



# Gifford Park's Pride

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

October 2004

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

## Creighton Reveals Plan For Cuming Street Redevelopment Project

Creighton has announced that work on the Cuming Street Development Project has been approved and will be starting soon. The project is a collaborative effort between the State of Nebraska, the City of Omaha, and the University to improve the safety and efficiency of traffic in the area.

There are three primary elements of the plan:

- 1) the relocation of the U.S. 75 South on-ramp from Burt to Cuming Street by constructing a bridge over Burt Street
- 2) full conversion of Cuming Street to two-way traffic from 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> Street
- 3) the conversion of Burt Street to two-way traffic from 16<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> St.

Hawkins Construction Company is the contractor and HDR is doing the design work for the project. Work is anticipated to begin on October 4, 2004, with detour routing and closing of the present south-bound U.S. 75 on-ramp at Burt St. The first stages of work will be to surcharge the existing street and ramp, beginning at Cuming St. The borrowed soil will be in place for several months to compress the subgrade on the site in order to provide the foundation for the new bridge and on-ramp. Both Cuming and Burt Streets will remain open during this time. Through the winter, construction will be limited to utility relocation and off-street work, with continuation of normal traffic flow on Burt and Cuming Streets.

It is expected that the entire project will be completed in late August, 2005. During the 2005 construction season, Cuming Street will be passable but left turns off of Cuming will be restricted. The impact of no left turns will be at 30<sup>th</sup> and Cuming as that intersection is rebuilt to a wider throughway with two left-turn lanes and one right-turn lane. During construction, Burt will be closed periodically to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Parking on Burt will also be interrupted during construction but will resume on both sides of the street when the job is completed. Parking on Cuming west of 24<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> will be permanently removed. The project requires changes to the traffic control signals and roadway striping to accommodate two-way traffic. An additional signal will be installed on 25<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Cuming. The driving surfaces of Cuming and Burt will be milled and a new asphalt surface will be applied.

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### Next Meeting

Thursday, October 7  
7:00 P.M.

### Guest Speakers:

Jim Vokal  
District 3 City Council  
Representative

Justin Evertson  
Nebraska State Arboretum

Creighton University  
Medical Center  
Morrison Seminar Room

## Fall Cleanup To Be Held Oct. 23

This year's annual GPNA Fall Cleanup is scheduled for **Saturday, October 23**, from **9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** in **Gifford Park**. The fall cleanup is for **GPNA MEMBERS ONLY**, or people who donate their time or money to the cleanup. There will be dumpsters and a compactor for hauling trash, a membership and donation drive, scrap metal recycling, a Halloween pumpkin patch, and hot dogs for the helpers. Volunteers are needed to provide pickup trucks for hauling, assist in packing and monitoring dumpsters, and help in making pickups. **PLEASE NOTE:** It is very important for you to call the phone numbers listed below **BEFORE** the day of the cleanup if you are unable to bring your trash to the park yourself and need a volunteer to help. Tree brush **WILL NOT** be accepted. There will be a \$10 charge for appliances containing refrigerant (freon). Tires **WILL** be taken at the fall cleanup this year for \$1.00 apiece. A \$5.00 fee will be charged for sofas and overstuffed chairs. Please call **Chris (342-6006)**, **Ron (344-0757)**, **Jim (551-1344)** or **Terry (342-2795)** for more information or if you can assist with the cleanup.

**GPNA OFFICERS****PRESIDENT**

Ron Frey 344-0757

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Cynthia Shuck 556-2090

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

Kate O'Brien 496-8419

**TREASURER**

Vicki Frey 344-0757

**NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES****ADVERTISING**

Dar Sweazy 345-0125

**COMMUNITY GARDEN**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**COMPLIANCE**

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

**HISTORIAN**

Eva Swanson 345-1707

**KELLOM SCHOOL LIAISON**

Jean Peck 344-0722

**MEMBERSHIP**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**NEWSLETTER**

Sue Wilwerding 342-2795

**NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**NEWSLETTER MAILING**

Mike Bacom 933-7506

**PARK**

Roger Freeman 557-2914

**PARKING VIOLATIONS**

Leo Wilwerding 345-1433

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Cynthia Shuck 556-2090

**TOOL LENDING**

Chris Foster 342-6006

**WATCH GROUP**

Ien Wilwerding 342-2795

**WEEDS & LITTER**

Jim Wilwerding 551-1644

**WELCOMING**

Vicki Frey 344-0757

**TOOL LENDING HOTLINE****Mike 933-7506****Chris 342-6006****Mowers - \$5****Rent for most tools - \$3****From The President . . .**

As you've probably noticed, there's been a lot of activity and dust on California Street this month. It's happened on my block, in front of my house, from 38<sup>th</sup> Street down to 33<sup>rd</sup>. But with dust, comes history.

I watched the backhoe pull up all of the old limestone block curbs. My initial thought was, "Wouldn't it be nice to recover those blocks for some project, either in Gifford Park, or at the Community Garden?" Just the massive size and weight of the blocks, however, eliminated that possibility. I had no "concrete" project in mind (pardon the pun), no means to move them, and no place to store them.

The more pragmatic issue at hand was observing the brick street pavers being pulled up with the curb and hauled away. I asked the driver where they were being hauled to, and was told they were going to a salvage place in Council Bluffs. I immediately caught the "brick fever," and joined the "California Brick Rush of '04."

My fellow prospectors worked with me to recover as many as possible. As we worked, we "staked our claim"; a position and a location to throw bricks. Sometimes we worked in competition or sometimes we helped each other or another neighbor. You start feeling a sense of ownership for the bricks your sweat and muscle heaved over to your location, hour after hour. Sometimes that came into conflict with the sense of ownership one feels to the bricks in front of their house. Newcomers to the game didn't always quite understand the "rules", but we tried to accommodate anyone who was willing to pitch in and do the hard work of tossing bricks. Overall, I think there were enough bricks available for most who showed up to recover them. Even so, there were still many bricks that were hauled away that we just couldn't get to.

One of my interests is archaeology. At a dig site, one thing archaeologists often encounter is building materials in secondary uses. As ancient cities were destroyed and rebuilt, the building materials were reused, sometimes in interesting locations. It is said that the pyramids in Egypt were once encased in smooth white limestone, to reflect the light of the sun. The limestone casing blocks were stripped off by subsequent pharaohs for reuse in temples and palaces.

I could think of a hundred secondary uses for brick pavers and saw my work as "rescuing" bricks from "forced emmigration". Most are being held in paver "refugee camps". Each person who gathered their collection of bricks has a plan to "resettle" them in brick colonies, where they may live out their remaining years in close proximity to their native streets as garden borders, patios, and little walkways. That is how we keep our history in our neighborhood.

It was exciting to see the bricks exposed when they ground the street down. It was also sad to see them paved over again. But I know it was best for our street, as busy as it is. Bricks, quaint as they were, aren't the best driving surface. Light sleepers would wake up each time a car drove noisily by. They are also slippery. I had neighbors tell me how cars would slide on the bricks, down the hill, into parked cars.

You get a sense of an age gone by, working with the bricks. Someone was telling me that brick streets in some small towns were part of Roosevelt's solution to get people back to work during the Great Depression. Since most of the houses on California Street were built before 1920, the question becomes, did the houses come first, or the bricks?

*by Ron Frey*

**Cuming Street . . . continued from page 1**

Be aware of the detour routes and use caution when passing through construction zones. Alternate ramps to U.S. 75 are located at 30<sup>th</sup> Street and at Hamilton Street. The City will announce changes in traffic flow and street closings throughout the project.

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

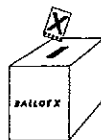
GPNA volunteers will soon be installing 6 new park benches that were received as part of grants from the **Omaha Community Foundation** and the **Mayor's Grant Program**. Your help with preparation for installation and assembly would be greatly appreciated. On **Saturday, October 9**, at **9 a.m.** come to **Gifford Park** to dig holes for the concrete pads. On **Saturday, October 16**, at **9 a.m.**, the park benches will be assembled and installed in the park. Please call **Ron 344-0757**, **Cynthia 556-2090**, or **Chris 342-6006** if you are interested in helping, or just come down to the park. We plan to assemble one of the benches and bring it to the October general meeting - they are very nice!

The GPNA would like to announce the arrival of two new "members" to the neighborhood. Congratulations to **Mike & Nadja Wilwerding** on the birth of their son **Bennett Joseph** on September 20th. Mike and Nadja have been involved in many GPNA projects and events for a number of years. Congratulations also to **Steve & Rose Carlson** on the arrival of their new daughter **Maria**. The Carlsons have lived in the neighborhood for about 2 years and have also been involved in GPNA activities.

The GPNA sends its best wishes to member **Diane Kaye**, who is feeling much better after being hospitalized for about a week. She is home now with her son **Max**.

Nebraska Secretary of State **John Gale** will sponsor a public hearing to answer voters' questions concerning the four-part gambling initiative that will appear on the **November 2** ballot. This hearing will take place at the **OPS Teacher Administration Building, 32nd & Cuming St.**, on **Tuesday, October 19th** at **6 p.m.**

**Don't Forget To VOTE!**  
**Tuesday, November 2**



**MNA To Assist in Destination Midtown Implementation Phase**

Now that the **Destination Midtown** plan has entered the implementation phase, the organization of the **Midtown Neighborhood Alliance (MNA)** has been formed. According to **Bonnie DeSmet-Bacon** of the **Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association**, who is its executive board's president, the MNA is a major stakeholder in the implementation of the Destination Midtown plan. This alliance will oversee macro issues directly and indirectly impacting the area's Fortune 500 companies, the academic institutions, small businesses, the 28,000 residents, and the City of Omaha. The MNA Board of Directors is composed of a representative from each of the following neighborhood associations: **Blackstone, Columbus Park, Field Club, Ford Birthsite, Gifford Park, Joslyn Castle, Leavenworth, Morton Meadows, Pacific-Leavenworth, Park East, and West Central Development**. Five additional at-large members will also be part of the Board. **Chris Foster** is the GPNA's representative on the Board. The MNA's first official meeting was held on Sept. 15th with a variety of organizations such as the mayor's office, city council, Nebraska Public Service, UNO, and others represented. **Anne Camp** from the **Omaha Community Foundation**, will help set the MNA's agenda. The MNA meetings will be held on the **3rd Wednesday** of each month, **7:30 p.m.** at the **Field Club**. For more information contact **Bonnie DeSmet-Bacon** at **Bdesmethacon@cox.net**.

We  
have a  
*minor*  
problem.

Let your kids know how you feel  
about underage drinking.  
It's illegal. It's unhealthy. It's unacceptable.



Supported by the Nebraska Health Care Trust and the Nebraska Office of Highway Safety



# 10th Annual Haunted House

### Where:

PKA House  
3100 Chicago St.



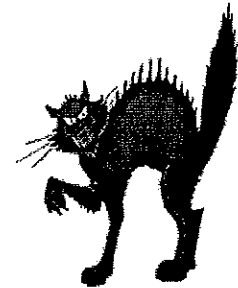
### When:

Saturday, October 30th  
Ages 10 & under: 7 p.m.  
All ages: 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

## FREE!

hosted by:  
*Pi Kappa Alpha (PKA) Creighton Fraternity*  
*Gifford Park Neighborhood Association*

All Neighborhood Children And Parents  
Are Welcome to Stop By For Refreshments  
And Trick-or-Treats!



**GIFFORD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**  
**P.O. Box 31462 Omaha, NE 68131-0462**  
**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          |

## SIXTH ANNUAL "SAFE NIGHT OUT" PARTY

Pre-Kindergarten to 3rd  
Grade Children's Program  
(Must Be Accompanied By a  
Parent or Guardian)

**5:30 TO 7:30 P.M.**  
Thursday, October 28  
Northeast Police Precinct  
4316 North 30th St.  
444-3751

*Safety Tips - Face Painting -  
Balloon Figures - Fire Truck  
Display - Bag of Treats  
(No Costume Needed)*

*Sponsored By The Omaha  
Police Dept. and the Northeast  
Precinct Advisory Council*