



Gifford Park's Pride

Gifford Park Neighborhood: A Great Place to Live, Work, Learn and Play
www.giffordparkomaha.org

June 2010

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Mayor Holds Press Conference At Gifford Park's Community Garden

On May 13, Mayor Jim Suttle held a press conference in Gifford Park's Community Garden to award a number of Mayor's Grants. I believe there were 22 neighborhood grant recipients from all over the city who attended along with good media coverage. Our fearless GPNA leader **Dana Carlton-Flint** did a great job speaking about the many past and present efforts put forth by our neighborhood volunteers.

On a personal note, I realize people's lives are very busy with family, job and community, but Sallie & I would like to personally thank everyone who has ever helped make this community garden project what it is today. There were many nice comments today from the mayor, city officials and other neighborhood organizations who had not been to the garden. Interestingly, there were a number of grants given to neighborhoods to start/improve their own community gardens.

This year's garden director **Diane Kaye** and others dodged recent rains to get a lot of weeding and mulching done before the season opening event and the mayor's visit. Youth Garden director and last year's garden director **Dana Freeman** has continued the incredibly important youth program started by **Kate Bodmann**. Others like **Eric & Annemarie Noll, Cynthia Shuck, Mike Caban** and **Bob Hutton** have been there from the beginning putting in countless hours to help shape the foundation for what we have today. Obviously there are many more individuals responsible for the past and current successes of the garden; thank you too! Let's all keep the garden alive and growing for all involved.

by *Chris Foster*



PS.
More
Com-
munity
Garden
News
Inside!

Next General Meeting
Thursday, June 10

Speaker: To Be Announced

7:00 P.M.
Creighton University
Medical Center
Morrison Seminar Room

Executive Meeting
Thursday, June 24
At the Flint's

A Message From The President

Life is good in Gifford Park! While at the Tennis Block Party last Wednesday I spoke with a police sergeant who used to work in this area; he could not believe the transformation. Just the sheer amount of activity in our park had him interested enough to come and check us out. It was great to hear what he had to say about how this is not the Gifford Park of yesterday. He is right...not only is it not the Gifford Park of yesterday but it is not the Gifford Park of Today. Each day we evolve, each day we get closer to being the neighborhood we want to be, each day more members join, each day more neighbors volunteer, and maybe just maybe 10 years from now we will all look back at what we built and say this is not the Gifford Park of yesterday! I encourage everyone to continue to participate in neighborhood events and be a part of Gifford Park's future. Enjoy the Summer!

by Dana-Carlton Flint



Fly The Flag Proudly
On
Flag Day - June 14



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Julie Kalkowski* 342-2103

* denotes new officer, board, or committee member

Tell Us What You Think!

The **Gifford Park Neighborhood Association** and **Destination Midtown** have spent the past few months formulating a survey, fine tuning it with **Russ Smith** from UNO's School of Public Administration and now we want to hear from you and anyone else that can share their thoughts.

You may ask "why do we need a survey?" or "haven't we done this before?" Well, those are good questions and the answer could be the same for why it's important to change the oil in your car's engine, "I changed it once why do I need to do it again?" Like anything, routine maintenance is good to keep things running smooth and in good working order. So our neighborhood is due for a "tune-up".

Over a year ago, the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association had a meeting with **Jamie Grayson -Berglund**, the Executive Director of Destination Midtown. It was at these meetings that we started to discuss the future of the neighborhood and business district. Our neighborhood was identified in the original Destination Midtown Study as a significant neighborhood and business district for Midtown. However, at the time of the study, we were just one of many "to do's" on the list that came from this study and final report. That's not to say we were forgotten but when it comes to such a big endeavor as the Destination Midtown Study everything can't be done at once. Now, 5 years later, we're continuing the discussion that began with this original Destination Midtown study. Over the past few months volunteers from the neighborhood, businesses, GPNA board, and Destination Midtown have come together to discuss the future and it was determined that we needed to hear from not only you but others who live near, work in some of the surrounding businesses or institutions, and those people who visit our neighborhood.

Our neighborhood is and has been changing over the years and this is natural for any community. For some people, it's difficult to see the changes that have occurred. But change has been going on for years. Just ask our local experts, story tellers, and historians **Eva Swanson, Bob Hutton** or **Harry Dirgo**. They can tell you about the Grass Shack, ice skating in the park, the Circle Theatre and all the colorful characters that made and still make Gifford Park special. Recently, there has been a new wave of change in our neighborhood such as a new Community Bike Shop, dilapidated buildings being restored, community gardens flourishing and most noticeably the Midtown Crossing project at 33rd and Dodge Street. Because of these and other changes, it's time to start thinking and talking about what we want our neighborhood and business district to look like and be for another 50 years. It's important to remember that if we don't start planning and discussing it now, there may not be any better opportunity or time.

The Neighborhood Survey included with this newsletter is divided into 5 categories - Human, Social, Physical, Financial and Environmental Capital. Take a few minutes
continued on page 3

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 mailed to P.O. Box 31462 Omaha, NE 68131; please include your name and phone number. Contact **Sue Wilwerding (342-2795)** or **Chris Foster (342-6006)**.



**Happy
Father's
Day!**

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Chris 342-6006



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Call: Mayor's Action Office
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Basic Bicycle Check and Drive Train Maintenance Workshop

DATE: Tuesday June 15, 2010 6PM - 8PM

WHERE: 525 N. 33rd ST, Omaha, NE

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. A. Kuhl, B.D. (bike doctor)

We are pleased to offer you an opportunity to expand your self-maintenance skills with an incredible hands-on workshop.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. LIMITED SPOTS AVAILABLE.

The workshop will cover :

- * *Thorough diagnosis of the bicycles ride-ability.*
- * *Drive train issues, chain and derailleur problems*
- * *Drive train repair*
- * *Hands-on tutorials using your bicycle*
- * *Emergency trail-side repairs*

This workshop will be hands-on, you must bring your own bicycle to work on. Pre-registration is required.

We are suggesting a minimum age of 14 years old for participants. Participants under the age of 19 will require a signed parental permission form.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED - we only have space for 10.

To reserve a space, there is a \$5 fee. We accept paypal for the fee which automatically registers you, too.

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GPNA Survey . . . continued from page 2

and fill one out and give us some of your great ideas and opinions. The survey can be mailed back to (GPNA, P.O. Box 31462 Omaha, Ne. 68131-0462), dropped off at the Community Bike Shop Survey Box (525 No 33rd Street), or taken online(www.giffordparkomaha.org). The volunteers will be working this summer on getting as many participants as possible and we encourage you to share copies of this survey or the online version posted on our website (www.giffordparkomaha.org) with others you might know. After August 3rd (National Night Out), the survey ends. The survey volunteers, Destination Midtown and UNO will be tabulating the results in the fall. The information from this survey will be used as a starting point for a future neighborhood wide master plan that could be adopted by the city, or also as a guide in determining future funding needs for neighborhood projects that may be identified in the survey.

Please keep an eye out for future announcements about the survey, and most of all have a fun and safe summer. Thank you for your time!

by Martin Janousek

P.S.

If you want to learn more about the history of Gifford Park, visit the website and download our history book.

Gifford Park Neighborhood Market

Gardens are planted and it's time to think about this summer's Gifford Park Neighborhood Market. As you may remember, last summer ended with a series of Friday nights in the business district where a handful of Urban Farmers, 5:00 Gardners and a couple local Hucksters (vendors) set up tables and sold their locally grown produce, flowers and wares. There's been interest to do it again this year on consecutive Friday nights in the business district starting sometime in July. If you're interested in vending or need more information please contact **Cynthia Shuck** at **556-2090**.



In My Opinion . . . Who Really Controls The Liquor Licences In Omaha?

In early April the Liquor Control Commission (LCC) granted 23 liquor licenses to the Walgreens stores in the Omaha area. Liquor licenses had been denied to 13 of these stores by the Omaha City Council; seven were approved and three were outside the city's jurisdiction. In issuing a statement citing his reasons for approval of these licenses, the hearing officer for the LCC discounted the City Council's recommendations to deny some of the licenses, stating the council was "inconsistent" in its recommendations.

The officer went on to say that the council had "an agreement among city council members" to support each council members' vote in their district, implying that the local city councils' vote was just political maneuvering — you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours — with no real basis to deny the applications. In fact I believe these "inconsistencies" show us that most of the City Council members represented their districts well by seriously considering the facts and listening to the citizens who opposed these licenses.

Prior to voting, the council members listened to testimony by directors of organizations fighting underage drinking and tobacco use, professors and students from Creighton and UNO, and residents and neighborhood association leaders who live near the Walgreens stores. They considered the facts:

- the majority of the neighborhoods around these Walgreens stores already had too many liquor outlets (in some cases there are literally hundreds of liquor establishments within a 10-minute drive)
- the nature of the neighborhood within their district and their struggles with crime and neglect (and more liquor outlets just adds more crime and violence)
- that increasing liquor outlets in certain areas will increase crime and violence (research by a Creighton professor using Omaha crime data supports existing national data that this is a proven fact)
- that Walgreens has failed repeatedly over the last few years on tobacco compliance checks (they have racked up more than 70 violations of sales of tobacco to minors in Omaha alone, even after signing an agreement with the US government that they would take a tougher stance to curb sales of tobacco to minors)
- several of these stores were located within 300 feet of a city park (the city has a rule stating no new liquor license should be located within 300 feet of a park).

The city attorney defended the council's recommendation to deny these licenses at the state hearing, arguing that the state should not grant licenses based on economic development nor should the state be concerned if these licenses will increase the bottom dollar for Walgreens and make them more competitive. He argued that the state should use restraint (control) in issuing new licenses and adding this many new liquor licenses in the city without consideration to the already existing licenses is not control.

These arguments raise many questions:

- Have we created the expectation that every place we shop needs to sell alcohol?
- How should we value one business's bottom dollar against national research that says the over-saturation of off sale liquor outlets is not good economic development and that it brings more crime and violence to a community?
- Is a liquor license in this state being treated as a right or is it, as stated by law, a privilege?

The granting of the Walgreens liquor licenses is another clear indicator that the liquor licensing system in Nebraska is broken, and the word "control" is not being taken seriously by the state agency in charge of our residents' health and safety. If the state's three-person liquor commission disregards the local government's recommendation and dismisses local residents' voices, then perhaps it is time we take a hard look at this system. If the opinions of the people who live, work and even govern in their community are dismissed and disregarded, then it is not democracy at work but rather a well-funded, well-paid industry that controls what our community and our neighborhoods will look like.

I believe that what is needed is not probation on alcohol as the liquor industry would have you think, but a fair balance and control on the number of liquor outlets in our neighborhoods and a licensing system that gives some control to the people who decide what might be best for their community.

by Margie Magnuson

Note: The views expressed in this editorial are not necessarily those of the GPNA.

Do You Need H.E.L.P.?

H.E.L.P. Adult Services is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping disadvantaged adults, seniors, and the elderly since 1982. This organization, formerly known as Presbyterian Outreach, changed its name after 25 years for two reasons: a lot of people thought they needed to be Presbyterian to use the services and the services are for adults only - they do not offer respite care for children or carry pediatric-sized medical items.

The two programs are the Health and Medical Equipment Loan Program (H.E.L.P.) and the Respite Care program. The Health and Medical Equipment Loan Program handles over 9,000 items of medical equipment in its warehouse which are loaned for up to one year for a small fee. These items include wheelchairs, hospital beds, scooters, commodes, bath benches, bath transfer boards, c-pap machines, crutches, transfer chairs, lift chairs, and thousands of other items. For those who have no insurance or are under-insured, we are truly a life-saver. When the item is returned, we clean, make any repairs, and sanitize them. We do provide delivery for large items, but request a \$25 donation for this because our large delivery truck is expensive to operate and we are particular about finding strong and trustworthy—but reliable—help to drive, go into seniors' living quarters, and sometimes carry extremely heavy hospital beds or lift chairs up multiple flights of stairs.

Our Respite Care program offers trained personnel to stay with a loved one while a family caregiver receives a much needed break. If able, they pay only \$5 per hour (as compared with the typical \$20-\$30 per hour) for 2-4 hours once or twice each week. No medical care is provided. We offer things such as companionship, conversation, light shopping and cooking together. The majority of the elderly patients have dementia, Alzheimer's Disease, or are recovering from a stroke or hip replacement. Last year we served almost 10,000 individuals with only 2 full-time and 5 part-time employees—but many volunteers. For the first time ever, we have more caregivers than patients, so we are looking for family caregivers who need a break. However, we are always interested in finding volunteers who wish to be trained and become a caregiver for a few hours each week.

Jan Schwee
Community Relations Coordinator
HELP Adult Services
8447 Lake Street
Omaha, NE 68134
jan@helpadultservices.org

Joslyn Castle To Host Father's Day Classic Car Show

The **Joslyn Castle Trust** premieres a Father's Day event no family will want to miss. Debuting **Sunday, June 20, Joslyn's Classic Car Show** will showcase over 100 vintage cars and motorcycles plus feature old-time games, live jazz, jugglers, face painting and food for the whole family from **10 to 4 p.m.** Joslyn Castle will host the event on its 5.5 acre estate just north of Dodge Street on 39th Street in midtown Omaha.

The first-ever Joslyn Castle Classic Car Show will cap a full weekend of activities for fathers – and the whole family – said **Susan McMannama**, Joslyn Castle Trust board member and chair of the Joslyn Castle Classic Weekend. Other weekend events include a Fashion Classic Style Show and Luncheon on Friday and a '20s Jazz and Gin Gala Saturday evening on the castle grounds.

"This is one of those don't-miss weekends that comes along very rarely," said McMannama. "We will have more than 100 classic autos (plus vintage motorcycles) on display from the early 1900s through the 1960s, including a 1906 Rauch and Lang, several 1950s Jaguars, a 1939 Lincoln Zephyr and a 1931 Cadillac LaSalle."

Joslyn Castle Trust board member **Mark Maser** says the weekend is intended to alternate with the Designer Showhouse, which was a "spectacular success" last fall benefiting the Joslyn Castle Trust. "The showhouse took the Joslyn Castle Trust to a new level of visibility and fundraising," Maser says. "We wanted an event to compliment it that would maintain interest in the castle." Maser's father, Al, a participant in many classic car shows, brought the idea to Joslyn Castle. Combining a car show, fashion show and gala actually harkens back to a concept that was briefly popular in Paris, Maser says. Classic cars were used to bring the fashion models to the show. Eventually the cars assumed the starring role and the fashions become secondary. The castle's fashion show will present a combination of vintage clothing and jewelry with modern fashion.

Tickets for the Classic Car Show are \$10 in advance at area Hy-Vee locations or are available online. Children 12 and under are free.

Parking will be available for the Classic Car show at the Kiewit lot on 38th Street between Farnam and Harney Streets. Ollie the Trolley will run a continuous shuttle. Additional parking will be available at Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart at 36th and Burt Streets and after 12 Noon at St. Cecilia's Cathedral at 40th and Webster Streets. For more information and tickets to the other weekend events visit www.joslyncastleclassic.com or call the **Joslyn Castle** at **595-2199**.

June Notes From The Garden

All Community Garden plots have been assigned, and the garden is in full swing. Please stop by during our Wednesday garden hours (6-8 PM) to visit, admire, and help make our verdant green oasis better each week. Many hands make light work! Also, please stop by on Saturday mornings (10-11:30 AM) to enjoy our Children's Garden program run by **Dana and Sue Freeman**. What a great team!

The Identity Garden has been planted by **Sandy Freeman**, and will be mulched by the time that this article is published. Per the direction of Destination Midtown, perennials and bushes were planted along with annuals for spot color. We will have color in our new bed all season long. This fall we will complete the Identity Garden with tulips, daffodils, and other spring blooming bulbs.

The City Forest Department has approved our plan for building up the bed by our new neighborhood park sign. The spot will be built up with sandbags and dirt to make the area more level. The remainder of the grant of roses from Star Roses in Texas will be located there. Please look for new developments soon now that the plan has been approved.

Our permanent beds in the Community Garden, our new Identity Garden, as well as our new signage garden have all been supported by the graciousness of **Lowe's** on 74th & Dodge. Justin, the manager, has been wonderful to work with. We have received so much this year in plant material from them. Please support this very huge supporter of our garden.

Our picnic tables in the Community Garden have been sanded and painted. They look really nice, and are a great place to visit and just enjoy the scenery.

Joy Doll will be getting the plants from our grant shortly. It's exciting to think about all the new plants, trees, and bushes for our space.

I look forward to seeing familiar faces as well as new ones this coming season.

*by Diane Kaye
Community Garden Director*



The Community Garden Season Opening Event was held Saturday, May 8. Activities included: Youth Garden Program Registration, Garden Plot & Plant Information, Music, Face Painting, Free Library Books, and Plants, Seeds & Refreshments. Adults and children had a wonderful time in the garden!

Charles R. Kilgore Jr. Attorney At Law

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Happy 4th of July!

Tennis Block Party 2010 Highlights

Despite a rainout of our original Tennis Block Party scheduled for Wednesday, May 26, we had a great turnout the next evening. The GPNA partnered with the **Missouri Valley Nebraska Tennis Association** and the **Omaha Tennis Association** to put on the event at Gifford Park. About 75 youth and 20 volunteers participated in the event, where they learned the basic tennis skills along with rally courts. Thanks go to **Godfather's Pizza** again this year for giving us a good deal on 16 pizzas for the event. Many thanks go to our great tennis instructors – **Jane Hines, Dan Bratetic, Don Gildon, Kirk Peck, Jim Wilson, Jackie Foster, Nancy Gaarder, Roger Freeman, Tyler White, Laurie Bolte, Buddy Hogan, Ed Trandahl, Carmody family (Margie, Brian, Ellie), Sara Waldner, Mark Trampe, and Kalif Hassan.** Thanks to **Jan Franks,** the **Slayden family (Betty, Tiffaney, Kayleen, Will), Mike Caban, Jim Wilwerding, Diane Kaye, Sandy Freeman, Chris & Sallie Foster, Dana Carlton-Flint, Darryl Hutton and Sue Freeman** for helping with signage, registration, setup and food. Special thanks once again to **Jane Hines** for doing additional "behind the scenes" work. **Senator Gwen Howard** and City Parks Director **Melinda Pearson** were our special guests; they read the Governor's and Mayor's "Tennis Proclamation" making it official that May is "Tennis Month". We appreciate the police officers who attended the event. One final note; many thanks to **Brook Bench** and **City of Omaha Park Maintenance** – on very short notice - they removed graffiti around the tennis courts and benches, and the park looked very good overall. And the new Gifford Park park sign along 33rd Street looks good.

We are offering to the older youth (9 to 19 years old) the opportunity to continue playing tennis with several instructors on Wednesdays from 10 to 12 noon, starting June 9th through July 14 at Gifford Park. If anyone is interested, please contact **Chris** at **342-6006** for a registration form, or you can show up at the tennis courts.

by Chris Foster



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Closed Sunday



Flower Pots A Welcome Addition To Business District

The flower pots in the Gifford Park business district have been planted and are ready to grow. It seems like just yesterday we were trying to figure out where to put all the snow that accumulated along all our sidewalks and driveways. After this past winter, it will definitely be fun and way more enjoyable to watch the flowers grow instead of those snow piles that buried them. The business district has 13 large flower pots and a **BIG "Thank You"** needs to go out to all the businesses that donated money this year to help fill them. Over the years, we have received many compliments from visitors to our neighborhood about the beautiful flowers and this should be another good year. If you're in the business district stop and take a look and while you're there stop into the businesses and thank them for their continued support in keeping Gifford Park growing.

Thank you to the following businesses and people for their generous support:

Blueline Coffee
California Bar
Cass Street Gas and Shop
Charles R. Kilgore Attorney at Law
Gifford Park LLC
K n J Grocery Store
Robinson's Garage
Selena's Market
Urban Village
Sue Freeman (Dana Freeman's mom)
Glenn Burns

by Martin Janousek

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the
Gifford Park's Pride!**



What's Happening In the Neighborhood . . .

We got rained out! But that is not going to stop us from trying again. Let's play ball! Gifford Park adult members are invited to participate in or be a spectator at the first annual **Gifford Park Neighborhood Softball Game** at the ball diamond **Thursday, June 17th, at 7:00 PM.** Teams will be decided when we get there.

Thanks to **Jill Westfall** and **Diane Kaye** for "manning" the GPNA/Community Garden booth at the **Best of Midtown-Community Open House** on May 13th at Turner Park. Also, congratulations to **Jerry Reimer** and **Scott Semrad** of **Urban Village** (local neighborhood developer of the Melrose and Park Terrace apartments) and **Jim Champion** (owner of Charlie Graham Buick, longtime Midtown Business Association leader, and Destination Midtown board member), who received "Spirit of Midtown" awards at the event.

We have had some bad luck with tool lending lawn mowers breaking down recently. So if anyone has usable (or easily fixable) lawn mowers you can donate to the GPNA for our tool lending program, we would greatly appreciate it. This would be a burden off our mower (and many other items) repairman **Bob Hutton**.

We are still waiting to hear if Gifford Park will be a host site for the **"Music in the Park"** concert series. Due to City budget cuts it has been a challenge to find funding for sponsoring this event. We will keep you posted.

Have you noticed the "Identity Garden" in Gifford Park near 33rd & Cass Street? GPNA volunteers **Sandy Freeman** and **Diane Kaye** planted the 15 ft diameter flower garden (which has a nice cobblestone border) with bushes, shrub roses, lilies and petunias. There is an iron sign and lamp post installed in the middle. The garden material and sign was donated by Destination Midtown for the purpose of "identifying" the over dozen neighborhoods within the Destination Midtown boundary with a common link – the identity gardens.

Membership Application v2009.03.30

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

The GPNA Membership Year runs from January 1 through December 31.

Type of Membership: Single (\$10.00) Family (\$15.00) Business (\$25.00)

Today's Date:

Name (1): E-Mail (1):

Name (2): E-Mail (2):

Name (3): E-Mail (3):

Name (4): E-Mail (4):

Name (5): E-Mail (5):

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Volunteer Opportunities! I am interested in helping out with...

Please indicate areas of interest:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleanup/Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Delivery | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Easter Egg Hunt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Block Captain | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Cleanup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree Planting | <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Cleanup |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> School Liaison | <input type="checkbox"/> Call Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday Banquet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Lending | | | |

Mail check or money order with this completed Membership Application Form to:

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 31462

Omaha, NE 68131-0462

For additional information about GPNA, please visit our website:

www.GiffordParkOmaha.org

