

Gifford Park's Pride

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

January/February 2012

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association



Restore Omaha Aims to Inspire and Teach

Inspiring and teaching attendees to restore older properties is the theme for the seventh annual Restore Omaha Conference, Saturday, March 3, 2012 at Metro's South Campus at 27th and Q streets.

Keynote speaker is Patricia Gay, executive director of the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans. Gay is passionately committed to preservation working since 1974 to convince developers, politicians and the general public that urban revitalization and preservation of historic architecture and neighborhoods is crucial to the health and welfare of the Big Easy.

An opening reception at The Barnard Flats, a 1902 building at 804 Park Ave. Friday, March 2 from 7 to 10 p.m. Attendees will view completed two bedroom apartments as well as tour the nearby Art Deco's apartment buildings on Park Avenue and The Bungalow and The Prairie Box homes. The reception cost is \$20 and includes food and drink along with the tour. Visit www.uvomaha.com for a sneak peek inside the buildings under the UV Apartment and UV Houses tabs.

At the Conference, attendees can select from 16 sessions to attend. Topics include:

- updating electrical systems,
- historic hardware,
- restoring brick,
- making older homes more energy efficient,

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Next General Meeting Thursday, February 9

Guest Speaker: Big Muddy Farms
Topic: Urban Agriculture in Gifford Park

7:00 pm Creighton University Medical Center Morrison Seminar Room

2011 GPNA Neighbor of the Year: Martin Janousek

By Chris Foster

The GPNA honored Martin Janousek as our 2011 'Neighbor of the Year' at the 23rd annual GPNA Holiday Banquet hosted by Creighton University Medical Center on December 15, 2011. Martin, a GPNA Board member for 4 years, spends a significant amount of his time "living" in the Gifford Park neighborhood, even though he doesn't reside within the neighborhood association boundaries. His focus is to have 33rd & California be the "best neighborhood business district" anywhere.

Martin works tirelessly on efforts to improve our neighborhood: leading the business district flower pot project, rehabilitating some of the worst properties in the neighborhood, supporting the Community Bicycle Project, helping found the Restore Omaha Conference, leading the Gifford Park Neighborhood Market on Friday evenings, working with Destination Midtown and Omaha Chamber on the neighborhood master plan, and many other GPNA activities.

Martin also volunteers for other organizations which positively affect our neighborhood. Besides the

Continued on page 7

2012 GPNA OFFICERS

President

Luther Larson 330-3286

Vice President

Jeff Spiehs 457-9979

Secretary

Jill Westfall 213-3105

Treasurer

Dana Carlton-Flint 346-4575

Board Members

At Large

Darryl Hutton 706-7597 Travis Lavender 605-321-8142 Eric Purcell 719-5108

Business

Martin Janousek 558-4070 **Landlord** Chris Foster 290-8187

COMMITTEES

Community Garden

Chris Foster 290-8187

Membership

Luther Larson 330-3286

Neighborhood Market

Martin Janousek 558-4070

Newsletter

Jill Westfall 213-3105

Newsletter Distribution

Chris Foster 342-6006

Park

Sandy & Roger Freeman 557-2914

Pubic Relations

Dana Carlton-Flint 346-1344

Spring Clean-up

Jim Wilwerding 551-1344

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.

From the President

Last time I wrote an article for this newsletter I talked about what a nice Fall we were having so I feel compelled this month to talk about what a nice winter we are having. With little to no snow much of the neighborhood is exposed, so to speak, with all the foliage dormant for the winter, allowing trash and other junk piles to be visible. Please take advantage of the nice weather and cleanup some of those exposed eyesores.

Since we are on the topic of trash, has anyone else noticed the accumulation of the plastic bags containing advertising in the yards and gutters of the neighborhood. It seems that someone is littering our neighborhood weekly. If you feel like I do on this topic, please contact the publisher/distributor of these ads and let them know that we do not appreciate the litter.

The 2012 GPNA board has been busy in January planning and budgeting for the year. 2012 activity list and budget can be found in this newsletter issue. Some of the plans for the year include changes to the website, including the ability to get memberships and donate money online. We are also looking into ways to electronically communicate to people in the GPNA neighborhood. One option being looked at is Nextdoor.com. Take a look at https://giffordpark.nextdoor.com and join if you feel compelled.

Hope to see you at the Feb 9th GPNA general meeting.

Luther

From the Editor

By Jill Westfall

Our long-time newsletter editor, Sue Wilwerding, has "retired" from the newsletter and handed over the reigns. You may have noticed some changes in the look with this issue of Gifford Park's Pride and will likely notice a few more in the months to come.

In addition to the news and events you are used to seeing in the newsletter, you will notice a new feature "Better Know Your Neighbors." This month we're kicking it off with a few of our new board members, Jeff Spiehs, Travis Lavender, and Eric Purcell. We will also be accepting submissions of "Good Neighbor Stories" featuring the amazing people and good works that knit our community together.

If you have ideas for features or news and notes to submit, please email me at jill. lynn.westfall@gmail.com and I will do my best to fit them in the next edition.

2011 GPNA Holiday Banquet Highlights

By Chris Foster

About 125 GPNA members, family, and guests attended our 23rd Annual Holiday **Banquet** held Thursday December 15th at Creighton University Medical Center in the Becic Dining Room. Everyone seemed to enjoy the evening. Many thanks to everyone who helped, from sending out invitations to cleanup, to make this a very nice event! This year we displayed neighborhood and GPNA memorabilia, this included history scrapbooks (created by our historian Eva Swanson), old newspaper articles, picture books of past events, GPNA recognition awards, watch group information, and even a DVD playing a 1989 GPNA documentary about our neighborhood (produced by COX Communication for the GPNA receiving special recognition).

Emcee and GPNA president **Luther Larson** kept the evening fun and spirited. This year's theme was "ornaments and greenery", **Dana Carlton-Flint** put together our table decorations. The 2011 events & activities slideshow ran during the first half of the evening – thanks **Sallie Foster** for taking another year's worth of wonderful pictures. Luther and Dana lead the group in a GPNA rendition singing of "The Twelve Days of Christmas".

The GPNA recognized two special families, the Carlson's and the Stanley's, for their excellent volunteerism and participation over the years in many of our events and activities. These families help define what our neighborhood is all about. We also recognized **Sue Wilwerding** for 15 incredible years of newsletter editor duties for the "best" neighborhood newsletter hands-down. Sue's commitment to producing a high-quality publication EVERY month is rare – thank you for your dedication! And of course the GPNA announced our "Neighbor of the Year" - Martin **Janousek.** Martin thanked everyone for his recognition and asked everyone to volunteer to help the neighborhood. (see 'Neighbor of the Year' article in this newsletter).

Sodexho made it complete with a buffet of traditional holiday fare, including pumpkin pie for dessert! Terry Wilwerding, Ben Spahn and Darryl Hutton were our event "photographers". Eric Purcell handled the collection of canned food donations. We again offer our sincere appreciation to Creighton University Medical Center for their enormous support by hosting this event.

Throughout the evening door prizes were given to lucky neighbors, and children also received presents – all donations came from GPNA members and VIP's - Senator Gwen Howard, Sara Howard, Councilman Chris Jerram, Subby & Janice Anzaldo, Brad Bogard, Rod & Dana Flint, Lois Baumhover, Paul Mileris, Chris & Sallie Foster, Mike Caban, and Bob Hutton (note: again this year Bob Hutton made hand-carved wooden ornaments for gifts). Thanks to Mike Caban and Jill Westfall for coordinating the children's present give-a-way. Until the 24th Annual Holiday Banquet when we will again share a meal together, we'll see you around the neighborhood!

For photos of the banquet, see page 9.

2011 Holiday Decorating Winners

The GPNA would like to thank everyone who decorated your homes for the holidays. Good weather no doubt helped folks. The Gifford Park neighborhood was well represented again this year. Judges toured the displays December 22. With so many nice displays, we decided to give congratulations to the following areas with exceptional decorating:

California - 33rd to 37th
Cass - 31st to 37th
Webster - 33rd to 36th
North 36th Street - California to Burt

Of special note: The community garden at 35th & Cass had their annual Christmas tree lit with over 1,500 lights; Midtown Crossing had had another very nice display lighting up their campus; and best concentrated display goes to the 34th & California area.

Better Know a Neighbor

With so many fantastic people living and working in Gifford Park, it can sometimes be hard to keep track of everyone. In this new feature, we will introduce you to a new neighbor or reintroduce you to an old one. Think of it like facebook - only for Gifford Park!

First up, three new members of the GPNA Board:

Name: Jeff Spiehs

Board Position: Vice President

Family: Wife Melany, 3 daughters: Anna age 6, Lauren age 4, Caroline 11

months

What do you do? Coordinator of the CommonLife program at inCOMMON

Community Development

Why you live in Gifford Park?

I live in Gifford Park because I enjoy living in an urban, densely populated area, while still maintaining a small community feel. My favorite thing to do in Gifford Park is play tennis in the park.



Name: Travis Lavender Board Position: At-large

Family: Wife Becky, son Ian, 18 months

What do you do? Partnership Coordinator at inCOMMON Community

Development

What is your favorite thing about living in Gifford Park?

My favorite thing about Gifford Park is the diversity of the neighborhood and how close my family lives to the newly renovated park! I hope that the baseball field is next in line for renovation.



Name: Eric Purcell Board Position: At-large

Family: Wife Lisa, two children, Norah and Brennen

What do you do? I am a strategist and site leader for a leadership development non-profit called Church Resource Ministries.

Why do you live in Gifford Park?

What we love about Gifford Park is its location, diversity, "greenness", and our many new neighbors. We had a lot of fun last year participating in the youth garden, tennis program and taking advantage of the park.



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



558-5000

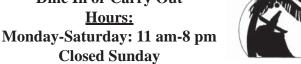


California Tacos & More

Homemade Mexican Food

342-0212

33rd and California Street **Dine In or Carry Out Hours:**



2012 GPNA Budget

Budget Categories	2012 Income	2012 Expense
Operation Expense		(300)
Membership	1,500.00	
Newsletter	1,500.00	(1,200.00)
Egg Hunt	400.00	(400.00)
Park Activity		(400.00)
Holiday Banquet		(400.00)
Board Fund (Discressionary)		(600.00)
Support Organizations		
MNA Membership		(50.00)
Restore Omaha		(75.00)
AIC Donation		(100.00)
City Sprouts Fund Raiser		(200.00)
MNA Fund Raiser		(100.00)
State Wide Arboretum		(100.00)
NE Precinct		(50.00)
Website		(400.00)
Cultural Event		(500.00)
Grants	7,500.00	(7,500.00)
Flower Pots	350.00	(350.00)
Donations	500.00	
Interest	30.00	
Tennis	500.00	(500.00)
Soccer	100.00	(500.00)
Garage Sale	400.00	(65.00)
Street Market Permit		(50.00)
501c3 Filing		(900.00)
Total	\$12,780.00	(\$14,440.00)

The GPNA Board has been hard at work in January, developing our annual budget. If you have questions about this year's budget, contact Luther Larson at 330-3286.

Community Bicycle Project Updates

By Matt Martin, Executive Director, Community Bike Project Omaha



Thanks to all who attended our Golden Spokes volunteer appreciation night back in December. It was a huge success and I think a great time was had by the 100+ people at the Pizza Shoppe that night-listening to great music from the Prairie Gators, eating the free pizza, and enjoying some fantastic company. In addition, we awarded Golden Spokes to three dedicated volunteers from 2011: Alex Bodell, Fedi Nzaniye, and Rich Settje. We hope to see you all at the next one at the end of this year!

2012 is already off to a great and busy start, probably due to some mix of the unusually warm winter and the enthusiasm of our volunteers. We're still operating the shop three times a week (and always looking at ways to be open more) and busy planning lots of special events throughout the year.

Our first such event is "In Tandem" on Saturday, February 25, a beer-tasting event with Lucky Bucket at the Pizza Shoppe Collective, 6:30-8:30pm. A special 3-course meal is included, with beers paired to each course, and the winner of a raffle that evening will get a beautiful Mongoose tandem bicycle which was recently donated to CBPO. Tickets can be purchased on our website (www.communitybikeproject.org) or by contacting Sara at sara@communitybikeproject.org). Hope to see you there!

We are always looking to get more people involved with CBPO. If you're looking for a local volunteer opportunity or a charity to support in 2012, please consider us. We do a lot of work with kids in our community, as well as providing bicycles for those who couldn't otherwise afford them, and help encourage bicycling for both recreation and transportation. There are a lot of ways to get involved-stop down at the shop sometime and we'll chat!

Alcohol Outlet Beverage Sales Ordinance

Supporters of the LOCAL Campaign continue efforts to make Omaha a safer and healthier place by working to get an ordinance adopted that addresses negative consequences associated with too many poorly managed alcohol outlets. We feel that the problems associated with too many alcohol outlets are adding to the decline of our neighborhoods, reducing the economic viability of our community and contributing to the violence in our streets. We want to work in partnership with the city to get a zoning ordinance adopted to ensure Omaha has more authority over the environment around alcohol outlets to better reflect community standards.

We believe that the ordinance would do two things: provide the city with some say over where <u>new</u> alcohol outlets are placed which will in turn provide buffer zones around sensitive use areas, such as churches, schools, hospitals and treatment facilities; and also provide standards of operation for the new and existing businesses to ensure they remain good corporate citizens.

The Campaign is in the final stages now. A draft of the proposed ordinance has been submitted to the City's Planning Department and Legal Department.

We ask that you help us by:

- -Show your support and join in the effort
- -Call your City Council representative to encourage his/her leadership on the ordinance
- -Attend the City Council hearing when the ordinance goes up for a vote (date To Be Announced)
- -Tell your family, friends and colleagues to do the same

If you want to join us on Facebook, go to http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=205345659487523.

Also you can follow regular updates on our LOCAL Campaign website, http://www.thelocalcampaign.com/ by providing your email on the lower right-hand corner of the site. We appreciate your support!

Restore Omaha

Continued from page 1

- National Register nominations,
- chimney repair,
- neighborhood conservation overlays,
- Midcentury Modern architecture and
- case studies on the restoration of three homes, including one here in Gifford Park

Live demonstrations by craftsmen and a Restoration Jam will allow opportunities to network and to gather ideas and solutions from other restoration-minded property owners and from the 35 businesses and organizations exhibiting at the event.

Cost to attend the March 3 conference is \$40. Admission includes the keynote lecture, three educational sessions, lunch, demonstrations and the Restoration Jam reception.

Save \$10 by registering before February 20. Visit www.restoreomaha.org for full details and registration information. For questions call Barb Naughtin at 402-334-0269 or e-mail info@restoreomaha.org.



What to know if you go

What: Event to teach and motivate our community to restore and preserve older properties

Restore Omaha Reception and Tour March 2, 2012, The Barnard Flats, SW corner of Park Avenue and Leavenworth Street, 7 to 10 p.m. Cost \$20.

Restore Omaha Conference March 3, 2012, Metropolitan Community College South Omaha Campus, 27th and Q streets, 8 to 4:30 p.m. Cost \$30 before Feb. 20, \$40 after.

For more information and to register: www.restoreomaha.org or call Barb Naughtin at 402.334.0269.

Congratulations to 2011 Neighbor of the Year, Martin Janousek



2011 Neighbor of the Year, Martin Janousek at the GPNA Holiday Banquet.

Neighbor of the Year...

Continued from page 1

organizations already mentioned, his community involvement includes Omaha By Design, Midtown Neighborhood Alliance, Destination Midtown, Alcohol Impact Coalition, LOCAL (Let Omaha Control its Alcohol Landscape) Campaign, Cathedral Arts, American Institutes of Architects (AIA), and others.

Martin has a passion for fixing up older properties. He and his brothers Rob and John just completed rehabbing the yellow house at the corner of 3201 California - it is beautiful inside and out! Martin's entire family is very supportive of our neighborhood. He has also been a great friend and very supportive to my wife Sallie and I. Martin's grassroots ideas and actions inspire others to take action, and our neighborhood is a better place because of his efforts.

Congratulations Martin!

Gifford Park Gets New Equipment

Over a year ago, a group of Creighton University Occupational Therapy (OT) students came to the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association to see if they could do something that would not only impact the neighborhood but would add to the health of the community. People's health and especially children's health was important to them since they were students from the College of Pharmacy and Health Professions. After some setbacks and some real world education of how the fundraising / building process works when dealing with public space, city government, and the community, money was raised for new playground equipment for the neighborhood's namesake, Gifford Park. This park and neighborhood is close to campus, home to students and in desperate need for new equipment. Maria Doyle (Creighton OT student), lead the group in its efforts to raise money from special fundraising dinners and on-campus events, to local foundations and in-kind donations. After many hours of dedication, the equipment was selected, drawings were completed and the project was sent out to bid by the City of Omaha. Even though some of the original students have since graduated, other students from the College of Pharmacy and Health Professions have continued the effort.

Today, we have a brand new playground in the south end of Gifford Park. As the temperatures warm, we will see the addition of five new park benches paid for through the Mayor's grant and assembled by our friends at the Community Bicycle Project.

A Big Thank You goes out to the follow organizations, foundations, and companies for their donations to making our improved park a reality.

Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions
Peter Kiewit Foundation
Mutual of Omaha Foundation
City of Omaha Mayors Grant
City of Omaha
Leo A Daly Company
The Hawks Foundation
Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
Urban Village
Della and Jack Lee
Sally Jacobs
Noodles & Co
PKA Fraternity
Game Time Inc



Holiday Banquet 2011

Every year for 23 years, neighbors have gathered in Gifford Park to celebreate another fantastic year. Here are a few highlights.





Neighbors gathered December 15 for the 23rd Annual Holiday Banquet.



Event MC's Dana Carlton-Flint and Luther Larson and junior-MC Curtis Flint lead neighbors in a musical review of the year, set to the tune of the 12 Days of Christmas.



Neighbors learn and reminisce about the history of our neighborhood.



Sodexho once again graciously provided a holiday buffet with all of the trimmings.

Good Neighbors

By Rose Carlson

Some time back, I was upstairs when I heard a loud crash outside in the street. I looked out to see a man and a woman getting out of their car, which they had just driven into the parked car of one of our neighbors. The back end of the neighbor's car was smashed, the glass broken out, and the couple was stumbling around in the street, yelling and blaming each other.

Within half a minute, a trio of male neighbors came out of their respective front doors, cautiously approaching the scene from three different sides. They called the police, diffused the fight, and stayed until the situation was resolved. Had it been a TV show it could not have been better staged.

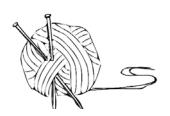
I've told this story to several people to illustrate the kind of neighborhood we have. Our neighborhood is not without its problems. But the solutions - in the form of individuals committed to a community bigger than their own backyard - outnumber them.

These men knew they had "backup," both in each other and in those of us watching from windows. Our neighborhood streets are never empty. We have a wide range of ages and work schedules, and we like being at home. Older folks watch out for the toddlers of busy moms. Next-door neighbors inform each other before leaving town with the tacit understanding that someone will "keep an eye out."

Even our dog can't have a night on the town without getting caught. Someone always calls. "Jack's here," they say, or sometimes they just haul him back home. (Apologies to those of you who have had to do this. He's pretty determined.)

I know that this story isn't the only "Good Neighbor" story we have in Gifford Park. I know many of you have lived here all or most of your lives and there are some great Gifford Park stories. Would you consider calling or emailing me with your own "good neighbor story"? I would love to hear them! Email rhcarlson4@yahoo.com or call (402)342-9335.





Call for Yarn and Knitting Needles

The refugees at Yates Community Center are busy knitting warm socks, mittens, hats, and scarves, to get through a Nebraska winter, and they can use your help! If you have yarn left over from another project, or knitting needles or crochet hooks (smaller sizes preferred), please drop off at the Yates Community Center, 3260 Davenport, Monday-Friday, 9-4.

Teen Market Garden Informational Meeting

Thursday, February 16, 2012 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Location: TBD

Year Four: Teen Market Garden. Dive into the basics of urban gardening and entrepreneurship from product selection and marketing, to pricing and selling. Interested Mentors and perspective teen participants: please join us to discuss the program commitment and any questions. Parents Welcome! Contact Cynthia Shuck (402) 556-2090 for more information.





Preserving Our History

As many of you saw at the Holiday Banquet, the GPNA has collected and inherited items over the years that tell the a rich, interesting and on-going story of our neighborhood.

Our GPNA historian Eva Swanson has done a wonderful job of capturing information into our "History Book" and two large scrapbooks. We would like to build on this good work.

If you have any neighborhood memorabilia or history items (pictures, videos, books, awards, articles, other items), we would love to add them to the collection. We are also looking for a volunteer to help organize and preserve our history. Please contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net) if you can help!

Report Crime

This is a great opportunity for us as a neighborhood to help law enforcement and help our own neighborhood, especially this time of year as the temperatures warm. Here are things you can do:



- Observe and report suspicious activity (it's the right thing to do and it helps to document issues);
- When calling 911 be willing to meet with officers even if you meet at a nearby location (the call will be given a higher priority);
- If possible, take pictures and provide as much information as you can.

Northeast Police Precinct Crime Prevention Specialist Theola Cooper (444-3367, Theola. Cooper@ci.omaha.ne.us) is an excellent resource to contact if you have specific information on problem issues.



OF THE SACRED HEART

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Community Garden & Youth Garden

The warm winter weather (so far) has people already thinking about gardening. We are starting to plan for community garden projects and youth garden program.

For those of you who had garden plots last year, a bit of information about this year's garden: in 2012 we will roll back annual plot fees to: \$15 for the large 5ft X 15ft plots, and \$8 for the smaller 5ft X 8ft plots. Stay tuned for more updates as spring approaches.

If you have any questions or are interested in becoming involved with either the community garden or youth garden program, contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster 3413@cox.net).

What's Happening In the Neighborhood...

Tool Lending

Congratulations to GPNA members **Mike & Joy Doll** for the birth of their new baby **Claire** in early December. Joy served as community garden director last year. With this year's warm winter weather Mike & Joy have actually been out in the neighborhood walking Claire in the baby stroller!

Is it possible **Terry Wilwerding** turned 60 years old? The answer is yes, on January 25! Terry, a Creighton University dentist, has been an active volunteer in the community and neighborhood for many years. For GPNA, Terry has served as vice president, led Watch Groups, neighborhood cleanups, Easter Egg Hunts, emceed the holiday banquet, and many other activities.

Gifford Park neighborhood folks were recently featured in the Omaha World-Herald. **Rose Carlson** was pictured volunteering to help St. Cecilia students repair uniforms in the Community Connection section Saturday, January 28. **Marrakech Restaurant** owners **Moussa Drissi** and **Mohamed Ismail** were featured in GO magazine's Chef Chat on Thursday, January 26.

Many thanks to the **Omaha Tennis Association (OTA) Development Fund** for awarding seven junior scholar-ships totaling over \$1,000 to participants of the **Gifford Park Youth Tennis** program. The funds will help pay for 12 weeks of indoor tennis lessons at Hanscom Tennis Center for youth who demonstrated good sportsman-ship and a committed interest to improve their tennis skills. Our sincere thanks to the OTA for their support for youth tennis in and around the Gifford Park neighborhood.

Membership Application v2009.03.30

Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

The GPNA Membership Year runs from January 1 through December 31. Type of Membership: Single (\$10.00) Family (\$15.00) Business (\$25.00) Today's Date: Name (1): E-Mail (1): Name (2): E-Mail (2): Name (3): E-Mail (3): Name (4): E-Mail (4): E-Mail (5): Name (5): Address: City: Zip Code: State: Telephone: Volunteer Opportunities! I am interested in helping out with... Please indicate areas of interest: Cleanup/Beautification Newsletter Delivery Easter Egg Hunt Community Garden Membership Block Captain Youth Garden Spring Cleanup Fall Cleanup Social Activities History Tree Planting Landlord/Tenant Issues Watch Group Youth Activities Neighborhood Walks School Liaison Call Committee Tennis Program Holiday Banquet