



Gifford Park's Pride

Gifford Park Neighborhood: A Great Place to Live, Work, Learn and Play

June 2001

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Show Wagon Returns To Gifford Park; Gravydippers To Also Appear

Gifford Park will be the site of two Show Wagon performances again this year. A District performance will be held **Tuesday, June 19**, and the Regional Finals are scheduled for **Wednesday, July 11**. Both performances will begin at 7:30 p.m. Entry forms are available by calling **Cis Carlson** at 444-6280. More information will be provided at the June neighborhood meeting.

The Show Wagon program is a competition for young people ages 1-18 to show off their talents on stage, whether it be singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, juggling, magic tricks or any other talent performance. There are 5 different age divisions and participants can come from anywhere. Wouldn't it be nice to see talented young people from our own neighborhood participate? Mark your calendars and come out on both dates to enjoy an evening of music, dance and other talents at Gifford Park. Seating will most likely be on the east bank of the park, so bring your blankets and enjoy the show!

Be sure to come early to listen to jazz music and more from the **Gravydippers**. They will perform in Gifford Park from 6 to 7 p.m. on **June 19th**, using the Show Wagon stage. We also plan to have food and drinks at these events. Bring your blankets and lawn chairs to the park and enjoy the shows!

Spring Cleanup Scheduled for June 16

The GPNA's Spring Cleanup will take place **Saturday, June 16**, from **10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** in the Gifford Park south parking lot. The cleanup is open to all GPNA members and those who donate time or money to the Association.

The following items will **not** be accepted at the dumpster site: concrete, yard waste, hazardous materials, paint, oil, or herbicides. The GPNA has been given 5 vouchers for tree brush disposal through River City Recycling; these will be given out on a first come, first serve basis, with large loads taking precedence over small ones. The Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association's cleanup site is the area's tire disposal location (the parking lot across from 141 North 41st St.)

For large loads and disposal of couches or stuffed chairs, a donation to the Association would be appreciated.

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Next Meeting

**Thursday, June 7
7:00 P.M.**

**Election of Officers
For 2001 - 2002**

**Presentation by Police
Nuisance Unit**

**St. Joseph Hospital
Dining Rooms A, B, and C**

Note: No July Meeting!

Despite Weather, Gifford Park Day Fun For All

Despite a steady light rain during much of **Gifford Park Day**, held **Saturday, May 12**, most events went on as planned. The weather forced cancellation of the music and the moonwalk; however the park and memorial dedications, speakers, and a wonderful parade through the park went as planned. Due to space limitations this month, more details and pictures of the events and activities will be found in our July newsletter, including the many volunteers and organizations who helped the GPNA.



GPNA OFFICERS**PRESIDENT**

Chris Foster 342-6006

VICE PRESIDENT

Peter Cihunka 341-7293

RECORDING SECRETARY

Vicki Frey 344-0757

TREASURER

Dana Carlton 346-4575

COMMITTEE CHAIRS**ADVERTISING**

Doris Sweazy 345-0125

CLEAN-UP

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

COMPLIANCE

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

WELCOMING

Vicki Frey 344-0757

HISTORIAN

Eva Swanson 345-1707

MEMBERSHIP

Chris Foster 342-6006

NEWSLETTER

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Mike Bacome 933-7506

PARK

Roger Freeman 557-2914

PARKING VIOLATIONS

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

TOOL LENDING

Chris Foster 342-6006

WATCH GROUP

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

WEEDS & LITTER

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

KELLOM SCHOOL LIAISON

Dana Carlton 346-4575

The President's Column

The June GPNA meeting is the time when we hold the election of officers. My term as president ends but I want to let everyone know what a great experience it has been for me the last two years. I am truly grateful to everyone involved in supporting the GPNA and its mission. I have met many new people and strengthened existing friendships and relationships. I know I have asked a lot from many of you, especially the GPNA Board, and you have always responded without hesitation. I appreciate the long hours and hard work that you routinely put in. I strongly believe it's worth the efforts because our neighborhood is what we make it. I plan to stay active with the GPNA with our many events and activities. I also would like to focus on a couple projects I haven't had time to start because of my current duties.

I'd like to personally thank everyone who actively participates in the GPNA, but I frankly don't have the space in this newsletter nor would I do justice to everyone. However, there are a few people I wish to acknowledge who have consistently gone above and beyond the call of duty: **Harry Dirgo, Brad Bogard, Mike Bacome, Candy Bacome, Jim Wilwerding, Peter Cihunka, Ron Yates, Terry Wilwerding, Sue Wilwerding, Ron Frey, Vicki Frey, Jean Peck, Dana Carlton, Mike Wilwerding, Eva Swanson, Mark Saner, Sandy Saner, Betty Slayden, Bob Hutton, Officer Mike Paul and Loren Johnson.** Many of these individuals have served as officers or have been there for me and the GPNA the last two years. Two other very special people who have supported me are my mom **Jackie Foster** and of course my wife **Sallie**, who does more work for the Association than you'll ever know.

As mentioned above, it always seems to be active around here, both good and bad. Some of the highlights that come to mind were the Show Wagon coming back to Gifford Park, the park planting project and Gifford Park Day. The lowlights and disappointments included the Chandler murders, losing Yates as our neighborhood school and not getting more people involved with the GPNA. I'm proud of the way our neighborhood responded to these and other events, and we are stronger as a result.

In May I had the opportunity to attend the annual NUSA (Neighborhoods U.S.A) Conference in Pittsburgh, Pa. Holy Name Housing provided scholarships to a few neighborhood presidents to attend. Omaha sent ten people, including three from the City Planning Department. I had a great time at the conference meeting other community leaders and planners from across the country. The workshops and discussion groups focussed on specific ideas for building stronger neighborhoods. I plan to share the information in future meetings and newsletters. I was impressed with Pittsburgh, especially how well the community treasures its many distinct neighborhoods. I came away from the conference with these observations: many communities have adopted "community policing" concepts; Omaha has some catching up to do as far as organizations working together on community projects and planning issues; our neighborhood association is doing a very good job of organizing activities and maintenance issues, however we need improvement in getting more people involved and being a more "inclusive" neighborhood.

It really boils down to getting to know your neighbors and asking them to get involved. I believe now more than ever that the Gifford Park neighborhood has tremendous opportunities for becoming an even stronger neighborhood, but it takes commitment and effort from neighborhood leadership, which is all of us. I realize everyone is busy these days, but energy put toward our neighborhood will be well worth it. Please consider getting involved with the GPNA by attending monthly meetings or participating in events. If you are already involved, the challenge is to share your knowledge and encourage others. This is vital to the overall health of our neighborhood. There are several opportunities in June to make a difference - GPNA meetings, neighborhood walks, cleanup, Show Wagon and music in the park, Sun Dawgs...or start your own project. Thanks again for your support, hope to see you soon!

by Chris Foster

**TOOL
LENDING
HOTLINE**

Mike 933-7506
Chris 342-6006

Mowers - \$5
Rent for most tools - \$3



3rd Annual Tennis Blitz Hits Kellom, Gifford Park

Over 400 students and teachers were introduced to tennis at Kellom Elementary on Thursday, May 17. Ed Hubbs and Chris Foster ran the clinic in the school gymnasium. Prizes were given out to both students and teachers who helped in the demonstration. Two days later on Saturday, May 19, Gifford Park hosted a free 1 ½ hour tennis blitz in which 45 kids participated. The GPNA provided racquets, balls and instructors. Many thanks to the instructors for their commitment to this event: **Chris, Jackie, Jenny and Willie Foster, Roger Freeman, Keith Cronican, Doug Deacon, Robert Glaser, David Vosberg, John Dervin, Kirk Peck, Ron Frey, Jackie Taylor and Mark Forster.** Also a big thanks to **Betty, Tiffany and Kayleen Slayden, Jan Franks, Raquel Ayala, Jean Peck and Bette Tanner** for a great job of handling registration and prizes for the kids. Don't forget, tennis racquets and balls will be available for use at the Sun Dawg Shack this summer at Gifford Park. Also the GPNA plans to sponsor the annual summer tennis program in August – practice makes perfect!



GPNA Officers To Be Chosen

The GPNA Nominating Committee has identified the following individuals who have volunteered to serve as officers for 2001 - 2002:

President:	Peter Cihunka
Vice President:	Terry Wilwerding
Recording Secretary:	Vicki Frey
Treasurer:	Dana Carlton

This slate will be placed in nomination at the general meeting on June 7th, and a vote will be taken.

Reminder: You must be a GPNA member to vote!

Spring Cleanup . . . continued from page 1

As in past years, \$10.00 will be charged for each air conditioner or refrigerator brought to the cleanup.

If help is needed, volunteers will haul your trash for a small donation to the Association. If you need the hauling service, it is very important that you call **Chris** at 342-6006, **Peter** at 341-7293, or **Jim** at 551-1344 as soon as possible.

Plenty of volunteers are needed to help with the cleanup. If you can spare a few hours, please call the numbers listed above. You'll also be able to join or renew your GPNA membership at the cleanup site. Hope to see you there!

Neighborhood Walk Calendar

All walks are scheduled for Friday evenings at 8:00 p.m.

June 1 - Meet at TAC Building, 32nd & Burt

June 15 - Meet at Gifford Park by baseball diamond

June 29 - Meet at Kum & Go, 33rd & Cass

City of Omaha Parks & Recreation Sun Dawg Summer Fun Youth Program

Monday - Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Beginning June 11- August 3

No Cost Activities for kids
ages 6 - 15 include:

**Fun, sports, games, reading, arts
and crafts, field trips,
camp programs, swimming and
more.**

**The Gifford
Park Sun
Dawg Shack
is the "cool"
place to be
this summer!**



What's Happening In The Neighborhood. . .

Please keep **Loren Johnson's** family in your thoughts and prayers. Loren's wife **Mary** passed away on Memorial Day. She is survived by sons and daughter-in-law, **Michael, Jamie, Tracy and Angela**; daughters and son-in-law, **Jennifer and Jason Hoff, Kasey Johnson**. Loren Johnson is owner of **J-N-J Grocery** on 33rd & California, and he and Mary have always been very generous to the Gifford Park neighborhood.

The proposed Assisted Living Center, which would be in the old Nebraska College of Business Building on the Duchesne Campus at 36th & California, is scheduled to go before the Landmark's Heritage Preservation Commission June 13. The board will rule on whether physical changes to the building will impact the historic integrity of the neighborhood. The proposal is expected to go before the City Council in late June or July. The Planning Board unanimously approved the project at their May 2 meeting.

Congratulations to **Mike Fahey** for winning the Mayoral election and **Jim Vokal** for winning the District 3 City Council election held on May 15th. We look forward to working with both gentlemen as soon as they get settled in their new positions. We also wish **Mayor Hal Daub** and **Councilman Bob Sivick** the best of luck and sincerely appreciate their efforts to make our community a better place.

Have you noticed the newly painted crosswalks on 33rd and California? With as much foot, bike, and vehicle traffic on the corner, it should make for safer streets for everyone.

The renovation of the new addition at **California Tacos** was completed in late April. It looks great! The beautiful oak wood floor, new

bathrooms and large front windows make this an enjoyable place to eat. It is also a non-smoking area. Thanks to **Brad Bogard** for letting the GPNA hold our May board meeting in the new space.

The GPNA is now taking orders for T-shirts and hats with our new logo. We plan to have these items available at our June 7 meeting. The shirts have a colored embroidered logo and come in 2 colors right now - yellow and ashe (light gray). The shirts are \$10 and the hats are \$15 each. Now is a good time to buy while the price is low. GPNA embroidered items are great for wearing at neighborhood walks and other events. Call **Pete (341-7293)**, **Chris (342-6006)** or **Vicki (344-0757)** for information or to place an order. Also, you can contact **Eva (345-1707)** for History Books - \$12 for color and \$6 for black & white.

Third Annual Bike Rodeo Held In May

On Saturday, May 19, **St. Joseph's Hospital** and the GPNA sponsored a bicycle rodeo in the hospital lot at 32nd and Burt St. Over 100 children attended the afternoon event. Many bikes were repaired at no charge by **Larry Thorsen** from **Olympia Cycle** at 40th and Hamilton. Highlights included free bike helmets, an obstacle course and traffic light training, and the Life-Flight helicopter. Ten new K-Mart bikes were also given away. Pop, ice cream, snacks and gifts were provided by **St. Joseph's**, **Baker's Grocery** and **Robert's Dairy**. Many thanks to the volunteers from **St. Joseph's**, and **Terry, Sue, Steve, Jim, Kathleen, Mike & Leo Wilwerding** and **Peter Cihunka** from the GPNA.



GIFFORD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION 532 N. 33rd Street, Omaha, NE 68131 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (Please print clearly)



Membership year: _____ (Membership year runs from June 1 through May 31)

Type of membership: Single (\$5) _____ Family (\$8) _____ Business (\$25) _____

Name of business _____

Name _____ (Last) _____ (First)

Spouse _____ (Last) _____ (First)

Address _____ (Street) _____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip)

Telephone Number: _____ (Home) _____ (Work)

E-mail Address: _____

Can we contact you for help on any of the following items? (please circle areas of interest).

Cleanup/Beautification	Tennis Program	Block Captain	Tool Lending
Membership	Youth Activities	History	Newsletter
Neighborhood Walks	Park	Merchants	Newsletter Distribution
Social Activities	Tree Planting	Watch Group	Meeting Program
Landlord/Tenant Issues	Calling Committee	Public Relations	School Liaison