



# Gifford Park's Pride

*Gifford Park Neighborhood: A Great Place to Live, Work, Learn, and Play*  
[www.giffordparkomaha.org](http://www.giffordparkomaha.org)

January/February 2015

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

## 2014 GPNA Holiday Banquet

*By Chris Foster*

Once again we had a great turnout with about 125 GPNA members, family, and guests who attended our 26th Annual Holiday Banquet held Thursday, December 10 at CHI-Creighton University Medical Center in the Becic Dining Room. Many thanks to everyone (especially Jill Westfall) who helped with sending out invitations, taking RSVPs, and 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) and picture boards of our GPNA events and activities.

Emcee and GPNA outgoing president Eric Purcell kept the evening rolling. This year's theme was "snowmen." Dana Carlton-Flint put together our table decorations, and Dana, Curtis, and Jill decorated the cute snowman cookies for dessert. The 2014 events & activities slideshow ran during the first half of the evening as people enjoyed the festive atmosphere and good conversation. Brent Lubbert video-taped several neighbors about their experience volunteering with the GPNA.

After our delicious meal we recognized some very special volunteer efforts. We paid tribute to some of our dedicated neighbors who sadly passed away in 2014, we will certainly miss them. Then we had a "Year in Review" which several folks presented photos and talked about highlights from their programs including: Friday Night Neighborhood Market & Block Party (Ali Clark, Martin Janousek); Community Garden, Tennis, Halloween Haunted House and Food Drop-off (Chris Foster); Youth Soccer and Yates

**Next General Meeting**  
**Thursday, February 12**

**7:00 pm**

**Alegent Creighton Medical Center**  
**Morrison Seminar Room**

**Topics:**

**Project updates from the**  
**Community Bike Shop,**  
**Yates School,**  
**Restoration Exchange, and**  
**Big Muddy Urban Farm**

**Special presentation on Airbnb**

Cultural event (Eric Purcell); Big Muddy Urban Farm (Ali Clark, Brent Lubbert, Matt Cronin); and Community Bike Shop (Manager Charles Mitchell, youth volunteer Mohamed Ukach). Chris Foster then announced our "Neighbor of the Year" – Jill Westfall (see "Neighbor of the Year" article in this issue).

We again offer our sincere appreciation to CHI-Creighton University Medical Center, in particular Kevin Nokels, Pattie Dappen, and Tom Miller for their enormous support by hosting this event

*continued on page 3*

**2015 GPNA Officers**

**Luther Larson, President**

402-616-9350 | lutherlar@cox.net

**Eric Purcell, Vice President**

402-719-5108 | eric.purcell@crmladers.org

**Jill Westfall, Secretary**

402-213-3105 | jill.lynn.westfall@gmail.com

**Alexandra Goswami, Treasurer**

847-477-2156 | omaha\_beef@hotmail.com

**Board**

**Mark Trampe, At-Large**

402-332-6188 | supertrampe@gmail.com

**Andy Wessel, At-Large**

402-916-5030 | ajwessel13@yahoo.com

**Charles Mitchell, At-Large**

402-309-0777 | charlesalexandermitchell@gmail.com

**Marie Hélène Andre, At-Large**

402-769-9183 | mhandre34@hotmail.com

**Martin Janousek, Business Rep**

402-558-4070 | mjjanousek@leoadaly.com

**Chris Foster, Landlord Rep**

402-290-8187 | foster3413@cox.net

**Opportunities – Contacts**

**GPNA General Meetings**

Luther Larson, 616-9350

**Community Bike Project**

Charles Mitchell 309-0777

**Community Garden/Youth Garden**

Chris Foster 290-8187

**Adventure Playground**

Teal Gardner 402-875-1896

teal.gardner@gmail.com

**Teen Market Garden**

Cynthia Shuck 556-2090

dalilabush@cox.net

**Gifford Park Market**

Martin Janousek 558-4070

**Yates Community Center**

Susan Mayberger 557-2431

susan.mayberger@ops.org

**Youth Soccer**

Eric Purcell 719-5108

**Youth Tennis**

Chris Foster 290-8187

**Spring Cleanup**

Luther Larson 616-9350

**From the President**

*By Luther Larson*

Happy New Year. It's a new year and a new neighborhood association president. As a quick introduction, I am Luther Larson and have been involved in GPNA since we moved into the neighborhood in 2006. I have served on the GPNA board for 6 years in various positions, including as president in 2011 and 2012. I am excited to be your president again for the 2015 term.

To get the year started, the GPNA Board met last week and set some goals for 2015. One of the first goals discussed was increasing membership. This is where you can help by filling out the form on the back of this newsletter and sending a check in with it today. Also, ask your neighbors if they are members and if they aren't already, encourage them to join. As last resort to increase membership, board members may be knocking at your door.

Our second goal the board discussed was to increase advertisement in this newsletter. If you own or know a business that would like to advertise in our newsletter, please email Jill at jill.lynn.westfall@gmail.com for more information. Related to this goal are plans to improve/upgrade the website to offer more electronic access to neighborhood information.

The third goal for the neighborhood is to improve the welcoming of neighborhood

homes by providing tools and communications related to front yard/front door improvement projects. We are calling this the "Restore Neighbors One Home at a Time" initiative. Think of the most welcoming home(s) you have seen, what is different about it? What makes it so welcoming? Welcoming homes typically will have the front door visible with the porch/entry open and free of obstructions. The front yard is landscaped so as not have barriers between the sidewalk and the front door. Instead flowers and shrubs add to the welcoming effect. Our initiative is to have GPNA recognize the efforts neighbors make to improve their properties. If you need a few extra hands to help, let us know so that neighbors can volunteer to help, connect you with tools through the GPNA tool rental program, and publish the results in the newsletter to encourage others to participate. Our goal is to give neighbors a reason to work together on an activity where everyone is a winner, including the neighborhood. If interested in participating email me at LutherLar@cox.net.

I am sure the Board will come up with more goals for the year, but we need your input. Please plan to attend the February meeting and share your thoughts on what GPNA can do to make Gifford Park a better place to live and play.

See you around the neighborhood!

Luther

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.

## Update from the Bike Shop

By Mohamed Ukach

The Community Bike Project is excited for our new Youth Board! At the beginning of the year six dedicated youth volunteers applied and were accepted as the first Youth Board members. Congratulations to Mohamed (President), Abdi (Vice President), Marcus (Treasurer), Moe (Secretary), Abdi (Graphic Designer), and Mumin (Activity Coordinator) on their new roles.

The Youth Board started from youth meetings every Sunday. Kids could come to the meetings and talk about ideas and whatever they're thinking about helping people and think outside the box about the bike shop. We thought there were too many people coming to the youth meetings and it was too noisy to think about stuff that would help the bike shop. So we changed the youth meeting to the board meeting so that we can think about helping the neighborhood. The Youth Board is Mohamed, Abdi, Abdi 2, Moe, Marcus and Mumin.

The person that came up with the study hall is the vice president, Abdi. The study hall is an after school activity for kids at Yates from 5 to



7pm on Tuesday. Anybody can come with their homework and just have fun doing homework at the study hall. If you're done with your homework you can help the other kids with their homework. If you're having a hard time with your homework you can come to the study hall and get help from the best tutors.

I feel glad to be the president of the Youth Board so I can come up with the ideas to help the youth board do good around the neighborhood. I like to help the community and to be a leader.

## Airbnb

At our next general meeting, Yon Chong and Leon Dickinson, experienced Airbnb hosts will explain how Airbnb works and offer tips for renting out your spare room to out-of-town guests. With Berkshire Hathaway weekend right around the corner and our neighborhood's proximity to the Century Link Center, it's a great chance to turn that extra room into a little extra cash!



## 2014 GPNA Holiday Banquet

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complete with a buffet of traditional holiday fare! Darryl Hutton was our event photographer again. Mark & Sara Trampe greeted everyone, took memberships and handled the collection of canned food donations (later taken 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 Sara Howard and her mom Gwen, Councilman Chris Jerram, Subby & Janice Anzaldo, Paul Mileris, Jenny Waltemath, Jackie Foster, Chris Foster, Nancy Gaarder, Mike Caban, and Bob Hutton (note: again this year Bob Hutton made hand-carved wooden ornaments for gifts).

## Restore Omaha

Join old-home owners, restoration experts and amateurs, and preservation lovers alike for an opportunity to spend the day networking and gathering ideas, solutions and inspiration for restoring older properties.

The 10th annual Restore Omaha Conference is Saturday, February 28, at Metropolitan Community College's South Campus, 27th and Q Streets. The conference opens with a reception on Friday, Feb. 27 from 7 to 10 p.m. at The Pella, a new event facility inside the former Pella Lutheran Church at 41st and Harney Streets. Saturday's conference runs from 8 to 5 p.m. Keynote speaker is 2014 National Trust for Historic Preservation Award winner Bernice Radle and her husband Jason Wilson. Through Buffalove Development, the couple works to create cool urban spaces in an affordable, sustainable and high-design way. Their organization is bringing new life to properties that were either foreclosed upon or on the brink of demolition in Buffalo, NY.

Fifteen breakout sessions have something for everyone whether you are a developer, architect, owner of an old home or a neighborhood community leader. Topics range from case studies on successful home and building restorations, how to finish older basements, how to use real



estate tools to save historic properties and information on the new state historic tax credits and city code enforcement policy. Breaks provide opportunities to visit with vendors and local craftsmen. It all ends with the Restore Jam, where any attendees are invited to share before-and-after photos of their own restoration project.

Cost to attend both the reception and conference is \$70 (\$50 for conference only, \$25 reception only). Restoration Exchange members receive a discount.

For more information and to register starting January 15, visit [www.restoreomaha.org](http://www.restoreomaha.org) or call (402) 679-5854.

To see a short video from a past conference visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYHuAyt3IA>.

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## Restore Omaha Conference keynote speakers to talk about Buffalove

Bernice "Buffalove" Radle and her husband Jason Wilson will serve as keynote speakers for the 2015 Restore Omaha conference February 27 and 28, 2015 at Metropolitan Community College's South Omaha Campus. They are 2014 National Trust for Historic Preservation Award winners. Through Buffalove Development, the couple works to create cool urban spaces in an affordable, sustainable and high-design way. Their organization is bringing new life to properties that were either foreclosed upon or on the brink of demolition in Buffalo, NY.

Radle and Wilson love buildings and cities. Their endless enthusiasm, dedication and passion is aimed at historic preservation, neighborhood development and making historic buildings more energy efficient. Radle is a project manager at Buffalo Energy, co-owns Buffalove Development and is very active in Buffalo New York's Young Preservationists and the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association. She has overseen over 150 energy efficiency projects statewide, impacting 24,000 people. Radle and Wilson's Buffalove Development focuses on buying and renovating vacant or underutilized properties in Buffalo. In 2014, they teamed up to film a historic renovation series for HGTV which is set to air in Spring 2015.

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## Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Budget 2015 1/30/2015

Cash balances	Bank Accts	Allocation
General funds on hand (12/31/2014)		\$10,709.79
Checking	\$7,470.30	
Certification of Deposit 1	\$2,742.08	
Certification of Deposit 2	\$2,511.41	
Specified funds on hand (12/31/2014)		
Garden	\$3,264.31	\$3,264.31
Soccer (MNA Grant)		\$425.00
Kiewit Grant		\$1,589.00
Bank account balance as of 12/31/2014	\$15,988.10	\$15,988.10
2015 Budget		
Income	2015 Budget	
Unspecified		
Memberships	\$2,000.00	
Donations	\$1,200.00	
Misc. Other	\$30.00	
News Letter Ads	\$50.00	
Sub-total		\$3,280.00
Specified		
Grants	\$10,000.00	
Donations		
Sallie Foster		
Easter Egg Hunt	\$500.00	
Flower Pots	\$300.00	
Tennis	\$550.00	
Garden	\$1,000.00	
Sallie Foster		
Garden plot fees	\$420.00	
Sub-total		\$12,770.00
Total		\$16,050.00

Expenses		
General		
Neighborhood Market	\$-	
Banquet	\$500.00	
Newsletter	\$1,000.00	
Cultural Event	\$500.00	
Post Office Box/ Bank Fees	\$165.00	
Organization memberships	\$200.00	
Website	\$175.00	
Meeting expenses	\$400.00	
GPNA Board discretionary	\$1,000.00	
Sub-total		\$3,940.00
Specific		
Easter Egg Hunt	\$500.00	
Flower Pots	\$300.00	
Soccer	\$425.00	
Garden	\$700.00	
Tennis	\$300.00	
Mutual of Omaha Grant	\$1,589.00	
Grant Projects (Mayor's Grant)	\$5,000.00	
Sub-total		\$8,814.00
Total		\$12,754.00
Expected Bank Account Balance as of 12/31/2015		\$19,284.10

prepared by Alex Goswami

### 501(c)3 Status

Last year, the GPNA's application for 501(c)3 was approved. Donations to the GPNA are now tax deductible. Make a donation to support the GPNA and all of it's activities at any of our events or by mail.

## Jill Westfall - 2014 Neighbor of the Year

By Chris Foster

The GPNA honored Jill Westfall as our 2014 'Neighbor of the Year' at the 26th annual GPNA Holiday Banquet. Jill was born in West Des Moines, IA. She moved into the Gifford Park neighborhood in 2003, living at the 'Spirit of Peace' house near 32nd & Webster while attending Creighton where she graduated in 2005. After graduation, Jill left Omaha for a year in the Twin Cities, volunteering with Catholic Charities putting her skills and passion to work advocating for public policy changes for families in poverty and immigrant communities. After a year in Minnesota, she returned to Omaha for a position at Voices for Children in Nebraska where she worked as Communications Coordinator. Last February she changed employers and now works at UNMC at the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska.

Jill's neighborhood involvement is very impressive in a relatively short amount of time. She was GPNA Secretary from 2008-2010, and again 2012 to present. Jill served as Vice President in 2011. Most of you know she has been our GPNA Gifford Park's Pride newsletter editor for the past 3 years and does a GREAT job. In fact the GPNA was one of just a few neighborhood organizations to be recognized last May in Eugene, Oregon at the NUSA (Neighborhoods USA) National Conference for "Outstanding Neighborhood Newsletter." If you think about, over the past 7 years while serving on the GPNA board, Jill has attended more GPNA meetings (general and board) than any other member! She does a ton of work for our Holiday Banquet including planning, invitations, RSVPs, decorating, and more. Other areas Jill has volunteered include the community garden, Block Parties, Bike Rodeos, and of course, the Community Bicycle Project of Omaha (CBPO) from 2006-2011. Her incredible dedication volunteering with the Bike Shop is amazing and includes: early startup and "foundation" work to help get operations off the



ground; fundraising; training; operations; recruiter; working with Creighton Legal Clinic on 501c3 non-profit status and by-laws; CBPO President, Treasurer & Secretary; teaching bike safety and repair; and mentoring youth.

At the banquet, I had the real honor of presenting Jill her special recognition. I always knew she did a huge amount of the "heavy lifting" for the GPNA since she joined the board in 2008, but after gathering her information as I prepared my talk, I was blown away by how much she has done for our neighborhood and the broader community, and all the while working a challenging job. The following testimonials below are from folks who know and have worked with Jill:

**Emerick Huber (founder of the Community Bicycle Project of Omaha):**

Greetings to you! This is awesome, Jill is a great role model. Let me think about a story, I'll tell ya she did have vision, and as you might know was someone that supported me, that is something that I'm forever grateful of.

**Caitie Caughey (founder of Big Muddy Urban Farm):**

I remember Jill from the Community Bike Shop. She always hosted ladies night on Wednesdays & I thought that was amazing. Sometimes it was intimidating to go to the shop to work on things with only males around. She knew it was important to make space for folks to work on their bikes

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## Community Garden/Youth Garden Update

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 foster3413@cox.net), or Mike Caban (402-341-4722 or caban3321@cox.net).



## Neighbor of the Year

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who might not feel as handy with tools (not to say all women aren't as handy with tools as men). I remember seeing her regularly at neighborhood meetings, at potlucks, at the garden, at the bike shop, she really cared for the neighborhood and her neighbors and made time to be involved on top of everything else she had going.

Tyler Magnuson (founder of Big Muddy Urban Farm):

Jill was a great stabilizing force at the bike shop in the early days. She help provide direction and clarity to the mission of the bike shop when we were just 'dipping our toes into the water.' I remember her being instrumental in helping get all the papers in for our non-profit status among other tasks she managed. Thanks Jill for all your dedication and hard work over the years, Gifford Park is better off because of you!

Stuart Shell (past President and current volunteer of Community Bicycle Project of Omaha, past Vice President of GPNA):

Jill works quiet magic in community projects. Through her consistency, perseverance, and optimism she brings transformation to organizations with a slow-and-steady-wins-the-race mentality. This is exactly what she achieved with Community Bike Project starting in 2006. In those years of organizational gestation, Jill was a continuous presence that kept what little semblance of organization we could muster intact. She did this by being present at the table and listening, as well as redirecting the conversation (several times!) when someone started veering away from the long-time mission of serving a clear need in the neighborhood. Jill also served as a leader for the group during a time of transition, and allowed each volunteer to contribute according to their skills and passion. I've been blessed to have worked beside Jill and I am comforted to know that her neighborhood-based skills are continuing to transform our community.

I do not know what our neighborhood would do without Jill. The work she has done and is doing is many times difficult and time-consuming, it's tough to find people willing to volunteer to do this! Congratulations Jill!

## Food Express

*By Jim Wilwerding*

On my daily walks I've noticed that most of the Food Express packets are not picked up by residents. I've also noticed that the delivery person doesn't get the hint when they are still laying out a week later, and continues to deliver them. I had previously read on the "Nextdoor Gifford Park" site that a person is supposed to come around a couple of days after delivery to pick up the rejects, but I've only seen this happen once. I have seen up to four weekly deliveries accumulate at some addresses so this pick-up is irregular, at best. To add to the nuisance, in my neighborhood the delivery person rarely gets the packet farther than the sidewalk (rather than getting it into the yard). So they're more of a hazard while walking (and more numerous) than the dog owners that don't clean up after their pets.



Did you know you can opt out by of the Omaha World-Herald's Food Express? Contacting the World-Herald at 402-346-3363 or email [foodexpress@owh.com](mailto:foodexpress@owh.com).

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## Better Know a Board Member

*In 2015, Gifford Park is welcoming four new members to the GPNA Board. Get to know two of our newest members, Alex Goswami and Andy Wessel.*

Alex is originally from Omaha, moved away to Chicago for college, next to West Virginia, and finally looped back to Omaha. She found a home here in Gifford Park with her husband Asit, her little dog Spicer, and recently her brother moved in after serving in the Marine Corps. During the day Alex works as the Director of Finance and Accounting with the Food Bank for the Heartland. In her leisure time, Alex likes to speak truth to power.



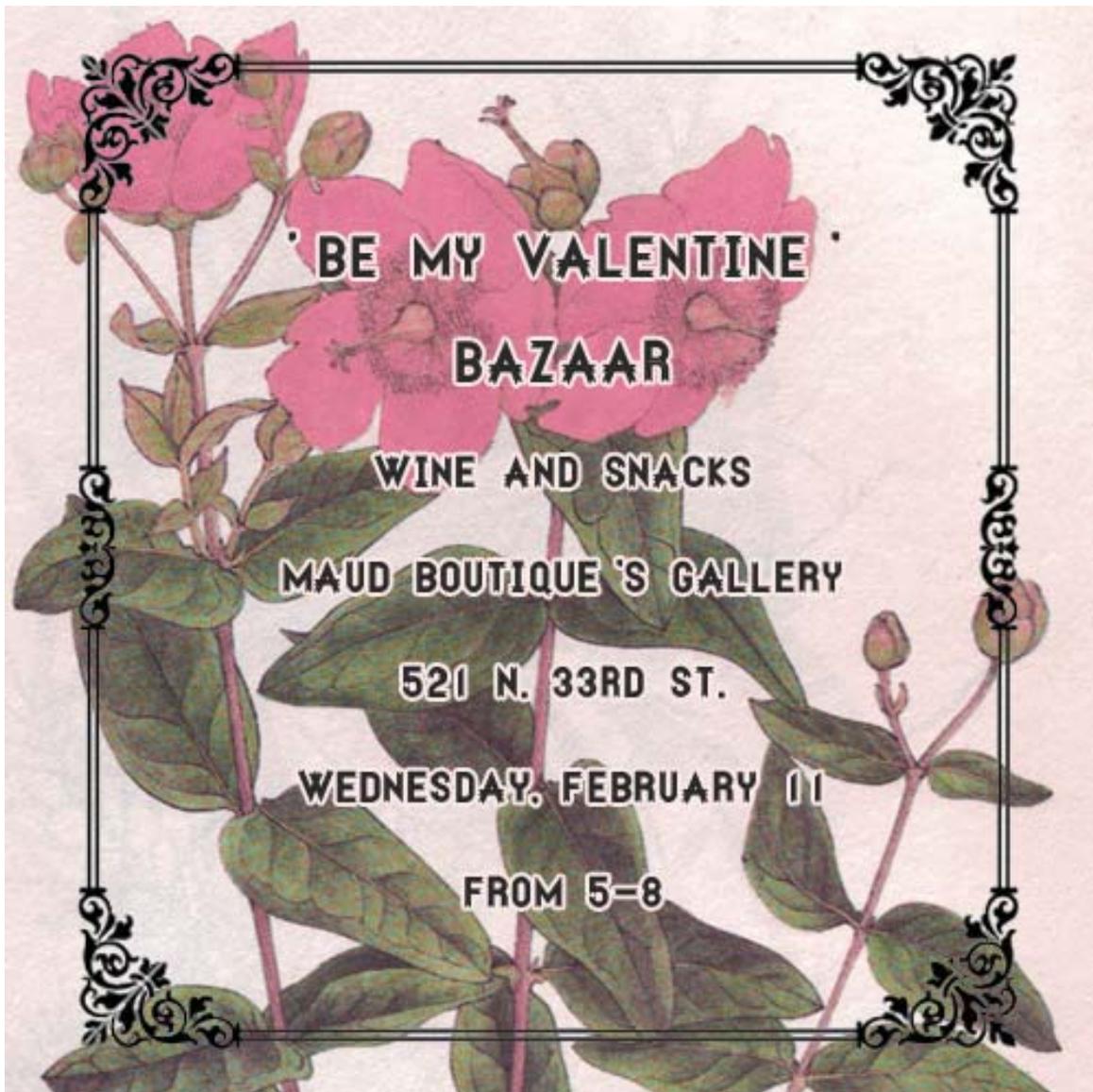
My name is Andy Wessel and I live in the neighborhood on 36th Ave with my wife Leslie and my three kids, Nora (6), Jonas (3), and Manny (1). When I'm not in dad-mode, I work at the Douglas County Health Department helping to build health considerations into transportation and housing decisions. Two interesting facts about me -- 1) As part of my dad's work for Union Pacific, we moved 7 times when I was a kid before we finally settled in Omaha when I was in middle school and 2) I spent five years living in Detroit working with people who were homeless. My passions are reading, taking walks and hikes, and my work with the Mankind Project.



## Restore Omaha Keynote

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In their keynote, Radle and Wilson will examine how the preservation movement is changing in rust belt cities and nationwide, explore ideas and projects that have promoted historic preservation initiatives and identify lessons learned and ideas to use to promote future preservation initiatives. Additional break-out sessions by the two will examine the use of the state & federal historic tax credit program highlighting their successes as well as shortcomings and touch on other programs meant to spur neighborhood revitalization efforts.



## Holiday Banquet Highlights



## GPNA Events

The groundhog may have predicted six more weeks of winter, but that doesn't mean spring (and summer) aren't right around the corner. Get out your calendars and save the date for all of these GPNA activities:

### Ongoing:

GPNA general meetings (2nd Thursday 7pm Feb/May/Aug/Nov at CHI-Creighton)

GPNA board meetings (4th Thursday 7pm each month at GPNA president's home)



### April

Spring Cleanup

(Saturday in April or May, date TBD 9am-2pm at Gifford Park)

Easter Egg Hunt

(Saturday April 4, 10:30am-12:30pm at Gifford Park)

Cultural Event

(Date TBD, 10:30am-2pm at Yates Community Center)

### May

Community Garden Season Opening

(Saturday May 9, 10am-noon)

Community Garden Work Parties

(Wed evenings 6-8pm during growing season April-Sept)

Youth Garden Program

(each Saturday morning 10-11:30am, May 16-August 29)

Adventure Playground at Community Garden

(Saturday afternoons during spring/summer/fall)

Gifford Park Neighborhood Market

(Friday evenings May-September, 5-8pm)

Youth Tennis Block Party

(Wednesday May 13, 6-7:30pm at Gifford Park)



### June/July/August

Youth Tennis Program

(Wednesday mornings 10am-noon June-July at Gifford Park)

Youth Soccer Program

(Wednesday evenings 6:30-7:30pm June-July at Gifford Park)

Youth Tennis Program

(Wednesdays in August, 6-7:30pm at Gifford Park)





Gifford Park Neighborhood Association  
 PO Box 31462  
 Omaha, NE 68131

Place  
 Stamp  
 Here

**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.