



GIFFORD PARK'S PRIDE

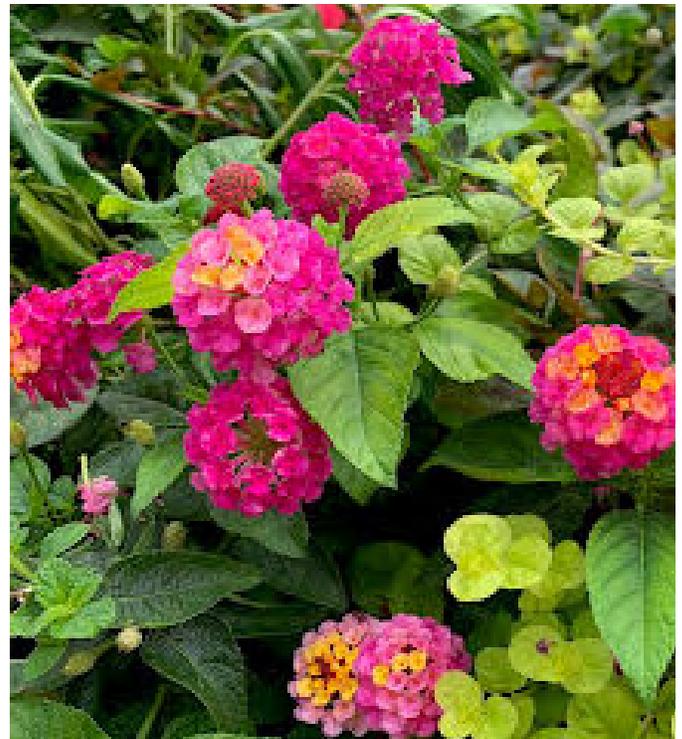
Gifford Park Neighborhood: A great place to live, work, learn, and play.
www.giffordparkomaha.org

THE MAGIC OF FLOWER POTS

It can never be said enough, but what makes this neighborhood great are the volunteers who step up and help with our activities, projects, and events. One such project is the flower pots in the business district. Thanks to the help and dedication from the Pellerito family, the flowers are looking great this year. At the beginning of spring, they volunteered to select flowers, plant, and keep them watered all summer. Mother Nature helped occasionally but most of the time the Pelleritos carried water by bucket to keep them looking good and healthy. Thank you Paul and your kids Josie, Stella and Andrew Pellerito.

A big thank you also goes out to the following neighborhood businesses that donated money to purchase flowers this year: California Bar, Farm Bureau Insurance, Danny's Corner Store, California Taco, Gifford Park LLC.

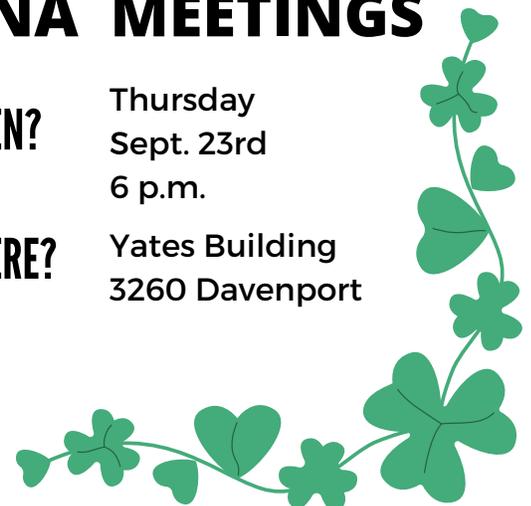
Article and photos submitted by Martin Janousek



GPNA MEETINGS

WHEN? Thursday
Sept. 23rd
6 p.m.

WHERE? Yates Building
3260 Davenport





BOARD MEMBER COLUMN

BY ALEX GOSWAMI, PRESIDENT

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association has celebrated the diversity of our neighborhood from decades past through the present. Diversity in culture, income, languages spoken and more.

In many ways, the neighborhood is changing. The GPNA board knows this and is reckoning with the reality that while our neighborhood is the best neighborhood in the world for some, it is not an easy place to live for everyone.

For a long time, I thought that the amazing events like youth garden and soccer camp that are open and free to the whole neighborhood were enough to contribute to equity in the community. Certainly these activities and events are essential elements of community building. The most beautiful thing about Gifford Park is that we know our neighbors. We work side by side at community events. We participate in conversations with developers and elected officials. We answer phone calls from each other when we need a hand or another voice in a difficult situation. This is an absolutely glorious part of the neighborhood and builds a close-knit community. So now the question is: Is there more that the GPNA board (and membership) can do to support a diverse and inclusive community?

To answer that question, one of the board's goals for 2021 is to have greater inclusion in all neighborhood activities. At our November 2020 neighborhood meeting, the members agreed that this goal is important and voted for greater inclusion to be a top priority along with increasing our membership and improving our digital presence. The members also approved hiring a facilitator to assist with developing a vision and mission of the GPNA that aims toward greater inclusion for all of our neighbors. The board went through the facilitation and we made progress on our vision which we are excited to share with you at the September 23rd neighborhood meeting. We look forward to hearing your thoughts to develop a rich vision that embodies the breadth of Gifford Park neighborhood.

In order to create a more inclusive, comfortable, and welcoming environment at our quarterly neighborhood meetings, I introduced an idea to our board ahead of our facilitation. I suggested that the board consider whether we want to have a police presence at our neighborhood meetings because for many in our neighborhood, the police are threatening. I am talking about, but certainly not speaking for, undocumented neighbors and many Black, Brown, Indigenous, and LGBTQIA+ people who historically and/or personally have been mistreated by the police or victims of police violence. For some, seeing a police car parked outside our meeting and a police officer inside is a reason to avoid our neighborhood gatherings.

My question then becomes: Can meetings be a place for neighbors to gather and get to know one another and share their ideas to make Gifford Park a great place to grow, live, work, and play without a police presence?

The board has made no decisions on these questions yet and has not reached consensus. I understand that this is a heavy topic and probably brings up a lot of feelings for just about everyone in the neighborhood. Some neighbors who have lived in the neighborhood a long time have heard about these conversations that the board is having, and they have asked to speak on it at the next neighborhood meeting. We want to be responsive to this request, so we are making a space for comments at the September 23rd meeting. There will be an opportunity for those who attend to speak. It will be the last agenda item for the evening. There will be no decisions made, but instead there will be an opportunity to offer perspectives. I will introduce the topic and we will take a 5 minute break to give folks the opportunity to collect their thoughts to speak or leave the meeting if they choose not to stay for this conversation. Then I will ask that each person who wants to speak raise their hands, so I can calculate how long each person will have to speak uninterrupted. For example, if we have 20 minutes available and 10 people want to comment, then each person will have 2 minutes to speak uninterrupted. If we have time after everyone has had an opportunity to talk, then we will take questions. Myself and others will stay after the meeting as well if people want to continue the conversation. Also, if you prefer to email a comment, please send it to giffordparkomaha@gmail.com.

There will be other topics on the agenda as well: Updates on summer activities like arts and science in the park and tennis camp. We will also get an update about the great work being done at the Yates building. We are partnering with Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association for a fall cleanup. We will find out if yard waste is available for disposal at this cleanup and let you know. Kimberly Jones, principal of Gifford Park Elementary, will be there to give an update about the school year. Also, Porchfest is coming back to Gifford Park on Sunday October 3! I hope to see many of you there.

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ABOUT THE EDITOR



Hello Gifford Park! My name is Abby Rick and I will be serving as the new editor for the Gifford Park newsletter. I am currently a junior at Creighton University studying journalism and history with a minor in philosophy. I am so grateful for the opportunity to become more involved in this community, and look forward helping both the GPNA, and Gifford Park itself, thrive.

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT GIFFORD PARK?

Ever have a question about Gifford Park that can't be answered by a google search? If so, send in your questions here and find answers in the next issue!

iwanttoknowgifford@gmail.com

YOUR MEMBERSHIP FUNDS NEIGHBORHOOD FUN!

FOR THOSE ABLE AND INSPIRED TO GIVE, RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR JOIN GPNA BY FILLING OUT THE FORM ON THE BACK PAGE AND SEND TO PO BOX 31462

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING COMMUNITY-BUILDING IN GIFFORD PARK!

\$10 SINGLE
\$15 FAMILY
\$25 BUSINESS

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF GIFFORD PARK YOUTH SOCCER CAMP

By Eric Purcell



PLAY

LIVE
WORK
LEARN

Like most programming last summer, GPSC had to cancel and take a summer hiatus. Thankfully, in 2021 we returned for our tenth summer of soccer camp! This year's program was a bit smaller with fewer kids and coaches, but everyone who participated was happy to be together again and to be on the pitch for some soccer. As always, we finished off with a big community potluck to celebrate the hard work everyone put into camp.

This summer, a grand total of 38 youth, aged 3-11, participated in our six weeks of camp; along with our 11 amazing volunteer coaches. This summer started out hot with the first couple of weeks already in the 90's, yet it somehow cooled off for us for the rest of the program. Despite the heat, we all very much enjoyed getting sprayed with the water from the "cooling station": our 2.5-gallon hand pump weed sprayer!

A big thank you to all of our coaches who make this camp possible. They give all of their time and heart to create this fun environment for both the kids and parents. Our coaches this year included: Cesar Tadeo, Matt Cronin, Wendell Stanley, Andrew Pellerito, Ean Patrick, Jenny Patrick, Anna Deal, Lizzy O'Bryan, Jared Wagenknecht, Laura Lehn, and Eric Purcell.

I would also like to honor one of our coaches this year, Ean Patrick, for his faithful dedication to our camp. Ean offered extra help almost every week this year loading and unloading all of the gear, and even took the reins for a week while I was out of town. Ean, thank you for your hard work and commitment to our program!

We are also grateful to the GPNA for its financial support of this program, along with a \$250 Thrivent Grant, a \$50 donation from Scheels Sporting Goods, and all of the parents who sign up to bring snacks and drinks each week. Without your support, we never would have gotten to celebrating 10 years of this wonderful program.

WILDER BOND POEM

WRITTEN BY NICOLETTE SOWDER
SUBMITTED BY ROSE CARLSON

May we raise children
Who love the unloved
things -- the dandelion, the
worms and spiderlings.
Children who sense
the rose needs the thorn

And run into rainswept days
The same way they
turn towards sun...

And when they're grown and
someone has to speak for those
who have no voice

may they draw upon that
wilder bond, those days of
tending tender things

and be the ones.



**OCTOBER
3RD**

LEARN **LIVE WORK PLAY**



GIFFORD PARK PTO

2021-2022 school year meetings! New 2021-2022 Gear Sales!

Tuesday at
8 p.m. on Teams:
- September 7
- November 9
- February 1
- April 5

Check out our Facebook page for the link to order T-shirts, sweatshirts, and stocking hats. All proceeds go toward items the school needs, teacher appreciation gifts, and celebration gifts for students.

Follow our Facebook page for more information!

@GiffordParkPTO



AROUND THE GARDEN

WORK LIVE LEARN PLAY

The summer of 2021 at the Gifford Park Community Garden has been one for the books, and continues to be as we move into the fall for harvesting, covering crops and prepping the space for the upcoming season of relative dormancy. This summer we welcomed 12 new gardeners/ gardening families to our 32 plots. Currently our youngest gardener is an 8-month-old; although it's Karynn, August's mother, who does the work while he watches from his stroller.



YOUTH GARDEN



Our oldest gardeners are 89: Bob and Virginia, originally from Oklahoma, have the best okra around! We are growing lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, pumpkins, watermelons, summer squash, carrots, garlic, beans, corn, peppers, the aforementioned okra, herbs and flowers, including 10-foot tall sunflowers, some of which did not make it through the last storm!

All are welcome to bring compost to our compost pile to enrich our garden soil for next year's crops; it is in the northeast corner of the garden. All are welcome to take from the community basket on the picnic table under the shed, where we share any extra produce, and to use the herbs which grow in front of the shed area. All are welcome to walk through to enjoy the beautiful garden and get to know the wonderful neighbors who frequent it.

Clockwise from top left: Selah collects catalpa "bean" pods, Thabo harvests a carrot from his plot, Sam turns compost, Ezra helps younger kids with glue gun, Ally Rose holds a chicken, Genevieve paints the Gifford Park Community Garden sign.

Article and photos submitted by Rose Carlson
If you would like more information about our garden, please contact Rose Carlson at 402-639-5952 (rhcarlson4@yahoo.com) or Chris Foster at 402-290-8187 (foster3413@cox.net).

LIVE

**WORK
LEARN
PLAY**



Gifford Park Neighborhood Market



Fresh Produce, Farm Raised Meats, Breads, Honey,
Plants, Handmade Items and more

Friday Evenings
5:00pm - 8:00pm

520 North 33rd Street - Gifford Park Business District



Like us on
Facebook

All Summer
June 4th to September 24th

WHAT THURGOOD MARSHALL TAUGHT ME

Submitted by Mike Caban

A brief excerpt of Stephen L. Carter's *Memories while clerking for the first black supreme court justice of the united states*

There's a story Thurgood Marshall loved to tell, about the day the Supreme Court handed down its landmark 1958 decision in *Cooper v. Aaron*, ordering the integration of the public schools of Little Rock, Ark., and openly chastising state officials for seeking to interfere with the decrees of federal judges.

Marshall argued the case, and the justices unanimously took his side. "The constitutional rights of respondents," wrote the court, "are not to be sacrificed or yielded to the violence and disorder which have followed upon the actions of the Governor and Legislature."

Black people — or Negroes, as he would have said — were jubilant. After the decision was announced, Marshall climbed into a taxicab in New York, heading to a celebration. The Black driver had no idea who his passenger was, but seeing a well-dressed man of his own race, he asked if he'd heard about the verdict.

Marshall grunted an affirmative. "What a great day for our people!" the driver enthused. Marshall agreed. The driver broke into a smile. "God bless Martin Luther King!" he cried. Marshall would chuckle as he recited the punchline. He wasn't complaining. Even back in the 1950s, he'd had several lifetimes worth of recognition. But like all his stories, this one was intended to make a point: It was a reminder of how, in the popular image of the civil rights movement, protests are everything, and the law is a sideshow.

The Judge always had a felicitous turn of the simplest phrase, what I thought of as the pinpricks, the sharp little barbs that made big points: like the November 1981 oral argument in a death-penalty case, when Justice William Rehnquist asked why taxpayers should have to foot the bill for what the petitioner preferred, a life sentence together with psychiatric care. Marshall, who rarely spoke in the courtroom, leaned toward his microphone and intoned, "Well, it would be cheaper just to shoot him when you arrested him, wouldn't it?" The unusually sharp exchange made the news. (Marshall's side prevailed.)

This was not, as you might suppose, an act of rudeness; at least I've never taken it so. Marshall's retort was, instead, a rejection of the idea that success should be a matter of what connections you have. He was not about to treat me any differently from anyone else just because he knew my deceased grandmother decades earlier.

After dinner, Marshall stood up to say a few words.

The hero of the story was an unnamed man who went to Las Vegas for a gambling weekend. And it wouldn't be a good story — the Judge said — unless he lost all his money. So he did.

When you lose all your money, the story continued, two things happen. You get hungry, and you need to use the restroom. (Yes, in some of his tellings, the Judge described this need more colorfully.)

So our hero, having lost all his money, went into the restroom, only to discover that you had to pay to use the stalls. Twenty-five cents. Alas, he didn't have a dime to his name.

Fortunately, at that moment, a stranger happened into the men's room, saw our hero's dilemma and gave him a quarter. Our hero was about to pay the quarter to open a stall when he noticed that one of the doors had been left open. He could enter free. And so he did.

Or the time I asked him why he was so adamant in opposition to capital punishment. "Same reason I'm against war," he said, deadpan. "Thou shalt not kill." Then the familiar laugh: "I still eat meat, though."

And even the occasion of our first meeting, in the spring of 1978. I was still a law student, and Marshall came up to Yale to preside over the final round of the moot-court competition. Just before dinner, his wife, Cissy, introduced us. "Thurgood," she said with her beautiful smile, "this is Eunice Carter's grandson." (Eunice, my grandmother, had been a prosecutor in New York and a friend and neighbor of the Marshalls.) The Judge gave me a skeptical look. "So what?" he said, and stalked away.



next page

When our hero emerged from the restroom, he was standing on the casino floor with 25 cents to his name. So he did what anybody would do. He put the quarter in a slot machine. And it wouldn't be a good story unless he hit the jackpot. So he did.

He kept stuffing quarters into the slot machine, and he kept on winning. He took a break and wandered the casino floor. He played roulette, he played blackjack. And it wouldn't be a good story if he didn't have the most amazing two days anyone had ever had at that casino. So he did.

When our hero quit 48 hours later, he had a net worth in the millions of dollars. And he swore off gambling for life. He invested the money with a brilliant broker who must have been able to see the future, because our hero's fortune just kept multiplying. Unfortunately, we don't know what investment strategy he used. We do know that 30 years after that night at the casino, our hero had become one of the wealthiest people in the country.

At that point, our hero came to a momentous decision. He called the press together and told the assembled reporters the story of how he had made his fortune, beginning with that night in Las Vegas. Then he made a public promise that if his "benefactor" came forward, he'd receive half of our hero's fortune. The press went wild. Claimants turned up by the thousands. Our hero hired a top firm of private detectives to screen them. After a few months, the head of the agency called him up. "We've found the man," he said.

"Are you sure?" our hero asked.

"We're sure. We've checked out every detail of his story, and he's passed a lie-detector test."

"Bring him right over."

So the head of the detective agency brought the man to our hero's office. Our hero came out from behind his big desk and looked the man up and down.

"So you're my benefactor?"

"Yes."

You know, you do look familiar. Remind me. What did you do for me exactly?"

"I handed you that quarter in the restroom 30 years ago."

Our hero shook his head. "You're not my benefactor," he snapped. "If I'd used that quarter the way you intended me to use it, I'd be just as poor now as I was that day. My benefactor is the man who left the door of the stall open!"

The audience laughed and laughed, not least because the Judge, an old-fashioned spellbinder, paused or gestured at well-chosen instants. But like all Marshall's stories, this one also made a point. We'll never know the names of all the people who fought to open doors for us. We'll never know the names of people who walk through doors we ourselves had to kick and shove to get through – sometimes while getting our hands dirty. Our job is to keep working to open them anyway, not for thanks or glory but for the sake of doing what is right. And in the complexity and strife of America's remarkable 20th century, no one did more to open doors for others than Thurgood Marshall.

In August 1992 – the last summer of Marshall's extraordinary life – the A.B.A. named him the first recipient of an award named in his honor. The award was bestowed at a banquet in San Francisco. I was privileged to be among the speakers.

By then the Judge was plainly ailing, but he sat patiently through the endless encomiums, doing his best to smile through the pain. When my turn came, I repeated several of his favorite tales, closing with the same Las Vegas story he told on the night we first met. When I was done, I turned his way to thank him for all the doors he had so brilliantly opened during his unparalleled career. Truth be told, I could hardly finish for the tears.

We never completed the oral history. Our final sessions came in the fall of 1992. We had finished the material on his career before the Supreme Court and were starting on his life as a justice. We were supposed to resume the interviews in January 1993. He died a few days later. Before his funeral, he lay in state in the Great Hall of the Supreme Court building, and we who served as law clerks over the years took turns standing watch at the coffin as the public filed past, mourning the passing of a giant.

The Supreme Court has never been the same.

WHAT THURGOOD MARSHALL TAUGHT ME

"Daddy, please take me to Robotics class Saturday!"

(Michael, 7 y.o., every day Monday through Friday)

All the stars aligned and Cifford Park did it, once again. Over one and a half years of preparation, trans-Atlantic experience and expertise, waiting on and dodging a pandemic, the flexibility of the Omaha Community Foundation, the nicety of the Omaha Public Schools Board of Education, countless volunteer hours by so many caring friends and neighbors, passion, commitment, patience, a desire to learn and spread new things to everyone who wants to learn them, and Yates Illuminates now existing and caring to make things possible in spite of ongoing construction on site- Science and Arts in Parks (SAP) was born this Summer of 2021.

The excitement, smiles, and light in the eyes of all the future inventors, from 3 years old to 15 years old, who took part in our GPNA newest summer camp? Look for yourselves. We believe strongly that everyone who ever stepped foot at Yates would be proud and will be proud. The spirit of curiosity and of great learning that starts here at Yates lives on. It's a spirit that led, so far, to one Nobel Prize winner—Alan J. Heeger, who studied here in the 1950s in eight grade—and that will certainly multiply ahead. Thank you all very much. We invite you kindly to help us grow the newly born SAP more and more next time, and the time after that, and the time after that. For years and generations to come.

Article and photos submitted by Adrian S. Petrescu and Marie Hélène André.



Project funded with a grant from the Omaha Community Foundation

Powered by GPNA friends and neighbors volunteers, and Yates Illuminates



SCIENCE & ARTS IN PARKS



GUIDELINES FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Note: the GPNA board has been calling these "editorials" instead of "letters to the editor." This is not technically correct because editorials are written by the editorial staff of the newsletter. Most of our editorials aka letters to the editor are from neighbors.

What is a letter to the editor compared to a regular old article? Letters to the editor are mostly opinion as compared to articles which are mostly fact.

Newsletter review committee: The newsletter review committee shall be the person(s) who create the newsletter and at least one member of the board. Lately, the full board has been reviewing editorials, but this review can be done by a smaller group of people. The newsletter review committee can decide its process of communicating with neighbors who submit letters to the editor about edits to their submission, etc.

Values: The Gifford Park newsletter letter to the editor section is a forum available to all who live in the neighborhood. It is the goal of the newsletter review committee to allow anyone who wants to submit an editorial to have that editorial published if that letter is in line within the guidelines below.

Guidelines: (some items below are adapted and borrowed from HereToHelp 2019)

- GPNA will only print letters that address a specific issue, theme, or article.
- Letters may not be more than a single page of the newsletter. The letter can be words, pictures, or other images as the author decides to express themselves.
- GPNA will not print more than one letter per issue per writer.
- Letters do not necessarily need to be edited for style, clarity, or grammar. This is to preserve the author's intent. To provide clarity to readers, the newsletter review committee may suggest edits to the author.
- Letters do not necessarily need to be in any particular language. The newsletter review committee will work with the author and others to translate the letter to English as well. Both versions of the letter will be printed and each version can have the allotted single page per letter.
- Final determination of whether a letter is published is made by the newsletter review committee.

GPNA will not print:

- Letters that incite physical violence.
- Letters that are threatening. This includes personal attacks, intimidation, bullying or threat of harm against a person or organization.
- Letters that make false statements of fact about other people. These letters would be potentially libelous. You can disagree with someone, but you can't claim they did something damaging unless you can prove it.
- Discriminatory on any grounds. This includes discrimination based on age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, religion or culture.
- Letter that are obscene. This includes any statement that is vulgar, profane or offensive.
- Letters that are promotional. Letters cannot promote products or services. Letters may discuss resources that have helped the author if it is specific to the neighborhood or if it refers to another newsletter article. Promotion of products or services is advertising, and the newsletter provides other routes for advertising.
- Letters that discuss any candidate for public office. This is because GPNA is a 501(c)3.

Personal information:

- The author must provide their full name or alias. The name is printed alongside your letter.
- Anonymous letters will not be published.
- If the letter identifies another person, the GPNA prefers that person is asked for their permission before the author sends their letter to the GPNA. For example, if you the author shares a personal experience and mentions a family member, GPNA hopes that family members was asked permission to identify them in the letter. When you submit a letter to GPNA, we assume that the author received consent from other people. GPNA reserves the right to edit any letter to protect personal identity.
- Any letter containing matters of personal or financial interest to the author must be disclosed by the author.

Editorial due date: The deadline for submission of editorials is the first of the month.



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
 PO Box 31462
 Omaha, NE 68131



**Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
 Membership Application**

The GPNA membership year runs from January 1 to December 31.

Type of membership: ___ Single (\$10) ___ Family (\$15) ___ Business (\$25)
 Today's Date: _____

Business Name (if applicable): _____
 Business Phone (if applicable): _____

Name (1): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
 Name (2): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
 Name (3): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
 Name (4): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____
 Name (5): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday Banquet | <input type="checkbox"/> 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.