

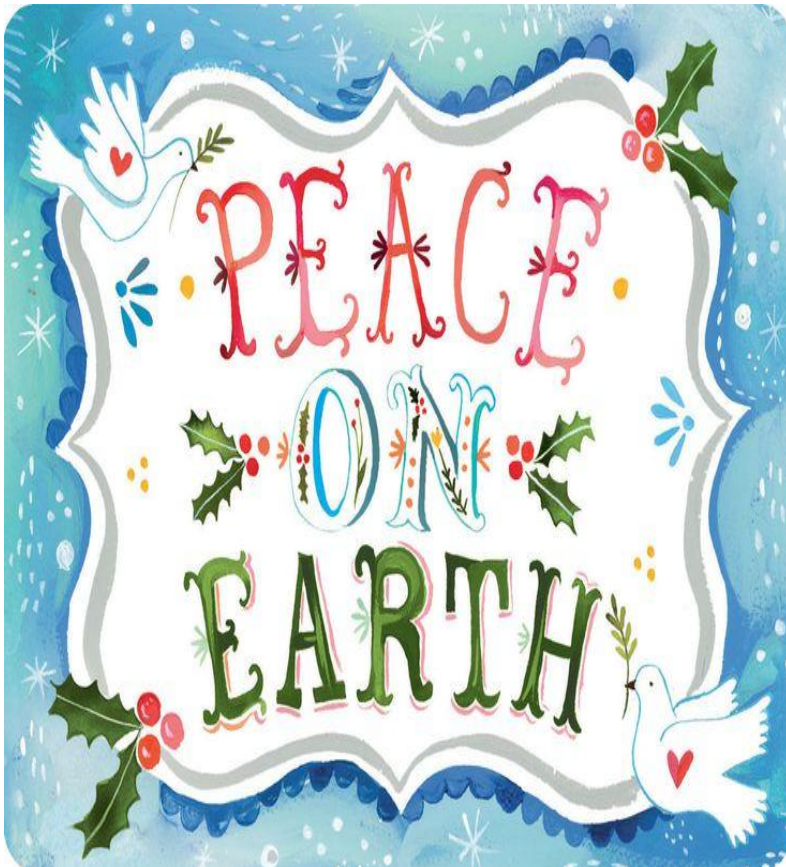


Gifford Park's Pride

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

December 2016

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association's 28th Annual Holiday Banquet

When: Thursday, December 1, 2016
6:00pm (Dinner served at 6:30 pm)

Where: Betic Dining Room, Creighton
University Medical Center
A traditional holiday meal will be served,
compliments of
CHI Health-Creighton Medical Center

RSVP: to Eliza @ 207-590-9880 or email:
yrrepazile@gmail.com
(Space is limited, RSVP by 11/28/16)

Join us for a Year-in-Review,
Neighbor of the Year Award, door prizes
and time with your neighbors!

Please bring a canned food item for the
Food Bank.

**must be a GPNA member to attend*

Welcome to the Center of the U.S.A.

By Adrian S. Petrescu

About this time last year the GPNA decided to engage in the Save Yates campaign. We have covered that successful effort so many times already. At the December gathering of last year we proposed that there should be a form of an indoor type of a winter "farmers' market." There has just been the first ever Holiday Makers Market on November 19. The turnout was fantastic. The music was great. The atmosphere was perfect. With Jingle Bells and other Christmas music, holiday preparations in Gifford Park Neighborhood have thus officially started, exactly along with the change

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2017 Elected Board

Welcome new board members! Elected at the
November meeting:

President	– Marie H�el�ene Andr�e
Vice President	– Eric Purcell
Secretary	– Eliza Perry
Treasurer	– Alexandra Goswami
At-Large	– Andy Wessel, Brent Lubbert Tyler Magnuson, Scott Larsen
Landlord Rep	– Chris Foster
Business Rep	– Martin Janousek

2016 GPNA Officers

Marie Hélène André, President

402-769-9183 | mhandre34@hotmail.com

Eric Purcell, Vice President

402-719-5108 | eric.purcell@crmladers.org

Eliza Perry, Secretary

207-590-9880 | yrrepazile@gmail.com

Alexandra Goswami, Treasurer

847-477-2156 | omaha_beef@hotmail.com

Board

Tyler Magnuson, At-Large

402-706-7496 | tyler.magnuson@gmail.com

Andy Wessel, At-Large

402-916-5030 | ajwessel13@yahoo.com

Brent Lubbert, At-Large

402-213-9646 | brent.lubbert@gmail.com

Scott Larsen, At-Large

402-690-7469 |

Slarsen@refugeempowerment.org

Luther Larson, At-Large

402-616-9350 | lutherlar@cox.net

Martin Janousek, Business Rep

402-558-4070 | mjjanousek@leoadaly.com

Chris Foster, Landlord Rep

402-290-8187 | foster3413@cox.net

Opportunities – Contacts

GPNA General Meetings

Marie Hélène André 402-769-9183

Community Bike Project

Adams Blowers

adam@communitybikeproject.org

Community Garden/Youth Garden

Chris Foster 402-290-8187

Adventure Playground

Chris Foster 402-290-8187

Teen Market Garden

Cynthia Shuck 402-556-2090

dalilabush@cox.net

Gifford Park Market

Martin Janousek 402-558-4070

Yates Community Center

Susan Mayberger 402-557-2431

susan.mayberger@ops.org

Youth Soccer

Eric Purcell 402-719-5108

Youth Tennis

Chris Foster 402-290-8187

Spring Cleanup

Luther Larson 402-616-9350

From the President...

This is the last newsletter of the year... already! Looking back at the goals the GPNA Board defined last January and at all we have accomplished, I must say 2016 was yet another great year for our neighborhood.

We got a resolution about the new elementary school in the neighborhood and we were involved in the early discussions about the redevelopment of CHI – Creighton University Medical Center. In both cases, we shared our vision of the future in Gifford Park Neighborhood with the stakeholders. That was only possible thanks to your involvement, your support, and your participation in some meetings.

As the GPNA strives to preserve and protect the neighborhood, we will make sure we are involved in future discussions too, and that we keep you regularly informed.

Of course, Gifford Park Neighborhood wouldn't be what it is without all the activities and events that took place throughout the year, and that we have presented in our newsletter. This is not possible without each of you: you give time, energy, resources, you share your talents and ideas to make our neighborhood such a vibrant place. THANK YOU! And stay involved! We need your ideas and support for future projects!

I wish you and your family a very happy holiday season!

Marie Hélène

**CUB SCOUT PACK 17 AND BOY SCOUT TROOP 42
CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION AND SERVICE PROJECT**



The Dundee Neighborhood Scouts are again offering to pick up your Christmas Tree for recycling.

Dates for Pick-up are: Saturday December 31, 2016

Saturday January 7, 2017

Scouts will complete requirements towards their World Conservation Award and Community Service advancement requirements. This project demonstrates renewable resources, solid waste reduction, and community service in our neighborhoods. Donations are accepted, Thank you!

To have your tree on our schedule: Return the request form, remove the decorations, place it on your curb by 9:AM on pick up day!

Christmas Tree Collection Request

Your Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Donation Enclosed _____

Collection Date December 31, 2016 OR January 7, 2017

Size of tree: LARGE OR SMALL

Return by December 28, 2016

Christmas Tree Collection Project, % Marc Anderson, 4914 Chicago St, Omaha, NE 68132 OR

Call 402-558-0727 OR email troop42communications@gmail.com

Please make checks payable to : TROOP 42

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 gpnewseditor@gmail.com.

A Different Christmas Poem

By LCDR Jeff Giles, SC, USN

The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light, I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight.
My wife was asleep, her head on my chest, My daughter beside me, angelic in rest.
Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white, Transforming the yard to a winter delight.

The sparkling lights in the tree I believe, Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve.
My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep, Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep.
In perfect contentment, or so it would seem, So I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.

The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near, But I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear.
Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know, Then the sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow.
My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear, And I crept to the door just to see who was near.

Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night, A lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.
A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old, Perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold.
Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled, Standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.

"What are you doing?" I asked without fear, "Come in this moment, it's freezing out here!
Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve, You should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!"
For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift, Away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts..

To the window that danced with a warm fire's light Then he sighed and he said "Its really all right, I'm out here by
choice. I'm here every night."

"It's my duty to stand at the front of the line, That separates you from the darkest of times.

No one had to ask or beg or implore me, I'm proud to stand here like my fathers before me.
My Gramps died at 'Pearl on a day in December,"
Then he sighed, "That's a Christmas 'Gram always remembers."
My dad stood his watch in the jungles of 'Nam', And now it is my turn and so, here I am.

I've not seen my own son in more than a while, But my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got her smile.
Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag, The red, white, and blue... an American flag.
I can live through the cold and the being alone, Away from my family, my house and my home.

I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet, I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat.
I can carry the weight of killing another, Or lay down my life with my sister and brother..
Who stand at the front against any and all, To ensure for all time that this flag will not fall."

" So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright, Your family is waiting and I'll be all right."
"But isn't there something I can do, at the least, "Give you money," I asked, "or prepare you a feast?"
It seems all too little for all that you've done, For being away from your wife and your son."

Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret, "Just tell us you love us, and never forget.
To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone, To stand your own watch, no matter how long.
For when we come home, either standing or dead, To know you remember we fought and we bled.
Is payment enough, and with that we will trust, That we mattered to you as you mattered to us."

PLEASE, would you do me the kind favor of sending this to as many people as you can? Christmas will be coming soon and some credit is due to our U.S service men and women for our being able to celebrate these festivities. Let's try in this small way to pay a tiny bit of what we owe. Make people stop and think of our heroes, living and dead, who sacrificed themselves for us.

November General Meeting Recap

Great turn out for the November 10th Neighborhood meeting at the Creighton Medical Center Morrison Seminar room. We estimated approximately 35 people came out for the last meeting of the year. Cookies, lemonade, veggies and amazing cupcakes helped to compliment an evening of great guest speakers and neighborhood conversations. We started the meeting with an update from Lieutenant Mark Matuza, OPD Northeast precinct, regarding recent neighborhood issues. He lead a great conversation and many people said later they enjoyed having him stop.



Then we conducted a quick election of officers for the 2017 GPNA Board. Knowing what we've all went through just two days prior with our national election cycle, it was nice that our neighborhood elections took less than a minute and without a single scandal. The remainder of the meeting started with a debut and explanation about the new "Welcome To Gifford Park Neighborhood" yard signs starting to show up in the neighborhood. Then we enjoyed an update from Todd and Mary Heistand with NuStyle Development regarding their purchase of the Creighton Medical Center Hospital and parking lots. They brought boards showing the scope of their proposed project and stuck around afterwards to answer people's questions. They were very complimentary of our neighborhood and look forward to being good neighbors. The last half of the evening was spent listening to a presentation from Jason Rose, outreach coordinator with Metro Area Transit. He came to speak about the new Bus Rapid Transit route that will go along Dodge Street. He gave a very informative presentation and answered many good questions. Thank you to all the guest speakers. You, along with any new guests, are always welcome to participate in future neighborhood meetings.

Welcome to the Center of the U.S.A.

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in weather down to freezing temperatures. At the same time this year, when we plan for next year, the question becomes: What would we do this coming year though that could become of equal or maybe even greater importance? It is a question for everyone to ponder now, and one that will be answered in January when the goals for next year will be decided.

Many plans are already in. More plans will show up and we'll incorporate those too. At this time of giving thanks, we will mention here only two small but important things that are being done. In addition, we will add two more "ideas in the making" that need more input, clarification, and action. We need your help once again to make all the projects, old and new, become a success.

First, the "Welcome to Gifford Park Neighborhood" yard sign campaign just started a few days ago. In many gardens and front yards you can see the signs printed in many languages, from Omaha-Ponca to Burmese. Contact Eliza Perry (yrrepazile@gmail.com) or simply come to the December 1 holiday banquet to get your yard sign if you want to display one.



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Adventure Playground Poem

By Jasmine Frierson

Through the winter months
We may cocoon
We hope to see you soon

We Free Spirits, Rebel Rousers
Ice Queens and Silly Beans

We will not let our fire die out!

We revel in the snow
Because we know
We must enjoy
It before it goes

Our playground is perfect
for sliding, gliding, building
and chilling with Cocoa

There is too much fun to be had
If you come, we will be glad
More details to come soon
Please stay tuned

Adventure Playground Update

By Chris Foster

A big thanks to Teal Gardner, Monica Lehn, Jasmine Frierson, Paul Pellerito, Katherine Royal, Theresa Hospodka, Jenny Waltemath, Therman Statom, and EVERYONE who volunteered at Adventure Playground this year! Even though our formal Adventure Playground season has ended for 2016, adults and children are always welcome to come play at Adventure Playground (at the community garden at 35th & Cass St.). All school break and special winter events will be announced through email and Facebook.



Snowy Season Reminder

Now that snow season may soon be upon us, a reminder of the ordinances of the City of Omaha:

Sec. 34-332 says, in part:

“It shall be the duty of the occupant, as well as the duty of the owner, of any lot or land or real estate in the city to clear all ice and snow from the sidewalks adjoining the said lot, land or real estate within 24 hours after the city has declared that snow removal operations on the city’s major streets are complete.”

It also states:

“It shall be unlawful to place snow and ice on any alley or street right-of-way from private sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, roofs or other private property.”

To simplify, sidewalks must be cleared. And throwing the snow into the street is not allowed. As a good neighbor, both should be obvious. We have many pedestrians in the neighborhood. Clean sidewalks encourage that. And with the difficulty we have in getting neighborhood streets plowed, it makes no sense to add to the problem by throwing more snow in the street. Your cooperation on both matters would be appreciated.

Bike Shop News

By Adam Blowers

The 20”/16mm Build-a-Thon is going strong right now. As of this writing we’ve refurbished 46 bikes for a total weight of 1,168 lbs! Several of these bikes will be going to the Refugee Empowerment Center and others will be going to CASA. We’ve done a great job so far, but we could still use some help to push the total up to over 100 bikes. Drop by the shop and help refurbish a kid’s bike to brighten up the holidays for a child in need.

Our Earn-a-Bike program has taken its end of the year hiatus. This year we had 81 Youth Earn-a-Bike graduates, 27 Kid’s Bike Club graduates, and 45 adults earn bikes. Earn-a-Bike will begin again next February and be on the lookout for some special programs for students this winter. Did someone say bamboo bike build?

As always, we are looking for great volunteers to get involved. Stop by the shop or email me at adam@communitybikeproject.org to get involved.

Welcome to the Center of the U.S.A.

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Two months ago we left out a little surprise from the report on the IN the Neighborhoods conference. We are sharing it now. Gifford Park Neighborhood Association just put in for a grant with One Omaha and the Peter Kiewit Foundation to design and make yard signs that would say “Welcome to Omaha” in 20-35 languages that would be given to those who want to display them in every one of Omaha’s neighborhoods. We hope this campaign will be a success as well.

With “Save Yates,” which inspired the little project, the news media picked up on the multitude of signs and they came several times to interview community leaders. Omaha Public Schools and Creighton University took wind of everything, including by way of letters sent to them, and ultimately it all worked out well so far. Hopefully the same spirit will prevail this time as well.

Second, Big Muddy Urban Farm enters a completely new stage in their development and their involvement in the broad community, both local and national, this coming year. After over four years of their strong presence in our community, Big Muddy’s Aspiring Farmer Residency will commence in January. Several U.S. states will be represented. There are plans to even invite briefly exchange fellows to come from other urban farms out of town and share their experiences with the resident aspiring farmers here, and to share with other similar efforts nationwide the experiences that are developed here at Big Muddy. When he is not busy with the farm work, with this newsletter, with the candidatures for the residency, with the application for the 501(c)3 status for Big Muddy, with the many activities that he organizes, Brent Lubbert is writing grants to expand the scope and reach of Big Muddy as an educational institution hoping to achieve soon national reputation for the work it does. Big Muddy is in really good company. The trend of

urban agriculture has been around for a long time in the United States, at least since the Victory Gardens commenced in the year 1917 during World War I. Since those days, the benefits of urban farms—bringing community members together and educating especially the youth on what farming means—have always been tremendous. We’ve just seen the dance last October, bringing together all ages at the Yates Community Center. We wish

Big Muddy the best of success in this new stage, happening at the one century anniversary of the Victory Gardens idea in the United States.

As Nebraska will have a new license plate this coming year, we figured we’ll show an old advertisement for urban agriculture that is 100 years old and that resembles the symbol on the new license plate. It is not exactly the same as Big Muddy’s goals and objectives, but the idea is 100 years old in the United States. We better celebrate it well and show the Neighborhood USA visitors how well we do farming in Nebraska, even in Midtown Omaha. Maybe from the Center of the United States the idea spreads again to the entire country.



We invite everybody to think about new ideas for activities and especially the community’s goal for 2017. We all heard from Megan Sperry about her projects to bring parents together over winter and we will try to work with her to make something work soon. The GPNA board heard from Angela Eastlund of YMCA about her idea to get more people outdoors. This, Gifford Park Neighborhood, is exactly where more and more people always get outdoors more. Maybe more so during the summer than in the winter though. We’ll see what else we can do. Please brainstorm with us and reach out with your ideas and suggestions for new activities or projects. So far we thought we’ll do a movie night at Yates Community Center for children with their parents, and certainly a February indoor Market (to shop for Valentines Day?).

We can’t wait for the December 1 Holiday Banquet. See everyone there for a fun evening of fellowship and sharing of memories of the last year and plans for the next.

First Holiday Makers Market Celebrates a Great Event

By Martin Janousek

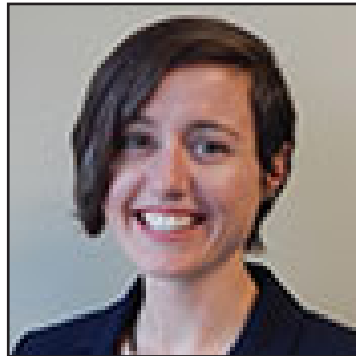
The first Gifford Park Neighborhood Holiday Market was a success. On Saturday November 19th between noon and 4:00, the volunteer crew that normally organizes the Friday night market in the business district tried their hands on a holiday market. This one day event took place at Yates Community Center at 32nd and Davenport in the gymnasium. The idea of trying a holiday market has been discussed for years but for some reason this year the idea became a reality.

Tables were reserved for \$10 and we had a variety of vendors selling an amazing array of handmade items. There were people selling baked goods, soap, local honey, artisanal cheese, dog biscuits, handmade items by the talented Yates Community Center seamstresses, holiday wreaths, herbal tea, house plants, a local coffee roaster shared their talent on crafting a perfect cup, jewelry, and the list goes on. Many people complimented the holiday market and enjoyed not only shopping but also meeting friends and neighbors. Local musicians from the neighborhood shared their talents throughout the day. Many people new to the neighborhood enjoyed seeing inside the beautiful historic building and learning about all the great programs taking place. It was a perfect day, place and reason to bring the community together. A BIG Thank You goes out to Yates Community Center staff, all the Gifford Park volunteers, the musicians, and vendors for making an enjoyable day.



Two Gifford Park Neighbors Receive “40 Under 40” Award

Each year, the Midlands Business Journal honors 40 greater Omaha, Council Bluffs and Sarpy County entrepreneurs, executives and business professionals under the age of 40. The winners are selected based on their contributions to their businesses and to their communities. We are proud to announce two award recipients are very active GPNA members:



Alexandra Goswami is Director of Finance and Accounting for Food Bank of the Heartland. Many of you know her for being our excellent GPNA treasurer, board member and neighborhood volunteer at cleanups, the community garden and Neighborhood Market.

Daniel Lawse is principal and chief century thinker of Verdis Group, a sustainability consulting firm. You probably best know him for volunteering at the youth garden, Adventure Playground, and a vendor at the Neighborhood Market.



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
 PO Box 31462
 Omaha, NE 68131

Place
 Stamp
 Here

**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"/> Neighborhood Watch | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleanup/Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord/Tenant Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Distribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Lending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Memberships | <input type="checkbox"/> School Liason | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree Planting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easter Egg Hunt | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Market | <input type="checkbox"/> School Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Walks | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer | |

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