



# Gifford Park's Pride

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

December 2001

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

## Feeling Grinchy?

'Tis the season – or so we've been told. With exceptionally warm fall weather, economic recession, job cuts, and travel complications it has been hard for some of us to get into the spirit of things. If you're not feeling all warm and fuzzy inside as you rush around with all the holiday preparations, perhaps you need to take a step back.

Come join us for some old fashioned Christmas caroling in Gifford Park. **Friday night, December 14<sup>th</sup>**, we'll meet at the corner of **33<sup>rd</sup> & California Streets** at **6 PM**. After caroling for about an hour, we'll gather at **California Tacos** for some hot chocolate and cookies. Song sheets will be provided for those who are hesitant about their musical talents. This is a *family event*. **Children must be accompanied by an adult.**

So before you say "Bah, humbug!" consider this a great way to get the festive spirit back. You can meet new neighbors, visit old friends, and experience a crisp winter evening. Most importantly, we'll have a very merry time. Who knows. It may even put the "Ho, ho, ho!" back in your holiday season.

## Assisted Living Update

At the November meeting of the Landmarks Commission, California Housing gained approval to move forward with the assisted living facility in the Foxley building at 37<sup>th</sup> and California. After the commission ruled at an earlier meeting that the physical changes to the building would be acceptable, opponents raised the issue of possible financial loss, which then required that California Housing prepare and submit a financial impact study. The study was submitted at the October meeting, and opponents requested time to rebut that study. A financial impact study was then prepared and submitted at the November meeting by the opposing group, but that study, while disputing the prior findings of California Housing, presented no significant information suggesting that financial loss would in fact occur if the project was carried out. Representatives from the GPNA reiterated the support of the organization for the project, and indicated the belief that the facility would be a positive asset for the neighborhood. Having gained the approval of the Planning Board and the

*continued on page 3*

## Next Meeting

Thursday, December 6  
7:00 P.M.



**Holiday  
Banquet**



St. Joseph's Hospital  
Becic Dining Room

See Page 3 for details on  
the Holiday Banquet!

## Two Lighting Contests To Be Held This December

This year, the Gifford Park neighborhood will be participating in two separate holiday lighting contests. For the annual GPNA Lighting Contest, a panel of judges will pick out 5 new houses this year to receive prizes donated to the Association. The other contest, sponsored by **Omaha.com.**, will include our neighborhood along with others around the city. The first place prize will be \$1,000. Judging for both contests will take place on **December 20<sup>th</sup>** between **7:00 - 10:00 p.m.** This is a great opportunity to showcase our wonderful neighborhood and demonstrate our holiday spirit! Let's turn our neighborhood into a winter wonderland and bring that \$1,000 prize to Gifford Park!



Happy Holidays from the GPNA!

**GPNA OFFICERS****PRESIDENT**

Peter Cihunka 341-7293

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

Micki Frey 344-0757

**TREASURER**

Dana Carlton 346-4575

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS****ADVERTISING**

Dar Sweazy 345-0125

**CLEAN-UP**

Mike Wilwerding 341-8224

**COMPLIANCE**

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

**HISTORIAN**

Eva Swanson 345-1707

**KELLOM SCHOOL LIAISON**

Dana Carlton 346-4575

**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

**WELCOMING**

Micki Frey 344-0757

**The President's Column**

As the holiday season comes upon us (too fast as usual), I have noticed many people in the neighborhood already getting into the spirit of the time: many decorated houses, holiday party plans, and believe it or not, some good cheer! This is also a time when many people take a moment and realize all the things they have to be thankful for.

I find myself being so busy this year that this is the first time I have really had a chance to sit back and think about all the things I am thankful for. The first six months of my term as President have been very enjoyable. I have made many new friends, strengthened old friendships, and received a lot of support from many good people inside and outside the Association. I thank everyone who has been a mentor, advisor, and friend to me the last six months.

I guess this is a good time to look at my six month "report card". When I first came into the office, I set out to accomplish three main goals:

1. Double the Gifford Park Membership. We have made strides in recruiting members, but we do have a long way to go before June 2002. With your help, I know we will get there.
2. Increase the involvement of all groups within the GPNA's boundaries. We have made great strides in this area. We have heard from members of both the Latino and Sudanese cultures at our general meetings. Last week, we had the first meeting of the GPNA Multi-cultural Council. I look for great things from this group and strongly encourage anyone who wants to get involved in a great project to call me!
3. Safety on 33<sup>rd</sup> and California streets. This is always an ongoing concern. Just this week I had a meeting with members of the mayor's office and the Omaha Police Department; the goals being to improve the already good communication lines between our groups and to find a way to consistently work on the situation at 33<sup>rd</sup> and California. All groups are committed to finding ways to improve the situation.

I know that none of these goals will be met overnight. With a little persistence, effort, and a whole lot of teamwork, we will get there.

So, with that I just want to say I hope you have a great holiday and a Happy New Year. May you and your family be safe and I look forward to working with all of you in 2002!

by Peter Cihunka

*Editor's note: If you have something that would be of interest to our neighborhood, we encourage you to submit an article for our monthly newsletter. Editorials must be approved by the GPNA Executive Board. Articles can be left at the GPNA Office; please include your name and phone number. Contact Sue Wilwerding (342-2795) or Chris Foster (342-6006) for information regarding the newsletter.*

**GPNA Multi-Cultural Committee Holds First Meeting**

On November 19th, 2001, the GPNA held its first ever multi-cultural meeting. The main focus of this group is to identify ways to proactively work with the many ethnic groups within our neighborhood. The entire neighborhood was well represented and an educational activity is planned for sometime early in 2002. Anyone who is even slightly interested in getting involved is encouraged to do so. Call Peter 341-7293 for more information or to volunteer to join the committee.

*The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association  
requests your presence at the*

## *13th Annual Holiday Banquet*

*to be held  
at 7 p.m. on December 6th  
at St. Joseph's Hospital  
601 N. 30th Street  
in the glassed-in (Becic) dining room  
south of the cafeteria.*

*St. Joseph's Hospital graciously  
demonstrates its support of the  
GPNA by hosting this annual event  
for members.*

*There is no cost - you just need  
to be a GPNA member.*

*Please bring a canned good item which will be  
donated to a local charitable agency*



**SAINT JOSEPH HOSPITAL**  
AT CRRIGHTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER



## **Assisted Living. . .**

*continued from page 1*

Landmarks Commission, California Housing will in the near future submit the project for the approval of the City Council, the final step prior to beginning the project. GPNA members will attend the City Council meeting to voice support for the assisted living facility and for Duchesne Academy, which feels the facility will provide valuable opportunities for community service and involvement for students.

## **Senior Partners Offers Informative Program**

Saint Joseph Hospital's Senior Partners Program will be offering an informational session on **Saturday, December 29th, at 9:00 A.M.** in the **Seminar Room** at the hospital. The speaker will be **Jennifer Hauschild**, who is the executive director for Volunteers Intervening for Equity. This organization provides information, advocacy, and access to community resources that spare older persons the frustration of searching for the most appropriate agency to find a solution to their problems. Topics that will be addressed include insurance counseling (help with deciphering doctor and hospital bills and Medicare Explanation of Benefits), filling out homestead exemption forms, dealing with consumer/contractor fraud, and a review of legal and financial services that are available to seniors.

In order to attend this presentation, you must be a member of the Senior Partners program. Membership is free and is for individuals 50 or older. Anyone interested in joining must fill out a membership information card (cards will be available at the Holiday Banquet). There are many other benefits to joining the Senior Partners program. For more information on how to register for the informational meeting or how to join the Senior Partners program, call **Cheryl Morehouse** in the Volunteer Department at 449-4260.

## **PKA Haunted House A "Frightening" Success**

The 7th annual PKA (Pi Kappa Alpha) Creighton University Fraternity-GPNA Haunted House was opened to neighborhood children, free of charge, on Sunday, October 28th. The nice weather made it very enjoyable as the event had one of its best turnouts ever. Many thanks to those who provided treats and those who helped with crowd control, and of course special thanks goes to the PKA Fraternity for holding the event again this year.



*Some of the neighborhood children who went through the haunted house check out the table of goodies at the end of the tour. A good time was had by all who attended.*

## What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

Many thanks to **Mayor Mike Fahey** for being the guest speaker at our November general meeting. Mayor Fahey answered a variety of questions about issues that impact our neighborhood. The mayor's assistant **Steve Scarpello** also attended and wrote down several items to look into concerning problems in our neighborhood.

Please note there will **not** be a GPNA Executive Board Meeting in December. The next board meeting will be **Thursday, January 17 at 7 p.m. at California Tacos** – anyone is welcome to attend.

Please continue to keep **Wayne and Peg Hill** in your thoughts. Wayne is very ill and they need your prayers during this difficult time. Wayne and Peg are owners of the **California Bar** near 33<sup>rd</sup> & California.

Our thoughts will also be with **James and Vera Horton**. Vera has become ill recently. James and Vera have lived next to Gifford Park for many years and have been committed GPNA members since the start of the organization. They have helped with several GPNA events including cleanups, Gifford Park Day and Show Wagon.

Many thanks to **Raquel Ayala** for translating the November newsletter to Spanish. Raquel, who is a high school student, lives near Gifford Park and has also helped with many other GPNA events. Raquel will try to continue to translate future newsletter articles. Copies are available at **J'N'J Grocery** and **California Tacos** or call **342-6006** to obtain a copy.

The GPNA sends its congratulations to **Rodney Hay**, St. Joseph Hospital employee and GPNA volunteer. Rodney was selected by the hospital to receive the 2001 Caring Kind Award from the Nebraska Association of Hospitals and Health Systems.

The **Joslyn Castle Neighborhood** will hold its first annual tree lighting and caroling event on the front lawn of Joslyn Castle **Monday, December 10, at 7:00 p.m.** Guests will carol around an old fashioned Douglas fir decorated with hundreds of lights and set in the circular flower bed in front of the castle entrance. Santa Claus is scheduled to visit with treats for the children. Refreshments will be served after the caroling in the Castle where guests will get a sneak peak at the Castle's new interior Christmas decorations. The event is sponsored by the Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association and the Friends of Joslyn Castle.



**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              | Mercbants        | Newsletter Distribution |
| Social Activities      | Tree Planting     | Watch Group      | Meeting Program         |
| Landlord/Tenant Issues | Calling Committee | Public Relations | School Liaison          |

### Don't Forget . . .

Don't let 2001 slip away without joining the GPNA. Just fill out the form on the left and send it in with the appropriate dues (single - \$5, family - \$8, business - \$25) or bring it with you to the holiday banquet if you've pre-registered. The GPNA has sponsored many great activities this past year - be part of the action in 2002 and join one of the most active neighborhood associations in the city!

**For City Services,  
 Information, or  
 Complaints**

**Call:**

**Mayor's Action Office**

**444-5555**