



Gifford Park's Pride

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

April 2014

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Spring Clean Up April 12

The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association is offering you FREE disposal of bulky items that will not fit in the normal trash pickup. The Spring Clean Up is not a disposal program for regular household garbage for which collection is provided weekly. We cannot accept chemicals, hazardous materials, paint, yard waste, or concrete/bricks. Metal recycling, including appliances, will take place at our Gifford Park site (note: we will charge \$10 handling fee for appliances containing freon). We will take tires for \$1 each, or you can drop off tires for free at St. Vincent De Paul at 22nd & Leavenworth St. Vouchers to recycle brush and tree limbs will be available at our site. This is a great opportunity to clean up our neighborhood! For more information or if you need help hauling items, please call: Eric 402-719-5108, Chris 402-290-8187 or Luther 402-330-3286 (GPNA members will get highest priority for hauling).

3rd Annual Gifford Park Cultural Celebration

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association and Yates Community Center would like to invite you to join us for our Third Annual Gifford Park Cultural Celebration on Saturday, April 19 from Noon to 2:00pm. As in previous years, GPNA is partnering with Yates to celebrate the lives and cultures of our friends who have moved into our neighborhood and city as immigrants and refugees. 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.

If you are interested in volunteering or contributing to this year's celebration with a performance, display or something else, please email info@giffordparkomaha.org or call Eric at 402-719-5108.

Next General Meeting Thursday, May 8

**Theme
Grow in Gifford Park**

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

Upcoming Events

Spring is almost upon us! Mark your calendars for these annual GPNA events.

April 12 – 9 am-2 pm - Spring Cleanup
(in Gifford Park)

April 19 – 12:00 noon sharp - Easter Egg
Hunt (in Gifford Park)

April 19 – 12:00-2 pm - Cultural Event (Yates
Community Center)

May 10 – 10 am-12 noon - Community
Garden Season Opening (Community
Garden)

May 14 - 6:00-7:30 pm - Tennis Block Party
(in Gifford Park)

May 17 – 10-11:30 am - Youth Garden
Program (each Saturday morning 10-
11:30am, May 17 through August 23)

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Martin Janousek 558-4070

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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

Wow! What a fun night we had at Marrakech Gourmet on March 20! Over 40 friends and neighbors (many whom I had never met or are new to the neighborhood) came out to reconnect with friends, meet new ones, have a meal and a couple good laughs! Thank you to Marrakech Gourmet for hosting us and making it a fun evening. If you've not stopped in for lunch or dinner, it's time to give it a try!

Now that it is April, we are going to have more and more opportunities for fun, learning, connecting with each other, and investing in our neighborhood. In just a few days (Saturday, April 12) we will have our annual Spring Clean Up event from 9:00am to 2:00pm. This is your chance to clean out the basement, remove that pile of junk that's been collecting in the back of the yard, make a sweep through the alley behind your house, spruce up our neighborhood park and conveniently dump it all in a couple of trash compactors in the Gifford Park parking lot.

On Saturday, April 19 there are TWO

events happening! Our annual Easter Egg hunt will be happening at noon in Gifford Park. There is also our third annual Cultural Celebration in partnership with Yates Community Center from Noon to 2:00pm.

We're also looking forward to the new growing season! The Community Garden is gearing up and will kick off on May 10, with the Youth Garden Program starting May 17. And to get us all in the gardening mood, our May 8 general meeting will have the theme of Grow in Gifford Park. We are lining up an all-star Neighborhood Garden and Urban Farming cast to make our May 8 meeting a memorable one.

For those of you who competed as a track and field athlete, the sound of "Runners, take your mark. Set! BANG!" is a familiar one. That's how April feels to me. We're about to shoot the starting gun to another "high season" in Gifford Park! If you're not already on the track for the race, consider this a formal invitation to join us for all of the various activities that make Gifford Park such a great place to live, work and play!

See you in the Neighborhood!

Youth Garden Program Plans for 11th Year

The Gifford Park Youth Garden (GPYG) program will be kicking off its 11th 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 22 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 17 through August 23. 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 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 10, 10 am – Noon. Stay tuned for more information. Please contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187, foster3413@cox.net) or Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) if you have any questions about GPYG program.

Community Garden Update

By Chris Foster

This is the 14th year of the Gifford Park Community Garden, located at 35th & Cass, and we are getting ready for the new planting season. We are hoping this year we will see our first fruit from the blackberry bushes and espalier (apple and pear) fruit trees. At the present time we have a waiting list for new requests for renting garden 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 10, 10 am to Noon – we plan to have a variety of family activities including youth garden program registration, “ask the master gardener,” Mother’s Day take-home project, face-painting, digging, music, refreshments, free library books and library card sign-up, see the chickens, etc. 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:

- Build 45 youth garden raised beds to replace old beds (Saturday, May 3, 10 am)
- Garden Season Opening event (Saturday, May 10, 10 am - Noon)
- Youth Garden Program (Saturdays 10-11:30am, May 17-August 23)
- Pot Luck dinners
- Wednesday evening work parties (6-8 pm during the growing season))
- Garden tours (get folks familiar with different parts of the garden)
- Theme garden maintenance (rose, butterfly, senses, perennial, front wall & parkway, herb, berry bushes, etc.)
- Compost bins – turn over compost pile
- Various planting projects

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).



Tennis Block Party

Wednesday, May 14

6:00-7:30 pm at Gifford Park

OLD HOUSE Restoration & Repair

EXTERIOR

Paint & Paint Removal
Window Sills
Trim & Siding
Sagging Porches
Soffit & Gutter Repair

INTERIOR

Paint & Plaster Repair

LAWRENCE PAINT CO.
David Lawrence
402-813-0827



Elizabeth “Bette” Tanner Lived Whole Life in Gifford Park – 93 Years

By Chris Foster

Unconditional love for our Gifford Park neighborhood was how Bette Tanner lived her life, all 93 years at 3320 Burt Street. Sadly, Bette passed away on March 13 due to health complications after suffering a fall at her home a few months ago. But up to that point she lived an incredibly full life committed and dedicated to her family, friends, neighborhood and community.

On April 5 at First Central Congregational Church family and friends celebrated Bette's life by sharing memories and stories. Here are some of them. She joined the church on Pearl Harbor Day and was an active member and volunteer ever since – 73 years! Bette made her own wedding dress, and known for not always being on time, she was still finishing her dress in the church on her and Jack's wedding day – it was a beautiful dress! Jack & Bette were married for 57 years before Jack passed away in 2006. She graduated from Technical High School and worked as an accountant for Roberts Dairy, a real estate company, and finally Enron before retiring. Jack was a salesman at Sears. She was very physically fit for life, an avid swimmer (including synchronized swimming long before it became an Olympic sport), loved the outdoors and canoeing, and loved tennis. As some of you know Bette had been volunteering at our Gifford Park Youth Tennis program the past 15+ years. She walked around the neighborhood often, especially with her late dog Toby. When Toby passed away, people noticed things were different in the neighborhood and missed seeing Bette and Toby's daily walks. Speaking of Toby, she took great care of him, including “spoiling” him with fruit and ice cream most days, to go along with his normal good food. She even used to send cards to other family and friend's pets, signed “from Toby.” To Bette, all creatures mattered, which is why she supported the Humane Society. She loved gardening and volunteered at Lauritzen Botanical Gardens. Of course Bette was a wealth of history living in the neighborhood as long as she did. Jack & Bette were very

supportive members of the GPNA every year. One example is our neighborhood clean up events... they would call to have volunteers pick up items on their front curb, it was usually a small amount, but they would make a very nice donation to the



GPNA. They had to deal with a lot of poorly managed rental property all around their home, seems unfair for all the work they did to keep up their part of the neighborhood, but Bette was a real trooper even after Jack passed away. I believe their efforts of sticking it out through thick and thin helped make it possible for the recent rehabilitation of the Nottingham Apartments on 33rd & Burt St....Jack & Bette were an anchor to this part of our neighborhood.

Above all, everyone who spoke about Bette described her incredible kindness and generosity toward everyone. Family and friends described her as a great listener. She especially cared for the down and out, always giving them the “benefit of the doubt” and was never judgmental. Bette had a heart of gold for unconditional love to help people, even when often it seemed to many of her family and friends that it was a big burden on her. Even though a few people did take advantage of her good will, it didn't change her attitude or stop her from giving. Bette's old-fashioned spirit for life, and her giving of herself, home, possessions and money was probably not so much a burden to her, that's the way she lived her life...all 93 years. Think if everyone was as giving as Bette?



Who said it can't be done?

By Martin Janousek

After attending the February 12, 2014 Landmark Heritage Preservation Commission meeting, and seeing the potential plans submitted by Mutual of Omaha that would demolish the locally landmarked Clarinda and Page buildings, Omaha-based Leo A Daly architects Martin Janousek and Matt DeBoer and designer Adam Andrews knew there was a better way that would incorporate the historic buildings yet still meet a potential developers need for office space and parking. On their own time, they created the design above.

The design repurposes the Clarinda-Page buildings from condominiums into office space on the upper floors and a possible restaurant on the first level with an entertainment venue in the basement....think Jazz Club or the television show Cheers. The Clarinda-Page would join the parking garage by way of a connector addition that would have elevators, stairs and restrooms to make the Clarinda-Page accessible and have access to parking. The office tower would be on the east side of the block above the parking

garage and retail giving the office tenants 360 degree views of downtown and midtown. This office location would be visible from interstate 480 and would mark the start of Midtown as people drive up Farnam Street from the east.

What do you think....can and should it be done?

- Visit the Facebook pages of Restoration Exchange Omaha and Save Clarinda-Page to voice your opinion.
- Sign an online petition on Change.org. Search "Clarinda" to take you to the petition. A link is on the Restoration Exchange Omaha Facebook page.
- Call and write your City Council Members and the Mayor's Office.
- Attend the City Planning meeting May 7 at 1:30 p.m.

And remember, Midtown is here because of you and all the hard work and the sacrifice of many neighborhoods. Help us save the Midtown character now and for future generations.

Big Muddy Urban Farms

Spring is here and we are very excited to start enjoying the new life that comes with it! The chickens are laying eggs like crazy! These girls are fed organic feed from a local producer and they free range during the day. Their eggs are brown, white, blue, and green; which we think is pretty fun!

Also, this season Big Muddy would like to use part of the lot on 33rd and Webster to garden with our neighbors. There are going to be 12 foot growing plots on the lot and they will be blocked off from the chickens so that the little seedlings can get going. We are all excited to see more green, especially us farmers, and we would love for you to be a part of what we grow this season.

If you would like to receive more information about fresh eggs or growing on 33rd and Webster, please email Brandon and Megan at eggs@bigmuddyurbanfarm.com.

Better Know a Board Member

Hi everyone! I'm Laura Weiss, an Omaha native, recently finding my way back after living out of state for some years. I currently work at the Southern Sudan Community Association, coordinating the Education and Employment programs for newly arrived refugees. A large portion of my time is dedicated to being active with the various refugee communities we have in Eastern Omaha, helping to manage and find available land and resources for refugees to garden. Additionally, I play music locally in a band called Lars + Mal, and occasionally get some exercise in with Ultimate Frisbee. I was raised in Omaha, but am finding this time around to be an entirely new experience, and Gifford Park has been a huge factor in that. I couldn't be happier to live in this neighborhood and am looking forward to meeting many of you this Summer at all of the events this wonderful neighborhood association works hard to put on!



Advertising Circulars a Neighborhood Eyesore

So, what's the deal with those plastic-wrapped packets that we see scattered throughout the neighborhood, sometimes three or four deep at some addresses?

They are advertising, delivered courtesy of the Omaha World-Herald, for which the paper presumably receives revenue. Why is OWH allowed to litter our neighborhoods on an ongoing basis? Evidently, because no one is stopping them.

When last I observed packet delivery, the driver never left the vehicle, tossing them out the windows to left and right. As a consequence, the packets generally didn't make it past the sidewalk. Allegedly, there are 'sweepers' that come by a couple of days after delivery, picking up the unclaimed packets, observing those addresses, and removing them from the delivery schedule. This process has been observed only once, on a limited basis, and there have been subsequent repeated deliveries to the addresses where packets were picked up, so no delivery restrictions occurred.

And a walk through the neighborhood reveals some places where three or four deliveries have accumulated, so picking up unclaimed packets is not uniformly practiced. The OWH claims to have an "opt out" process allowing residents to call and stop the deliveries, but the process doesn't seem to work either, at least as reported on a local social network.

Neighborhood representatives are attempting to resolve this issue, as the packets are perhaps the leading source of litter in our neighborhoods taken on a cumulative basis. How can you help? For the next month or two (assuming you have no use for the circulars), leave them where they land. Yes, it will be unsightly and a nuisance. But we need to demonstrate that OWH is not being responsible about picking up unwanted packets, in order to get some change in the process. You might also contact the OWH circulation department to attempt to stop the deliveries. Perhaps some other media exposure (like a local news channel) reporting the accumulation of packets might shame OWH into limiting the litter.



Membership Application

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

The GPNA Membership Year runs from January 1 through December 31

Type of Membership: Single (\$10) Family (\$15) Business (\$25)

Today's Date:

Business Name (if applicable):

Business Phone (if applicable):

Name (1): Phone: Email:

Name (2): Phone: Email:

Name (3): Phone: Email:

Name (4): Phone: Email:

Name (5): Phone: Email:

Address:

City: State: Zip:

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

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday Banquet | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Distribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleanup/Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord/Tenant Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> School Liaison | <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Lending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Memberships | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree Planting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easter Egg Hunt | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Walks | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Watch | <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Garden | |

Mail check or money order with this completed Membership Application Form to:

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
 P.O. Box 31462
 Omaha, NE 68131

For additional information about GPNA, please visit www.giffordparkomaha.org



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
PO Box 31462
Omaha, NE 68131

Place
Stamp
Here

**Spring Clean Up
Saturday, April 12 9:00-2:00 pm
in Gifford Park**



Each Spring the City of Omaha and Keep Omaha Beautiful host neighborhood Spring Clean Up events all over the city. It's a chance for neighborhoods to clean up their allies and streets, garages, yards, parks and playgrounds and make their neighborhoods more beautiful places to be. 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!

**25th Annual Gifford Park
Easter Egg Hunt**



**Saturday, April 19
12 noon sharp!
in Gifford Park**

**Volunteers needed to help clean up Gifford Park
at 10:30 am prior to the event.**

**(Join us afterward for the 3rd annual Cultural
Event at Yates Community Center
12:00-2:00 pm)**