



Gifford Park's Pride

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

July/August 2016

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

The Green Space: A Gifford Park Treasure

By Clarinda Karpov & Richard White

"Grow With Gifford Park!" Gifford Park has long committed to being a "green neighborhood." We value our mature trees and green spaces, the special harmony that you find in an established neighborhood that has mellowed with the landscape. The GPNA has participated in programs with Big Muddy Workshop and the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum to develop into a showcase green neighborhood. While the appearance of our neighborhood is historic, the people of our diverse community are of today and tomorrow. We support a flourishing Community Garden; Big Muddy Urban Farm; a tree-planting program; and green spaces, especially Gifford Park and the Green Space on 30th Street between Cass Street and Cottage Grove. Gifford Park is our active green for sports and events at the western end of our neighborhood; the Green Space at 30th Street between Cass Street and Cottage Grove is its quiet, contemplative, and natural complement on the other side of the neighborhood.

The Green Space is a beautiful park-like green, $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre, home to urban wildlife and songbirds, and cherished for its mature trees—including rare American Elms—that frame a view of the Downtown skyline and give refreshment in summer heat beneath their cooling canopy. There we refresh and recharge in nature, enjoying some green moments on our walks to school or work—or walking our dogs on-leash; there we can stroll, contemplate, meditate, relax, or do tai chi; and children can make lifelong friends with nature—becoming friends of the environment--

Next General Meeting
Thursday, August 11th, 7:00PM

Big Muddy Urban Farm
Aspiring Farmer Residency

CHI Health-Creighton University
Medical Center
Morrison Seminar Room

Upcoming Events

33rd Friday Cultural Event
August 12th, 5 - 8p.m.
(details on page 4)

Youth Tennis Program
(details on page 7)

and discover a sense of wonder in their own neighborhood, developing their imaginations in creative, unstructured play. Kids who played in the Green Space now bring their children to the Green Space to play! The Green Space gives us the daily opportunity to enjoy nature and the changing seasons, to be inspired creatively, and to reconnect.

The Green Space is elevated above street level, creating a magical and somewhat secluded oasis away from the world even in busy Midtown and surrounded on three sides by vintage homes: a stage for the pageant of the seasons.

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Opportunities – Contacts

GPNA General Meetings

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Charles Mitchell 402-309-0777

Community Garden/Youth Garden

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Teen Market Garden

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Martin Janousek 402-558-4070

Yates Community Center

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Youth Soccer

Eric Purcell 402-719-5108

Youth Tennis

Chris Foster 402-290-8187

Spring Cleanup

Luther Larson 402-616-9350

From the President...

'Creighton University sold its property on 30th street!' ... that was last month, at the beginning of the Summer.

And then just a few days ago, in the midst of a muggy Summer day, the news went all over Gifford Park Neighborhood: 'OPS Board members approved the purchase of the parking lot to build the new neighborhood elementary school!' ...

Good news? Certainly! It was one of the objectives of the GPNA this year to get a resolution on the new elementary school. And not only did we get a resolution, we also got what we wanted: build the new elementary school where we think it is best, and save Yates Community Center (Temporarily? We certainly hope not!)

So far, the GPNA has been involved in the discussions leading to these two major decisions. We attended OPS Board meetings and expressed our thoughts and concerns to the Board members, we sent letters to both OPS and Creighton University asking them to start talking with each other, we sent them a petition and we placed signs all around the neighborhood. As for the re-development and transformation of Creighton University Medical Center into apartments and retail spaces, we were invited to preliminary meetings, we shared our vision and wishes, and we felt we were listened to.

We could think our job is done. No! Our job is not done yet! This is just a milestone for Gifford Park Neighborhood: it is a first decision that opens new possibilities, major changes, uncertainties too. It is just the start of a new step, a new era for the neighborhood.

It is important to stay involved in the discussions and decisions about the re-development of Creighton medical Center into apartments and more, and about the school, including its design, its size (fitting the needs), and also the curriculum offered (remember the special meeting last March about the possibility to offer a dual language program). And it is also of paramount importance to be open to new ideas while insisting on what makes our neighborhood: welcoming, inclusive, family-oriented, vibrant, and so much amore!

Despite, or thanks to, all these changes, Gifford Park Neighborhood is and will remain a great place to live, learn, play and grow!

I wish you a great rest of the Summer!

-Marie Hélène André

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 gpnewseditor@gmail.com.

Youth Soccer Program

By Eric Purcell

Gifford Park Soccer Camp just keeps getting better and better! I am blown away by how much fun this is each summer. When we started this five summers ago our goal was to create a fun space where kids could be introduced to the game of soccer to learn the basic skills of the game.

This summer we had a whopping 86 youth participate in our 7 week soccer camp. Most nights we were right around 50 kids ages 3-11! Our biggest night was 55 kids! We had an amazing group of 22 different volunteers and coaches that gave their time to make this happen!

On the last night of camp each of the coaches handed out participation ribbons to their teams and all of the kids who came every week got a special prize! This year it was a drawstring backpack with our Gifford Park Soccer Camp logo printed on it! We also honored a very special coach. Alex Wichman has been helping out all five years and has not missed a single week! Her dedication to these kids is remarkable and we're honored to have her be a part of our program.

Our second goal when we started this was to create a space where neighbors who might not connect otherwise could become friends. It is amazing to watch this happen each summer. Earlier this spring someone told me about how their kids have become friends with some other children on their block all because of playing together at Soccer Camp! I love that!

We wrapped up camp this summer with another cookout! Everyone brought a side dish to share and we grilled up a whole bunch of hot dogs!

Some big thank you's go out to some special sponsors we had this summer as well. In order to keep up with our growing camp, we applied for the Mayor's Grant and were awarded \$1,200 to buy more soccer balls, nets, training equipment and field paint. We also received a \$100 donation from Scheels Sporting Goods, \$250 from Thrivent Financial Action Team and, of course, the ongoing support and investment of GPNA! THANK YOU!!!



33rd Friday BLOCK PARTY!

By Eliza Perry

First Friday comes once a month... but there is only one 33rd Friday per year. Celebrate it the right way - on 33rd Street! Gifford Park Neighborhood Association invites EVERYBODY to celebrate summertime, community, and our neighborhood's diversity together from 5-8pm on August 12th.

Free admission!

Friday night market, free kids activities, bike rodeo, live music and dance performances from around the world, craft fair, food and SO MUCH MORE!

This year's Block Party will double as a fundraiser for the Gifford Park Neighborhood Market. The market has put together a one-of-a-kind raffle with items from vendors past and present - tickets will run as follows:

One ticket for \$1

Five tickets for \$3

Seven tickets for \$5

The event will feature Bhutanese, Mexican and Eastern European dance performances, in addition to local musician Matt Cronin & Friends.

Photos from last year's 33rd Friday



GIFFORD PARK

NEIGHBORHOOD

MARKET

EVERY FRIDAY
JUNE-SEPTEMBER 5-8 PM

Like us on
Facebook!



We accept Cash, Credit, Debit + EBT

Special thanks to our sponsoring vendors:



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Cooking LLC



Harmony Farms
& Skin Care
Natural Perfection



MINNE LUSA HOUSE



EARTHEN joy



Sawdust Creations
"You should see ... what I saw"

Find these vendors and more at the Gifford Park Neighborhood Market!
contact: gpnmarket@gmail.com

Eva Swanson Celebrates 90th Birthday

By Rose Carlson

Several years ago, our elderly neighbor Eva Swanson called me over to her house. She was in the midst of moving, having decided it was time to downsize, and she wanted to give me a few of her things. One of them was a beautiful blue and white quilted bedspread, made by her mother. It had a smaller quilt that matched. I admired the workmanship and the pristine condition they were in. "This smaller one was for the crib," she told me. I knew Eva had been an only child and had never married nor had children.

"The crib?" I questioned. "When did a baby live here?"

"I was the baby," answered my 83-year-old neighbor. Standing there in her beautiful, vintage-style house and looking at that baby quilt, I was able to picture her as a little girl growing up, running up and down the stairs, walking to school at Yates Elementary, taking the streetcar to Central High School, leaving for Augustana College in Rockford, IL and returning home to work as a secretary at UNO, a position she held for 41 years. She retired in 1989 and continued to live in the family home, caring for her aging parents there until they passed away in 1991 and 1992. Wow! How many of us can say we've lived our entire lives in one house, one neighborhood, or even one town? Not many.

Although I missed most of Eva's life on Webster St., my family has been fortunate enough to be a part of it for the past 13 years, the first six of which we were neighbors. (Eva moved to Elmwood Towers in 2009.) Every Christmas she invited us over to her house (and now invites us to her apartment) for peppermint ice cream in bowls shaped like tulips, which we eat with her homemade Swedish Christmas cookies and silver spoons. She helped one of my kids learn to sew and knit. They knitted a small blanket and drove together to the Humane Society to present it to a cat. Another one of my children invites Eva every year to her birthday party. Eva is the entire guest list. I could go on with so many wonderful memories of Eva, but then this newsletter would be 25 pages long.

But speaking of birthdays, Eva has just celebrated her 90th! She asked us to come to church with her as part of the celebration, greeting us with, "Today's a great day!" Indeed, reaching the age of 90 does make for a great day, but I think Eva lives every day with this attitude, which may be the reason she is still with us. Last November Eva had triple bypass surgery, which caused her to miss the GPNA holiday banquet for only the second time in 27 years. Her confidence and enthusiasm for life were apparent when she told me, "I'm sorry I'll miss the banquet this year, but I'll be back!"

Happy Birthday, Eva! You are a treasure!

Yates Community Center: A Place for Activities and Meetings

Yates Community Center located at 3270 Davenport Street is available to the Gifford Park Neighborhood to use for meetings and other activities. There is a gym and 8 classrooms available. Yates has hosted a variety of classes, community meetings, events, celebrations, basketball, and other activities. If anyone in the Gifford Park Neighborhood is interested in using the space they can contact Susan Mayberger, Building Administrator, at 402-557-2431 or susan.mayberger@ops.org to request a building permit. The building is open weekdays until 8:00 p.m. and Saturday mornings from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. for activities.



23rd Annual Gifford Park Free Tennis Program

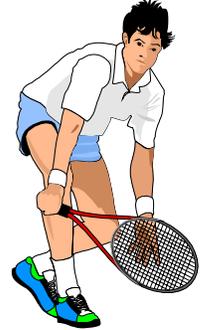


For: Youth (4 to 18 years old)

Dates: August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
(each Wednesday in August)

Where: Gifford Park Tennis Courts
(33rd & Cass St.)

Time: Ages 4 to 9 (6:00 - 6:45 p.m.)
Ages 10 to 18 (6:45 to 7:30 p.m.)



The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association is offering **FREE Tennis Lessons** and will provide tennis racquets, balls and instructors for each lesson. Parents and others are welcome to help.

To be enrolled, YOU MUST complete the form shown below and bring with you to the tennis lessons. Special prize for those who attend every lesson and demonstrate good sportsmanship. Space is limited so please **be on time.** Call **402-290-8187** for more information.

Registration/Permission Form - Bring this form (completely filled out) with you to the tennis lessons to be enrolled.

Youth's Name: _____ Parent's Name: _____

Street: _____ Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ School: _____

Parent/Guardian Phone: _____ email: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the child named above, I hereby give my full consent and approval for my child to participate as a member of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program.

I understand that there are certain risks of injury inherent in the practice and play of this sport, as well as related activities incidental to my child's participation, and I am willing to assume these risks on behalf of my child. I hereby certify that my child is fully capable of participating in this sport and that my child is healthy and has no physical or mental disabilities or infirmities that would restrict full participation in these activities, except as listed below.

I hereby waive, release and hold harmless the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program, and the City of Omaha, Nebraska, its Officers, coaches, sponsors, supervisors and representatives for any injury that may be suffered by my child in the normal course of participation in this sport and the activities incidental thereto, whether the result of negligence or any other cause. Furthermore, I give consent to any necessary medical treatment in case of emergency.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

What's Happening

Congratulations to GPNA members Andy & Leslie Wessel for the birth on July 4th of their 4th child Henry Bosco Wessel ("Hank"). Hank was 8 lbs. 4 oz and 20 inches. Nora, 7 and Jonas, 5 are very active participants in our youth garden and soccer programs. Andy works for the Douglas County Health Department with focus on Healthy Community Design and Health Impact Assessment efforts. Leslie has been heavily involved in helping to lead our Gifford Park Neighborhood School/Save Yates effort. Gifford Park is extremely lucky to have the Wessel's in Gifford Park!



Every year when July 25th rolls around our 'Godfather of Gifford Park' Bob Hutton celebrates a birthday. Last year he claimed he was 38 years old, this year he says he 48. Can you figure out what's going on? In 4 years he will be 88 and he will finally be telling the truth about his age, he won't be able to deny it! So Happy Birthday Bob, 84 years old...sorry, we meant 48 years young...or however old you really are!

Congratulations to Gifford Park residents and Community Bike Shop volunteers Aaron Haug & Amelia Peterson for their marriage July 27. Aaron & Amelia actually live above the Bike Shop and would love to find a home to buy in Gifford Park. Their wedding ceremony was at Narrows Park in Council Bluffs on the banks of the Missouri River – Good luck to you both!

SHELTERBELT SEASON 24 • 2016-2017

3225 California St. • Omaha, NE • www.shelterbelt.org

BY LOCAL/BUY LOCAL

We're proud to present a season of all local work - playwrights living in Omaha, Lincoln and Council Bluffs. Local work deepens the cultural landscape of Nebraska and allows us to provide our local theatre artists with the opportunity to showcase their work where they live, and where YOU live, too.

October 6 - 30, 2016

REVELATION

by Samuel Brett Williams

Rivers are turning to blood and people are disappearing! Explore faith, love, and the American landscape in a pitch black comedy about the End Days.

April 21 - May 14, 2017

CATHERLAND

book and lyrics by Becky Boesen
music by David von Kampen

A lesson in embracing the unexpected, *Catherland* reminds us that "where there is great love, there are always miracles."

January 27 - February 19, 2017

THE MOTHERHOOD ALMANAC

by Noah Diaz

A fiercely passionate tapestry of stories about the life inside of each us, as told by women and the women who raised them.

July 14 - August 6, 2017

NEIGHBORS, LOVERS AND ALL THE OTHERS

by Marie Amthor Schuett

As fantasy becomes reality, there is more to Loyal's neighbor than the window to his world originally revealed.

COME PLAY WITH US! SEASON TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

The Green Space: A Gifford Park Treasure

Continued from page 1

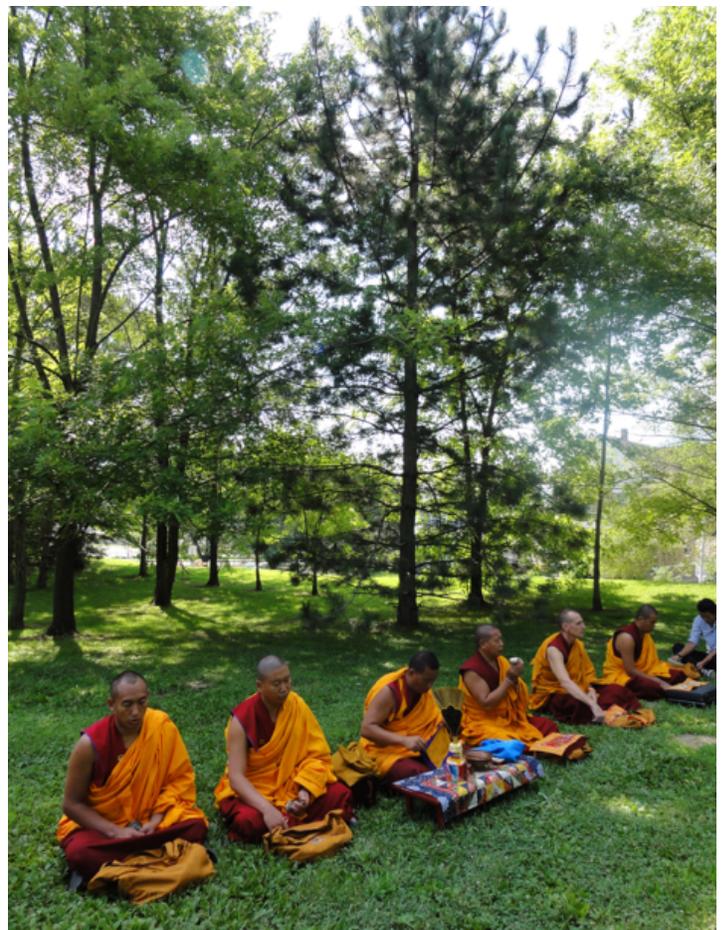
The Green Space has now been incorporated into Omaha's bike trail along 30th Street, providing a peaceful stopover for cyclists, as well as a wraparound alternative route via the well-worn diagonal path through the Green Space. The Green Space continues the green corridor from Turner Park North, and links with Gifford Park's Teen Market Garden site across the street on Cottage Grove. With the forthcoming redevelopment of the Creighton University Medical Center as an apartment complex and the building of a new Gifford Park Elementary School, the role of the Green Space as a "village green" will be more important than ever-- as an amenity to attract new residents to this part of the neighborhood, and for field trips and educational nature visits for schoolchildren attending the new school. Along 30th Street the eastern slope of the Green Space is owned and maintained as green in perpetuity by the City of Omaha as part of the historic and innovative Parks and Boulevards System, designed by the great landscape architect H.W.S. Cleveland. The rest of the Green Space is owned by the Boys Town National Research Hospital, which has maintained and mowed it, planting new trees and preserving the original trees, as a park-like green since the 1970's. Over the years the GPNA has helped protect and preserve the Green Space as green, and it is the neighborhood's hope that, working with Boys Town, we can eventually formalize the role of the Green Space in our community, maintaining it on the model of the Community Garden, or as a city park, or as part of a Community Arboretum in association with the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum.

The Green Space is a microcosm for the global movement to heal the environment and to reconnect with nature, living sustainably. It is a green link in a green chain connecting neighborhoods, parks, and green corridors. Enlightened city planning now values the human scale, takes account of neighborhood impact,

and recognizes that the holistic view promotes a healthy city economy based on flourishing communities. Greenspace, community, and peace of mind are not frills, but necessities.

In protecting the natural urban Green Space, we are part of a nationwide trend in dynamic cities as diverse as New York and Memphis that support parks, pocket parks, green spaces, community gardens, and "privately owned public spaces" in thriving neighborhoods throughout the city.

Be sure to take time to visit and enjoy the Green Space. A few years ago, Tibetan monks from the Gaden Shartse Monastery in India, who have visited Omaha for more than 20 years, performed a beautiful blessing ceremony on the Green Space. The monks will repeat this ceremony when they return in September this year. Come relax on the grass under the trees, and enjoy the peaceful chanting of the monks, the tinkling of bells, and the singing of birds in the Green Space!



Youth Garden Program 2016

At the time of this newsletter we have completed 10 weeks of the Gifford Park Youth Garden (GPYG) program at the Gifford Park Community Garden (35th & Cass St.). The 2016 program is each Saturday morning from 10:00 to 11:30am. This year we again have 44 each 30"x30" raised garden beds that each youth planted and tended since May. To get you caught up with what's been going on, we started May 7 with our Garden Season Opening followed by the next four weeks of learning about plants, selecting which vegetables to grow, then planting their own garden plot and painting name stakes - a



lot of important work gets done during these early weeks. During week 5, the Nebraska Watershed Network had us use 'cell phone microscopes' to view samples (soil, plants, water) using our smart phones, then we had a nature vs. pollution scavenger hunt. Week 6 was 'all hands on deck' as we tended our youth plots by weeding and mulching. For play we created our own 'slip & slide' with a HUGE sheet of plastic, water and a little laundry soap. We also had a water balloon toss and fight to cool off. Week 7 'Art in the Garden I' presenters Brent Lubbert and Monica Lehn taught us all about soil and how to work with clay. Then we made clay pottery which we will fire and paint soon. Week 8 Kate Bodmann and Andrea Lawse taught us about the great variety and health benefits of herbs and other plants. We then toured the community garden to find some of these plants. We are grateful to have Kate and Andrea share their expertise, they both live in Gifford Park, have their own businesses in their expertise field, and sell at the Gifford Park Neighborhood Market on Friday nights. For week 9 Monica Lehn and Mekenzie Sutton led us in 'Garden Movement' activities including yoga and meditation – they are yoga instructors! Kids and adults participated. Week 10 was 'Art in the Garden II' as Anna Deal and Michaela Wolf led us in doing tie-dyeing of clothing and fabric using different dyes, including natural dyes they made from beets and marigold! Our young gardeners have been growing and harvesting ripening vegetables including squash, cucumbers, radishes, carrots, broccoli, lettuce, tomatoes, watermelons and more. Upcoming sessions include: Art in the Garden III, Cooking Matters, Sound of Music, Making Bread & Butter, and Pizza Garden Harvest PARTY. We cannot thank enough our dedicated volunteers, parents and family members who participate with their young gardeners. Please contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187, foster3413@cox.net) or Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) if you have questions about GPYG program.

Gifford Park Youth Garden Program
2016 Schedule ~ all Saturdays 10:00 – 11:30am

July 30 Painting Clay Pots
August 6 Cooking Matters
August 13 Sound of Music
August 20 Making Bread & Butter
August 27 Pizza Garden Harvest PARTY! (BMUF)
Rest of growing season - tend your plot

more photos on page 15



The power, inspiration, and responsibility of perseverance

By Adrian S. Petrescu

Yes, Gifford Park has great news that spread like wildfire the very second when the vote happened that late at night on July 19. The earlier news itself that Creighton University decided to sell, and now the latest news that the Omaha Public Schools Board voted to buy the land from Creighton for the new neighborhood school are both great, of course. But this is not the entire story. The news means of course that the beloved Yates school stays and so do also stay all of the community outreach programming for refugees and others in need of improving their English and their skills they need to fully join the American dream in our diverse community.

It's been a journey for everyone. It took many meetings, internal and elsewhere with all decision-makers, and letters to higher-ups, and more meetings and more letters. It took speeches and persuasion, it took explaining, partnering, patience, and resilience. It took a strong and sustained community effort, led essentially by Mike Caban, Chris Foster and Martin Janousek and embraced and supported by all. This effort and its most recent success coming with this news is part of a much broader story. In fact it is so broad of a story that we may be afraid to write it in its entirety out of fear that it may madden someone somewhere and it may thus backfire.

The GPNA is now nationally famous for its Adventure Playground. The details were spelled out in the last edition of the newsletter. What does that mean though? The neighborhood has initiatives that are so creative and unique that they are worth recognizing nationally and learned from by everyone nationwide. But wait, there's more. This past month NuStyle, the developer purchasing the site, started working on its early plans for the apartment complex at the now soon-to- be-former Creighton University Medical Center. There were meetings upon meetings. Visioning plans and alternatives were presented and stakeholders were consulted and offered

their input. Martin and Chris were there every step of the way. More than just that, in fact. They took the leadership of the developer on a tour walking around Gifford Park neighborhood. A fly on the wall present at some of those meetings and during the walking-tours told me how often the neighborhood was praised and in how nice terms were its unity, strengths, initiative and care described by all these impressed visitors who are now soon-to- be major new neighbors.

This is the broader scope and context of the latest news. The GPNA voice matters. The designs and strategies chosen incorporate the preferences and philosophy of our neighborhood. The priorities we care for are there. The playing and gathering spaces and the paths between them are there. The existing green space(s) stay and more of them will be added. The overarching green philosophy we care for is embraced and expanded upon by the developer. The small but vibrant Gifford Park business district, Big Muddy, the community garden, and the adjacent park itself are all seen as a strong attraction point to the future residents of the new apartment complex and will enhance the attractiveness of the entire project. Integration is a key feature between Midtown Crossing through and by Gifford Park and NuStyle's new Creighton Lake Center (whichever its name will be) and much beyond up the 30th Street corridor and with the overall bike and green paths of the old "Destination Midtown" project area. This time everything is re-conceptualized and re-assessed with much stronger neighborhood consultation and input.

This is then news not only in architectural design. It is news in cultural endurance and strength. It is news about the power of perseverance and the inspiration that comes from success through perseverance. But it is also a message of warning somewhat. Success is always only temporary and it always calls for more perseverance for more future success... because if one rests on their laurels the turtle may beat the hare in their proverbial race. Here, again, the road is ahead so much more than it is behind.

Adventure Playground Update

By Teal Gardner

Well, we're halfway through our second summer at the Adventure Playground, and it has been a great one so far! We've been really lucky to have had the support of Francisco & FJC Builders early in the spring, when they updated our shed and put in some shelving and pegboard for us. We've been able to organize tools and materials in such a way that things are much more accessible now to youth, and easier for volunteers to track! With the early spring gift from the Sperry's, we now have a good deal of new tools to take care of. It is lovely to be able to store things and find things with ease. In the shed we keep all of the tools and materials that are used on the playground that can't be left outside.

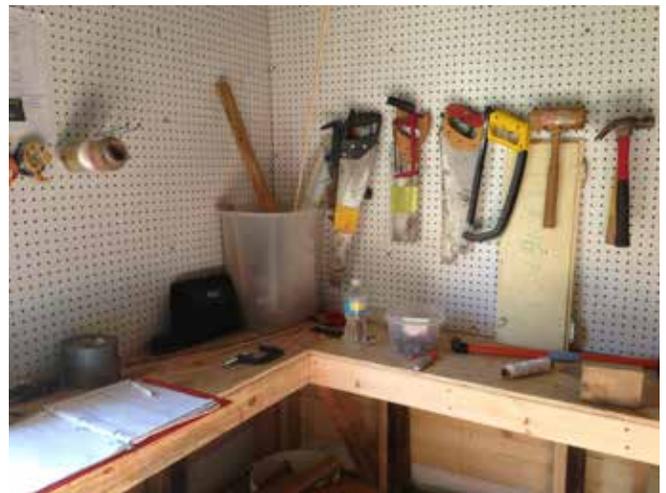


This summer we have also enjoyed the addition of a few new playworker volunteers. Katherine Gillespie went through the playworker training and has been at the playground almost every week since the start of summer. She works at Film Streams, and brings along with her a big bag of popcorn saved from the night before at the theatre. The kids love digging into popcorn in the afternoon, and often use it as a prop for their play. In the first official day at the AP this summer, the youth invented a play, in which popcorn was a central prop. They pretended it was gold, and the plot formed around that idea.

Another new volunteer, Katie Schroeder & her son, Cole had his birthday party at the Playground before summer began. We have been lucky enough to have her commitment to being at the playground in the afternoons most of the summer. We'll be sad to see her and Cole head off to Minnesota this August, but will eagerly welcome them back next year!

The youth at the playground have been getting super creative this summer especially with regards to creating solutions for dangling while in the treehouse. An apparatus of ropes has risen and fallen, as well as a hammock and a tire swing. Stop in sometime to see what is currently keeping people hanging around! And while you're there, you can stop in for some lessons in target practice using bow and arrow, which is a favorite tool to create while at the playground. Longtime volunteer, Monica Lehn and her son Ezra have really worked to hone in on the perfect solution to making PVC bows.

The playground is open on Saturdays from 2-6 PM, but families are welcome to stop in and use the space any time it is light enough to see! If you are interested in a volunteer orientation or just to hear more about the playground, please get in touch with Teal at teal.gardner@gmail.com or just drop by the space on a Saturday!



The power, inspiration, and responsibility of perseverance

Continued from page 11

What is yet to come, and how one can and should use this gained strength of voice that is heard to its fullest potential, are the real news here.

The fly on the wall I mentioned above told me about this vision of coffee shops and attorney offices on California St. between 30th St. and 33rd St. Just as an example of a broader vision. I never figured out why attorney offices. I guess it is because many attorneys from downtown already come often to California Tacos. I have nothing against all that. Coffee shops across the street from the school may support creativity and a spirit of entrepreneurship. They may inspire the young to apprentice while in school and to dream at starting their own business. Besides, I like hip places and hip places attract people and increase property values. As long as it is done right, as long as all neighbors respect each other and listen to each other, and as long as the dreams are fearless and their implementation is pursued with perseverance, such visions can only lend good results.

The good news is thus that there is always more good news to come when passionate people set their minds together at predicting the future by building it themselves, one good idea at a time, and one inspiring neighborhood project upon neighborhood project at a time. The power of creativity coming from an inclusive culture is generally hard to see in the immediate. It's usually showing over long periods of time. Just as the power of perseverance.

Let us all keep our focus on working even harder into the future inspiring each other and inspiring others who are watching us with the strength and responsibility of the success of this long lasting perseverance that got us here and will take us as far as the soul and heart can dream. Thank you, Gifford Park, for the inspiring culture you radiate.

P.S. Because it is Summer. Because I write on Belgian Independence Day, July 21. Because in part Gifford Park owes some small allegiance to Belgium through Mr. Bogard and his contribution to Gifford Park's own inspiring founding past. Because in its turn Belgium owes a lot to the United States for help the U.S. gave Europe and the world back in the day, I'll add a daytrip suggestion to augment as a powerful example the above: visit President Hoover library in West Branch IA, and on the way stop by at Amana Villages. We can learn a lot from both experiences at a time when any inspiration can help us. For example, did you know that President Herbert Hoover (as Head of the Food Administration then) asked all Americans to plant "war gardens" to help America save Europe during the First World War? Did you know the Amana community and all the small shops with wonderful things made by Amana residents and available for sale are a "hand-crafted" experience for any visitor? Take the time to make the visit. You may find it well worth it.

Much Appreciation

Hi all. My name is Isabel Petrescu, a high school student living in Michigan who will soon be entering her senior year. I visit Omaha during the summer and school breaks to spend time with my father, Adrian Petrescu, and stepmother, Marie Hélène André, who many of you may know as the president of the GPNA. With the program I'm in at school, the International Academy, there's a volunteering requirement to graduate with the diploma.

Volunteering is pretty fun, but I likely wouldn't be doing as much of it if I didn't have that little push. I would like to make a shout out to Eliza, Martin, Brent, Chris and Mike to thank them for allowing me to volunteer with them to get me closer to graduating. Thank you! I really appreciate their efforts and willingness to include me in their projects with the Gifford Park Neighborhood Market, the Youth Garden, and the Full Cycle Supper. I had some great times.

Bike Shop Update

By Charles Mitchell

Everyone is more excited about bicycling in the lovely summer weather! At the Bike Project we're always stoked to get new riders on bikes and encourage cycling through fun activities and adventures.

This past month we were particularly excited to help five youth mentors from the Women's Center for Advancement Leadership Academy. We helped these young mentors refurbish bikes and learn safe riding skills. The Union for Contemporary Art then helped the girls decorate their bikes with colorful accessories, handmade stickers and paint pens. By the end of this special Youth Earn-a-Bike series, the students had perfectly functioning bikes with some truly inspired designs. All of the students worked hard to make their bikes like new and added some very creative touches to make their bikes and helmets totally unique.



In July we also partnered with Ponderosa Cyclery and Tour to lead an "Introduction to Bike Touring" bike ride for our Youth Earn-a-Bike graduates and volunteers. We rode our bikes to Hummel Park, where Vince from Ponderosa Cyclery demonstrated hammock camping, couscous cooking, and how to make the most out of any bike trip! Our Earn-a-Bike programs always strive to provide participants with an empowering mode of transportation and new found sense of freedom. Our mini-adventure to Hummel built upon that foundation, and we're looking forward to hosting more lengthy trips soon!

To culminate a summer full of cycling, the Youth Board is hosting the 2nd Annual Bike Shop Birthday! Join the Bike Project on Saturday, August 6th from 5PM-8PM at the Gifford Park Tennis Courts to celebrate cycling with bike polo, games, food, live music, and t-shirt printing!

Big Muddy Aspiring Farmer Residency Application is Open

By Brent Lubbert

Do you (or someone you know) want to get involved in sustainable agriculture? Big Muddy is pleased to announce a very exciting opportunity to live in a house with four residency farmers, grow crops on seven lots in Gifford Park and learn from the structured experience. Resident farmers receive room and board as long as their educational and 20 hr/wk field work responsibilities are upheld. The education is designed around hands-on, decision-making experiences managing a small market farm in the urban environment so that residents acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for their next steps in food system work.

For more information and to fill out the application please visit BigMuddyUrbanFarm.org, or stop by the 3320 Burt St. residency house on open house dates (check facebook events for dates). Please note that applications are due October 1st, 2016. See photos on page 15 of opening event. The supportive Gifford Park Neighborhood allows this educational opportunity to take shape and flourish, making an impact on the health and resiliency of our community. For this, we are extremely grateful. Thank you! For questions contact Brent Lubbert (402)-213-9646 // brent.lubbert@gmail.com

Community Garden update

Knock on wood, but timely rains have saved us from a couple very hot and dry periods in June and July, so gardens are growing well for the most part. Unfortunately, the Japanese beetle has taken a toll on some plants in the area. It has been so busy in the neighborhood we will plan for a garden pot luck dinner in September to celebrate efforts involving the community garden, youth garden program and “friends” of the garden – we will let you know exact date as we get closer. Everyone is encouraged to use the Little Free Library in the very front of the garden. Check out the 12 chickens located in their coop on the upper-north part of the garden. Also check out Adventure Playground (and 2-story tree house!) on the west part of the garden – we even had our first outdoor ‘movie night’ Saturday night July 23 complete with roasting hot dogs and making smores - we plan to do this again! Our blackberries and serviceberries did very well this year, the apple and pear trees not so well. Wednesday work nights continue each Wednesday 6 to 8 PM through the growing season. During these times water and garden tools will be available for plot renters and anyone else interested in helping maintain the community garden – we always need weeding of the flower beds, especially this year! It’s a good time to stop by the garden to see neighborhood friends or check out what’s growing. Contact Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) for garden plot information, and Chris Foster (402-290-8187, foster3413@cox.net) for other questions.

Youth Garden Weeks five through ten



Big Muddy Urban Farm Breaking New Ground Event Held July 21st





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"/> Neighborhood Watch | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleanup/Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord/Tenant Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Distribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Lending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Memberships | <input type="checkbox"/> School Liason | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree Planting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easter Egg Hunt | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Market | <input type="checkbox"/> School Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Walks | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer | |

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