



Gifford Park's Pride

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

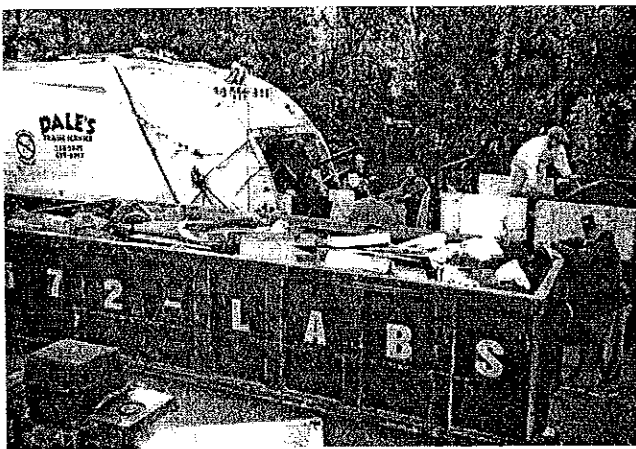
November 2001

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Biggest Fall Cleanup Ever!

What a Day in Gifford Park! Children painting pumpkins in the pumpkin patch; children sounding the siren while learning about public safety in a brand new police cruiser; volunteers of all ages packing dumpsters and helping neighbors with hauling trash; neighbors eating hot dogs, pop, chips and brownies; people joining the GPNA and finding a few extra bucks to donate - these were the sights and sounds of this year's fall cleanup held Saturday October 20. We had a cool morning to start but the temperature rose to the low 70's by mid-afternoon. We filled three 20 cubic yard dumpsters and one trash compactor (one compactor is equal to about 3 or 4 dumpsters). Some of the other highlights: the GPNA gave away over 80 pumpkins, collected 4 tons of scrap metal, signed up 18 memberships, collected over \$600 in memberships and donations, and collected over 50 tires. **Loren Johnson of J-N-J Grocery** donated hot dogs and **California Bar** donated pop for the workers. **Bakers and HyVee** grocery stores donated pumpkins. We also received a large pumpkin donation from **John Knickman** and the **Mic & Jane Whelan** family. **Ken Labs Trash** once again provide the dumpsters. This year we had **Dale's Trash Service** provide a trash compactor. **Rich & Bobbie Kaster**, who work for **Jensen Tire** and also

continued on page 3



The volunteer crew saw a steady stream of traffic into Gifford Park during the fall cleanup. A compactor and several dumpsters were used to make the cleanup more efficient.

Next Meeting
Thursday, November 1
7:00 P.M.

Guest Speaker:
Mayor Mike Fahey

St. Joseph Hospital
Becic Dining Room

Judi Caban - We Will Miss You

by Mike Caban

We moved into the neighborhood in 1975, in a brick duplex at 331 1/2 N. 35th Ave. Michael and Ellen started school at Yates at that time, and Louis Parkart was a PTA member and a neighbor who asked Judi if she could help with the Carnival at the school that year. Of course, Judi said yes. She was asked to serve on the board the following year. She said "yes" again and again and again. During those first years she grew to love her involvement with the PTA, and we saw the positive results of that involvement in our two older children, other children, and their parents. In those early years there was an overabundance of volunteers, and as the years went on and the demographics of the neighborhood changed the number of PTA people slowly dwindled. Judi served in every board capacity, and was president of Yates PTA five times from 1979 to the early 90's. We have always believed in grooming new leaders, but sometimes there was just no one to take the job, and she refused to allow the Yates PTA to die on the vine so to speak. In the mid 80's, since she was such a presence at the school, she was offered a part time position as "The Family Room Liaison" at Yates.

In 1986-7 a group of PTA members saw problems in the park, and the neighborhood in general, and

continued on page 6

GPNA OFFICERS**PRESIDENT**

Peter Cihunka 341-7293

VICE PRESIDENT

Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

RECORDING SECRETARY

Vicki Frey 344-0757

TREASURER

Dana Carlton 346-4575

COMMITTEE CHAIRS**ADVERTISING**

Dai Swaczky 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 Bacombe 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

Over the last two months, I have invited representatives from the Latino and Sudanese communities to come and speak at our monthly meetings. They provided us with very interesting information and valuable insight into their cultures.

I learned that the Latino community is a very private community. They do want to be accepted by American society, but maintain their own culture. One point our speaker made was that they just want to work. A simple request for a complex culture. The Latino community finds our way of life very interesting as well. I think a lot of us feel that we live a fairly private life, but in the eyes of a Latino person we do not. The telephone, Internet, and answering machines are all viewed as intrusions. Latino people also put a large emphasis on spatial relationships. For instance, if you are invited to a Latino family's house for dinner, you may never see the inside of the kitchen. The kitchen is a very special place in a Latino house.

In listening to the Sudanese speaker, I heard a real desire to just fit in. The Sudanese community may be a little overwhelmed by our society. Many of them left Sudan to flee a civil war that has been going on there for years, a civil war that is being fought between Muslims and Christians. I find it interesting that our Sudanese neighbors may have more insight into the war in Afghanistan than most Americans do.

There are similarities too. Both cultures have difficulty understanding basic United States law. English as a second language is also a real need for these groups. Both cultures take their faith very seriously. They actually sound a lot like some U.S. citizens that I have known.

One of my goals when I became President was to bring ALL the people of this neighborhood closer together; to open up the GPNA to the different cultures that live within our boundaries. To that end, I am forming a Multi-Cultural Committee. What would this committee do? We would discuss how to tear down the barriers between ALL cultures that live within our boundaries. We would also put together functions and activities to achieve that goal. Who would be on this committee? Anyone who believes in the basic premise that we will only become stronger as a neighborhood and as a neighborhood association once we eliminate the invisible barriers that separate us. The meeting will be held on **November 19th** at **St. Joseph's Hospital** at **7 pm** in dining rooms A,B, and C. If you are interested in attending, please call me before the 19th so I can get you a copy of the agenda (341-7293). I envision this first meeting lasting about one hour to an hour and a half.

I look forward to hearing from you!

by Peter Cihunka


**TOOL
LENDING
HOTLINE**

Mike 933-7506

Chris 342-6006

Mowers - \$5

Rent for most tools - \$3

**Holiday Lighting Contest**

It's only the beginning of November, but it is not too early to think about Christmas lights. Aside from the annual GPNA lighting contest, Gifford Park has also been entered in a contest being sponsored by **Omaha.com**. The first place prize is \$1,000. Judging will take place on **December 20th** between 7 and 10 p.m. Our entire neighborhood will be on display!

Fall Cleanup. . . continued from page 1

live in the neighborhood, made arrangements for us to drop off the collected tires. Pumpkin and face painting was handled by **Betty Slayden** and her family **Tiffany, Kayleen, Billy and Jacob** – they did a great job. **Sgt. Kurt Sorys** and **Officer Ann Vos** handled the police cruiser and safety information – the kids loved it. **St. Joseph's Hospital** donated the use of a truck for hauling – **Rodney Hay** again volunteered to drive. Volunteers included **Lloyd Canfield, Melvin, Brian & Gail Wesson, Jim & Kathleen Wilwerding, Ron & Vicki Frey, Mike & Candy Bacome, Terry & Sue Wilwerding, Steve Wilwerding, Ben Sweazy, Leo Wilwerding, Eva Swanson, Peter Cihunka, Mike Wilwerding, Billy Dooly, Bob & Virginia Hutton, Harry Dirgo, Chris & Sallie Foster, Steve Cross, Bob Cline and Jim Thompson**. Thanks again to the **City Parks Department** for keeping the park looking great and to **Omaha Weed & Seed** for awarding the GPNA a \$655 grant for this year's cleanup. Special thanks again to **Kathleen Wilwerding** who was feeling a little under the weather but was a real trooper by taking donations, memberships, and addresses for hauling. **Kathleen**, you get the MVP award for this year's cleanup! If anyone is interested in heading up future cleanups, contact **Peter 341-7293** or **Chris 342-6006** for more information.



Not only were free pumpkins available for the neighborhood children, but they also had the opportunity to decorate them with paint during this year's fall cleanup. This new feature proved to be a hit, and it kept the youngsters entertained throughout the day. A big thanks goes to the Slayden family for supervising this activity.

What's Happening in the Neighborhood

Besides a few replacement trees, the park planting project is completed. **Indian Creek Nursery** has done a great job planting and maintaining the trees and shrubs. Of course without the very generous contributions from the **Nebraska State Arboretum Community Enhancement Program** (over \$14,000), **Omaha World Herald Branching Out** (\$3,500), and the **City Parks Department**, this project would never have happened. The GPNA encourages EVERYONE to do your part to keep Gifford Park clean.

Please continue to keep **Wayne and Peg Hill** in your prayers. Wayne has a very serious illness and has been at **University Hospital** recently and they need your prayers during this difficult time. Wayne and Peg are owners of the **California Bar** near 33rd & California.

Time to renew your membership! Next month will be your last mailed newsletter if you have not renewed your GPNA membership. Currently we have a total of 185 paid memberships, but many people have not renewed for 2001-2002. There is a membership application on the back of this newsletter.

continued on page 7

California Bar & Pkg. 510 No. 33rd St.

Serving the Gifford Park
Community since 1937
Wayne and Peggy Hill,
Proprietors



Charles R. Kilgore Jr. Attorney At Law 4913 Underwood Avenue 558-5000

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Community Garden Tour Includes Stop At Gifford Park

The Gifford Park Neighborhood Community Garden, located at 3416 Cass Street, was one of four gardens included by City Sprouts in their tour and fall harvest celebration held Saturday October 13. A soggy start turned into a nice fall day for the event. Those who stopped by were treated with bread, cookies and apple juice. We posted progress photos of the community garden project from June to present to give people an idea of what is needed to start a community garden. Landscape and garden design plots were available to view to give visitors a perspective of potential garden plot sizes and locations.

Currently, the lot has a green cover crop planted for preparing the soil for spring planting. A small core group of us will plant some bulbs yet this fall - we wish to thank **Indian Creek Nursery** for donating the bulbs and taking an interest in the garden. We plan to get more organized over the winter so we are ready to develop the community garden this spring. Education and conservation will be top priorities of the project. If you are interested in participating or just learning more about our community garden project, contact **Chris 342-6006** or **Annemarie 342-1340**.

Thanks to **Eric & Annemarie Noll** and **Chris & Sallie Foster** for organizing the Gifford Park Neighborhood Community Garden tour and **Jean Peck** for making treats. Also thanks to **City Sprouts (Libby Broekemeier and Nancy Williams)** and the **County Extension Agency** for their support and expert advice.



Chris Foster points out the importance of mulch and wood chips to children from the Child Saving Institute at the Gifford Park Neighborhood Community Garden during the community tour.

Crook House Offers Glimpse of Past

The Douglas County Historical Society, located on the campus of the Metro-Tech Community College (old Fort Omaha), is a "must see". The main attraction is the General Crook House. This old Army home, built in 1879, has been totally restored to reflect the time when General Crook and his wife, Mary, lived in the home. Entering by the front door takes one into the main floor hallway where a beautiful staircase leads to the second floor and wide doors open to the living room, dining room, reception room, the general's den, and the butler's pantry and kitchen.

On the second floor is Mrs. Crook's bedroom and morning room, the general's bedroom, and the presidential bedroom. The museum shop is also on the second floor. In the basement is a room for current displays, a classroom, and office space. Many classes are given including the popular antiques class led by Pat Pixley and ongoing historical classes for Girl Scouts and others. A very popular activity is the "Try On History" program, in which groups of girls select from a collection of period dresses to wear during a tour of the house and fascinating history lesson. Many weddings and receptions are held in the house and the Victorian Heirloom Garden.

The Crook House is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday from 1p.m. to 4 p.m. Admission/donation is \$3.50 for adults (\$5.00 from November 11 through December 31 to view the special Christmas decorations), and \$1.50 for children ages 6-12. Located next door to the Crook House is the Library/Archives Center and National Indian Wars Library, which is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.. The library houses the official archives for Douglas County, documents, maps, county records, and private and business collections. It is a great place for historical research - heads up, area students!

There are many other benefits for members of the historical society, such as speeches, classes, exhibits, services, and innovative events. Annual dues are \$15 for students and seniors, \$20 for individuals, and \$30 for families. For more information, call **455-9990**.

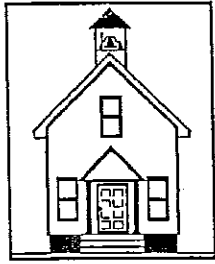
by Eva Swanson

**For City Services,
Information, or
Complaints
Call:
Mayor's Action Office**

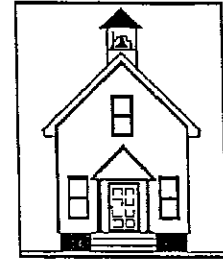
444-5555

**Want to
Advertise in
the Gifford
Park Pride?**

**call
345-0125**



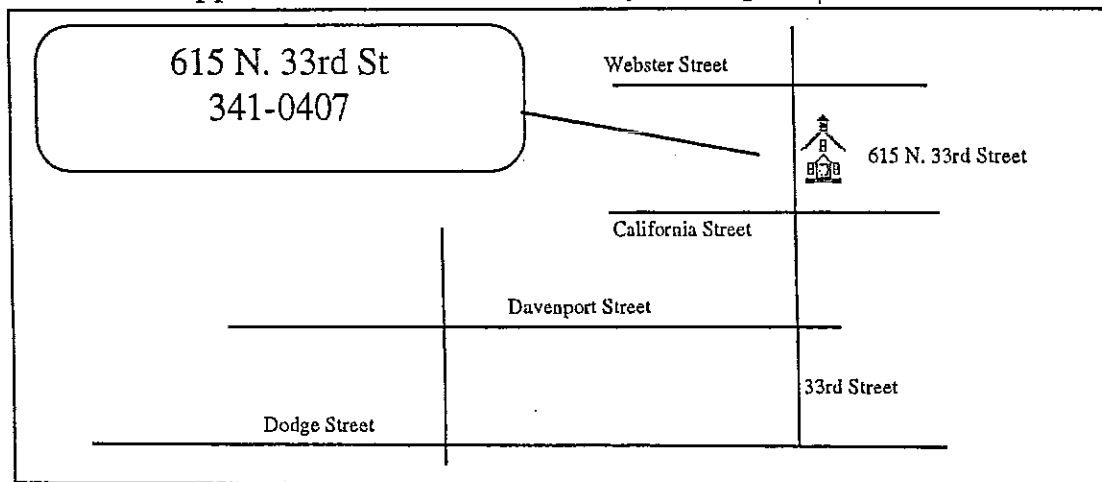
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- * Safe, state approved transportation
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- * We accept Title 20

Appointments are not necessary so drop in for a visit.



Judi Caban . . . *continued from page 1*

formed a group called "Yates Parents Care", and that was the seed group that eventually formed the GPNA. Judi and Ruth Windorski ran the first 3 or 4 garage sales (at that time it was in the vacant Bogard drugstore) and there were a lot of kids' clothes that Judi and Ruth washed before they put them into the garage sale. In 1990 we both got involved with the Watch Group, and Judi had some 400 hours in that beatup old chevy station wagon. She helped with the Easter egg hunts, the cleanups, the pumpkin patch and other activities, aside from being an active board member, and an excellent parliamentarian to keep the board meetings focused.

Judi served as secretary of the Omaha PTA Council in the early 90's. She was asked to serve as secretary of the Nebraska PTA in 1992, and then she took off as Legislative Chair, and Convention Chair, and in 1996 she was chosen as president elect of the Nebraska PTA, and served as President from 1997 to 1999. During that time she was active recruiting new units to the PTA in Nebraska, and she served on the National PTA Board of Directors, and also was an active member of the National PTA Strategic Planning Committee from 1998-2000. Throughout these 25 years Judi was an outspoken advocate for children, especially inner-city children. Even at the national level she always fought to keep the local unit a main focus of the PTA. She was never shy to confront anyone who thought that "the poor schools" were less deserving of PTA attention. Judi received a Nebraska PTA State Life Award, a National PTA Life Award, an Admiralty in the Nebraska Navy from the governor in 1999, and this year she received the Spirit of PTA Award from the Nebraska PTA for her years of devotion to Nebraska's school children.

On November 10th there will be "A Celebration of a Life Well Lived" to be held (hopefully) at Yates (Elementary School) Academy, where she spent most of the past 26 years working for the children of this neighborhood.

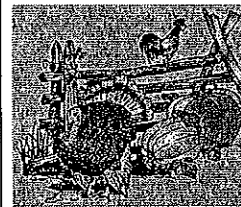


Judi Caban passed away on October 16, 2001. She was 52 years old. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent to the Nebraska PTA, Westside Community Center, 3534 South 108th St. Omaha, NE 68144.

Cabans An Asset to GPNA

Mike and Judi Caban worked tirelessly on most of the GPNA events, activities and meetings. Many events that go on today are successful because of the commitment of the early leaders of the GPNA, and Mike and Judi were two of the most committed. I had the honor of learning from them early on when the neighborhood association was getting stronger – unfortunately many of you will never know how much hard work Mike and Judi put into our neighborhood. Because Mike and Judi were avid gardeners, Mike planted bulbs in memory of Judi in the Gifford Park Neighborhood Community Garden. Judi, we will miss you dearly.

by Chris Foster



*Happy
Thanksgiving !*

from the
Gifford Park
Neighborhood
Association

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

What's Happening . . . continued from page 3

The GPNA hosted a short tour of our business district, Gifford Park, and the community garden in early October to representatives from the Neighborhoods USA (NUSA). NUSA is a national grassroots organization committed to building stronger communities. Also in attendance were representatives from St. Joseph's Hospital, Creighton University and the City Planning Department. The City Planning Department asked us to give the tour which also included a very interesting tour of the Shelterbelt Theater. The city of Omaha would like to host the national conference of NUSA in 2006. Pittsburgh was the host city this year; Houston will be host next year.

Some of you may remember a program called Main Street. It is a process by which a community gets involved to improve its business district and neighborhood as well. Back at our January GPNA meeting, we invited the director of the Nebraska Main Street program to present an overview. Since then a couple of us from the GPNA and leaders from other neighborhoods have continued meeting to see if the program might have benefits. The next two meetings are **Saturday, November 3** and **November 17, 9 a.m. to noon** at the downtown library. If you are interested in finding out more about Main Street and revitalizing our business district, contact Chris 342-6006.

Snap! Productions and the Shelterbelt Theatre, 3225 California St., are presenting the play *Corpus Christi*, an acclaimed and controversial drama by Terrence McNally, Nov. 15 to Dec. 9. Call 341-2757 for more information.

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7:00 AM - 11:00 PM Friday thru Saturday

8:00 AM - 10:00 PM Sunday

Committee Corner

On the inside of the cover of the GPNA newsletter, in gray, are the names of our standing committees and their chairpersons. Ever wonder what these folks do? What their goals are? We are always looking for new people to get involved in the GPNA. If one of these committees sounds like something you would be interested in helping with, please contact the committee chairperson. (Note: this is just a partial list; there will be more committee descriptions to come in future newsletters.)

WELCOMING COMMITTEE – Vicki Frey

The Welcoming Committee is the newest of the committee chairs and is still in the developmental stage. Our goal is for new residents to become aware of the benefits and activities Gifford Park has to offer. This would be accomplished by a personal visit to the homeowner/tenant with a packet of information describing some of the highlights of the neighborhood. We could also answer any questions they may have at this time. If you have recently acquired a new neighbor on your block, be sure and welcome them yourself, then call me at 344-0757 so we can get a Welcome Packet to them.

PARKING COMMITTEE – Terry Wilwerding

The purpose of this committee is to generate a monthly report consisting of parking and licensing violations. Added to this list are complaints from residents in the neighborhood. This list is then faxed to the Mayor's office. Usually within one week, the city sends out an enforcement officer who will either tag or tow the offenders. Overall cooperation is very good. 342-2795

WEEDS AND LITTER – Jim Wilwerding

The purpose of this committee is to inspect properties for accumulations of litter and weeds that measure over 18" tall. We also look for any obstructions to public walkways. Once a month a list is compiled and faxed to the Mayor's office. The city will then take action with the property owners. Again, overall cooperation is generally good. 551-1344



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 |

Annual Holiday Banquet To Be Held Dec. 6

With all of this beautiful fall weather, it's hard to believe that the holiday season is just around the corner, but it's only about a month away. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending the annual **GPNA Holiday Banquet**. The date has been set for **Thursday, December 6th, at 7 p.m.** by our host, **St. Joseph Hospital**. The dinner, which takes the place of the December general meeting, will be held in the Becic Dining Room and is free to all GPNA members. If anyone is interested in helping to plan the festivities, please call **Peter** at **341-7293**. If you would like to attend, please call **Jean Peck** (344-0722), **Sue Wilwerding** (342-2795), or **Chris Foster** (342-6006). See you there!