



Gifford Park's Pride

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

January/February 2008

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Mike Caban Chosen As 2007 GPNA Neighbor Of The Year

The GPNA was proud to honor longtime member **Mike Caban** as our 2007 Neighbor of the Year. He was recognized at the 19th annual **GPNA Holiday Banquet** hosted again by **Creighton University Medical Center** on December 6. Mike's motto is "what you see is what you get" and the Gifford Park neighborhood has gotten a great deal from him since 1989, shortly after the very beginnings of the GPNA. Mike has served as a GPNA officer and chaired several important committees that helped set the foundation of our organization. Over the years, he has been involved with most of our events and activities including the Watch Group, Volunteer Incentive Program, Newsletter, Easter Egg Hunt, Spring and Fall Cleanup, Community Garden, GPNA Office, Tennis Program, Halloween Haunted House, Yates Elementary School, and other projects. Mike was instrumental in forming the Watch Group and has been involved with the Community Garden since the beginning where he broke ground developing the herb garden and first flower garden. In fact his flower garden when in full bloom is in the shape of a heart in honor of his late wife **Judi**.

Mike was born in the Bronx, New York, and lived there until age 11. He ended up finishing high school in Puerto Rico, and one week later joined the Navy. Mike served in the Navy from 1965-1969, and 14 months of that was in Vietnam, including 5 ½ months in the Mekong Delta doing coded secure communications. After the Navy, Mike

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Next General Meeting
Thursday, February 7
7:00 P.M.

Topic: The GPNA In 2008:
A Discussion Of Current
Events

Creighton University
Med Center
Morrison Seminar Room

Executive Meeting
Thursday, February 21
7 P.M.

Via Christie
36th & California

Liquor License Application Update

Currently our 33rd & California business district has three separate businesses applying for liquor licenses: **K-N-J Grocery** (upgrade from beer to full liquor sales), **Selena's Market** (no alcohol to full liquor sales) and the former **Kum & Go** now **One-Stop** (reapplying for current beer license). For the record, the GPNA Executive Board is opposed to all these applications; the main reason is we believe additional alcohol outlets will have a negative impact on our neighborhood.

You may remember on October 19, 2007, in Lincoln the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission (NLCC) denied the K-N-J

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Chris Foster 342-6006

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Terry Wilwerding 342-2795

WEEDS & LITTER

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

WELCOMING

Dana Freeman 850-9611

Green Homes: Clean Water - Managing Storm Water At Home

Do you know where rain goes after it falls on your roof? Into the gutters of course, then it takes the journey down your driveway or across your lawn, across the sidewalk and into the street where it finishes its journey down the storm drain, right?...

Well, it doesn't stop there; the storm ultimately drains into the local stream that runs through your back yard and parks. All of the streams in the Omaha area drain into the Pappio Creek, which then ends up in the Missouri River.

Along this journey to your local stream, the water picks up dirt, oil, asphalt shingle particles, and other chemicals from our driveways, streets, yards, and roofs. These pollutants are then washed down the storm drain to directly into the stream. This is typical in Omaha, especially west of 72nd Street.

East of 72nd St., this water is combined with the sewer system which takes sink, toilet, and bath water from our homes. During light rains, this water is first treated before being dumped into the Missouri River, but with heavy rains, the water goes straight into the river, often with raw sewage from the sewers.

This is the result of an old sewer system called a combined sewer overflow. In the metropolitan area, this means about 50 times a year raw sewage is dumped into the Missouri River. The City of Omaha will be taking steps to fix this problem over the next several years. See www.omahacso.com for more details.

You can help improve local water quality by implementing one or more of the following strategies.

What Can I Do To Improve Water Quality?

There are three main ways to reduce the stormwater runoff from your property. One is to reduce the amount of hard surfaces on your property, another is the use of a rain barrel and lastly, you can landscape a rain garden.

Ask yourself if you need that extra stall in the driveway or that patio addition. By reducing how many hard surfaces are on your property and how big they are, you eliminate a major source of stormwater runoff. Rainwater quickly runs off of hard surfaces, but it has the chance to soak into landscape beds and lawns.

If you still need that extra patio area, be creative. Think of alternatives to concrete such as brick or natural stone. The same goes for driveways, pathways, and sidewalks. One great driveway idea is to have two concrete strips for where the tires go. Less pavement, less cost, less runoff, and less shoveling!

Another way to reduce runoff and save money at the same time is to use a rain barrel. A rain barrel is a simple device that collects rainwater from your gutter before draining onto your driveway or yard. Since average homeowners use 40% of their water for outdoor use, using a rain barrel for watering plants can save you money and provide a chlorine-free drink for your plants.

This also reduces how much rainwater from your roof makes it into your local stream. Most rain barrels come with a spigot compatible with the standard garden hose, so it makes watering outdoor plants easy. You can make your own rain barrel or purchase one from a store or on-line. For a place to start check out:

www.rainbarrelsandmore or www.rainbarrelguide.com.

Another simple way to reduce stormwater runoff from your property is to install a rain garden. Rain gardens are designed to allow rainwater to soak back into the ground recharging groundwater and reducing pollution caused by runoff into our waterways.

Rain gardens hold water for 24 to 48 hours after a rainfall and provide wonderful landscaping opportunities, which will improve our local water quality. For detailed information on rain gardens and how to build your own, check out this website:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/nps/rg/rgmanual.pdf>

As a reminder, use fewer lawn chemicals, fertilizers and pesticides on your lawns to reduce the amount of toxins rain can pick up before draining into your local stream.

by Daniel Lawse

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) for information regarding the newsletter.

Restore Omaha Coming This Spring

Was your home or business built before the 1950s? Do you live in an older Omaha neighborhood? Are you interested in learning about historic restoration and preservation? Then mark your calendar for the **Restore Omaha** conference, **February 29-March 2** at **Metropolitan Community College's** newly expanded **South Omaha Campus (27th and Q streets)**.

Keynote speaker **Jim Lindberg**, director of preservation initiatives at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, will speak on how to tame the teardown trend in historic neighborhoods. In addition to the keynote speaker, five hands-on demonstrations and 20 break-out sessions will teach attendees preservation and restoration techniques to use on their own homes.

A reception the night of **Feb. 29** will open the conference, and a Restoration JAM! Session the evening of **March 1** will allow attendees to share lessons learned in renovation and preservation of their older property. Tours on **March 2** will focus on and highlight the preservation and restoration efforts in the area bordered by Pacific Street to the north, the Missouri River to the east, 36th Street to the west and Q Street to the south. The event also features an exhibitor area open from **10 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.** on **March 1** that includes Ask-an-Expert areas, a bookstore, hands-on demonstrations and exhibit booths for participants to gather ideas, products, contacts and solutions to their old-home problems.

Now in its third year, Restore Omaha offers current and potential owners of older properties an opportunity to learn from local and regional experts about how to restore, revive and preserve their home or business. For more information on **Restore Omaha**, visit www.restoreomaha.com.

2007 Holiday Lighting Contest Winners

The GPNA would like to thank everyone for decking the halls this holiday. Whether this is your first year or you're a veteran, the festive lighting is a joy to observe each year. **Neil Liberty** and **Chris & Sallie Foster** judged displays on December 20. And the winners are:

3210 Cass
152 N 35th St
621 N 36th St
715 N 36th St
3514 California
3416 Cass (Community Garden)



Free Tax Help Available Soon

The site for the annual free tax assistance is the **Lay Apostolate Center at St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 40th & Webster St.** Tax help will be available on **Mondays from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m.** and **Wednesdays from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.** starting **February 4** through the tax season (**April 15**). Everyone is welcome!

AARP representatives will provide free tax help for our neighborhood for the 14th year in a row. Processing of basic tax returns and electronic filing will be available. No appointment is necessary; individuals will be helped on a first come, first serve basis. Please call **Jackie** at **551-3629** for more information.

To be able to provide assistance, persons will need

To be able to provide assistance, persons will need to bring the following:

1. Valid Picture I.D.
2. Copies of ALL W-2, 1098, 1099 Forms and the amount of other income received by you and your spouse
3. Tax Identification Number (example: Social Security Number, Individual Tax Identification Number) for you, your spouse and any others shown on the tax return.
4. Provider's address and Tax Identification Number for Child/Dependent Care Credit
5. Form 8332 or copy of divorce decree for non-custodial parent claiming child
6. Proof of Account Number and Routing Transit Number of the financial institution for direct deposit into a savings or checking account.
7. Copy of prior year's tax return, if available.



Happy Valentine's Day!



Charles R. Kilgore Jr.

Attorney At Law

4913 Underwood Avenue

558-5000

Personal Injury Law

Worker's Compensation

Injury

Auto Accidents

Insurance Claims

What's New, Pussycat?

March 15 is the 2008 Omaha deadline to license companion cats and dogs. Licensed pets must be up-to-date on rabies vaccinations.



To help, **Caring for All Pets** will sponsor vaccination clinics for cats and dogs, by a licensed veterinarian. Fees will be: 1-year rabies, \$5.00/ 3-year rabies, \$10.00; 1-year distemper combo shot (for animals under 1 year of age), \$5.00; kennel cough, \$5.00; feline leukemia, \$7.00. Microchipping will be available for \$25.00. Clinics will be held on **Saturdays**, from **1-4 p.m.** as follows: **February 9** and **March 15** at **Christie Heights Recreation Center, 5105 S. 37 Street** (37 & P); and **February 2, March 1,** and **March 8** at the **Sherman Community Center, 5701 N. 16 Street. Nebraska Humane Society (NHS)** licensing will be available at all clinics. The clinics are on a cash only basis, and it is requested that children under 10 not attend.

The Nebraska Humane Society recognizes the importance of spay/neuter by significantly reducing the licensing fee for spayed and neutered animals. If you require financial assistance with spay/neuter for your tame cat, or to learn about the benefits of spay/neuter, you can turn to the Cat Spay/Neuter Connection, "helping families help cats." Phone **(402) 964-CATS (2287)**; write **P.O. Box 27927, Omaha, NE 68127**; e-mail info@catspayneuter.org; or visit www.catspayneuter.org. (For spay/neuter help for feral/stray cats, phone **Feline Friendz at 778-1111**; e-mail felinefriendz@yahoo.com; or visit www.felinefriendz.org).

An OPPD tree-trimmer working in the neighborhood observed more homeless cats in Gifford Park than elsewhere in Omaha - and wondered at all the orange tabbies! But we can all choose to be part of the solution! (The friendly black cat sitting by my side, a stray rescued from the bitter cold and neutered this week, assures me that this is true!) First, please help the homeless strays and ferals by putting out food and water, particularly vital at this time of year. If you can provide some form of shelter, better still. Want to do more? Contact **Gifford Park Cats, 553-3736**, to learn how to trap humanely and spay/neuter to prevent the birth of homeless kittens. Many of the Gifford Park strays are remarkably friendly and homeable; think about adopting one, or finding her a good home.

To prevent the problem in the first place, please never allow your cat to roam outdoors if not spayed or neutered. The law requires indoor-outdoor cats to wear ID. It is a good idea even for indoor cats to have address tags or microchips, so that, if lost, they can find their way home again, and not join the homeless population. According to the NHS, only 4% of lost cats make it back home, due to lack of ID. And NEVER abandon an unwanted pet; it is cruel and illegal to do so. It is believed that abandonment is the root of most feline homelessness in Gifford Park.

Many circumstances can make a lifetime commitment to a pet difficult: future landlords who don't allow animals; future roommates who are allergic; future jobs requiring travel; future family changes. If you feel that your life is in flux, you can still enjoy feline companionship and make a difference, with the shorter-term commitment of fostering. Many homeless cats only need to be worked with for a while to be eligible for adoption; and many adoptable cats need a temporary home while waiting for their permanent one. To learn more about fostering, please contact **Gifford Park Cats** at **553-3736**.

Let's make 2008 a great year for everyone in our neighborhood—including the Gifford Park cats!

by Clarinda Karpov 553-3736

Habitat ReStore Helps Community In Several Ways

Although Habitat for Humanity is well known, the **Habitat ReStore** unfortunately does not share this same recognition. However, the Habitat ReStore is tightly linked to Habitat for Humanity. Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit ministry that builds houses for low-income families and the Habitat ReStore helps keep this ministry sustainable.

The Habitat ReStore is a home improvement discount outlet that opened seven years ago. It sells new and high quality used building materials and home improvement products. All of these donated products are available to the public at significantly reduced prices – 50%-70% off retail.

The mission of the ReStore is three-fold:

- **Help provide funding to build more Habitat homes.**
- **Help the environment by recycling and reusing saleable building materials. (Thus far in 2007, we have kept over 200T of materials out of landfill in the first quarter of 2007.)**
- **Help homeowners and landlords maintain and improve their property by providing affordable building materials and products.**

The success of the ReStore is tied to both customers and excellent donations. Inventory changes on a daily basis and includes windows, doors, cabinets, appliances, electrical fixtures, paint, flooring, and much more.

The ReStore is located at 1003 South 24th Street (one block south of Leavenworth) and is open to the public. For further information, contact **David Klitz** at **934-1033**.

**Mayor's Action Office
444-5555**

Volunteers Needed At CUMC

Do you have a heart and passion for people? Are you organized, calm under pressure, and comfortable in a culturally diverse setting? Creighton University Medical Center is the busiest trauma center in our region, and cares for very complex patients. Our hospital provides care and comfort not only for patients, but their families and visitors as well. Come join us as a CUMC volunteer as a host or hostess in the ICU/Surgical Waiting Lounge. The days and times we have openings are:

Monday morning substitute (occasional)

Tuesdays 12-2

Wednesdays after 1:30 PM

Thursdays after 11 AM

Friday mornings

If you are an early bird, we also can take volunteers on Thursday and Friday mornings from 7-9 AM in this area.

Another important area where we need more volunteers is the front Information Desk. You will be the first impression our community has of our hospital! If you love to greet people, are outgoing, and delight in helping people find where they need to go, you will love this position!

The days and times we have openings are:

Mondays after 1:30 PM

Tuesdays before 9 AM and after 4 PM

Wednesdays after 11:30 AM

Thursdays mornings until 12:30 PM

If you would like to volunteer with a friend, a couple or two people can also volunteer together for either position. Sometimes it is more fun to volunteer with a buddy. Or, if you are really ambitious and have a nice circle of friends and would like to "adopt" either area and rotate a group of friends in this assignment to provide continuity of coverage, that would be wonderful! The more the merrier!

Please call and ask for a volunteer application packet: **449-4260**, or email the Volunteer Manager, **Cheryl Morehouse**, at

cheryl.morehouse@tenethealth.com. We would love to have you join our hospital volunteer family!

Recycling Site Available To All

Thanks to the efforts of UNMC Student Senate President **Jonathan Henning** and other students, a recycling drop-off point is now available for use by the entire Omaha community. The site, which accepts tin, aluminum, newspaper, and plastic, is one of the only recycling spots in the midtown area. The drop-off site is located in the northeast corner of the **Student Life Center Parking Lot** near 40th & Emile Street. Although the original goal was to accommodate students who live in apartments around the area who don't normally have access to recycling services, it is open to anyone in the Omaha community.

Mike Caban . . . *continued from page 1* put his computer communications skills to work at the phone company (Northwestern Bell which became USWest) from 1969-1995. Then he switched careers to Human Resources, working at IBP, ConAgra, and now Oakland Foods. He is retiring in January, lucky dog!

Mike met Judi at the phone company. They moved into the neighborhood in 1975; their home was a brick duplex at 331 N. 35th Ave. They bought a house at 3321 Davenport in 1978, which is Mike's current home. Mike has two sons; Michael lives in Arizona and Ben lives with Mike. Mike's daughter Ellen, son-in-law Andy, and grandson Ethan live in Omaha. You cannot say Mike's name without also recognizing Judi. Judi was also very active in the GPNA and with the PTA – she was president of Yates and Nebraska PTA's. Quite simply, Mike and Judi made a great team! Mike's real passion is writing. He has written 9 short stories that have been published, including articles in *Crickett* and the *New Yorker*. Mike is also an "amateur archeologist".

Mike's contributions to the Gifford Park neighborhood are long, and his commitment is as strong and passionate as ever. I have personally learned a great deal from Mike, and I draw energy from his passion for the neighborhood. I remember many nights walking or driving (in that old brown station wagon!) through our neighborhood on Watch Group on Friday and Saturday nights and dreaming about what could be and ways to make our area a great place to live, work, learn and play. Mike, we are proud of your service to our country and proud of your service to our neighborhood. Congratulations, from all of us in the Gifford Park neighborhood!

by Chris Foster

Community Bike Shop Omaha News

Community Bicycle Shop Omaha at 525 N 33rd Street is full speed ahead for 2008! The board is planning events for the season and expanding our workstations by 200%. We're looking forward to repairing even more bicycles this year, and seeing more graduates from the Earn-A-Bike program. Join us at our Spring Open House on March 15 at 5pm at the shop to stay in the loop.

Everyone is welcome during our open shop hours on Saturdays from 12-4pm. We are also doing renovation work on Wednesday evenings for the next month.

In the neighborhood, the bicycle shop has been active in opposing offsale package and beer licenses on 33rd Street. The board and volunteers at CBSO have worked hard to nurture a safe, healthy environment for youth and recognize the negative influence of alcohol in the area. The board drafted letters to the City Council, and **Emerick Huber** and **Stuart Shell** made statements at the hearing.

by Stuart Shell

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum!

Did you have an opportunity to view the charming Douglas-fir while it proudly stood in the **Gifford Park Community Garden**? Selected and transported from **Santa's Woods** choose-and-cut tree farm in Blair by **Cynthia Shuck** and **John Barna**, the eleven-foot tall specimen was erected with the roping and Boy Scout skills of **Bob Hutton**. How lovely were its branches! The few lower branches that had to be removed were salvaged and used in centerpieces at the **Holiday Banquet** made by **Dana Freeman** and **Cynthia Shuck**. **Chris & Sallie Foster** strung lights round and round the tree so it gave us great delight brightly shining twenty-four hours a day. Many folks were responsible for the difficult task of keeping the tree hydrated when temperatures were above-freezing, and beautifully green through sun and winter snow.

If you will remember, the **Gifford Park Neighborhood Association** requested donations of decorations with which to adorn this tree and treasure for future use. Our neighbors responded quickly to the call for assistance. We offer our sincere appreciation to those who graced the tree with their handmade, old, and new ornaments. Extra thanks to **Lois Baumhover**, who generously contributed tinsel, balls, bells, an assortment of embellishments, and hooks to hang them all, and **Emily Smith**, our avian friend from **Lauritzen Gardens**, for her contribution of edible wildlife ornaments. Without your help, the tree would not have been nearly as stunning.

The official **Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony** occurred concurrently with the **Holiday Caroling Event** on **Thursday, December 13, 2007**. Many neighbors met before 5 PM at **Via Christe Assisted Living Community** to drop-off baked goods and treats for the post-caroling warm-up. Without the assistance of a choir, this initial group of merrymakers headed for the Community Garden with songbooks in hand. It is no easy task to simultaneously read music in the dark, sing, walk, watch for oncoming cars, and all the while try not to slip on ice, but thankfully everyone arrived safely to meet the rest of our chorus around the tree. Special thanks to **John Barna** for adding to the festivities by trimming the Community Garden with extra lighting. After the ceremonial burst of lights, words spoken honoring our volunteers, those in attendance, and our glorious tree, and alternately completing several lively and solemn songs, the cheerful group of twenty treaded uphill to Via Christe. With guys like **Paul Mileris** and **Richard White**, we may not need to ask for choral accompaniment in the future. Before partaking of hot apple cider, cocoa, and yummy treats, our happy singers serenaded residents following their supper. Thanks to **Clarinda Karpov** for sharing her percussive instruments and talents with all and the folks at **Via Christe** for hosting us.

Stuart Shell, Diane Kaye, and Chris Foster removed the ornaments after the New Year arrived and safely stored them away until they will be used again this coming Holiday

2008. The remains of the tree will be recycled, and once dried, makes an excellent acidic amendment to soils. It's safe to say that we love our trees in Gifford Park, both temporary and permanent. Whether used as teaching tools for children in the Community Garden, to cool us and our homes from the summer sun, or a seasonally reminder that "hope and love will ever be the way to joy and peace" for us all, trees are an important part of our lives year round.

by Dana Freeman



California Bar And Package

510 North 33rd Street
402-449-9138

Happy Hour Discounts - Mon thru Fri - 5 to 6 pm

Nightly Specials - 7 till Close

Package Liquor, Beer and Wine

Welcome to your Friendly Neighborhood Bar!



Duchessne Preschool

Love God.
Love to Learn.
Help the Needy.
Share and Cooperate.
Learn Right from Wrong.

The Duchessne Preschool bases curriculum on the five goals above and includes specialist teachers in the areas of Spanish, art, music, computers and PE. Two, three and five-day options are available for BOYS and GIRLS. Call 558-6250 for more information or to schedule a tour.

www.DuchessneAcademy.org

California Tacos & More

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33rd & California Street

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Hours:

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

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California **Tacos
&
More**



K'N'J

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Fresh Meats -- Fresh Produce

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3301 California Street -- 422-1058

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7:00 AM - 10:00 PM Monday thru Thursday

7:00 AM - 11:00 PM Friday thru Saturday

8:00 AM - 10:00 PM Sunday

Liquor License Update . . .

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Liquor License Upgrade application, the vote was 2-1 (Commissioners **Pat Thomas** and **Bob Logsdon** voted to deny, **Rhonda Flower** voted to approve). The owner is appealing the decision, but for now K-N-J Grocery cannot sell more than beer. Eight letters of protest were sent to the NLCC. (Incidentally, in September the City Council had approved the their application by a vote of 4-3).

At the January 8 City Council meeting, the Council voted to approve Selena's Market but did deny the One-Stop application. It now goes to the NLCC for a hearing later in February. Again, eight letters of protest opposing these two applications were sent to the NLCC. The GPNA thanks those individuals who took the time to write protest letters, they were **Bob Hutton, Eric Noll, Mike Caban, Stuart Shell, Dana Freeman, Dana Carlton-Flint, Robert Janousek, Chris Foster,** and State Senator **Gwen Howard**. We also appreciate neighbors who testified at the Council meeting – **Bob Hutton, Stuart Shell, Dana Freeman, Emerick Huber, Darryl Hutton** and **Chris Foster**. Many others from other midtown neighborhoods testified against liquor license applications in their own neighborhoods as well, thus sending a strong, unified message about neighborhoods' concerns regarding liquor licenses and the saturation of alcohol outlets and availability in our neighborhoods.

Thanks also to **Diane Riibe** and **Erin Baum** from **Project Extra Mile**, they provided excellent research and data that we used during testimony at both City Council and NLCC. We referenced one "calls for service" data document (calls within a half-mile radius of 33rd & California) that seemed to help show the challenges our neighborhood already faces. Demographic data maps showing the high density of under 18 year olds near 33rd & California were presented. GPNA literature was submitted which illustrated our efforts to protect and improve the neighborhood. The GPNA thanks **Steve Virgil** for his support and taking time to meet with us on strategy. And we want to thank **Jeannie Dickes** (and Steve Virgil) for their efforts to win the Supreme Court case earlier this year regarding Orchard Hill Neighborhood Association's fight – this was a two year effort that helps set precedent for other neighborhoods like ours to have a better chance to win these cases. Thanks also to **Margie Magnuson** (Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association) for leading the larger effort of neighborhood leaders coming together for the common goal of opposing the high density of alcohol outlets facing our areas, particularly east of 72nd Street. We'll keep you updated.

by Chris Foster

Public Information Session For Streetscape Handbook Feb. 5th

Omaha by Design will host a public information session **Tuesday, Feb.5**, to introduce Omahans to the city's new Streetscape Handbook. The event will be held from **5 to 7 p.m.** at the **Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, 1301Harney St.** All interested members of the community are invited to attend. Off-street parking is available after 5 p.m., and there is a parking lot west of the chamber for those who choose to park at their own expense.

The handbook is designed to coordinate the placement and design of street furnishings in the public right of way. Street furnishings include items such as street lights, benches, public art, landscaping, bike racks, bus shelters, waste bins and signage.

The publication is the work of a volunteer Streetscape Handbook Committee comprised of members of the design community and those responsible for the placement and design of street furnishings in the city. Omaha by Design served as the project manager, and RDG Planning and Design was the project consultant.

"A well-designed street stresses form as well as function - it meets the needs of all users and fits within the context of its location," said Connie Spellman, director of Omaha by Design. "Our city will be a better place because of this committee's efforts." For more information, contact Spellman at **402.342.3458** or connie@omahabydesign.org.

Omaha by Design, an initiative of the Omaha Community Foundation, is a privately funded organization dedicated to changing the face of Omaha through the use of urban design principles and citizen engagement. For more information, visit www.omahabydesign.org.

Thanks - We Appreciate It!

The GPNA would like to thank **State Senator Gwen Howard** for donating 11 kids bikes to the midtown neighborhood associations in her district, one bike for a child in each neighborhood. She wanted to show her appreciation for the neighborhoods' hard work and support during the year. She asked the **Community Bike Shop Omaha** volunteers to assemble the bikes, which they did. The Bike Shop also provided helmets to go along with the bike giveaway. Each neighborhood decided how they would give away their bike. Thanks Senator Howard!

2007 GPNA Holiday Banquet Highlights

Even a storm that deposited five inches of less-than-festive snow couldn't keep over 125 GPNA members, family, ~~and guests from attending our~~ **9th Annual Holiday Banquet**. Those in attendance enjoyed an evening of good food, camaraderie among neighbors, and holiday cheer at **Creighton University Medical Center** in the Becic Dining Room. Tremendous thanks are extended to everyone who pitched in, from sending out invitations to clean-up, and made this yet another in our list of successful events!

Emcee **John Barna** kept the event lively, moving quickly, and cheerful. This year's theme, "**Branching Out**," was a celebration and extension of last year's "Taking Root." Considering GPNA's history of accomplishment and obstacles bested, we can truly be proud of our extensive roots in the community. Many programs and events established long ago continue to thrive and impact numerous people. Equally important are programs that branch out to serve members of our neighborhood in new and different ways. Speakers describing some of the neighborhood's important projects included: **Dana Freeman**, who promoted the **Youth Garden** program complete with show-and-tell props, and **Lynn Beha**, who gave an update on the programs and events at the **Community Bicycle Shop Omaha**. The *2007 Events & Activities Slideshow* ran throughout the evening – thanks, **Sallie Foster**, for taking a year's worth of wonderful, award-winning pictures. One such winning picture entitled *These Boots Are Made for Plantin'*, taken this summer at the Youth Garden, was turned into a refrigerator magnet and served as a prize for the trivia winners. **Eva Swanson's Superteam**, including the Carlson Family, had the most correct answers. They must read their neighborhood newsletter!

Rodney Hay's time and culinary expertise in preparing turkey was greatly appreciated. Rodney, as most of you know, bakes, smokes, and deep-fries the turkeys for us every year. (Note: we missed Rodney this year, as he was unable to attend due to an injury suffered during snow removal.) **Sodexo** made it complete with a buffet of traditional holiday fare, including pie for dessert! While they organized and set attractive tables, **Dana Freeman, Cynthia Shuck, and Dana Carlton-Flint** were responsible for arranging the lovely and low-cost evergreen centerpieces. **Bob Hutton**, on the other hand, crafted wooden ornaments that doubled as both centerpieces and decorations for one's holiday tree. We again offer our sincere appreciation to **Creighton University Medical Center** for their enormous support by hosting this event.

Chris Foster introduced our long-time resident, volunteer, and "**Neighbor of the Year**," **Mike Caban**. It was humbling to hear about Mike's compelling history in Gifford Park, especially regarding his good work with the Neighborhood Watch. We could all learn how to be better neighbors by following his example. The night was brought to a close by a drawing of door prizes and distribution of children's gifts all donated by members and VIP's- **Lois Baumhover, Jim & Liz Vokal, Subby & Janice Anzaldo, Lily Estes, Brad Bogard, Dana Carlton-Flint & "Design With You In Mind,"** and **Stuart Shell & Dana Freeman**. As with any event in Gifford Park, the list of people who extend their generosity and support is widespread, and unfortunately, cannot all be listed here. GPNA would like to extend its sincere gratitude to those on the Holiday Banquet Committee: John, Dana, Stuart, Cynthia, ~~and Chris. We are always looking for new recruits!~~ **Until the 20th Annual Holiday Banquet** when we will again share a meal together, we'll see you around the neighborhood.

by Dana Freeman and Chris Foster



What's Happening In The Neighborhood . . .

A workshop on green cleaning will be held on **Saturday, February 23**, from **10AM-12 noon**. Please contact **Daniel Lawse** at livesimply93@gmail.com for location. **Barbara Luna** of **FBG Service Corporation** will discuss the importance of green cleaning and some commercially available green cleaners. There will also be an opportunity to learn how to make your own green cleaners. There will be opportunities to win **FREE** green cleaning-related products for those present.

Congratulations to our GPNA Treasurer **Dana Carlton-Flint**, ASID, for having an interior design project she worked on featured in the Omaha World-Herald publication *From House to Home*. She said that after working for over a year, from the construction stage to completion, having the downtown condo featured in the magazine was definitely "icing on the cake." Anyone who has a chance to check it out will be wowed!

Hawkins Construction is planning to demolish three more bridges in the area east of the Gifford Park neighborhood. The bridges are near 30th Street generally east of the Seville Plaza motel. The current schedule is to accomplish lane closures starting on **February 3 at 12:00am** for Highway 75 south bound and I-480 westbound will be closed at **1:00am** on the same night. Both of these lanes will re-open by **6:00am** on **Feb 4th**. The actual demolition of the bridges is planned for sometime between **2:00am** and **3:00am** on **February 3**.

The **Midtown Neighborhood Alliance** is looking to hire an executive director. The position is part-time with expectation of it growing into a full time position. The position is open and interviews are being conducted. Interested candidates can send resumes to **Jim Farho** at jim.farho@continuumww.com or mail a resume to **Midtown Neighborhood Alliance, P.O. Box 6721, 68106** to be considered.

2008 is a presidential election year (if you haven't already noticed when watching TV or reading the newspaper!) If you are a Republican, your presidential primary is in May. If you are a Democrat, your "primary" is a caucus to be held on **Saturday, February 9th**. The **North Omaha Voter Participation Project** is holding a **Caucus Workshop** on **Saturday, February 2nd**, at North High School from **9:30 - 10:30 a.m.** Although workshop attendance is not required for caucus participation, it is being offered as an educational experience and a source of information. For more information concerning the caucus or workshop, call **991-3883** or **Preston Love Jr.** at **812-3324**, or email: votenorthomaha@yahoo.com



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

P.O. Box 91462, Omaha, NE 68131-0462



Membership Application

*Note: The GPNA membership year runs from June 1 through May 30

Today's Date: _____

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

If Business, Name of Business: _____

Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES I am interested in helping out with... (Circle Interest):

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Chairperson | Newspaper Delivery | Community Garden | Easter Egg Hunt |
| Membership | Book Club | Youth Garden | Boiling Cleanup |
| Social Activities | History | Tree Planting | Tall Cleanup |
| School Liaison | Wash Group | Youth Activities | Neighborhood Walks |
| Tool Lending | Cal. Committee | Lawn Program | Holiday Banquet |

Snow Removal Rules

A **Snow Emergency** means that no vehicles may be parked on the streets where you see an Emergency Snow Route sign. Crews will plow these streets first. If cars are left parked on an Emergency Snow Route during a snow emergency, the cars will be subject to a fine and may be towed at the owner's expense. Radio and TV stations will broadcast all necessary information.

Omaha's Municipal Code requires **all sidewalks to be shoveled within 24 hours after a snowstorm**. Walks left unshoveled may be cleared by City crews at the expense of the property owner. For more information, or if you have a comment or complaint, please call the **Street Maintenance Office** at **444-4919** (24 hour line).