



Gifford Park's Pride

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

July/August 2011

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Save The Dates

Date: Tuesday, August 2
Event: National Night Out and Neighbors Night Out Help for Flood Victims Event

This year the 28th Annual **National Night Out (NNO)** will be observed on **Tuesday, August 2nd**. The NNO is known as America's Night Out Against Crime. The goal of NNO is to promote neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships in a fight for a safer nation. The traditional activities associated with NNO are front porch vigils and leaving porch lights on overnight to make a statement against crime and to show support for local crime prevention agencies. This year, the **Omaha Police Department** and **The Neighborhood Center** are sponsoring a "**Night Out For Neighbors**" in conjunction with National Night Out. They ask that citizens donate cleaning supplies that will be donated to help local flood victims. Items needed are: rubber gloves, buckets, disinfectants, brushes, brooms, mops, safety glasses, garbage bags, clean rags, paper towels, bottled water, and Gatorade. Items can be dropped off at two locations in the Gifford Park neighborhood between the hours of **7 to 9 pm on Aug. 2nd: 33rd and Cass and 35 Ave. and Davenport**. In addition, items can be dropped off from **Aug.1 through Aug. 5th, 9am to 4 pm**, at any Omaha Police or Fire Department location, or the Neighborhood Center, **115 South 49th Ave**. The final drop off site will be the Target parking lot at 72nd and Dodge St. on **Saturday, August 6th, from 9 am to 11 am**. If anyone would like to help with the neighborhood collection on Tuesday, Aug. 2nd, please call **Luther** at **402-330-3286**.

Date: Thursday, August 11
Event: GPNA General Meeting
Location: Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart - 3601 Burt Street
Time: 7:00 PM

In addition to the usual general meeting, we will have a presentation of the new construction occurring at Duchesne along with a tour of the existing facility. This is an excellent opportunity to see the inside of one the landmark facilities that define the Gifford Park Neighborhood.

Next General Meeting: August 11
Topic: Review Of New Construction Project And Tour

7:00 PM
Duchesne Academy Of
The Sacred Heart
3601 Burt St.
(Use Burt St. Entrance)

Executive Meeting
Thursday, August 25th
7 PM at the Larson's
3565 California St.

Date: Friday, September 9
Event: GPNA Cultural Bazaar
Location: 33rd and Cass
Time: 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Note: This will be held in conjunction with the Friday Night Market. The plan is to have different cultural groups have booths that would share part of their heritage/culture with others. The event will also include a bike rodeo, BMX bike show, etc. Fun for all.

Date: Wednesday,, September 21
Event: Rain Barrel Building Workshop (Materials provided)
Location: Gifford Park Garden
Time: 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Participants will get to take their completed rain barrel home to install (limit one per household). Advance registration is required by calling **Luther** at **402-330-3286** or emailing **LutherLar@cox.net**. Registration will be limited to the first 10 applicants.

See Last Page for Tennis Program Info!

2011

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Julie Kalkowski 342-2103

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).

News From The Midtown Neighborhood Alliance

The Midtown Neighborhood Alliance (MNA) along with neighborhood alliances from around the city will participate in National Night Out for Neighbors. See page 1 for the details to donate flood relief cleaning supplies for neighborhoods affected by the recent Missouri River flooding.

Many thanks to all the private individuals and businesses in the midtown area who donated funds to put on the Annual Fireworks Show at Field Club. This event has become a favorite among neighbors in the Field Club area. If you are interested assisting us with the continued success of the July 3rd show, please contact **Jim Farho**: Jim.Farho@continuumww.com.

The Re-Tree Midtown effort raised nearly \$20,000 this year in grant money. Two planting projects were completed to date: Bemis Park (which included an eagle scout project) and the Dodge Street Corridor on the south side of 68th for the Elmwood Park Neighborhood Association. Three more projects are currently scheduled: 35th and Dodge (Blackstone Neighborhood), Schroeder-Vogel Park at Saddle Creek and Pine (Aksarben-Elmwood Park Neighborhood), and Walnut Hill.

The MNA Fireworks Stand sold almost \$58,000 worth of fireworks during the 12 day allotted sales period. Volunteer support from neighborhoods was poor since two families worked most of the shifts. A preliminary estimate for MNA's profit is \$3,500.

Redevelopment Effort at the Austin Apartments - 38th and Davenport America First Real Estate purchased the Austin and intends to spend nearly \$5 million on electrical, mechanical, plumbing and rehabilitation of each apartment. 3703 Davenport LLC was created to develop this venture. The result is intended to be 60 single-bedroom units; today there are 54 substandard units leasing at below market rates. Six basement units will be constructed to comply with ADA standards. The project seeks to include TIF redevelopment funds in the amount of \$400,000 for the rehab.

The project is applying for historic tax credits thru NSHPO administering the program for the US Park Service. Building permits for \$1.5 million have been let and contractors are on site.

Visit our website at www.midtownomaha.org or on Facebook! *by Cynthia Shuck*

Business District and Neighborhood Survey

As we have mentioned in past newsletters, the Neighborhood Survey which started last summer, is continuing. On Thursday, July 14th, we had over 20 people convene in the business district to tour the area, talk to business people, photograph and to get to know what it is about Gifford Park that makes it so dynamic (see page 6 for photo). The people who came were from the consulting team that the **Omaha Chamber of Commerce** has hired: **Lamp Rynearson, Alley Poyner Macchietto, Steve Jensen Consulting**, and **HRA** out of New York. The City of Omaha, the Omaha Chamber of Commerce and Destination Midtown were also present along with a handful of our own Gifford Park current and past presidents attending. It was a great morning to have a tour considering what type of weather we've been enduring lately. It was a two hour tour and after going from business district to Community Garden and beyond, the group then proceeded to the other 3 neighborhoods they planned to tour that day. The other neighborhoods were the Park Avenue, Leavenworth Street, and Vinton Street areas. All of these areas will be part of a future master plan and recommendation report. As the summer progresses, we will be hearing more from these consultants. Keep an eye out for future public presentations.

by Martin Janousek

Building Addition Final Phase Of Duchesne's Capital Campaign

In celebration of its 125th Anniversary, Duchesne Academy launched a capital campaign to finance numerous renovation projects that have greatly enhanced the students' experiences at the school. Updates have included renovation and construction of state-of-the-art science labs, new art studios, dark-room & kiln room, installation of a new heating/cooling system, and completion of a new athletic facility that includes a top notch training and conditioning room, large fitness center, and expanded bleachers in the gym. For the final phase of this capital campaign, Duchesne will begin work on a new addition to the building. This addition will include a barrier-free entrance from the student parking lot, a centrally located five-story elevator, an elegant lobby off of the performing arts center with an adjacent catering kitchen, and an enhanced student entrance with a new atrium staircase from the courtyard into the building.

The addition of the barrier-free entrance and elevator will help Duchesne meet compliance with ADA requirements. The new performing arts center lobby will be useful for social gatherings and special events and will provide greater space for school assemblies and performances. Health and safety issues such as new fire doors, an expanded sprinkler system, electrical updates, installation of air conditioning in the performing arts center, and lobby and improvements in the fine arts will also be addressed.

This project will improve the overall use of the historical campus, most notably the use of the wing of the building that was built in 1931. In addition to the updates to the performing arts center, this project will greatly enhance the student entrance and create improved access to the beautiful courtyard and cafeteria.

To learn more about these future improvements and to tour this historically distinctive building, plan on attending the August GPNA General Meeting on Thursday, August 11, which will be held at Duchesne. (See page 1 for meeting details.)

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

Call: Mayor's Action Office:

444-5555



Duchesne Academy

OF THE SACRED HEART

*Call today to schedule a visit in
the Academy or Preschool!*

3601 Burt Street • Omaha, NE 68131 • 402-558-3800
www.duchesneacademy.org

Farnam Festival

August 27th

40th & Farnam

5 pm \$5

Think of Farnam Festival as the block party from your childhood, except the music is louder, you can stay up later, and you can drink beer. We block off the street and bring in amazing musical talent. We have a beer garden sponsored by amazing breweries featuring craft beers as well as tried and true domestics that go down easy on a summer eve. When you get hungry, there are food trucks nearby.

We are proud to announce that the following bands will be playing this year:

Kyle Harvey

Blue Bird

So So Sailors

All Young Girls Are Machine Guns

Little Brazil

It's going to be bigger and better than last year, but we need your help! All you have to do is bring a few friends with you and tell as many people about the event that you can. Event price is lower this year! All 5 bands for \$5. Crazy, we know.

Please Like us on Facebook and then head over to our website and spend a few minutes:
www.farnamfestival.com

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



California Tacos & More

Homemade Mexican Food

342-0212

33rd & California Street

Dine In or Carry Out

Hours:

Monday - Saturday: 11a.m. - 8 p.m.

Closed Sunday



Neighborhood Market

This year's Neighborhood Market has definitely grown from previous years and this summer we can truly call it a "Neighborhood" Market. Most of our vendors are coming from neighborhoods other than Gifford Park. To name but a few, we have a dynamic group of ladies from the **Miller Park-Minne Lusa Neighborhood** selling jams, jellies, and their very popular and sturdy tomato cages. Our neighbor to the north, **Orchard Hill**, has their City Sprouts Community Garden selling produce and plants every week. We've had all sorts of produce the past six weeks. Lettuce, radishes, beets, all sorts of kahle, green beans, rhubarb, all types of herbs, peppers, and zucchini have all been selling at the market. If you have some time to stop down on a Friday night please do. It's been a great time and place for neighbors to meet neighbors.

By Martin Janousek

Teen Market Garden

Our new four by eight foot cedar tool shed is erect and looks beautiful. Huge thanks to our volunteers for pouring the concrete pad and erecting the shed: **John Barna, Chris Foster, Al Moellenbeck, Francisco Jimenez, Diego** and **Elena Carlson**. Many thanks also to **Dana Carlton-Flint** for obtaining two local grants to fund the project materials: Mayor Suttle's Neighborhood Grant 2011 and the Peter Kiewit Foundation 2010.

We were excited to be chosen by Omaha Venture Group earlier this spring for a capacity building grant. No More Empty Pots was awarded \$4,300 to assist us in building a curriculum for TMG which will be available to anyone wishing to start a similar program for teens.

July 30th will be our first day at the Outdoor Market at Midtown Crossing. We'll be there for five weeks selling an array of produce and flowers from E & E, Fruit Fly Farm, and Persephone & Co. Please stop by our stand and see what's growing!

Our CSA endeavor met several challenges this year, namely the June wind storm which caused a tree limb to take out a power pole behind the garden. OPPD, Qwest and Creighton were able to clean up the mess and erect a new pole, however considerable damage and compaction occurred to several plots. But things are slowly starting to pick up and we'll offer our Veggie Box Program through September.

Thanks for your support and Like us on Facebook ::
Teen Market Garden



*By Cynthia Shuck
TMG Coordinator*

Kudos, Neighbors!

I am one of the bad guys. Years ago I volunteered to drive around the neighborhood and observe properties where residents are not keeping weeds, grass, brush, and trees trimmed as required by city ordinances. It has been very gratifying to drive around this summer and see that there are relatively few properties with problems. In past years it was easy to find twenty to thirty properties in violation. This year I've been seeing fewer than five, generally. I've also observed in my surveys around the neighborhood that many properties are being better kept. One of the reasons I volunteered to be one of the bad guys was that I felt that keeping properties up, at least to minimum standards, improves the neighborhood as a whole, and influences the perception of people passing through that this is a desirable neighborhood in which to live (which it is, of course). So I, for one, would like to say "Good job, neighbors".

by Jim Wilwerding



Greetings From The Garden!

The Gifford Park Community Garden is now flourishing in this heat! Tomatoes and peppers are almost ready to eat and I know everyone is excited to eat them!

Recently, the Garden was awarded some grant monies for tools, a rainwater storage container system, and other supplies. We are very grateful to **Dana Carlton-Flint** who wrote these grants that are helping your garden grow! Please watch for these new additions at your garden.

Saturday, July 16th, the Garden hosted its first potluck of the year. Many neighbors joined us to share in some food and fellowship. We have some more exciting events upcoming. Please join us – gardeners and friends are all welcome!

On August 6th, the Gifford Park Community Garden will celebrate its 10th Anniversary. Everyone will be invited to the festivities! All gardeners and friends will soon receive an invite with more details. If you would like to receive updates on Garden activities please email **Bren Duval** (see address below) to be added to the email announcement list.

The Permaculture Garden continues to grow! Please take note of this growing garden when you visit the garden next time.

See you at the next Garden Work Party on August 3rd from 6-8 pm. Please contact any of us if you have any needs or questions.

Your Garden Board is working hard for you. Please feel free to contact any of us.

Mike Caban - Caban3321@cox.net

Joy Doll (Director/Plot Coordinator) – joyot@juno.com

Bren Duval (Secretary) - bren.design@hotmail.com

Chris Foster (Land Owner) – foster3413@cox.net

Dana Freeman (Children's Garden) - dana.freeman@gmail.com

Sue Freeman (Children's Garden) - glenda.freeman65@gmail.com

Diane Kaye (Treasurer) - diandmax@aol.com

by Joy Doll

A Letter Of Thanks

Dear GPNA Board and Garden Board,

I want to express long overdue appreciation for all you have done and all you continue to do to make our neighborhood a great place for kids and for families. Your tireless work has given my children an understanding of the word "community" that, previous to moving here eight years ago, I thought was lost.

Especially notable, for my own kids at least, have been the contributions of **Dana Freeman** and **Cynthia Shuck**. My daughters have grown up with these young women who made community service a chosen way of life. Dana and Cynthia's enthusiasm for gardening and their ability to pass that on to the next generation has been a priceless gift to all the neighborhood kids.

Many young women spend a summer or a year volunteering in an inner-city community, then move back to the suburbs (or to a sophisticated condo) to "get on with their lives". Dana and Cynthia have chosen Gifford Park as their home, have chosen our kids as their own, and have chosen their neighbors as part of their families. This speaks volumes about the kinds of people they are.

I want to apologize for taking you all for granted too often, especially the contributions of Dana and Cynthia. You have, and I mean this most sincerely, changed our lives forever.

Your grateful neighbors,
Rose and Steve Carlson



During Week 8 of the Summer Youth Garden Program, Chef Bob Murnan & AmeriCorps member Gretchen Filip led a hands-on cooking demonstration. Everyone made pesto pasta, a fresh, hand-tossed green salad with vinaigrette dressing, and herbal suntea that the participants enjoyed for lunch together.

**TOOL
LENDING
HOTLINE**



**Mowers - \$5
Rent for most tools - \$3**

Chris 342-6006



Summer 2011 In Gifford Park



A Neighborhood Tour



A New Restaurant

Beautiful And Unique Flowerpots



Like the song “Do You Know the Way to San Jose” sung by Dionne Warwick in 1968, a flower pot in the business district has given us a chance to hum that tune while trying to fit our neighborhood landmarks somewhere in the lyrics. This new evolving art piece was added to a flower pot next to the Community Bike Shop with the intention of promoting walking, biking and connectivity to not only our neighborhood landmarks but even some of our great neighbors and local destinations. Already it’s caught the attention of visitors as a compliment to this summer’s great looking flowers. If you have a chance to walk through the business district, make a point to look at the flowers and the new art piece. No one flower pot is the same and we even have some plants that came up due to our mysterious “Flower Planter Guy or Gal”.

by Martin Janousek

Gifford Park Dining Bites

If you have not had an opportunity to go to the neighborhood's latest restaurant you are missing out. **Marrakech Restaurant** located at 504 N 33rd St. recently opened its doors and is providing diners a taste of Morocco. Since discovering Marrakech in June I have frequented the restaurant many times, especially after visiting the *Gifford Park Neighborhood Market* on Friday nights. I am amazed each time I go how flavorful the food is and how the owners, **Mohamed Ishmail & Drissi Moussa**, have turned their passion for Moroccan food into a wonderful addition to the midtown area (see page 6 for photo).

I have tried a few appetizers and would recommend the humus with pita bread, and *Zaalouk*, which is similar to an eggplant ragu - it is really delicious! For entrees the Saffron Lemon Chicken served with rice and mixed vegetables is very well put together. This entree had the right amount of flavor to make it well worth coming back to try again. The Curry Chicken is a favorite of my brother in law; it also comes with rice and vegetables. It contains the precise amount of curry spice and will not overpower you. My favorite is the Pesto Chicken and if you're not interested in having the platter with rice and vegetables you can order the *panini-sandwich* version. I would also suggest that you try the mint tea that comes iced or hot; it is exceptional! On one occasion I was able to try one of their Avocado Smoothies - it should be added as a permanent menu item - incredible! The best part of the restaurant is the owners/chefs/waiters, and hostess **Nicole Wagner**. When you dine in their establishment they treat you like family.

The restaurant attracts people from all over the city down to 33rd St. I have seen rock stars, local celebrities and the average college student. For an added benefit you can enjoy the eclectic details of the space (courtesy of the landlord, **Glen Burns**) that includes stain glass windows from the "Lazy Leopard Lounge" (that used to operate at 77th and Dodge St). It is fun just to view the details of the space.

Marrakech is affordable. The average entree is between \$7.99 and \$10.99. The hours are from 10am to 10pm, offering later hours until 12pm on Friday and Saturday nights. The Gifford Park neighborhood should be proud to have such a wonderful addition to the neighborhood. So when you are looking for a new restaurant, stop by and give Marrakech a try - you will not be disappointed.

by Rose Janousek

CBPO Update

Summer is a busy time at the Community Bike Project! First, some new things. We are now offering free weekly yoga classes at the shop, Friday nights 6-7pm. No registration is necessary, but if you have a chance to let us know you're coming, it's always appreciated. Classes are taught by the wonderful **Emma Neuberger** from **Bliss Yoga**. We've had one class already and everyone enjoyed it. Start your weekend off right!



A few weeks ago, Destination Midtown led a group through the neighborhood as part of their Neighborhood Business District Project kick-off, and I was pleased to have the Community Bike Shop as their first stop of the day. The hope is that this effort will lay out the case for more sustainable economic development in the Gifford Park area, and CBPO is happy to participate. Thanks for coming by.

Open hours at the Shop have been busy busy busy. If you would like to learn more about how to fix up your bike or would like to volunteer your time to help us out, we'd be happy to see you. Our hours are Wed/Thurs, 6-8pm and Sat, noon-4. We've got lots of people using the shop these days, so if you come in for help, please be patient, and if you're coming in to volunteer, thank you!

We've been out in the community, too. So far this summer, we've helped out at two city-run bike events for kids: one at the Kroc Center in South O, where we helped organize a bike rodeo and helped refurbish nearly 60 bikes that were then raffled off to neighborhood kids, and then another at Miller Park in North O, where we tuned up a few dozen bikes that were then raffled off. It's so great to see so many happy kids with their new bikes. We've also been managing Omaha's new B-cycle public bike share program. Next time you're in the UNO/Aksarben Village area, check out the blue bikes!

Finally, our bicycle maintenance classes are going strong and will continue into the fall. For more information, please see our website (www.communitybikeproject.org) or the Metro Community College website (under Continuing Education classes). In another way we help break down barriers to getting more people on bikes.

Ride Safely!

Matt Martin

Community Bike Project Omaha
402-957-2453

matt@communitybikeproject.org



18th Annual Gifford Park Free Tennis Program

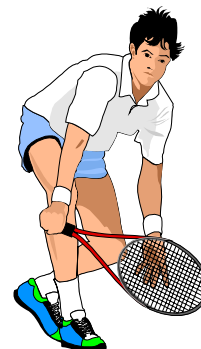


For: Youth (4 to 18 years old)

Dates: August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
(each Wednesday in August)

Where: Gifford Park Tennis Courts
(33rd & Cass St.)

Time: Ages 4 to 9 (6 - 6:45 p.m.)
Ages 10 to 18 (6:45 to 7:30 p.m.)



The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association is offering **FREE Tennis Lessons** and will provide tennis racquets, balls and instructors for each lesson. Parents and others are welcome to help.

To be enrolled, YOU MUST complete the form shown below and bring with you to the tennis lessons. Special prize for those who attend every lesson and demonstrate good sportsmanship. There is limited space available so please **be on time**. Call **342-6006** for more information.

Registration/Permission Form - Bring this form (completely filled out) with you to the tennis lessons to be enrolled.

Youth's Name: _____ Parent's Name: _____
Street: _____ Street: _____
City, State, Zip: _____ City, State, Zip: _____
Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ School: _____
Parent/Guardian Phone: Home: _____ Work: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the child named above, I hereby give my full consent and approval for my child to participate as a member of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program.

I understand that there are certain risks of injury inherent in the practice and play of this sport, as well as related activities incidental to my child's participation, and I am willing to assume these risks on behalf of my child. I hereby certify that my child is fully capable of participating in this sport and that my child is healthy and has no physical or mental disabilities or infirmities that would restrict full participation in these activities, except as listed below.

I hereby waive, release and hold harmless the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program, and the City of Omaha, Nebraska, its Officers, coaches, sponsors, supervisors and representatives for any injury that may be suffered by my child in the normal course of participation in this sport and the activities incidental thereto, whether the result of negligence or any other cause. Furthermore, I give consent to any necessary medical treatment in case of emergency.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____