



# Gifford Park's Pride

*Gifford Park Neighborhood: A Great Place to Live, Work, Learn, and Play*  
[www.giffordparkomaha.org](http://www.giffordparkomaha.org)

**October 2014**

**A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association**

## **Community Garden Updates**

*By Chris Foster*

Thanks to everyone who attended our fall harvest potluck dinner Sunday September 28 at the community garden at 35th & Cass St. for our community gardeners, youth gardeners, volunteers and their families. Children playing, chickens wandering around, delicious food, fine weather in the low 80's, great comradery – it was like a Normal Rockwell scene. We were greeted by about 30 bicyclists who were touring several neighborhood gardens where Big Muddy Urban Farm grows vegetables and collects eggs for their CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) shares and Friday Night Market – this was part of the 'Full Cycle Supper' fundraising event. Besides our normal grilling of burgers and hot dogs by Neil Liberty, our special guest Chef Wilson Calixte (chef at Le Voltaire French Restaurant) treated us to some entertaining food preparation and grilling of chicken and vegetables on flatbread – Chef Wilson announced to everyone that this new delicious creation will now be known as "Gifford Park Flatbread"!

We gave special recognition to a great friend and volunteer Ricky Green, who is also GPNA vice president. Sadly for GPNA, Ricky will be moving to Durango, Colorado in early November to continue sharing his amazing "community building" talents with others. I think I speak for the whole neighborhood when I say we would love to have Ricky continue his great work in Omaha by furthering and promoting his personal values into creating more of what he already does – biking, urban farming, volunteering, mentoring our youth, healthy eating, exercising, appreciation for land

**Next General Meeting  
Thursday, November 13**

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

**Topic:  
GPNA Officer Elections**

and nature, music and art, and being an all-around great person! Ricky has been a great supporter and had a huge impact on GPNA and to many of us personally in just three short years. Ricky, we wish you all the best on your new adventure, sky's the limit wherever you are!

As the garden season winds down we have scheduled a fall garden cleanup for Saturday, October 18 from 10:00am to 1:00pm at the community garden. Everyone is invited to help as we plan to cleanup both family and youth plots, mulch flower beds, and other tasks depending on volunteer's time. We ask plot owners to bring yard waste bags, but we will also have bags on hand if needed. Note for plot owners: if you clean out your plot before or after Oct. 18, please leave the yard waste bag in your plot and we'll put out for yard waste pickup. Please have all plots cleaned out by November 1. Contact Mike Caban (402-341-4722, [caban3321@cox.net](mailto:caban3321@cox.net)) for garden plot information, and Chris Foster (402-290-8187, [foster3413@cox.net](mailto:foster3413@cox.net)) for any other community garden questions.

**2014 GPNA OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT**

**ERIC PURCELL**  
402-719-5108

**VICE PRESIDENT**

**RICKY GREEN**  
402-513-6286

**SECRETARY**

**JILL WESTFALL**  
402-213-3105

**TREASURER**

**LUTHER LARSON**  
402-616-9350

**BOARD MEMBERS**

**AT LARGE**

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

**BUSINESS**

Martin Janousek 558-4070

**LANDLORD**

Chris Foster 290-8187

**COMMITTEES**

**COMMUNITY GARDEN**  
Chris Foster 290-8187

**MEMBERSHIP**

Mark Trampe 332-6188

**NEIGHBORHOOD MARKET**  
Martin Janousek 558-4070

**NEWSLETTER**

Jill Westfall 213-3105

**NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION**

Chris Foster 290-8187

**PARK**

Roger Freeman 517-5208

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Eric Purcell 719-5108

## From the President

*By Eric Purcell*

I have some exciting news to share this month that the GPNA board has been anticipating for over a year! Several years ago the board began to talk about the idea of converting our 501c4 non-profit status to a 501c3 status. The main difference between the two is that a 501c3 can receive tax-exempt donations. But it takes a little bit more financial oversight to manage than a 501c4. The board decided to go for it and began the process of filling out the application. Circumstances caused the process to stall and the question of whether or not it was the right move came up again. Nearly two years ago when I became president, the board was once again settling on the idea of applying to be a 501c3. So, with the help of the Milton R. Abrahams Legal Clinic at Creighton University, we finished filling out the application and filed it in June 2013. FINALLY, fifteen months later, I opened the GPNA P.O. Box and there it was: a letter from the IRS. Enclosed was our official notification that Gifford Park Neighborhood Association is a 501c3. Donations to GPNA are now tax-exempt!

Of course, with this new non-profit status there is a bit of a learning curve for us and some new procedures we'll need to implement. Part of how we have been preparing for this change is utilizing a tool created by the Nonprofit Association of the Midlands called Guidelines and Principles: Infrastructure Checklist. This is a

diagnostic tool that helps nonprofits identify areas that they are behind in best practices or in non-compliance with IRS and state regulations. Three areas that we needed to update our policies or create new ones were our record retention policy, our policy on conflict of interests, and our whistleblower policy. The board has adopted a policy for each of these categories. If you would like to read any of these, please go <http://giffordparkomaha.org>. The policies are near the bottom of the page right below the mission statement.

Another area that we have made some updates are in our expense reporting and reimbursement process. Though GPNA does not have any paid staff or generally run a budget of more than \$12,000 a year, we still need to be transparent and careful with how we steward our neighborhood association's money.

Of course, there is always more to be done! From the tedious level of managing a 501c3 all the way to actively making happen all of the amazing things this neighborhood does to make our vision and mission a reality. November is election month for 2015 board members and officers. We will be losing two, maybe three, of our board members and we are looking for people who love Gifford Park and desire to serve at the board level. If that is you, get in touch with me!

See you in the Neighborhood!

Eric

## GPNA Vision and Mission

As members of Gifford Park Neighborhood Association, we are committed to preserving and protecting our neighborhood. In the spirit of volunteerism and teamwork, and through dedication, integrity and communication with neighbors and local government officials, our goal is to help make the Gifford Park Neighborhood a great place to live, work, learn and play.

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](mailto:jill.lynn.westfall@gmail.com).

## Community Bicycle Project Update

*By Charles Mitchell*

On the last Sunday in September, 30 bicyclists gathered at 33rd and California for a progressive farm dinner and bike tour of Big Muddy Urban Farm's farm sites. Riders on the Full Cycle Supper, a fundraiser hosted by the Community Bike Project and Big Muddy, enjoyed salad at the California plot, deviled eggs at the chicken coop, freshly pressed cider at 45th and Charles, a main course featuring ham steaks and a bacon sunchoke puree at Joslyn Castle, and sweet potato hand pies for dessert. The courses were expertly prepared by chefs from Modern Love, Kitchen Table, and Cure and featured produce grown at the site at which they were served. The Supper also stopped at the Gifford Park Community Garden, where riders learned more about the garden and Gifford Park community from Chris Foster. This fun ride raised \$1,300 for the Bike Project and Big Muddy and introduced a lot of new people to all of the amazing community-building efforts Gifford Park has to offer. Thanks to all of the volunteers who made this great event possible!

Funds raised through the Full Cycle Supper will contribute to the continuing success of our Earn-a-Bike programs. Although the season for bicycling seems to be winding to a close, our Earn-a-Bike programs remain popular. Kids' Bike Club, Youth Earn-a-Bike, and Adult Earn-a-Bike all run throughout the year to give all bicyclists the opportunity to earn a free bike. Teens and adults are starting to build winter-ready bikes, so that they can commute year-round. Winter time is also a great time to

volunteer at the Bike Project and help teach and coordinate our Earn-a-Bike programs. Volunteering at the shop is a great way to stay connected to the neighborhood when most of the outdoor activities have stopped for the year. Email me at [charles@communitybikeproject.org](mailto:charles@communitybikeproject.org) if you're interested in helping youth and adults discover the joys and benefits of bicycling.

Open Shop hours will also stay consistent during the fall and winter seasons. A slower shop makes it possible to take on more intensive bike maintenance projects. Thinking about stripping down your frame so it can be repainted or completely overhauling your favorite bike before you put it away for the winter? We're happy to teach you how to take on any repair project you've got in mind!

### Fall/Winter Hours

Sunday:

2-6pm – Open Shop

Wednesday:

2-5pm – Youth Shop;

5-7pm – Youth Earn-a-Bike Class

Thursday:

2-5pm – Open Shop (16+ year olds);

5-7pm – Youth Earn-a-Bike Class

Friday:

4-8pm – Open Shop

Saturday:

11am-12pm – Kids' Bike Club;

12-6pm – Open Shop



## Sallie Foster Passes Away

By Chris Foster

Many of you know my wife Sallie Foster passed away September 22, she was 57. She struggled with health problems for a long time, her body just got tired and wore out. We had a beautiful memorial service on September 26 at West Hills Church - a wonderful place to celebrate Sallie's life and where we were married 24 years ago. On behalf of Sallie's family and mine, we have been overwhelmed with the tremendous support and kindness we have received from our Gifford Park neighborhood friends and other community friends.

Words family and friends use to describe Sallie are beautiful, tender, caring, spirited, feisty, hard worker, playful, "little bit...but big impact." Sallie used to remind me that "dynamite comes in small packages." She was born and raised in Omaha, attended Yates Elementary, Central High School and graduated from North High School in 1975. She worked as an insurance claims specialist for Mutual of Omaha for 29 years. Sallie loved to dance and she loved music - Fleetwood Mac (Stevie Nicks) was her favorite band. When Sallie's health was better we used to hike in the Black Hills and Badlands of South Dakota, Colorado, and my home state of New Hampshire. She also loved to collect elephants.

She cared deeply about children, and wanted all children to be safe and to be able to play and enjoy their childhood (since she didn't always get that opportunity). She had a natural "motherly instinct." This care for children was why she was so involved with volunteering with our Gifford Park Neighborhood Association events and activities. Sallie was best known for taking pictures at these activities. She did a lot more than just take the pictures, that's the easy part. Then comes sorting and printing pictures to share with neighborhood families and others about the good things going on to promote Gifford Park. This has helped to document the history of our neighborhood, not to mention we publish the pictures in our monthly newsletter, website, and presentations; use them to help our neighborhood secure grants; and display them at our annual holiday banquet (rolling slideshow and picture boards display).



Besides the picture taking, she worked hard behind the scenes before, during and after events - making sure details were being taken care of...name tags for kids, enough food/plates/utensils/decorations for pot luck dinners, fill the water coolers, etc. She cared more about taking care of others than herself. Sallie put her heart and soul into our neighborhood, especially our youth. Her hard work will continue to have a positive impact in their lives. I really regret she won't be here to see when "hopefully" soon our neighborhood gets a new elementary school where children can walk to safely - our neighborhood school effort meant a great deal to her.

When Sallie's health was better she worked hard on fixing up a few old houses we purchased over the years. I would talk us into buying these fixer-upper homes, then together and with contractors we would attempt to bring them back to life. She helped with the dirty job of tearing out plaster walls. She had a great eye for beauty when we were deciding on inside and outside finishes and colors. Sallie loved to decorate the house inside and out for the holidays. She was the inspiration behind our house decorations and made it a tradition for us. Sallie made sure I had everything I needed when going on out-of-town business trips. She sacrificed a lot for me in many ways.

Again, I wish to thank everyone for your incredible support, including generous memorial donations to the GPNA and Gifford Park Community Garden that will greatly benefit our neighborhood!

## Memories of Sallie

Sallie Foster, now just who was this person? Well to me she was a dedicated soul in many ways that we only understand a small portion of. Some years ago when I met this lady, I thought, wow, she can put words out to express herself beyond any doubt. As the years went by I learned she was as good of a friend that we could get. She would always ask how I was doing, and then get that grin or smile, at that time she would tell me how I was doing! I had several talks with Sallie and was sure to watch her with that camera that she seemed to always have, taking pictures of the youth activities, gardening, cleanups, Easter egg hunts, holiday banquets and other events. She and I would heckle each other in fun and I really think she would always get the best of me. Sure she had her problems, don't we all have some? One of my problems was that I never got to know her, really know her. I feel that even though she is no longer with us in person, she is in our thoughts and in our hearts.

*By Bob Hutton*

I first caught a glimpse of a young lady standing amongst many of the neighborhood youth which I assumed was such. I later learned that it was Sallie browsing about as she loved to do of course with camera ready to take that most important shot of the day. Small in stature but a big heart and a smile that push her rosy cheeks all the way to her eyes that came close to closing. I recall the many times of her walking home and how fast her legs would carry her but her arms never left the sides of her frame, and her eyes would be glued to the road straight ahead. I often thought she was running away from work or running to Chris. I see Sallie walking through the "valley of the shadow of death," not running, for now she has found peace, something that all who loved Sally had prayed for. May she rest in peace.

*By Roger Freeman*

My family moved to Gifford Park the summer of 2003, just as the community garden was getting underway. The following summer we decided to have a plot at the garden. I don't remember what I planned to put there, but the day we planted Sallie was there. She got to talking with my four kids, and before I knew it, she had given them a large bag of green bean seeds, enough that they took the entire plot. Sallie helped the girls plant them. She was about their size. They liked her. We've never had such a great crop of green beans as we did that year. I have a friend who claims the garden is enchanted. It's not too hard to believe.

*By Rose Carlson*

Remembering Sallie and her quips always made whatever we were doing or talking about much more fun and lively. I will miss that liveliness and playfulness. Sallie will be greatly remembered and greatly missed.

*By Brent Lubbert, Big Muddy Urban Farm*

I met Chris and Sallie in 1990, when I headed the GPNA Watch Group. They showed up to one of our weekend walks through the neighborhood. It wasn't long after that first meeting that Judi and I knew we had a couple of potential long term contributors to our community efforts. They became a fixture at the watch group walks, and other GPNA activities... and the rest is history so to speak. Once I got to know them better, I started calling Sallie "Little bit" due to her stature, and I playfully teased her sometimes when she got feisty about this or that neighborhood issue. Sallie was basically shy, but also a real little spitfire in some respects, and very passionate about the safety and wellbeing of kids in the neighborhood.

Sallie Foster loved taking pictures at our garden events. There's this ancient saying about the eyes of a person: "The Eyes are the window to the soul," and in Sallie's case, for those who didn't get to know her very well, take a look at our summer Youth Garden Photo albums and slideshows... Sallie took 99% of those pictures, so when you look at them you're seeing what her eyes focused on, what inspired and motivated her, and what she loved. The gentle goodness of her soul.

*By Mike Caban*

Your wonderful family is the light of our neighborhood, and Sallie was a very special ray of sunshine. Whenever we would see her at neighborhood events, Sallie was sweet, kind, joyous, encouraging, warm, and enthusiastic to all of us, with great generosity of spirit, and she made everyone feel welcome and at home. It was always such a great pleasure to see her. Thanks in large part to Sallie, we have a beautiful neighborhood archive of photos that delight and inspire; Sallie had a gift for capturing the wonder and beauty and love in any moment to which she turned her camera.

*By Richard White & Clarinda Karpov*

Everyone has a special place for children in their heart, Sallie's was bigger than most. She set an example that with hard work mixed with love and kindness you can overcome. She will be missed by everyone she touched.

Lord: Thank you for sharing Sallie with us. Now, with her pain eased, resting peacefully, bless her huge heart, as she has blessed ours! And comfort her husband, my brother, Chris.

*Thoughts and Prayers,*

*Dave & Kirsten Foster (brother-in-law and sister-in-law)*

It is incredible to learn about someone through the recollections of those who loved her so dearly. I have observed that she has made a very positive impact on the people and the place that we are all lucky to call home. Although I never met Sallie, I had the strong feeling yesterday at the Memorial Service that I was learning from her. I connected with your description of her enthusiasm, warmth, supportive nature, interest in children and gardening, and knack for photographic documentation. I felt her presence amplified through your words, the words of those who shared memories, the images of Sallie, and the great community that came together to recognize her life. I felt deep sadness, but so much warmth.

Although I have only known the small universe of Gifford Park for about a year, really, I feel very embraced by the community here. One aspect of a community that I value is its ability to nurture the human need to connect and embrace. When I walk through our neighborhood it just feels special. And that is due not only to those who are visibly working to keep things mowed and planted with flowers, but also to the legacy of positive impact that has contributed to the creation of such a valuable space for community. I am so glad to have heard Sallie's story yesterday, and to now be able to recall and connect to a small part of what she did to create the neighborhood that I love so dearly.

*By Teal Gardner, Play Lab organizer at the Friday Night Market*

## Play Lab bring summer of creative play to Gifford Park

*By Teal Gardner*

This summer started with a question: Could I open up space for kids to play that would be different from a traditional playground? I had been learning about how children playing in an unstructured, self-determined way can lead to their gaining better problem-solving and social skills, as well as helping to develop the imagination and creativity, among many other positive outcomes. As luck would have it, the organizers of neighborhood market allowed me to use some space each Friday. I hosted Play Lab, an open-play workshop, in the grassy space behind the stands at the neighborhood market. I brought lots of sticks, cut bike tubes, fabric and string, cardboard, stakes, mallets, tape, ribbon, pool noodles, a plastic barrel and more. The first evening there I was nervous: I didn't know how people would respond to all of this colorful junk that I was taking out of almost-busted cardboard boxes. I strung a long shiny piece of ribbon between the trees, and laid out some large cardboard panels, waiting for someone to wander back. As the market filled with a crowd of people, a group of kids came into the grass. "What is this?" "It's Play Lab," I said. "Do you want to make something?" "YEAH!!" They began rooting through the boxes, pulling out bits of things, asking "Can I use this?" "Of course!" I said. "All of this is here for you to play with."

As the summer progressed a consistency developed, with the same kids coming again and again, showing up with ideas they had been thinking of during the week. Some came bearing costumes or swords that they had made the week before, faithfully bring-

ing back the materials I'd lent. Kids who I'd seen struggle to hammer a stake into the dirt became skillful tent builders. Tents took on themes, a Fortune Telling Booth, a store with lots of leggy tomato starts I'd brought to give away, and a "Weird Place" with no articulable agenda, but a very strong atmosphere of mystery. Parents brought donations of materials, some hung around and helped build, and others set up blankets and sat and talked with their friends there. A playful extension of the market was growing in the back lawn. It became a place for invention and relaxation, a space dedicated – for a short time each Friday – to providing a place for kids to experiment and play in public. Kids of many backgrounds met there, collaborated, negotiated, played with each other.

With the market closed for the season, and I've packed my Play Lab materials up into new green totes. I am thinking about what it meant to me to work with the neighborhood kids each week. I saw a great vibrancy and wealth of creativity, exuberance as well as tenderness, care for others and willingness to pitch in at the end of the night. I am grateful that I was given the chance to run Play Lab each week, allowing me to meet a lot of neighborhood families, connecting even more dots between all of the great people that make up the community here in Gifford Park. Hosting Play Lab at the market was a wonderful opportunity for me to explore my curiosity about play as its own process, and helped me to investigate what it means to be a play advocate.

A HUGE THANK YOU to the people of all ages who came along and contributed their energy, effort, problem solving, excitement, materials, creativity and care to Play Lab. I am looking forward to more of it next year!



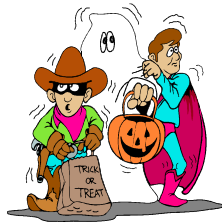
# HAPPY HALLOWEEN

## 20th Annual Haunted House

**Where:**  
3100 Chicago St.  
Haunted House  
**FREE!**



**When:**  
Tuesday  
October 28th  
Ages 10 & under: 6:00 p.m.  
All ages: 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.



*hosted by the 3100 Chicago Street residents,  
Delta Zeta Sorority & Gifford Park Neighborhood Association*

All Neighborhood Children and Parents are Welcome to  
Stop by for Refreshments and other Fun Festivities!



**Won't you fondue?**  
**MAD MEN**  
 NEW ERA PARTY  
 10.18.14 11- 5PM

Wallflower  
**TRUNK SHOW**  
 At Maud Boutique  
 33rd & California St.



Sport the 70's . Fondue . Vintage Shopping

### Gifford Park Neighborhood School

There is not much new to report until we see if voters in the Omaha Public Schools district approve a \$421 million bond issue on the November 4th ballot. The OPS board voted unanimously to put the bond issue on the November ballot to pay for school construction projects, including building upgrades and new schools. If the bond issue passes there is a line item in the current proposed OPS facility plan to build a new elementary school in our neighborhood, the location yet to be determined.

As you probably know in 1999 our neighborhood school Yates Elementary at 32nd & Davenport Street was closed by OPS because the building was too small to handle the number of children in our neighborhood. Currently of the 353 children K-6th grade in the Yates attendance area, 165 are assigned to Kellom School and 188 are bused to 39 different schools in the district. Letters of support to bring back a neighborhood school have been sent to OPS from the Gifford Park NA, Joslyn Castle NA, Dundee Memorial Park NA, Bemis Park NA, Leavenworth NA, Midtown Neighborhood Alliance, Councilman Chris Jerram, First Presbyterian Church, and residents.





Gifford Park Neighborhood Association  
 PO Box 31462  
 Omaha, NE 68131



**Gifford Park Neighborhood Association  
 Membership Application**

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

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

Business Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Name (1): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (2): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (3): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (4): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (5): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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