



Gifford Park's Pride

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

September 2018

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Special Community Meeting - Elementary School Principal Candidate

Join OPS and the NEW School Community for a community interview of our incoming elementary school principal candidate! The special neighborhood meeting is on Monday, September 10, 5:30 - 6:30pm at Yates Community Center (3260 Davenport St)

We are so excited to host a special neighborhood meeting devoted to learning about the education philosophy and background of principal candidates for 32nd & Burt Elementary School! Community members can submit questions or topics to have addressed at the interview by sending them to Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Board President Eliza Perry (yrrepazile@gmail.com) by Friday, September 6th at midnight. Omaha Public Schools' Chief Human Resources Officer Charles Wakefield will use all input to form 12-15 questions for the candidate to answer in front of an audience of community members.

We hope you'll join this amazing opportunity to get to know a potential future leader of our incoming neighborhood school, opening in less than a year!

Light refreshments provided by the Gifford Park Community Association. Interpreters will be available. This is a child-friendly event, bring the family!



August 9 GPNA meeting at Yates included presentations on Cumming Street Bridge and Turner Park North

SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING

Monday, September 10 // 5:30 PM
Yates Community Center
3260 Davenport Street
New School Principal Candidate

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

Thursday, November 8 // 6:30 PM
Yates Community Center
3260 Davenport Street

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Special Neighborhood School Meeting
- Community Garden Pot Luck
- Porchfest
- Neighborhood Market
- Adventure Playground

Event dates and details in articles of newsletter

2018 GPNA Officers

Eliza Perry, President

207-590-9880 | yrrepazile@gmail.com

Marie Hélène André, Vice President

402-769-9183 | mhandre34@hotmail.com

Brent Lubbert, Secretary

402-213-9646 | brent.lubbert@gmail.com

Alexandra Goswami, Treasurer

847-477-2156 | omaha_beef@hotmail.com

Board

Tyler Magnuson, At-Large

402-706-7496 | tyler.magnuson@gmail.com

Andy Wessel, At-Large

402-916-5030 | ajwessel13@yahoo.com

Eric Purcell, At-Large

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

Martin Janousek, Business Rep

402-558-4070 | mjjanousek@leoadaly.com

Chris Foster, Landlord Rep

402-290-8187 | foster3413@cox.net

Susan Mayberger, Yates Rep

402-342-6606 | susanmayberger77@gmail.com

Opportunities – Contacts

GPNA General Meetings

Eliza Perry 207-590-9880

Community Bike Project

Adams Blowers 423-307-4136

adam@communitybikeproject.org

Community Garden/Youth Garden

Chris Foster 402-290-8187

Adventure Playground

Jasmine Frierson 402-213-0223

sfadventureplayground@gmail.com

Midtown Neighborhood Alliance Rep

Adrian Petrescu, 402-769-9070

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Gifford Park Market

Martin Janousek 402-558-4070

Yates Community Center

Susan Mayberger 402-557-2431

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Youth Soccer

Eric Purcell 402-719-5108

Youth Tennis

Chris Foster 402-290-8187

Spring Cleanup

Chris Foster 402-290-8187

Newsletter Editor

Brent Lubbert 402-213-9646

From The President

by Eliza Perry

MY GOODNESS Gifford Park knows how to throw a block party!!!! I don't know of many things more beautiful than a group of neighbors of all ages getting together just about weekly (for months!) to plan the best celebration of summertime, community, and of course, GPNA's 30th birthday.

The craft area for kids was one of my favorite additions this year. The dedicated Amy Lanspa knocked this effort out of the park, gathering supplies and thinking of fun, easy projects to engage zillions of kids in. Amy also volunteers at the Sallie Foster Adventure Playground and GP's Youth Garden program.

Another huge hit was the petting zoo, coordinated and DONATED by new GP resident Henry Nunn. We had goats and ponies galore, a first for the neighborhood. Thank you Henry!

Our beloved friends from Omaha International Folk Dance group came back this year and led the community in a rousing participatory dance session. Gifford Park loves to dance, it turns out! They also honored the late icon Aretha Franklin dancing to R E S P E C T.

We were also treated yet again to the amazingly talented Karen dance group that comes each year AND, new to the block party, the super talented young Nepali dancer Resion Gasmer! Each of these performances help highlight cultures and traditions from the many countries around the world Gifford Park neighbors hail from.



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 brent.lubbert@gmail.com.



TOOL LENDING HOTLINE
Call Chris 402-290-8187
Mowers - \$5
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Creighton Party Houses

by Mike Caban

I have lived in Gifford Park since 1975. I saw white flight in action as our Yates school lost parents who had for years been the pillars of our PTA. Storefronts on 33rd street business strip dried up leaving but a couple of stubborn businesses to fend for themselves. Crime crept in and by 1988 the good people who still lived here couldn't walk down the business strip for fear of being propositioned, harassed or assaulted or mugged. Mother's taking their kids to school went blocks out of their way to avoid that area. That's when a group of PTA parents and fed up neighbors gathered together to create the GPNA. We planned and developed a strategy to address the problems we thought were the worst and implemented a plan to walk and drive the neighborhood as a group... and make it known that this was our neighborhood, and we would make sure that our streets were going to be safe for us and our children, and criminals were put on notice. Drug dealers are essentially business people, they pick places where they can sell their "stuff" without interruption or disruption. It took a few years, but our folks made it very difficult for them, when 15-25 adult community members were standing in front of where these bad guys were trying to conduct their business transactions. It wasn't easy for us, doing this sort of thing... but it was effective... with criminals.

I remember telling a friend, back then, that there were a few scary moments here and there, but frankly, compared to the verbal abuse, the spitting at us and the insults aimed at us, the urinating in people's yards, the loud unruly partying and the trashing of our streets by Creighton students, the interactions with the criminal element were relatively mild in comparison. And after many years of devoted hard work by many, many neighbors and friends of Gifford Park, criminal activity of that sort is virtually non-existent now ...but the Creighton students and their disrespectful and abusive behaviors still plague pockets of our community, with their loud partying and drunken yelling till late at night (things they wouldn't do in mommy's and daddy's neighborhoods). I guess we'll just have to develop another strategy to deal with this privileged, entitled bunch, once and for all.

Let it be known that you're on notice... like we did back then, when landlords, city code enforcement, officials and institutions gave us only lip service, we took it upon ourselves to get it done, and we'll do it again, make no mistake about it. The people and institutions responsible for curbing these kid's antics have been given ample opportunities to take care of this issue, and haven't. You should know by now, that when GPNA folks set their minds on getting something done... no matter what tactics we're forced to employ or whose reputation gets dinged in the process... WE WILL GET IT DONE! Stay tuned...

Walnut Hill Reservoir and Omaha Land Bank

Our neighbors to the north in Bemis Park have invited Gifford Park residents and any interested people to attend their next neighborhood meeting on Tuesday September 11th at 7:00 pm at Augustana Lutheran Church (3647 Lafayette Ave.). The Omaha Land Bank will be having a discussion about the Walnut Hill Reservoir. In the past, there has been serious concern about the future of the green space, future development, and the lack of neighborhood involvement. This land which consists of the Walnut Hill Reservoir and Walnut Hill Park is owned by MUD our public utility and our involvement and your participation is important.

Thank you Bemis Park Neighborhood Association for the invitation.

Adventure Playground Update - New Fall Open Hours

On Saturday evening August 4 Adventure Playground hosted a pot luck and outdoor "Movie Night". We roasted hot dogs and marshmallows, and gathered to watch "The Princess Bride". We plan to have our next pot luck and "Movie Night" around mid-October so we can also carve and decorate pumpkins. We have talked about having another "campout" in October...stay tuned for dates on these events. As always, the tree house and playground area is open and free to use at any time. Volunteers and access to the materials in the shed are on Saturdays 11:00am-1:30pm. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please contact us at sfadventureplayground@gmail.com or on Facebook.



25th Annual Youth Tennis Program Highlights

by Chris Foster

We had excellent weather for our 25th annual August Youth Tennis Program in Gifford Park. This year we had over 60 youth participants and 36 with perfect attendance. The kids learned basic groundstrokes, volleys and rallying skills. Godfather's Pizza gave us a good deal providing 12 pizzas for our program "finale" on the last day. Neighborhood volunteers also provided treats. We had great help from our dedicated volunteer instructors for each Wednesday in August for this free program - Buddy Hogan, Larry Newton, Ethan Neal, Brianna Liu, Jim Wilson, Vince Emery, Jackie Foster, Jenny Waltemath, Laurie Bolte, Donnie Gildon, John Aerni, Bo Finley, the Stanley sisters (Dawn, Crystal, Justine, & Witney), Logan Neese, Ari Manzo, Travis Bolte, Perry Mitchell, Andrew Pellerito, Chris Foster. Also, during June and July, volunteer instructors Lou Harrison, Ari Manzo, Brianna Liu, and the Stanley sisters taught group tennis lessons on Wednesday mornings in Gifford Park - this was the 11th year for this free program for kids having a stronger interest in tennis. Special thanks go to Jan Franks and Brittney Rubek, for handling registration and other administration duties, and Ric & Jane Hines for their awesome support! Thanks also to the Omaha Tennis Association, the Nebraska Tennis Association, and the City Parks & Recreation Department for their generous support over the years. If anyone who participated in the tennis lessons is interested in more advanced lessons, please contact Chris Foster at 402-290-8187.



Community Garden Update - Pot Luck Dinner Sunday, September 16

by Chris Foster

Plan to come to our Community Garden Pot Luck Dinner Sunday, September 16th at 4:30 PM Socialize, 5:00 PM Dinner at 35th & Cass Streets. Community gardeners, youth garden and Adventure Playground participants, family, friends, and neighbors are invited to celebrate; please bring a side dish or dessert to share; donations accepted. Besides our normal grilling of burgers and hot dogs, we will have a special guest - Chef Wilson Calixte (Chef at Le Voltaire French Restaurant in Omaha) will treat us to some entertaining food preparation and grilling, so be sure to come early about 4:30 to enjoy his expertise! Chef Wilson shared his culinary skills at our youth garden program and at last year's fall pot luck. 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 help weeding the flower beds. 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.

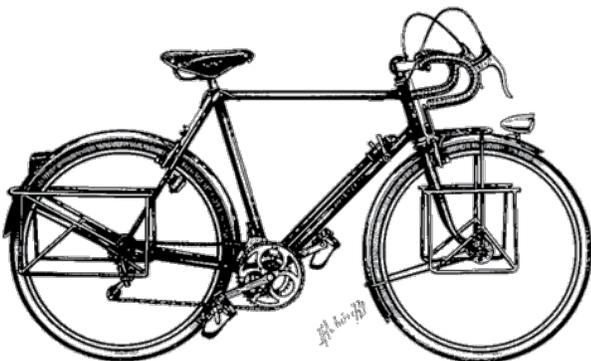
Community Bike Project Update

by Adam Blowers

The shop's 11th birthday was a lot of fun. We had some good food, good people, and there was even some frisbee action. We just want to thank everyone in the neighborhood for supporting us, putting up with our crazy bike shenanigans, and letting us be a part of this amazing community.

What's next for the shop? Well that would be Bike Camping with the Legend. Yeah that's right, Mohamed is leading a bike camping trip to Hitchcock Nature Center on Sept 15th. This is an intro trip to teach the basics to people who want to bike camp, but have never done so. If that sounds like you then join us. This ride is free, we only ask that you have a good working bicycle, a tent (or hammock!), a sleeping bag, and way to attach those to your bike.

We'd love to have more youth sign up for Youth Earn-a-Bike classes! Those classes are from 5pm to 7pm on Wednesday and Thursday. Youth will pick out a bike, completely refurbish it, and then get the bike, a lock, and a helmet all for free! Come check it out and follow us on facebook for all the latest bike shop news and events.



Gifford Park's neighborhood bar for 80 Years

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Youth Garden Update

by Chris Foster

Now in its 15th year, 2018 was another great year for the Gifford Park Youth Garden (GPYG) program. It began May 12 with our “Season Opening” event and ended with our “Pizza Garden Harvest Party” August 25. In between these dates we about 50 registered youth participants gardening on 44 raised beds (each 30”x30” plots). We again had no rainouts (although tents came in handy for a stray shower and especially for protections from sun and heat)! Last newsletter I gave an update through week 9, here are highlights of the last six weeks of activities: Week 10 artist (and Big Muddy Urban Farm resident) Laura Simpson lead us in doing a group art project using recycled material. Week 11 Nebraska State tree expert Justin Evertson took us on an interactive tree walking tour of sites and gardens within a few blocks of our community garden. Week 12 Anna Curry and Chef Wilson Calixte from the Visiting Nurses Association (VNA) led their famous “Cooking Matters” class. Chef Wilson demonstrated cooking using garden vegetables from our youth plots, Big Muddy Urban Farm plots, and our Friday Night Market. Week 13 Jess Dooley and Brent Lubbert with Big Buddy Urban Farm and Ammon Taylor with Waste Management taught us about “Recycling” then a great class on “Canning and Preservation” of our vegetables. Week 14 Andrea Lawse taught us about ‘Teas, Herbs & Health Remedies’. We are grateful to have Andrea share her expertise, she lives in Gifford Park and has her own business, Artemis Natural Healing and Artemis Tea. Week 15 we celebrated another wonderful year the Youth Garden program with a Harvest Party! We enjoyed homemade pizzas prepared by the kids, Big Muddy Urban Farm, and volunteers. Each pizza was topped with an assortment of bountiful veggies harvested from Big Muddy’s gardens, our young gardener’s plots, and Friday Night Market. After all the pizzas were baked in neighbors’ ovens, we enjoyed each other’s company while feasting on our harvest. We encourage our young gardeners to continue tending your plots for the rest of the growing season. This program teaches youth of all ages how to grow vegetables, prepare, eat, and share our harvest with others. Plus, the youth are creative with art and music; explore our natural environment; and have fun while working together and getting our hands dirty. GPYG relies upon parents and volunteers each week to provide snacks, lead lessons, and simply share their time with participating young people. Tremendous thanks to all our volunteers including but not limited to: Monica Lehn, Paul Pellerito, Amy Lanspa, Rebecca Cashman, Tyronda Pierce, Bryant & Angie Pasho, the Stanley family, Matt Cronin, Sarah Schulte, Francisco & Blanca Manzo, Andy & Leslie Wessel, Andrea Lawse, Rose Carlson, Anna Deal, Sara Goetzinger, Jackie Foster. Huge thanks to Brent Lubbert and Big Muddy Urban Farm residents Gavin Johnston, Kaya Baker, Laura Simpson, Jess Dooley for their planning & help to the program! Thanks to the dedicated parents and family members who participate with their young gardeners. And very special thanks to Mike Caban for his amazing dedication year in and year out to this program and the community garden project – thanks Mike! Please contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net) if you have questions about GPYG program.



2018 Youth Soccer Camp Recap

by Eric Purcell

Gifford Park Soccer Camp, now in its seventh year, wrapped up another great summer of soccer! For seven weeks in June and July youth (and the adults who brought them) from our community and surrounding neighborhoods descended on Gifford Park for an hour of soccer, snacks and being together! And we had so much fun!

Here's just a few highlights from this year!

The 3-4 year old group was as big as ever and had an amazing team of coaches that worked together to make a fantastic soccer experience each night for the kids! With these little "kickers" we always encourage parents to help out too!

The 5-6 year old group is usually split up into boys and girls. This year we combined them. Their coaching team, led by 7 year veteran Matt Cronin had a marvelous time learning to work together. At our Award Celebration and Potluck we honored Matt for his faithful investment into these kids and this program with a \$25 gift card to Myrtle & Cypress Coffeehouse!

The 7-8 year old age group led by Cesar Ramos and his team was one of our bigger groups and always full of energy!

The 9-11 year old group had two new coaches who really did a bang up job of leading this group! This group grew the most and was a ton of fun to watch improve!

A big thank you to all of our coaches who make this camp possible. They give of their time and heart to create this fun environment for the kids and parents. Our coaches this year were: Anna Deal, Virginia Roode, Patrick Roode, Brandon Sperry, Eric Purcell, Lisa Purcell, Cesar Tadeo, Matt Cronin, Megan Sperry, Witney Stanley, Crystal Stanley, Dawn Stanley, Andrew Pellerito, Josie Pellerito, Brittany Stebbins, Gema Ramirez, Tyler Magnuson, Ean Patrick, Norah Purcell and Aderyn Lawse.

We're also grateful to GPNA for its financial support of this program, along with \$1000 Mayors Grant, \$250 Thrivent Grant and \$100 donation from Scheels Sporting Goods!

As always, we're looking forward to next summer and thinking about how to keep making this program better and better—what do you think about an adult age group???

See you next year!



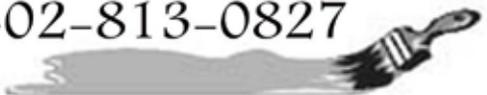


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Myrtle & Cypress Now Open

by Eric Purcell

Have you heard? Myrtle & Cypress Coffeehouse is NOW OPEN! And we want to be your local, walkable, neighborhood coffeehouse!

Myrtle & Cypress Coffeehouse is owned and run by Lisa and Eric Purcell, and Megan and Brandon Sperry. Our hope is that Myrtle & Cypress will become an area landmark, highlighting Gifford Park's diversity, "local" style, amazing neighbors, and value of well-being. Our mission is to provide a place for community and connection-- a "hub-like" indoor gathering space for Gifford Park residents-- and to be the coffee shop in town known for its locally driven and nourishing menu.



Our menu includes specialty coffee and espresso drinks, teas and tonics, ice-cream, pastries, and small bites to serve the many reasons people have to visit a coffee shop. We offer a solid base of traditional options and current trends in coffee, but because we also care about health and wellness our menu also features homemade, health conscious, and cultural food and drinks. The space we have created is bright, homey and full of natural light! And we have a playroom for the kids! Along with our house-made almond and cashew milks, we are serving Hardy Coffee, Artemis Tea, Grainolia Baked Goods and Ted & Wally's Ice Cream! There's a little something for everyone!

We first considered pursuing this project after years of being residents who just wanted a local place to meet up with our neighbors. Someplace to celebrate after Gifford Park Soccer Camp... someplace to visit with families we met at the Community Garden...and someplace to simply get a delicious cup of coffee! Now that Myrtle & Cypress is open, we invite you to make this your local meet-up spot!

Currently, our hours are 7am-5pm Tuesday-Friday and 8am-4pm Saturday-Sunday. We are closed on Monday. We look forward to seeing and serving you in the shop!!

Tibetan Monks Visit Green Space in Gifford Park

On Monday, July 22, the Tibetan Monks of Gaden Shartse Monastery in India performed a beautiful blessing on the cherished Green Space at 30th Street between Cass Street and Cottage Grove. Many neighbors attended and enjoyed the Monks' peaceful chanting in the quiet tree-filled Green Space. The Tibetan Monks have been visiting Omaha for 25 years, to spread compassion, to demonstrate Tibetan culture, and to fundraise for the monastery and for schools and medical care for Tibetan refugees in India.



Final Month to Apply for Big Muddy Aspiring Farmer Residency

Applications for 2019 Aspiring Farmer Residency will close on October 5th. If you know anyone interested in learning more about urban farming please send them to www.bigmuddyurbanfarm.org to apply for a year long residency that guides residents through business planning, crop selection, CSAs, community development, & more!



Gifford Park



Neighborhood Market

Friday's 5-8pm // 33rd & California St.

Thank You

to our Gifford Park neighbors
for 25 years of support.

We hope you'll continue to follow us
in our upcoming adventures.

We promise to keep you posted!



Duchesne Academy Food Drive

by Scott Quinn

Duchesne Academy will be collecting food for local families on Friday, September 14, 2018. This drive is being done in conjunction with our other network schools. Schools across North America are participating in a Global Service Day in celebration of 200 years since our founding nun, Rose Philippine, came to the United States. The food collected from this food drive will be collected, sorted, and packaged for those who are food insecure. If you are currently food insecure and in need of more immediate assistance you can reach out to Juan Diego Center (402-731-5413), St. Martin de Porres Center (402- 939-4677), or Heart Ministries Center (402-451-2321). Additionally, Operation Others delivers food bags containing perishable and nonperishable food each December; you can sign up for this delivery by calling 402-957-1328 on Nov 3rd, from 9:00am-1:00pm.

If you would like to help us please place non-perishable (no expired products please) items from the following list into a bag and set the bag near your front door by 8:15am on Friday, September 14th. We will collect rain or shine. Email squinn@duchesneacademy with questions or for more information.

ITEMS WE ARE COLLECTING:

Peanut Butter -- Canned tomatoes or sauce -- Canned soup, stews, chili, beans
Canned meat or fish -- Canned veggies, fruits -- Cereal, Pasta, Rice

Photos From Around the Neighborhood



Photos From Around the Neighborhood





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.