



Gifford Park's Pride

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

December 2014

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association's 26th Annual

HOLIDAY BANQUET

When: Wednesday, December 10, 2014
6:00 pm
(Dinner served at 6:30 pm)

Where: Becic Dining Room,
Creighton University Medical Center

A traditional holiday meal will be served, compliments of
CHI Health-Creighton University Medical Center

RSVP: to Jill at 402-213-3105 or email
giffordparkneighborhood@gmail.com
(Space is limited, RSVP by 12/4/14)

Join us for a Year-in-Review, Neighbor of the Year Award, door prizes and time with your neighbors!

Please bring a canned food item for the Food Bank.

Neighborhood School Effort Update

By Chris Foster

With passage on November 4th of the \$421 million Omaha Public Schools (OPS) district bond issue, efforts now focus on implementation. Nearly \$17 million of the bonds are slated to build a new elementary school in our neighborhood. The location of the school is still a big question and this is where things get complicated.

We (our Gifford Park Neighborhood School effort) have been unified and clear since last year about the goals and needs of our neighborhood children and families, and the neighborhood as a whole. We do not want OPS to tear down the existing historic

Continued on page 3

2015 Board Elected

New board members were elected at the November meeting:

President: Luther Larson

Vice President: Eric Purcell

Treasurer: Alexandra Goswami

Secretary: Jill Westfall

At-Large: Andy Wessel, Mark Trampe,

Charles Mitchell, Marie Helene Andre

Business Liaison: Martin Janousek

Landlord Liaison: Chris Foster

2014 GPNA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

ERIC PURCELL
402-719-5108

VICE PRESIDENT

RICKY GREEN
402-513-6286

SECRETARY

JILL WESTFALL
402-213-3105

TREASURER

LUTHER LARSON
402-616-9350

BOARD MEMBERS

AT LARGE

Mark Trampe 332-6188
Laura Weiss 609-444-9125

BUSINESS

Martin Janousek 558-4070

LANDLORD

Chris Foster 290-8187

COMMITTEES

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Chris Foster 290-8187

MEMBERSHIP

Mark Trampe 332-6188

NEIGHBORHOOD MARKET

Martin Janousek 558-4070

NEWSLETTER

Jill Westfall 213-3105

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Chris Foster 290-8187

PARK

Roger Freeman 517-5208

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Eric Purcell 719-5108

From the President

By Eric Purcell

Another year in Gifford Park is quickly coming to an end as we wind up for our final neighborhood event of the year, the 26th Annual Gifford Park Holiday Banquet on December 10. By now you should have received your invite in the mail and many of you have probably already sent in your RSVP. It's important to make note that this year the banquet is scheduled for a WEDNESDAY night. We try to keep things consistent and schedule the holiday banquet on our regular Thursday meeting night, but some years there are no Thursdays available! But when it comes to celebrating the people and events of our neighborhood, it doesn't make a whole lot of difference to me if it's a Wednesday or a Thursday!

As this year comes to a close, I'm also wrapping up my turn as the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association president. After these two years, I have a new appreciation for all of our past presidents. And I am more and more impressed each day at the level of dedication, perseverance and persistent service so many people have given over the years to invest in this neighborhood. It is no small thing! And I know that people are willing to give so much of themselves because they love this neighborhood and, more importantly, love their neighbors. Thank You!

As you know, one of the things that I have consistently advocated for is that we, as an association of neighbors, do all that we can to include and consider all of our neighbors. We have a unique opportunity in this neighborhood to continue being on the leading edge in neighborhood renewal. In my mind, the next level is a deeper integration of our immigrant, refugee and minority neighbors into the life of Gifford Park. There are a lot of little ways we can work toward this end. Mostly, just being good neighbors and building relationships with the people who live here. I am also confident that a new school in our neighborhood will begin to knit this community together in new and exciting ways. And now that the school bond has passed, I believe it is important for our neighborhood to continue working for a great school. In many ways, the work is only beginning! I also firmly believe that our hopes and plans to turn Turner Park North into a dedicated soccer field is another way for us to welcome and integrate with the diverse folks living here. These are some of the things that I and many of you will continue to champion!

And finally, thank you for the opportunity to lead GPNA for these last two years. It has been a privilege and I am honored to be part of Gifford Park!

See you in the Neighborhood!

Eric

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.

It's Membership time in the GPNA.

The 2015 Membership year starts January 1.

Renew your membership or join at the Holiday Banquet or mail in the "application" found on the back page!

Tennis in Gifford Park

On October 19th the Omaha Tennis Association (OTA) honored the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association for the OTA Community Service Excellence Award for 2014. There are too many people to thank for their volunteer service over the 21 years of youth tennis in Gifford Park, but I want to mention a few names who have gone above and beyond – Ric & Jane Hines, Jim Wilson, Lou Harrison, the Stanley

family, Jan Franks, Bette Tanner, Betty Slayden, Tyffaney Reichert, Kayleen Tran, Buddy Hogan, Paul & Lindsey Johaneck family, Donnie Gildon, Jackie Foster, Jenny Waltemath, Kirk Peck, Vince Emery, Roger Freeman and Chris & Sallie Foster. On a related note, we currently have thirteen dedicated youth taking lessons at Hanscom Park Indoor Tennis Center!

Restore Omaha

Mark your calendars for the 10th annual Restore Omaha Conference and Exhibition Saturday, February 27 & 28, 2015 at Metropolitan Community College South Campus. Restoration Exchange Omaha is organizing the event with its mission to educate and motivate the local community to restore and preserve older properties through Education, Advocacy and Invigoration. Also next year's fall home tour will be the Hanscom Park neighborhood. Go to www.restorationexchange.org for conference details as they become available. For questions call 402-679-5854 or email info@restorationexchange.org.



What's happening

A big congratulations to several GPNA family members (and volunteers) who recently had babies: Rob & Rose Janousek had a baby boy Harrison Robert 7 lbs 4 oz, 21" born September 4; Brandon & Megan Sperry had a baby boy Mogli Macai 8 lbs 13 oz, 21" born October 16; Mark & Sara Trampe had a baby boy Donovan Marcus 6 lbs 4 oz, 20.75" born October 24.

Congratulations to Bob Hutton (a.k.a the "Godfather" of the neighborhood) for receiving an Eagle Scout mentor pin from several Eagle Scout recipients at a November 29 ceremony. Congratulations also to Gifford Park resident Max Kaye for receiving his Eagle Scout honor. Max, who now attends college in Oklahoma and who was mentored by Bob, is a long-time GPNA volunteer.

Neighborhood School

Continued from page 1

Yates School building at 32nd & Davenport Streets. We would like to see the Yates building continue to serve as public use (as the existing programs do) and even serve as a community center for surrounding neighborhoods in the future. We believe the Yates building and location lend itself very well for a community center with Gifford Park on the west and Turner Park North on the east. Of note, the GPNA is currently working with City Parks Department on plans for a youth soccer field and walk/bike trail in Turner Park North.

In late November, neighborhood representatives met with key OPS officials and Jacobs (OPS's Consultants) representatives to discuss next steps for building a new school. We were told no final decisions have been made and there is a thorough process for deciding location and timeline, and our neighborhood will be involved in this decision-making process. One change may be that the old Yates School attendance boundary, which is 40th Street on the west, may move

to Saddle Creek Rd. Our new school is proposed to have a capacity of 450 students. The Student Assignment Plan will help determine these details.

We also met with Creighton University to discuss any possibilities of them offering to sell existing parking lot property near 32nd Street between Burt and Webster, or other Creighton-owned property that OPS could use to build a new school. These locations would be advantageous for building an "urban" designed school that would fit into our older neighborhood and address parking, traffic and safety concerns, as well as saving the current Yates building. Creighton is still figuring out their master plans and we plan to continue meeting as plans evolve with both OPS and Creighton.

Besides the school location and design questions, there will eventually be discussions regarding school principal, curriculum & programs, PTA/PTO, neighborhood partnerships, etc. – this is where we will need your help and involvement to work toward the best solutions for the future success of the school and neighborhood. For more information, contact Chris Foster 402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net.



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) ___ 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 Opportunities! 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 Liason | <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Lending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Memberships | <input type="checkbox"/> School Achivities | <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 | |

Return completed form along with check or money order to:
 Gifford Park Neighborhood Association, PO Box 31462, Omaha, NE 68131.