



Gifford Park's Pride

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

April 2013

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

24th Annual Easter Egg Hunt Highlights

Despite early morning rain showers and the forecast for more rain we thankfully did NOT have to deal with bad weather for our 24th Annual Easter Egg Hunt, held Saturday, March 30 in Gifford Park. Skies cleared and we had great spring weather just in time for the 350 neighborhood children who participated. This was the fifth year in a row an anonymous dentist made a wonderful donation of 300 dental care packages (each included toothbrush and toothpaste) - volunteers gave one package to each child just moments before the actual hunt. Volunteers, including Flatland Church (lead by Rob & Naomi Yanike), picked up litter and raked portions of the park before putting out candy, treats, and other prizes in the four age groups (0-4, 5-6, 7-9, 10-12). Thanks to Roger & Sandy Freeman for regularly picking up litter. As always, out of the thousands of pieces of candy, it took a matter of a few minutes for the kids to pick the park clean of goodies and prizes. There were many volunteers and donors who helped put forth extra effort – once again Darryl Hutton did a great job getting MANY donations (and making a large personal contribution) from a variety of people and businesses; Jan Franks, her granddaughter Brittany, and Robin Hansen organized the candy. The Slayden family (Betty, Tiffaney, Kayleen) were a huge help as always. Our event MVP award goes to Justine Stanley, she was this year's Easter bunny giving out treats to youngsters (thanks to Sharon Olson and the Miller Park-Minne Lusa Neighborhood Association for donating the Easter Bunny costume). Senator Sara Howard and her mom Gwen donated cute stuffed bunnies and ad

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**Next General Meeting
Thursday, April 11**

**Topic
What's Growing in Gifford Park
with speakers from:**

**Big Muddy Urban Farm
Teen Market Garden
Community Garden
Common Soil Seed Library
Creighton Community Garden**

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

UPCOMING EVENTS



**Spring Clean Up
April 13
9:00 am -
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

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Darryl Hutton 706-7597
Mark Trampe 332-6188

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Chris Foster 290-8187

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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

Pubic Relations

Eric Purcell 719-5108

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.

From the President

By Eric Purcell

Last Saturday I was reminded why I love Gifford Park so much! It was a huge breath of fresh spring air to see so many friends out in the park for the annual Easter Egg hunt! Many of the people there I don't know, but many I do and it was good to see some faces I've not seen during the winter hibernation. But what made the day even more special was when some of those friends who I don't know very well invited me over for a bowl of pozole. Having grown up in Mexico this was a treat in and of itself, but the bigger treat was that these neighbors were inviting me into a little bit more of their lives. We've played soccer together, and some of their kids have been a part of the Youth Garden, Summer Soccer Program and the Tennis Program. And now I was getting to enjoy some of their hospitality. Pretty soon my wife had joined me and not far behind were the Fosters. Together, we all were enjoying a bit of soup, conversation and deepening relationship!

I long for more of these kinds of interactions in our neighborhood. My

hope is that more of us who live in Gifford Park will take advantage of the many opportunities we have to meet our neighbors, make new friends and enjoy one another's company. Of course, its not always easy to be a good neighbor. Frankly, some of our neighbors we'd rather not talk to! But I've been experimenting for a while now with what might happen if I extend love and friendship even to those who I don't see eye to eye with. Not surprisingly, I'm finding that I'm making a lot of friends! In Gifford Park there are so many different kinds of people that its not too hard to find some who look, dress, think or act differently than I do, so there are plenty of opportunities to experiment with loving my neighbors.

Gifford Park is one of the most friendly places I've lived, but I can't help but wonder how many people here still feel lonely and disconnected. I wonder if we could remedy that together by purposefully engaging some of our neighbors we still don't know very well. Who knows, maybe Gifford Park could be even better!?

Neighborhood Clean-Up

Each Spring the City of Omaha and Keep Omaha Beautiful host neighborhood Spring Clean Up events all over the city. Its a chance for neighborhoods to clean up their allies and streets, garages, yards, parks and play-grounds and make their neighborhoods more beautiful places to be. On **Saturday April 13 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm**, several trash compactors and a metals recycler will be in the Gifford Park parking lot on 34th and Davenport. Bring your trash and clean out the corners of your property. And while you're on your way, pick up some trash on the sidewalk!



If you have old tires to dispose of take them to St. Vincent DePaul parking lot on the South East corner of 22nd and Leavenworth.

We will not be accepting brush, logs or tree debris, but if you have these to dispose of you will be given a voucher to use that day only.

There will also be someone there to accept GPNA memberships. If you haven't joined the association this year, this will be a great day to do so. Individual memberships are \$10 and families are \$15.

Easter Egg Hunt

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ditional toothbrushes. Many thanks to all those who donated time, money, candy, and other items for the event: Whelan Law Office, Kilgore Law Office, Discount Laundry, Urban Village, Lilly's California Bar, Marrakech Restaurant, KNJ Grocery, Selenas Market, Ideal Hardware, Hy-Vee, No Frills, Maud Boutique, Mark Bostick, Bob & Virginia Hutton, Mike Caban, Terry Wilwerding, Jim Wilwerding, Luther Larson, Eric Purcell, Brian & Millie Smith, Shelly Rose, Brendon Titrud, Megan Kriegler, Lindsay Pockett, Ben Spahn, and Chris & Sallie Foster. Please support the above businesses for their contributions. KETV Channel 7 had a nice news story again this year. One last thanks to our dedicated newsletter distributors who hand-delivered (on very short notice) about 1,300 flyers throughout the neighborhood late Thursday and Friday!



Community Garden update

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 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.

There are 32 plots available to rent in the garden: \$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.

Mark your calendars for our annual Season Opening Event on Saturday May 11, 10 am to Noon. 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
- Wednesday evening work parties
- Garden orientations (get folks familiar with different parts of the garden)
- Theme garden maintenance (rose, butterfly, senses, perennial, front wall & parkway, herb, berry bushes, etc.)
- Compost bin - turn over compost pile
- Planting projects: front parkway, espalier fruit trees, berry bushes

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).

Better know a Board Member: Ricky Green

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

Ricky is originally from State College, PA by way of North Carolina. He graduated from Duke University in 2008. Since then, he has spent time in Alaska and completed courses in outdoor leadership with the International Wilderness Leadership School and has taught English around the world. Ricky moved to Omaha a little over a year ago and is an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer with Omaha Serves in the Mayor's office where he serves as the Nonprofit Capacity Building Director and is placed at the Nonprofit Association of the Midlands. He practices ashtanga yoga daily and also likes climbing, running, cooking, slack-lining, music, and tea.



Youth Garden Program Plans for 10th Year

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 youngest 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

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.

Teen Market Garden 2013

Three openings are still available for teens ready to expand their urban gardening and entrepreneurship skills. As we did last year, we plan to participate in two local markets. The first is Wohlner's Mid-week Market (Wednesdays, June & July) 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 – 8:00 PM. Ideal age for teen participants are at least 13 years old or equivalent to a 7th grade level. We meet every Saturday, 1:00 PM either at my home (352 N. 35th St) to discuss planting plans or if the weather is nice then we meet at the garden (3028 Cottage Grove Avenue) to work on the soil. Stop by this Saturday and see if this might be something that would interest your son or daughter. For questions contact Cynthia Shuck, Teen Market Garden in Gifford Park, c. (402) 980-4190.

LOCAL Campaign Update

By Chris Foster

The Good Neighbor ordinance is a tool which will allow the city to review a liquor business' certificate of occupancy if that business is creating public nuisance problems (graffiti, litter, noise issues, etc) as well as jeopardizing public health and safety with unsafe business practices (drug activity, sales to minors, sale to intoxicated, not addressing disturbances at business, etc). Many neighborhood leaders feel helpless in getting problem businesses to address these concerns in a timely and effective manner and the Good Neighbor ordinance could be the answer to this problem but only if we use it!

To help facilitate use of this ordinance, LOCAL (Let Omaha Control its Alcohol Landscape) has created an alcohol outlet complaint log that helps neighborhoods track problem businesses in their area. The log is not a substitute for reporting problems to the city or calling the police. It is a tool to help us track reports and hold the city accountable for addressing these problems by using the Good Neighbor ordinance if applicable. The log sheet is available on page 7 and on www.thelocalcampaign.com. We need neighbors to first report problems to the city and police, log the reports and get that information back to LOCAL. Contact information to return the form is on the log sheet.

Saturday April 6, 2013 6-9pm.

The Soul Kitschn Gallery will have an art opening, Organic Honey: The paintings of Cameron Conlon. Maud Boutique is participating in a charity fashion show put on by SOHA-Style Omaha on April 20 at 9pm. Tickets are \$10.00. To find out more go to www.facebook/maudboutique.com for more details.



2nd Annual Gifford Park Cultural Celebration

By Eric Purcell

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association and Yates Community Center would like to invite you to join us for our second Annual Gifford Park Cultural Celebration on **April 20th from 10:30 am to 2:00 pm at Yates (32nd & Davenport)**. Like last year, GPNA is partnering with Yates to celebrate some of the diversity that we get to experience as Gifford Park residents every day. Our hope is that we will get to know one another better, laugh and share a meal together and celebrate our unique experiences while affirming our shared humanity.

But it's not enough to celebrate the idea of diversity without ever really becoming friends and growing in relationship with those around us.



TOOL LENDING HOTLINE



Call Chris 290-8187

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

What I've noticed in our neighborhood is that, though we are quick to celebrate that we are a diverse community, it is still pretty easy to walk by our neighbors who come from a different cultural heritage than us without really ever getting to know them. We miss out on so much when we don't take the risk to get to know someone new. This is a chance to do just that. Come and meet some new friends, enjoy special cultural performances, get to know the mission of Yates Community Center and how they are helping immigrants and refugees assimilate into life in the United States, eat some food and laugh together with people from all over the world!

If you are interested in volunteering or contributing to this years celebration with a performance, display or something else, please contact Eric Purcell at eric.purcell@crmladers.org or Veronica Hill at veronica.hill@ops.org.

OMAHA ALCOHOL OUTLET COMPLAINT LOG

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____



Record your observations and calls to the Omaha Police Department and/or City of Omaha for problems related to alcohol outlets in your neighborhood. This form will be used to document your complaints and be used as a tool to help move the implementation of the alcohol ordinance forward.

DATE (MM/DD/YY)	TIME (a.m./p.m.)	LOCATION (Business name, address and description of area)	BUSINESS CATEGORY	ACTIVITY TAKING PLACE (COMPLAINT/VIOLATION)	POLICE CALLED (Y/N)	CITY CALLED (Y/N)
			Restaurant _____ Tavern/Bar _____ Package store _____ Grocery store _____ Night club _____ Other _____	Public Indecency _____ Sale to minor _____ Loitering _____ Graffiti _____ Consuming alcohol on public property _____ Other _____		
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Return Address: 12165 W. Center Rd., Ste. 50
Omaha, NE 68144
For more information or to submit the form electronically email thelocalcampaign@gmail.com or call (402) 290-8187

EMERGENCY: 911



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 | | | |