



Gifford Park's Pride

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

September 2001

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

College Students: Welcome To The Gifford Park Neighborhood

We have a large number of university students living in the area who have returned for another year of school. The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association has been working with the city and police to improve the appearance and safety of our neighborhood. The goal of the GPNA is to improve the neighborhood and make it a better place for **all** residents, and we would ask our new student neighbors to become a part of this effort.

The largest part of being a good neighbor is consideration for others. First we ask students to be considerate in terms of noise, especially after 10:00 PM. Many families in our neighborhood have children or go to work early. Parties are another problem. Unfortunately, parties always seem to end up bigger and noisier than first planned, and the police have been more active in enforcing noise and underage drinking ordinances. Another difficult problem is parking. Our neighborhood has barely enough parking (like school), so you may not always be able to park directly in front of your residence. Please do not park on lawns, across sidewalks or on the wrong side of the street (facing traffic). Besides making the neighborhood look bad, all of these are parking violations. Also, do not litter and help us keep our neighborhood picked up. Many of us pick up trash that we did not leave and we ask that you would help us by doing the same.

Finally, consider coming to one of our meetings and perhaps joining our Association. A \$5.00 yearly membership will get this newsletter delivered to you every month, and you will meet your neighbors and many other wonderful people during our activities such as the neighborhood clean-up (we can always use more help), holiday events, and walks. We welcome the students for the upcoming year, and we hope that you will help us continue to make the Gifford Park neighborhood a better place to live.

Next Meeting
Thursday, September 6
7:00 P.M.

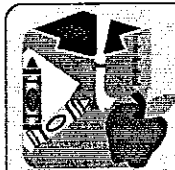
Guest Speaker:
Gotkuoth Kuich
Sudanese Community
Representative

St. Joseph Hospital
Becic Dining Room

Tennis Program A Winner With Neighborhood Kids

The 8th annual GPNA Tennis Program had another good turnout in Gifford Park. This year we had about 12 instructors for each of the five sessions. They had their hands full with an average of 40 to 45 kids per session. As in the past kids were divided into age groups so they could learn each of the basic tennis skills. The kids then used their practice skills to win prizes during target practice at the end of each session. The last day featured awards and tennis party. Special recognition goes to the winners of the annual Sportsmanship Award

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**Back
to
School**

**Please
Drive
Carefully!**

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Peter Cihunka 341-7293

VICE PRESIDENT

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Vicki Frey 344-0757

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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

Fall is almost upon us. I don't know about you, but I feel like fall is more a season of change than any other season. Not just the leaves on the trees and the weather, but the kids going back to school, the return of the Creighton students, and of course the new season starts for all my favorite TV shows. There is something in the air this time of year that always gives me a little injection of energy. Of course, change is no stranger to our neighborhood. I have seen more new faces around the neighborhood than I can remember seeing in a long time. Synonymous with change is diversity. I was recently talking to a reporter from the World-Herald and she asked me how I describe my neighborhood to other people. I told her one word: diverse. Did you know that Gifford Park is the most diverse neighborhood in the three county area? When you walk out your door or drive down your street, you have a 75% chance of seeing someone whose ethnicity is not Caucasian. I knew we were diverse, but I had no idea how much. Now, if you flashback to my first column, I said one of my goals this year as president was to increase the level of involvement from all ethnic groups in our neighborhood. First question: Why don't these different ethnic groups get more involved? I ask: Why haven't we gotten them more involved? Someone once sang about how people fear what they don't understand. You may ask yourself questions like: How do I approach these people? What could I possibly have in common with these people? They don't even speak English! I will answer these questions in a little bit (you see, I too asked myself these questions and I think I found the answers).

Without sounding like some crazy idealist, I think the first step to getting this diverse neighborhood more involved is to become educated. To this end, I am trying to get representatives from the Hispanic and Sudanese groups to come to our September meeting and offer their answers to the questions I posed above. I believe that if we understand more about our neighbors, the barriers will become smaller and smaller. The Hispanic and Sudanese represent just two of the many different cultures we have living within our boundaries; I welcome all groups to send a representative to speak at our meeting. After all, what is a neighborhood? A bunch of houses and buildings? Or is it the people who live within its boundaries? I think you know the answer.

If you would like to take the initiative and get to know your neighbors on your own, I encourage you to visit Gifford Park on almost any night of the week. You will meet a group of Hispanic soccer players who are very friendly and will probably invite you to join in. Or if you want, you can walk down to 32nd and Burt and visit the Sudanese people who live there. They too are very friendly and like to chat. I think you will find that we are all pretty similar; we want a safe neighborhood, clean streets, somewhere to raise our kids, and to live in an area we feel proud of.

As for the three questions I asked above (these answers are for all ethnic groups):

1. How do I approach these people? Walk up to them and shake their hand. Or as you walk by them nod your head.
2. What could I possibly have in common with these people? See the previous paragraph.
3. They don't even speak (insert your language here)! Everyone responds well to a smile and "Hello".

by Peter Cihunka


**TOOL
LENDING
HOTLINE**

Mike 933-7506

Chris 342-6006

Mowers - \$5

Rent for most tools - \$3



Tennis Program . . . continued from page 1

– **Brittney Rubek**, age 10, won the award for the girls, and **Andrew Saavedra**, age 11, won for the boys. A BIG thanks goes to **Godfather's Pizza** again this year donating 12 pizzas for the event! **California Bar** donated pop, **California Tacos** donated dinner coupons, and neighborhood volunteers made delicious treats. Many thanks go to all the instructors - **Nancy Gaardner, Bob Gaardner, Roger Freeman, Laurie Bolte, Kirk Peck, Vincent Shen, John Mahr, Jackie Foster, Willie Foster, Jenny Foster** (pictured on the front page), **Mark Charles, Paul Johaneck, Stuart Waters, Ed Hubbs, Camie Hubbs, David Vosberg, Kay Corell, Jane Hines, Sharon Reefer and Ron Goodman**. Special thanks to **Betty Slayden, Jan Franks and Bette Tanner** for helping with check-in and prizes each week. Unfortunately, Betty Slayden's family was not able to attend the last session; her mother passed away August 27. The Slaydens have always helped with many GPNA events for many years – our thoughts are with you. And last, but by all means not least, thanks to **Chris Foster**, who organizes this terrific event every year – the kids of the neighborhood are truly fortunate to have such a great guy in their court! (Get it?)



We Want You!

Everyone I talk to who is involved in some type of volunteer organization tells me the same thing: "We have a heck of time getting new people". GPNA, unfortunately, is no exception. We have some great people in this neighborhood who have a lot to offer. You know who you are! All you people who, when I talk to you, tell me you would love to help out, but then you never show up - can you spare a few hours a month? Look at it this way; in the average month, there are 720 hours. How hard would it be to give us 4 of those hours?? We are looking "to hire" for the following positions: web site builder and maintenance, calling committee, and the 12-1am shift for the neighborhood patrol. Serious inquiries call **Peter** at **341-7293**.

What's Happening in the Neighborhood

The GPNA wishes to thank the **Weed and Seed Committee** for awarding us a "Neighborhoods That Work" grant for \$655 for our fall neighborhood cleanup and pumpkin patch. The money will cover dumpsters and pumpkins.

In an effort to strengthen the impact of Omaha's neighborhoods on the city's overall success, **United Way of the Midlands, the Omaha Community Foundation, the University of Nebraska at Omaha** and several local foundations have joined forces to launch the **Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha (NCGO)**. The NCGO, housed in the Collaborating Center for Public Health and Community Service at **115 S. 49th Ave.** will provide services in four major areas for neighborhood associations: training programs to help residents organize neighborhood associations, technical assistance and consultation, information management and technology support, and fund-raising technical assistance.

The Dundee-Memorial Park Neighborhood Association is sponsoring **Dundee Days** on **Saturday, September 22nd**. Some of the activities scheduled include a pan-

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"Poison ivy, poison ivy. Late at night when you're sleeping, poison ivy comes a creeping all around."

-The Coasters

Never one to steer away from controversy or bold words I often get to eat later, it is my view that all ivy is poison ivy.

While ivy looks so quaint with lovely green tendrils spreading up the side of an old house—especially quaint and lovely on an English cottage-style house—it is unmercifully destructive. I'm not the only one that thinks so. Here is an e-mail I received this month from a reader:

I always read your great articles. Thanks.

I would like for you to do a column on ivy that grows on exterior walls. My husband thinks that it is so damaging to siding and brick mortar. We passed up buying a great house because he thought that all of the ivy that had grown over the windows and on the siding and brick would have done too much harm to the exterior.

Look forward to hearing about it.

Laura Mann

Looking to Buy or Sell Your House?



Call a realtor that lives and knows your neighborhood.

Matt Mancuso
740-6929

Century 21 Wear
391-5912

Your Neighborhood Realtor

Call for a free market analysis of your home. I can value, sell and buy you a new home. For any of your real estate needs feel free to call me.
Matt 740-6929/345-8611

Aside from the fact that I gratuitously included Laura's kind words about this column, there is a lesson here for old house owners—ivy is destructive. I heartily concur with Laura's husband.

Ivy grows so prolifically that in seemingly no time at all it will take over your house. But as it sends out new shoots the plant looks for footholds to climb up your exterior walls. A chink in your brick mortar, a crack in your stucco, or a gap beside a window is just fine with the ivy. As the plant grows the chink in the mortar widens and the crack deepens. Then the number one enemy of old houses—water—takes over from there. Rain penetrates the openings and maybe rot sets in on structural members or window frames. Then you add the freezes and thaws of Nebraska winters and bricks break apart and big chunks of stucco plummet into your bushes.

When we bought our old house, the west side had a substantial growth of ivy. Not only was it weakening the mortar, but also the plants were holding moisture in close to the brick. The ivy was infested with bugs so tiny they marched through the openings in the window screen like it was a front door into our house.

I admit it; I am guilty of "ivycide". I chopped the vines off at ground level and then sprayed the stalks with "Brush-B-Gon". Ivy is tough. It usually takes two or three applications to kill it. (If you are unfortunate enough to have trumpet vine, you'll be spraying for a lot longer. I have been attacking some trumpet vine to the west of my garage for eleven years now. But I will prevail!)

To remove the ivy vines, stems, and little suction pads the ivy uses to attach itself to the wall, a putty knife with the edge sharpened with a file and wire brush seem to work as well as anything.

As I said out the outset, my point of view on ivy may be controversial. I'm sure there are ivy lovers out there who are appalled with this column. So, if you would like to offer a contrary point of view, write or e-mail me. The editors of this

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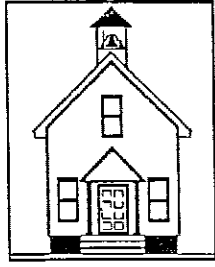


Mon - Fri 9:30-7
Sat 10-6
Sun 12-5

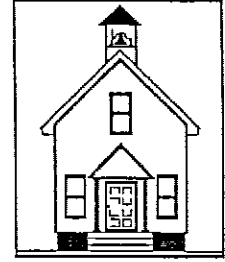
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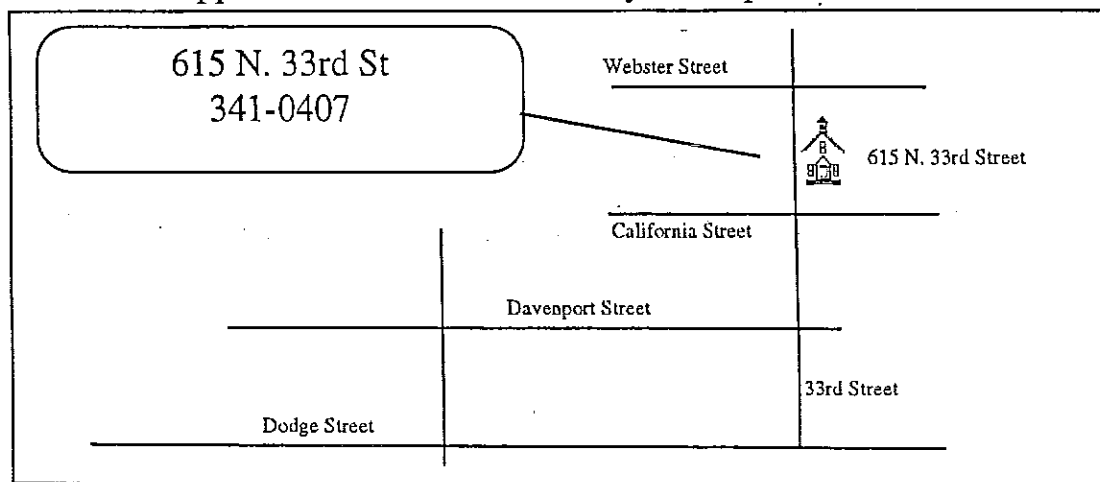
NEBRASKA CHILDCARE CENTERS

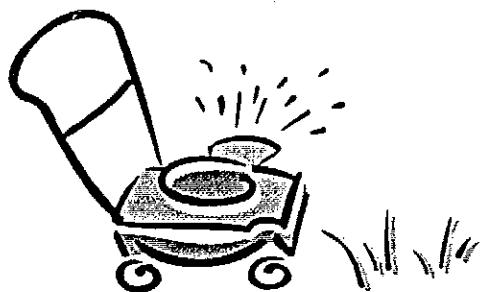


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8,000 sq. ft.	\$51.00	\$55.00	\$58.00
9,000 sq. ft.	\$57.00	\$60.00	\$63.00
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Old House Mechanic . . . continued from page 4

newsletter are always eager to offer equal time to opposing points of view. (Then they have less stuff to write.) Editorial space will be allocated according to how well the letter writer praises the wit, charm, and valuable information provided by the Old House Mechanic.

Old House Quote of the Month

If you own an old house you can never have too many tubes of caulk.

Old House Source of the Month

Hard-to-find old house parts may be a little easier now. The Old House Journal's website offers free classifieds at their website: www.oldhousejournal.com. Our friends (and Dundee neighbors) Jeannie and Tom have had success locating vintage light fixtures and other parts on e-bay, the on-line auction house.

Connections

If you have a question, or a subject you'd like addressed in a future column write to me at:

The Old House Mechanic
5207 Cuming Street
Omaha, NE 68132

Or call: 556-6638

Or e-mail: dbrowsers@home.com

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What's Happening . . . continued from page 3

cake breakfast from 8-11 am, Streetcar Wall ceremony, street parade, and a history tour on Ollie the Trolley. Stop by one of the Dundee area businesses for more information.

Community Natural Foods Coop has relocated from 108th and Blondo to 40th and Farnam (the old Beaton Drug building). This member-owned store is open to the public and offers refreshingly low prices on quality organic natural foods and products. The Coop is a full line grocery with organic fruits and vegetables, dairy products, meats, and many bulk items, including grains, beans, dried fruit, herbs, oils, etc. It is open to the public with one low pricing system; however, customers can join as members and receive discounts. See the ad for the Coop on page 4 for more information.

This summer, a group of GPNA volunteers has continued to work at a "community garden" on a lot at **3416 Cass St.** Grading and landscaping has nearly been completed during this last month, and some perennial and bulb planting will be done this fall. You don't have to have a green thumb or be Martha Stewart - just come out, dig in the dirt, and enjoy the outdoors with your neighbors! If you are interested in participating in this garden project, call **Annemarie 342-1340** or **Chris 342-6006.**

End of Summer Neighborhood Walk

Join us the evening of **September 14th at 7 pm** for the end of summer walk. We will be meeting in Gifford Park by the ball diamond. Bring the whole family! The GPNA will buy every person who attends one taco and non-alcoholic beverage at California Tacos after the walk. Tickets will be handed out before the walk. For the final walk of summer, we will be giving a **free GPNA shirt** to anyone who brings three other people to the walk (they must participate in the walk to qualify). Rain or shine, come out and show your neighborhood spirit. We will see you there!! Questions: call **Peter at 341-7293.**

Fall Cleanup and More!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association will be holding the annual Fall Cleanup on **October 20th** from **9am to 2pm** in Gifford Park. We will also have some pumpkins for anyone who would like to have one for Halloween. More details to follow in the October newsletter. If you want to volunteer or if you have any questions, please call **Peter at 341-7293** or **Chris at 342-6006.**

Third Annual GPNA Neighborhood Garage Sale

Do you have a bunch of junk that could be someone else's treasure? Well now it your chance to unload it! On **September 22nd**, the GPNA will be sponsoring a neighborhood garage sale. The neighborhood association will place an ad in the **World-Herald**, distribute flyers with the participating household's addresses, and post signs around the neighborhood. All you have to do is let us know who you are by **September 17th**. If you want to participate in the neighborhood garage sale, please call **Vicki Frey at 344-0757.**



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



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

Name of business _____

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

Telephone Number: _____
 (Home) (Work)

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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 |

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 444-5555**