 1913 Easter Sunday Tornado. Our Joslyn Castle neighborhood sustained extreme damage and devastation as the result of the F4 tornado that tore its way through the city. The tornado struck the Omaha area on the evening of Easter Sunday, March 23rd, 1913, at approximately 6:00pm. The storm's path was reported as being 40 miles long and from 1/4 to 1/2 mile wide, and included 8 distinct tornadoes. In all, 104 lives were lost, hundreds were injured, and some accounts state that as many as 2000 homes and buildings were damaged or destroyed. Within this edition you'll see an array of photographs of homes within our neighborhood that were damaged or destroyed by the tornado. Specific street addresses have been included for modern day reference when available. Please take a moment to reflect upon the events of that solemn day.

THE TORNADO - The Omaha Daily News 1913
"Within two hours after the twister had torn a path through the city every agency available was being rushed through the darkness to the relief of the victims. About the first organized aid to reach the scene consisted of 200 soldiers of the regular army stationed at Fort Omaha. Flames

were breaking out among the ruins up and down the belt of horror, and victims were pleading for someone to help them before the fire should reach them. The entire fire and police departments of Omaha were rushed to the scene, and the men scattered over wide areas of desolation. Council Bluffs was called upon, and the firemen of that city arrived while nearly a score of fires were burning. For half an hour it seemed as though the entire storm-swept area would be devoured by flames, which were fast spreading from wreck to wreck. The work of relief, begun when 200 soldiers, a hundred policemen, 150 firemen, three score physicians, and hundreds of citizen volunteers rushed to the storm-swept wreckage on Easter Sunday night, at the end of the first week had assumed immense proportions, and was being dispatched with the business-like system of a big corporation." (The Omaha Daily News)



Continued on page 8

1913 Tornado Anniversary

Continued from page 7

WRECKAGE LEFT BEHIND - The Omaha Bee 1913

“Thirty-ninth street was full of wrecked houses from Farnam to Mr. Joslyn's \$100,000 home, which had stones knocked out, windows wrecked, roof partially off and garage quite badly wrecked. Most of the houses on Thirtyninth were badly wrecked to that point. Steering northeast, the trail struck Thirty-eighth street, where from Dodge north to Webster street the big mansions were in various degrees of ruin. Saunders school, in the valley west of Fortieth, had a great hole in the roof and windows out. Sacred Heart convent was quite badly damaged, part of the roof off, walls shaken and windows out. From about Thirtyseseventh on Burt street east to Thirtyfourth the wreck was terrible. Homes of W. F. Baxter and T. B. Norris were piles of kindling. Houses were cut in two, with beds exposed in upper stories and debris dumped into the street. The trail crossed Cuming about Thirty-sixth.” (The Omaha Bee)

STYLISH RESIDENCES RUINED - The Omaha Bee 1913

“Some of the city's most substantial business men were missing from their offices Monday morning. They were busy nailing boards across the front doorways of their homes, which the day before were resplendent in Easter' holiday decorations. Society women who shone in the “Easter parade” on Sunday were picking up their silverware out of the grass, digging keepsakes out of ditches and looking longingly up into the trees at the remains of their Easter finery. Hundreds of society women and businessmen, wedged closely between those of humbler station in life, waited hours in line at the “information stations,” for passes, so that they might not be turned away from their homes.”



Duchesne Academy



38th St., near Davenport St.

38th and Davenport



3601 Davenport



Joslyn Castle



38th and Davenport

**THE
TORNADO'S TOLL**

Lives Lost	- -	140
Persons Injured	-	350
People Homeless		2,500
Houses Demolished		550
Churches Wrecked		11
Schools Wrecked	-	8
Loss	- -	\$5,000,000
Insurance	-	\$500,000
Houses Damaged		1,250

All Engravings in this book made by Dece Engraving Dept Omaha

*Insurance
Should be larger*

Parking in the neighborhood

By Jim Wilwerding

Recently one snowy Sunday, while walking through the neighborhood, I noticed a car obstructing the sidewalk. This is hardly a rare occurrence in our neighborhood, unfortunately. While driving through the neighborhood as part of the citizen patrol it is not uncommon to see a dozen or more vehicles blocking the sidewalk.

Omaha City Ordinance Sec. 36-156. - states, in part:

“It shall be unlawful for the driver of a vehicle to stop, stand or park such vehicle ...on a sidewalk except when a permit or lease is granted for the use of such area.”

With warmer weather on the way, and in an effort to improve the pedestrian-friendly nature of our neighborhood, we would ask that any violators please stop parking on the sidewalk. If the problem continues, we will be ask the Omaha Police Department to ticket or tow violating vehicles. Please be considerate of your neighbors.



Do not park your car over the sidewalk.

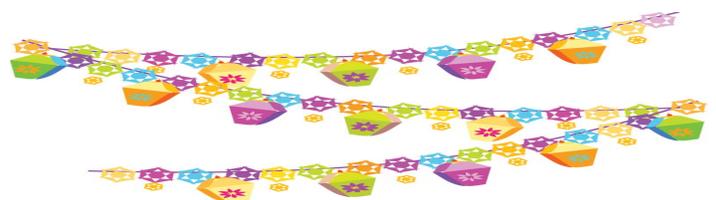
From OPD's Nuisance Unit

Public Property

Public property includes the streets, alleys and right-of-ways.

- Vehicles must be currently licensed.
- Vehicles must be in running condition.
- Vehicles cannot have expired dealer in-transit stickers, expired plates or improperly displayed plates.
- Vehicles with homemade in-transit stickers cannot be parked on public streets.
- Vehicles must be driven at least one mile, and reparked a minimum of three car lengths from its original parking place, every 48 hours.
- Vehicles must be legally parked.
- Vehicles cannot be driven or parked over sidewalks, curbs, or medians.
- Vehicles cannot be left unattended on the interstate for more than 12 hours.
- Non-emergency vehicle repairs cannot be made on the street.
- Vehicles over 4 tons, or any vehicle with or without a trailer, which exceed 21 feet in length or 7 feet in width, cannot be parked on any street or alley for longer than one hour.

To report violations, please contact the Mayor's Hotline office at 444-5555



Mark your Calendar for the Gifford Park Neighborhood Cultural Celebration

in partnership with Yates Community Center
Saturday, April 20 12:00-4:00 pm
Event will include food, performances, tours of Yates Community Center, and more.

Crime Update from OPD

Captain Scott Gray of the Northeast Precinct joined us as the speaker for our February General Meeting. As part of his presentation, he shared some good news about crime in the area. Overall, crime is overall down.



When comparing crime statistics from last year, we've seen a 50% decrease in the number of burglaries and a 66% decrease in the number of felony assaults. OPD has had some successful operations recently, focused on traffic enforcement in the area, and auto theft arrests in the area just north of our neighborhood.

Not all is good on the law enforcement front. Of particular concern has been the rise in auto thefts – specifically targeting Hondas. Captain Gray offered some tips to deter would-be thieves:

- Don't leave your car unattended and running the driveway. With the cold weather, it's tempting to let your car run and warm up. Leaving your car unattended with the keys in the ignition makes it easier for thieves to take your car.
- Don't leave valuables in the car in plain view. It makes for a tempting target.
- Don't leave your doors unlocked.

Even after our meeting with Captain Gray, car theft has continued to be a topic of conversation among Gifford Park residents. We've heard that some local car thieves have been posing as towing companies. Since the city will tow illegally parked cars (they use Arrow Towing), it is increasingly important that neighbors park their cars legally. If more of us park legally, it makes it easier to identify nuisance parking. If you see a car being towed that appears to be legally parked or something seems suspicious be sure to call 911 and report it.

Welcome to Gifford Park's newest residents!

Congratulations to GPNA members Daniel and Andrea Lawse on the birth of their son Rohan Alexander Lawse born on December 28 weighing in at 8 lbs 11 oz. and 21 inches long. The Lawses are long-time Gifford Park residents and have two children.

Congratulations to GPNA members Brian & Millie Smith for the birth of their daughter Alexandra Venecia Smith born on February 7 weighing just over 7 lbs and 18.5" long. Brian and Millie have lived in the neighborhood six years and have three young children.

Congratulations to GPNA members Brandon and Megan Sperry on the birth of their daughter Luca Melody Sperry born on February 17 weighing in at 8 lbs 11 oz and 21" long. Brandon and Megan moved into the neighborhood last summer. This is their first child.

Please keep your thoughts and prayers for long time Gifford Park resident Roy White and his family. Roy's health has not been good lately and he is currently at Via Christe Assisted Living. His son Roy, daughter-in-law Dina, and grandchildren Tyler, Matthew and Nicole are long time Gifford Park residents and also volunteer with GPNA activities.



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



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 | | | |