



GIFFORD PARK'S PRIDE

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

DECEMBER, 1992

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Secretary:**
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**Standing Committee
Chairs:**

Please see next month's
PRIDE for a full listing

NEXT MEETING:

**DECEMBER 3
HOLIDAY BANQUET
(RESERVATIONS REQUIRED)**

**ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL
GLASSED-IN AREA OF CAFETERIA**

FREE PARKING

GIFFORD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD RECEIVES AWARD

Wednesday, Nov. 18th, Keep Omaha Beautiful (KOB) presented our neighborhood with an award for our cleanup efforts in our community. Wayne Hill (California Bar owner) was also recognized for his support as a board member for KOB. Several businesses, individuals, neighborhoods, and organizations were honored at the awards celebration held in downtown Omaha. This award goes to everyone who has helped with our neighborhood cleanups and those who do the day-to-day tasks that help our neighborhood to look better and better.

TOOL LENDING HOTLINE

ED: 341-0475
JIM: 341-4695
CHRIS: 342-6006

About this month's PRIDE:

In the interest of the health and safety of our members, Judi Caban, who is not only our Recording Secretary but also the Parent Liaison of the Yates School Family Room, has provided some helpful safety and stress reduction tips to make this a safe and reasonably joyous holiday season.

Happy Holidays!

**From
Mike, Judi
and Ben**



**Season's
Greetings**

**From
The Yates Family**

DE-STRESS YOUR FAMILY'S HOLIDAY SEASON

In spite of (and partly because of) the emphasis on happiness, peace, and relaxation during the holiday season, this can be a particularly stressful time. Holidays are supposed to be joyful, but they often can create many headaches. Conflicting feelings may arise between the excitement and joy holidays bring, and the frustration of tight schedules, overextended budgets, and frazzled nerves that often accompany them.

Have you found yourself feeling anxious, irritable, or depressed as the holidays approach? Other signs of stress might be physical tension and headaches, impatience, excessive worry or apathy, troubles with sleep and increased eating, drinking, or smoking. How can you avoid or reduce these symptoms of the holiday "blues?" Here are some suggestions for improving your coping skills and emphasizing the positive aspects of the season.

Identify and respect your own limitations. Just because it's the holidays doesn't mean that we can magically produce unlimited time, money, "good will" or "good cheer."

Prioritize. Some of the holiday extras may be very important to you and your family, and help make this a special time . . . Great! But don't expect, or lead your children to expect, that you can do all the things, experience all the feelings, give all the gifts, and etc.

Communicate and discuss plans with the entire family so that everyone knows what is expected. Remember that children become very excited at this time of year. Increased advertising, the anticipation of gifts, and winter vacation can cause children to shift into high gear. Discussing your own feelings of excitement or frustration with your children and talking with them about time and money limitations will help all of you cope better.

Re-evaluate traditions. Too often we get caught up in long-held traditions even though they no longer fit our family's needs and interests. Think about the holiday traditions that cheer and nourish your family versus those that have little meaning or are just plain bothersome. Because time constraints are different for today's parents, consider altering some of your traditions, or starting new ones. They may not seem very comfortable at first, but if you are able to repeat them over the next few years, they'll become memorable.

Be flexible. Handling stress requires the ability to adapt, adjust, accept what can't be changed and change what you can and should. Remind yourself not to take things too seriously, to ask for help when you need to, and to keep your expectations reasonable. Don't expect major changes (improved family relationships or less job pressure, for example) just because it's the holiday season. Keep your sense of humor and enjoy the little things.

Take care of yourself. With all the extra running around and entertaining, it's extremely important to maintain as much of the regular family exercise, sleep, and diet routines as possible. Spend some evenings reading or listening to seasonal music together instead of watching TV with its overwhelming media messages. Or rent a favorite holiday movie, do some baking, or make holiday decorations. Take some "down time" and some time for yourself. Remember, you don't have to be a SUPER PARENT!

Planning, common sense, and restraint can help us be stress-free and put the "happy" in the holidays for our loved ones and ourselves.

FAMILY HOLIDAY SAFETY CHECKLIST

The holidays are a happy, hectic time. But with wintery weather, the rush of seasonal celebrations, and the house transformed with decorations, it's a potentially hazardous time as well, especially for children. Here are tips for making sure that they enjoy the festivities safely. Grandparents and others who will be entertaining young visitors this season might particularly want to brush up on their "childproofing" skills.

+Children love the color and novelty of a Christmas tree, but be sure that you keep decorations that could break or be swallowed out of their reach. Hang fragile or small ornaments in upper branches.

+Be careful to keep lighted candles out of the reach of children; also check to see that candles aren't sitting on table coverings that hang where children can reach and pull them.

+The inks used in print wrapping paper contain high amounts of lead and noxious chemicals that can be released into the air if burned in your fireplace.

+Spray-on artificial snow can irritate lungs if inhaled. Do the actual spraying yourself, or help older kids learn how to hold the can properly.

+A dried-out Christmas tree is a fire hazard, so be sure to keep yours well-watered. Dispose of it as soon as the stem no longer absorbs water (you'll notice you don't have to fill the tree holder). Don't wait until the branches sag and needles are shed.

+Invest in a smoke detector especially for the Christmas tree. Conceal it among the inner branches, and pack it away with your holiday decorations for use each year.

+Don't leave tree or other holiday lights on when you go out for the evening, even when you leave children at home with a sitter. Electrical decorations pose a fire risk.

+Never leave an extension cord plugged into a wall outlet when not in use. Small children may chew on the three end or stick a metal object into the opening—either of which would cause burns, shock, or even death.

+Small batteries left around the house appeal to young children, who may swallow them or lodge them into their nose or ears.

+Alcoholic beverages come out of the cupboard for guests during the holidays, or are often received as gifts. Don't leave them where children will be tempted to sample them. Be especially careful at holiday parties where guests may leave unfinished drinks sitting unattended. Also, keep rum-laced fruitcakes and chocolate cordials beyond children's reach. Even a very small amount of alcohol can be harmful or fatal to a young child.

+Keep children safe when you attend holiday parties by always providing the babysitter with your full name and address, a phone number where you can be reached, and when you expect to return, the name and phone number of a friend or relative to call for assistance if you cannot be reached in an emergency, and the numbers of emergency medical services and the police.

+Holidays are a prime time for thefts of wallets and gifts stowed in cars. Remind young shoppers to guard their purses and wallets.

+Don't let children operate snowblowers or other winter equipment unsupervised. And keep them off bicycles when road surfaces are snow or slush-covered.

