



Gifford Park's Pride

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

July/August 2014

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Youth Garden Program Highlights

By Chris Foster

At the time of this newsletter we have completed 11 weeks of the Gifford Park Youth Garden (GPYG) program at the Gifford Park Community Garden (35th & Cass St.). The 2014 program is each Saturday morning from 10:00 to 11:30 AM. This year we again have 44 each 30"x30" raised garden beds that each youth planted and tended since May. To get you caught up with what's been going on, we started May 10 with our Garden Season Opening followed by the next three weeks of learning about plants, selecting which vegetables to grow, then planting their own garden plot and painting name stakes - a lot of important work gets done during these early weeks. During week 5, Adam Saegert taught us about vermicomposting (worm composting) and the how worms make our soil richer for growing plants. We also learned how the right ingredients make for good composting, and the heat this process generates to break down these ingredients to "black gold" - a few families brought their own vegetable scraps to add the compost pile at the community garden. Weeks 6 through 8 artists Therman Statom and Jenny Waltemath led us in painting, decorating and planting six large planter pots. Thanks also to our team artist leaders Michaela Wolf, Megan Kriegler, Maranda Allbritten, Ricky Green, and the Stanley family - they did everything from mixing up a variety of paint colors to guiding the painting to final cleanup. One of our planters won the "most colorful" award in the "Wacky Container Garden" contest hosted by Truck Farm Omaha. For week 9 "Garden Movement" we enjoyed a refreshing morning in the garden as we learned about the amazing

continued on page 9

**Next General Meeting
Thursday, August 14**

**Theme:
Celebrating Neighborhood
Diversity**

**7:00 pm
Alegent Creighton Medical Center
Morrison Seminar Room**

In this issue:

- 33rd Friday Block Party page 4**
- Tennis Program Sign Up page 6**
- Youth Garden Pictures page 8**



2014 GPNA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

ERIC PURCELL
402-719-5108

VICE PRESIDENT

RICKY GREEN
402-513-6286

SECRETARY

JILL WESTFALL
402-213-3105

TREASURER

LUTHER LARSON
402-616-9350

BOARD MEMBERS

AT LARGE

Mark Trampe 332-6188
Laura Weiss 609-444-9125

BUSINESS

Martin Janousek 558-4070

LANDLORD

Chris Foster 290-8187

COMMITTEES

COMMUNITY GARDEN
Chris Foster 290-8187

MEMBERSHIP

Mark Trampe 332-6188

NEIGHBORHOOD MARKET
Martin Janousek 558-4070

NEWSLETTER

Jill Westfall 213-3105

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION
Chris Foster 290-8187

PARK

Roger Freeman 517-5208

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Eric Purcell 719-5108

From the President

By Eric Purcell

Did you know that Gifford Park is home to over 4,000 neighbors? And the folks who live here are a pretty diverse lot! Consider for a moment both the economic and age diversity in our neighborhood. Obviously, with three nearby universities (Creighton, UNMC, UNO) there is a good crop of college students. But there is also quite a lot of families with all ages of kids. And of course, there is plenty of wisdom in our neighborhood, too. Economically, data shows that we have a very balanced mix of income levels (via www.weichert.com). The largest income group is in the \$0-\$10,000 range, but the largest age group is also the 20-24 college age range. Otherwise, we're nicely spread! A diverse range of incomes is one of the things that makes for a strong neighborhood.

But we also have an incredible amount of ethnic diversity in Gifford Park. Much of that diversity comes from migrants and refugees. And amazingly, we have some pretty incredible neighbors right in Gifford Park that are serving our immigrant and refugee neighbors.

The South Sudan Community Association (SSCA) originally began in 1997 to help refugees and immigrants make the challenging transition to American life. One of our board members, Laura Wiess, is an employee at SSCA.

Yates Community Center was opened in 2011 by the Omaha Public School to serve as an ESL and Life Skills center for immigrant and refugees. Now in its fourth year, Yates offers English classes along with a plethora of other things, like cooking, sewing, and growing food.

One of the hardest things to do in a diverse neighborhood like ours is to actually come together, rub shoulders, talk. There are all sorts of barriers, not least of these is language.

It is easy to celebrate diversity as an idea and to love seeing all kinds of people in our neighborhood. It is an entirely different thing to actually grow a relationship with these amazing and yet different people. But what do we stand to miss if we don't? What new things might we discover about ourselves and others if we do?

This month we have an opportunity to take one step closer to being good neighbors at our Gifford Park General Meeting. On August 14, at 7:00 p.m. the director of Yates Community Center, Veronica Hill, will be sharing with us about the work at Yates and ways you could possibly get connected. We will also be having some yummy ethnic food! Hope you can make it!

See you in the Neighborhood!

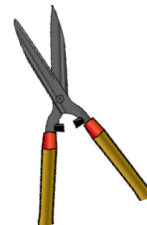
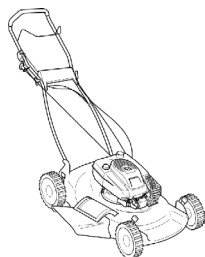
Editor's note: If you have news of interest to the Gifford Park Neighborhood, we encourage you to submit an article for the monthly newsletter. Editorials are subject to approval by the GPNA Executive Board. Please include your contact information. Articles may be submitted by email to jill.lynn.westfall@gmail.com.

TOOL LENDING HOTLINE

Call Chris 290-8187

Mowers - \$5

Rent for most tools - \$3



Community Bicycle Project Update

By Charles Mitchell

Bike donations to the Community Bike Project Omaha not only make our programs possible, they also help motivate us to find new ways to get bikes to those that would benefit from them. The community support the Bike Project has received this summer, in the form of bike donations, has been overwhelming. Fortunately, our motivated volunteers have been working hard to refurbish bikes and get them out on the road. Thanks to them, the Bike Project has been able to distribute 178 bikes to the Omaha community this year.

Kids' Bike Club, our youngest Earn-a-Bike program for kids aged 5-9, has been a blast so far. In addition to introducing the ABC's of bike maintenance, we've also been teaching the basics of riding. Our first Kids' Bike Club graduate even participated in one of our Sunday Funday rides, putting 18 miles on her newly earned bike!

In partnership with Lutheran Family Services and Livewell Omaha, we organized a Learn-to-Ride program for Nepalese refugees. Over the course of three classes, participants were taught how to maintain bikes and ride them safely on the road. The program culminated with a ride around Midtown, after which six participants earned a bike, helmet, and bike lights.

Our Earn-a-BMX competition rewarded some extremely hardworking volunteers with five excellent



BMX bikes. Congrats to Samuel, Motasim, Fausto, Marcus, and Mohamed – they really earned their bikes by putting in a total of 150 volunteer hours! In addition to building the bikes they earned, these amazing volunteers also helped teach bike maintenance to shop guests and put some time and thought into making the shop cleaner and more welcoming.

We're always looking for volunteer help to get even more bikes overhauled and rolling. If you'd like to help fix up some bikes or teach others how to, get in touch! Come down to the shop or email me at charles@communitybikeproject.org.



Bob Hutton celebrating his 82nd birthday at our Community Garden pot luck dinner Saturday, July 26 (his birthday was actually July 25). Bob is "affectionately" known as "the Godfather of the Gifford Park neighborhood"

The sun shines east
The sun shines west
Here in Omaha the sun shines for some of the best.
The Gifford Park area will not rest,
Til we show them we believe to rest will not bring out the best.
With heart and soul we strive to reach out,
Yes reach out and ask for your part of the toil.
It could be the "you" part in "your" neighborhood that can make a difference.

By Bob Hutton, July 25, 2014

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15TH
33RD + CALIFORNIAST
5^{PM} TO 8^{PM}
RAIN OR SHINE



FREE ADMISSION
FRIDAY NIGHT MARKET
FREE KIDS ACTIVITIES
BIKE RODEO
LIVE MUSIC
FOOD
...AND SO MUCH MORE!

**BLOCK
PARTY**

FIRST FRIDAY COMES ONCE A MONTH...
BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE 33RD FRIDAY
CELEBRATE IT THE RIGHT WAY -- ON 33RD STREET!

Gifford Park Youth Soccer

By Eric Purcell

Another summer of youth soccer has come and gone! This was our third year of hosting a free seven week soccer program for 3-8 year olds. Our numbers were down a little bit this year, but we still had 41 different kids participate with an average of 29 kids each night. The youth learned kicking, dribbling, passing, shooting and goalie skills as well as how to be a respectful, team player. This year, the youth who (schedule permitting) were dedicated to coming every week received a new pair of shin guards. Each youth who participated also received a ribbon for all of



their hard work and play! It really was a fun summer of soccer!

A big thank you to all of our outstanding coaches and helpers-Brandon Sperry, Megan Sperry, Alex Wichman, Matt Cronin, Sara Polachek, Andy Wessel, Jose Sanchez, Lisa Purcell, Monica Lehn, Whitney Stanley, Justine Stanley, Dawn Stanley, Crystal Stanley, Joel Thiessen, Stephanie Sanchez, Brianna Luna and Ixsayana Luna. Thanks also to all of the parents who faithfully brought their kids and provided snacks for everyone!



33rd Friday Block Party

Throughout the past three seasons of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Market, it has been such a joy to watch the neighborhood flourish. What started as a simple market with several vendors has grown into something to be proud of, with so many different people participating in many ways; families walking together to the marketplace for their weekly shopping, kids baking cookies and making things to sell as a vendor, and so many neighbors engaged in conversation. This is something to be celebrated!

And celebrate, we will! Friday, August 15th is the 33rd Friday of the year (an observation astutely made by our neighbor, Rich Mills) and while other

Omaha neighborhoods recognize First Fridays, Second Fridays and so on, we think it is rather suiting to celebrate the 33rd Friday here in Gifford Park.

On August 15th, from 5pm to 8pm on 33rd Street between California Street and Cass Street, enjoy the weekly market as well as a family-friendly block party! There will be live music featuring neighborhood musicians, a bike rodeo hosted by the Community Bicycle Shop, plenty of games to play, and best of all, the company of your neighbors. Admission is free and open to the public.

The 33rd Friday only comes once a year, so be sure to celebrate yours on 33rd Street!



21st Annual Gifford Park Free Tennis Program

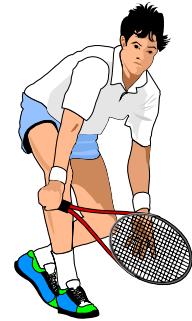


For: Youth (4 to 18 years old)

Dates: August 6, 13, 20, 27
(each Wednesday in August)

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

Time: Ages 4 to 9 (6:00 - 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. Space is limited so please **be on time.** Call **402-342-6006** or **402-290-8187** 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: _____



Record your observations and calls to the Omaha Police Department and the City of Omaha for **problems related to alcohol outlets in your neighborhood** online at

www.thelocalcampaign.com

This information will be used as a tool to help move the implementation of the "Good Neighbor" ordinance forward.

»» Examples to report:

- * Sale to Intoxicated * Graffiti * Disturbance
- * Prostitution * Noise * Public Urination
- * Public Indecency * Loitering * Illegal Drug Activity

Good Neighbor Ordinance

The "Good Neighbor" ordinance uses the city's zoning powers to set conditions around alcohol-sales establishments that better reflect our community standards and allows the city more authority to address problem outlets. The standards encourage businesses to be a good neighbor by not adversely effecting or jeopardizing the public health, peace or safety of people residing, working or using the surrounding area. Ongoing alcohol-related problems at the edge of the Old Market prompted the Omaha City Council to use the ordinance for the first time last summer. Now the next step in the enforcement process will be an upcoming August hearing before City Council involving a couple businesses in question.

To learn more about LOCAL, the "Good Neighbor" ordinance or to report problems related to an alcohol-sales establishment, check out our website at www.thelocalcampaign.com.

Tour de
GARDEN
Community Garden Bicycle Tour

2014

Sunday, August 31st

Hop on your saddle and join us for the third annual Tour de Garden.

A one-of-a-kind bicycle adventure, visiting some of Omaha's finest community gardens.



www.tourdegarden.com

Youth Garden Highlights



Youth Garden

continued from page 1

Truck Farm with Chelsea Taxman, practiced some kid-friendly yoga with Monica Lehn, and Zumba with Mary Liberty. Even with warm & humid weather, everyone (youth & adults) had a good time getting exercise! We then brought out the water guns to cool off...this turned into a water “free-for-all” where lots of us got caught in the crossfire – a good time had by all! During week 10 entomologist Dr. Tom Janousek brought live insect specimens for us to see, hear, and hold (including colorful grasshoppers and huge cockroaches!). Dr. Tom helped us identify insects we collected from our garden insect hunt. Week 11 brought us the “Sound of Music” where Matt Cronin, Ricky Green, and Brent Lubbert with Big Muddy Urban Farm taught us in making the “canjo” – similar to the banjo but with just one string and a can connected by a board. We also had “Family Show & Tell” with the Stanley family, Tyonda Pierce family, and Jenny Waltemath family sharing their interests and talents. Some of our young gardeners “showed-off” their garden plots. Our young gardeners have been harvesting ripening vegetables including zucchini, yellow squash, cucumbers, radishes, carrots, broccoli, lettuce, and tomatoes. Upcoming sessions include: Cooking Matters, Canning & Preserving, Seed Saving, and Pizza Garden Harvest PARTY. A big thanks to Joy Doll, Mike Caban, Jason & Denise Bash, Chris & Sallie Foster, Jackie Foster, and the Stanley family for generously providing youth garden t-shirt donation funds – thank you!

As you can see the program teaches youth of all ages how to grow our vegetables, prepare, eat, and share our harvest with others. Plus, the youth are creative with art, music, and poetry; explore our natural environment; and have fun while working together and getting our hands dirty. GPYG relies upon parents and volunteers each week to provide snacks, lead lessons, and simply share their time with participating young people. Tremendous thanks to all our volunteers including but not limited to: Michaela Wolf, Paul Pellerito, Megan Kriegler, Rose Carlson, Tyronda

Pierce, Mike Sheldon, Sara Stauffer, Ricky Green, the Stanley family, Sara Polachek, Maria Diaz, Teresa Vizcaya, Monica Lehn, Andrea Lawse, Eric & Lisa Purcell, Erin Grace, Jackie Foster, Sallie Foster, Big Muddy Urban Farm (Ali Clark, Brent Lubbert, Matt Cronin) and the dedicated parents and family members who participate with their youth gardeners. Special thanks to Mike Caban for his dedication to this program and the community garden project, neither would be the same without his leadership – thanks Mike! Please contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net) or Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) if you have questions about GPYG program.

Community Garden Update

Where did all the rain go? As of this newsletter we are headed toward 4 weeks of no measurable rainfall. Luckily we had around 10” of rainfall in June and cooler summer temperatures, so it could be worse. We periodically fill with city water the 275 gallon rainwater collection totes we installed a few years ago, this lets gardeners water their plots anytime as long as there is water in the totes. Most of our vegetable and flower gardens are doing well with nice varieties of vegetables and well maintained plots. Saturday, July 26 we had the first pot luck dinner of the season on the community garden. Despite very hot and humid weather we had a nice turnout to celebrate efforts involving the community garden, youth garden program and “friends” of the garden.

Weekly work nights continue each Wednesday 6 to 8 PM through the growing season. During these times water and garden tools are available for plot renters and anyone else interested in helping maintain the community garden – there is never a shortage of weeding! It’s a good time to stop by the garden to see neighborhood friends or check out what’s growing. Contact Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) for garden plot information, and Chris Foster (402-290-8187, foster3413@cox.net) for other questions.

Gifford Park Neighborhood School Effort

The Omaha school district continues to work toward a possible November school bond referendum to pay for school construction projects, including building upgrades and new schools. Our Gifford Park and surrounding neighborhoods are still very much in the hunt to bring back a neighborhood school – in fact, building a new elementary school in our neighborhood is in the current proposed OPS facility plan. As you probably know in 1999 our neighborhood school Yates Elementary at 32nd & Davenport Street was closed by OPS because the building was too small to handle the number of children in our neighborhood. Currently of the 353 Yates attendance area children in grades K-6, 165 are assigned to Kellom School, and 188 of our children are bused to 39 different schools in the district. Letters of support to bring back a neighborhood school have been sent to OPS from the Gifford Park NA, Joslyn Castle NA, Dundee Memorial Park NA, Bemis Park NA, Leavenworth NA, Midtown Neighborhood Alliance, Councilman Chris Jerram, First Presbyterian Church, and residents.

For more information on this effort, please contact:

Chris Foster (GPNA Board member):

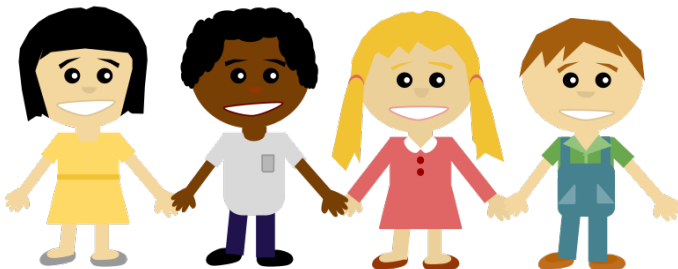
402-290-8187, foster3413@cox.net

Marque Snow (OPS Board member):

605-675-9251, marque.snow@ops.org

Sara Howard (Nebraska State Senator):

402-699-5514, saraehoward@gmail.com



Iowa/Nebraska IN the Neighborhood Conference

"Celebrating Strong Empowered Neighborhoods"

A collaboration of neighborhood associations, grassroots community organizations, civic and business leaders from Omaha and Council Bluffs have come together to host the first conference of its kind in this region.

Great neighborhood tours on Friday and timely topics and speakers on Saturday with an ending reception at Tom Hanfan Rivers Edge Park.

Iowa/Nebraska (IN) the Neighborhood Conference

October 10-11, 2014

**Metropolitan Community College
South Omaha Campus**

Register at:

www.intheneighborhood.org

**\$30 per person includes:
Friday tour, Saturday Conference
with continental breakfast, lunch
and evening reception.**

Contact Paula Steenson with any questions.

Ph: 402-346-3950

Email: ppresents@aol.com

H.E.L.P. Adult Services

By Lynne Holmquist

Everyone is busy. Life is busy with work, family, and school. But one local nonprofit organization, HELP Adult Services, is committed to making your volunteer experience meaningful and schedule-friendly.

In 1982, Marjorie Kiewit, Willis Strauss and several other community leaders collaboratively started an outreach program, now known as HELP Adult Services. Frail, elderly, and mostly low-income men and women often lacked the resources or the ability to access the needed services to remain safely in their homes. Two major programs emerged from those early years and continue today serving residents of Gifford Park Neighborhood and across Omaha: the Respite Companionship Program and the Health and medical Equipment Loan Program, or H.E.L.P.

The Respite Companionship Program offers two volunteer opportunities that can take as little as 15 minutes a week to several hours on a regular

basis. All volunteers receive training before being matched with a family who needs either a weekly telephone call to a homebound individual (Friend Connect) or providing conversation and companionship for a couple of hours while the full-time family Caregiver takes time off for his or her own personal needs (Respite Companions Program).

The Health and medical Equipment Program needs volunteers to work in a warehouse setting cleaning and refurbishing durable medical equipment, i.e. wheelchairs, walkers, and hospital beds before items are loaned out at a low-cost to individuals recovering from accidents or illness. Volunteers are also needed to assist with the delivery of medical equipment and meet the families in need.

HELP Adult Services welcomes individuals or teams to participate in our volunteer activities. If you are interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities at HELP Adult Services, contact Lynne Holmquist, Volunteer Relations at 402-990-6047 or holmquistlynn@gmail.com.

LIVING BETWEEN THE Sacred AND THE PROFANE

New Art by Cheryll Wallace

Show Opening
Friday August 1, 2014 5-9 pm
 Soul Kitschn Gallery
 521 N. 33 St., Omaha, 68131
 (enter thru Maud Boutique)
 Show Dates & Times: Aug. 1-30, 2014 Noon- 4 pm Tuesdays thru Saturdays



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
 PO Box 31462
 Omaha, NE 68131



**Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
 Membership Application**

The GPNA membership year runs from January 1 to December 31.

Type of membership: Single (\$10) Family (\$15) Business (\$25)
 Today's Date: _____

Business Name (if applicable): _____

Business Phone (if applicable): _____

Name (1): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name (2): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name (3): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name (4): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name (5): _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Volunteer Opportunities! I'm interested in helping with...

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday Banquet | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Distribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleanup/Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord/Tenant Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> School Liason | <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Lending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Memberships | <input type="checkbox"/> School Achivities | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree Planting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easter Egg Hunt | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Walks | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Watch | <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Garden | |

Return completed form along with check or money order to:
 Gifford Park Neighborhood Association, PO Box 31462, Omaha, NE 68131.