



Gifford Park's Pride

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

May 2015

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

Park Clean Up & Playground Celebration

By Chris Foster

On Saturday, April 25 Operation Playground leader Maria Devlin and her mom, Patty Doyle, visited Omaha to help with the playground/park cleanup. Many thanks to our brave and mighty crew who came out in the rain. We did some damage... picked up litter, cleaned around the playground and sand, and mulched the flower gardens along 33rd Street.

Maria and her mom provided healthy food & refreshments for volunteers. Patty & Maria - thank you very much for your generous donations of time and effort to the GPNA and the community garden!!

While we were cleaning up the playground, we started dreaming up ideas for additions and improvements to the park. We want everyone to think about possible additions for the playground area that would be appropriate improvements that we can work with City Parks Department.

The next day, I observed a lot of activities happening in our park: kids playing on the playground equipment; families gathered for a picnic; a group playing cricket on the old basketball court; people playing tennis; skateboarding; kids biking; a group playing soccer; and people watching the action from the park benches.

We want to thank the City Parks Department for their continued support of Gifford Park, especially after a busy and fruitful month of April in the park. Gifford Park continues to be the heart of our neighborhood for healthy activities!

**Next General Meeting
Thursday, May 14**

**7:00 pm
CHI Health-Creighton University
Medical Center
Morrison Seminar Room**

Spring Clean Up 2015

On Saturday, April 11, Gifford Park neighbors joined together for our annual Spring Clean Up. Again this year volunteers helped neighbors with hauling large items, and also cleaned alleys, streets and Gifford Park. Our metal recycler was on hand to help us with metal salvage. We filled two compactors, recycled 25 tires, and Monica Lehn, with help from her son Ezra, collected interesting items for the new Adventure Playground program. We also collected \$412 in donations and 13 new GPNA members. Thanks to all of the volunteers who made this year's spring cleanup a success: Alex Goswami, Lowell Wallace Traver Switzer, Mark & Sara Trampe, Mike Caban, Monica Lehn, Ezra Lehn, Sandy Jones, Logan & Samantha Campa, Eric Purcell, Paul Mileris, Bob & Virginia Hutton, Darryl Hutton, Jim Wilwerding, Terry Wilwerding, Lloyd Canfield, Bryant Pasho, Jim Kyler, Luther Larson, Roger Freeman, Chris Combs, Chris Foster and everyone who distributed event fliers to spread the word. Thanks Mark & Sara Trampe for bringing donuts for volunteers. Special thanks to the City of Omaha for sponsoring these valuable neighborhood cleanups year after year!

Check out photos from both events on page 5

2015 GPNA Officers

Luther Larson, President

402-616-9350 | lutherlar@cox.net

Eric Purcell, Vice President

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

Jill Westfall, Secretary

402-213-3105 | jill.lynn.westfall@gmail.com

Alexandra Goswami, Treasurer

847-477-2156 | omaha_beef@hotmail.com

Board

Mark Trampe, At-Large

402-332-6188 | supertrampe@gmail.com

Andy Wessel, At-Large

402-916-5030 | ajwessel13@yahoo.com

Charles Mitchell, At-Large

402-309-0777 | charlesalexandermitchell@gmail.com

Marie Hélène André, At-Large

402-769-9183 | mhandre34@hotmail.com

Martin Janousek, Business Rep

402-558-4070 | mjjanousek@leoadaly.com

Chris Foster, Landlord Rep

402-290-8187 | foster3413@cox.net

Opportunities – Contacts

GPNA General Meetings

Luther Larson, 616-9350

Community Bike Project

Charles Mitchell 309-0777

Community Garden/Youth Garden

Chris Foster 290-8187

Adventure Playground

Teal Gardner 402-875-1896

teal.gardner@gmail.com

Teen Market Garden

Cynthia Shuck 556-2090

dalilabush@cox.net

Gifford Park Market

Martin Janousek 558-4070

Yates Community Center

Susan Mayberger 557-2431

susan.mayberger@ops.org

Youth Soccer

Eric Purcell 719-5108

Youth Tennis

Chris Foster 290-8187

Spring Cleanup

Luther Larson 616-9350

From the President

Spring has sprung in Gifford Park. Hope you are enjoying it and getting out to reconnect with neighbors. The park is looking very picked-up after the Easter Egg Hunt, Spring Clean Up, and Playground Clean Up events. I would like to thank all of you who helped at these events and encourage all you who did not get out to help to

volunteer at the next event(s). It is at neighborhood events like these where you have the opportunity to meet new neighbors and build a community. So next time you see an event happening in Gifford Park Neighborhood, stop by and introduce yourself. Before you know it you will be part of the community called Gifford Park!

Luther

Project Embrace

Project Embrace, a summer program for neighborhood children, will be held at Augustana Lutheran Church (3647 Lafayette Avenue) from June 8 through July 17. The morning program, for ages 4-8, will be held 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.; the afternoon program, for ages 9-12, will run from 12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are provided. Ac-

tivities include swimming, roller skating, arts and crafts, outdoor games, computer skills, kindergarten readiness for 4 and 5 year olds, field trips to the Henry Doorly Zoo, the Omaha Children's Museum, and more. The cost is \$25 per child, scholarships are available. For more information or to register for the program, contact Augustana Lutheran Church at the address above or at 402-551-4728.

Legal Documents and More

What you need to know to protect yourself and your loved ones will be presented by Attorney Catherine N. Swinarski on Thursday, May 21 at 6 p.m. at Via Christie (3636 California Street - Omaha)

SEATING IS LIMITED! Please call or email Amy Leone to reserve your space: (402) 551-5557 amy.leone@viachriste.com

Creighton Print Center
http://printcenter.creighton.edu

Xerox Corporation
Murphy Building
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Omaha, NE 68178

creightonprintcenter@xerox.com
tel 402.280.2515
fax 402.280.2370



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.

Support Gifford Park Nonprofits During Omaha Gives!

By Charles Mitchell

The GPNA is excited to be participating in Omaha Gives this year. Omaha Gives! is a 24-hour, online giving event organized by the Omaha Community Foundation to grow philanthropy by inspiring the community to come together for 24 hours to contribute as many charitable dollars as possible to support the work of local nonprofit organizations.

Omaha Gives begins at midnight on Wednesday, May 20. For 24 hours on May 20, you will have the opportunity to support your favorite non-profits (like the GPNA) with donations of \$10 or more through the Omaha Gives website. Non-profits have the opportunity to receive extra funding through hourly drawings, prizes, and bonus dollars.

Support the GPNA's efforts to continue to make the Gifford Park neighborhood a great place to live, work, learn and play. Donations will support ongoing programs and events like the Gifford Park community garden, neighborhood market, youth soccer program, and youth tennis program. Donations will also help grow our neighborhood through new initiatives such as the Sallie Foster Adventure Playground and a Turner Park North soccer field.

Plant One More

My daughter and I are starting a new program in Omaha this year called Plant One More. Our mission it to is to encourage home gardeners and community gardens to plant a little more than they can use, so it can be shared with the community.

This year we will be donating our produce to Youth Emergency Services. We are thrilled to be teaming with YES as they do so much for Omaha's youth, including: street outreach program, emergency shelter, transitional living, maternity home and mentoring.



Get ready to give on May 20! Donations can be scheduled anytime between now and May 20 by visiting www.omahagives24.org. Follow the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GiffordPark for more reasons to give and to help spread the word about our great neighborhood!

Don't forget to support all of the other non-profits that call Gifford Park home, like the Shelterbelt Theatre, Southern Sudan Community Association, and the Community Bike Project Omaha.

PLANT 
ONE MORE

If you want to participate, contact us at the phone number below.

Thank you and we wish the Gifford Park Neighborhood Garden a very successful growing season!

Vicky Houston
<http://www.PlantOneMore.org>
402-490-3624

Adventure Playground

By Teal Gardner

How exciting that May is finally here! If you are looking for something fun to do in the neighborhood with your kids this summer, take note! The Sallie Foster Adventure Playground will be opening on May 16 at noon. This play space is attached to the Community Garden, and will feature many 'loose parts' materials for kids to use in their play, such as tarps, bungee cords, sticks lumber, paint, tools, and more. We will be supporting kids in their many self-directed projects, and through this, we hope that they develop a sense that the playground is really their

space. Adult volunteers will always be on hand to help out & supervise.

Please stop by the garden on May 9 to learn more about the Adventure Playground, and of course to kick off the Youth Garden season! We look forward to seeing you!

The Sallie Foster Adventure Playground will be open on Saturdays this summer from 12-4 pm. Look out for more hours to be added as the summer progresses.

Gifford Park Neighborhood Market

By Martin Janousek

The sun is shining and the days are getting warmer and this only means one thing..... it's time to be thinking of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Market. Now in its 8th summer, this small grassroots market has the makings of being even better than last summer.

Opening on May 29, the Friday night market will take place in the business district starting at 5:00 p.m. and lasting until 8:00 p.m. every Friday. Last year, we had vendors selling all types of vegetables and fruits, jellies, canned goods, handmade items, vintage clothing, honey, cheeses, smoked meats, bicycles and the list goes on. We had musicians and kid's activities as well.

The best part of the market is the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association purchases the Vendors Permit from the city of Omaha and the cost for vendors to have a stall is ZERO. Yes, you heard that right. All proceeds go right back into the pocket of the vendor. However, vendors must remember with no cost to be a vendor all market-



ing and advertising is up to each vendor. What the neighborhood association hopes to encourage is the cultivation of an entrepreneurial spirit and the building of community.

If you don't want to be a vendor but would still like to be involved, please contact us. We need volunteers to help with a variety of efforts from setting up tents to lining up musicians.

For more information keep reading the newsletter over the next few months, follow us and "Like Us" on Facebook - Gifford Park Neighborhood Market. E-mail us at : gpnmarket@gmail.com

Spring Clean Up Photos



Park Clean Up & Playground Celebration Photos



Community Garden Season Opening May 9

By Chris Foster

Celebrating our 15th year, we hope you plan to attend our Community Garden Season Opening, Saturday May 9, 10 AM to noon at the community garden (35th & Cass Street) – it's open to everyone. We plan to have a variety of family activities including Youth Garden program registration; information on community garden, Adventure Playground; Big Muddy Urban Farm; "Ask the Master Gardener" from the County Extension Office; free library cards and books; Mother's Day take home project; face-painting; music; digging; free seeds, plants and refreshments (while supplies last); and see the 17 chickens!

Timely spring rains and warmer weather have

helped to green up our yards, gardens and trees. In mid-April we started our Wednesday work nights and will continue each Wednesday 6 to 8 PM through the growing season. During these times water and garden tools will be available for plot renters and anyone else interested in helping maintain the community garden – there is never a shortage of weeding! It's a good time to stop by the garden to see neighborhood friends or check out what's growing – things are changing fast! Contact Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) for garden plot information, and Chris Foster (402-290-8187, foster3413@cox.net) for other community garden questions.

We hope everyone pitches in to help with ideas, projects, maintenance, and overall participation with the community garden in whatever capacity they feel comfortable.

Youth Garden Program Starts Soon

The Gifford Park Youth Garden (GPYG) program will be kicking off its 12th year at the Gifford Park Community Garden (35th & Cass) growing young gardeners. The 2015 program will be each Saturday morning from 10:00 to 11:30 AM May 16th through August 29th (except no program July 4th). Attached in this newsletter you will find the schedule and registration information. We will be accepting registrations at our Community Garden Season Opening Saturday May 9th, 10 AM to Noon at the community garden. This free program teaches youth of all ages how to grow our vegetables, prepare, eat, and share our harvest with others. Plus, we'll be creative with art, music, and poetry; explore our natural environment; and have fun while working together and getting our hands dirty. GPYG relies upon parents and volunteers each and every week to provide snacks, lead lessons, and simply share their time with participating young people. Please contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net) or Mike Caban (402-341-4722, caban3321@cox.net) if you have any questions about GPYG program.



GIFFORD PARK TENNIS BLOCK PARTY



WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

6:00-7:30 PM

GIFFORD PARK TENNIS COURTS

33rd & Cass

(Rain date - Thursday, May 21, 6:00-7:30 pm)

**Join us for a FREE evening of TENNIS.
We have the rackets and balls.**

Big Muddy Urban Farm

By Brent Lubbert

On Tuesday, June 2, when the moon will be full, Big Muddy invites you to celebrate the beauty of this year's spring growing season by joining in a potluck style get-together called the Full Moon Feast. Bring your favorite dish to share to the 33rd and California Street plot (just east of Shelterbelt Theater) at 6:00 p.m. and enjoy what is growing in the garden.

Big Muddy was recently accepted to the Future of Food residency at Omaha's Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts for this upcoming fall/winter. This residency will bring in a variety of different artists with a focus on "farming, urban agriculture, the relationship of food to our bodies, food justice, food as culture, the nexus between food and environment, and bio-engineering and other technological interventions in the food cycle." As part of this residency we want to put old, broken tools back into use. We are asking for your help that when going about your days this summer, if you find any broken tools, or break some yourself, please drop them off at the 33rd and California Street plot and place them near the rainwater catchment barrels. Send us a message so that we can thank you for your donation and share what becomes of the tools. Hope to see you out there with dirty hands. Happy digging, happy cooking.

Neighborhood Projects Update – School Design & Construction Timeline

By Chris Foster

The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) continues to work with various stakeholders on three very important projects with big impacts on the future of ours and surrounding neighborhoods. The three projects are: building a new neighborhood elementary school; keep Yates building continuing to function as a community center; and repurpose Turner Park North to be a recreational youth soccer field. We presented these project updates as part of our master plan vision at our GPNA holiday banquet in December and February general meeting. Because these projects are related and affect each other, we have been meeting to seek support from the stakeholders involved including Omaha Public Schools (OPS) Board & Administration, Creighton University/Alegent Health, Omaha Planning Department, Omaha Parks Department, Senator Sara Howard, Councilman Chris Jerram, Restoration Exchange Omaha, philanthropic foundations, surrounding neighborhood associations, and local residents.

Regarding the school, there is nearly \$17 million slated in the OPS facility plan to build a new elementary school in our neighborhood, the location is still a big question and this is where things get complicated. We have been unified and clear since last year about the goals and needs of our neighborhood children and families, and the neighborhood as a whole. We do not want OPS to tear down the existing historic Yates School building at 32nd & Davenport Street, nor tear down existing homes around Yates. We would like to see the Yates building continue to serve as public use (as the existing programs do) and even serve more as a community center for ours and surrounding neighborhoods in the future. We believe the Yates building and location lend itself very well for a community center with Gifford Park on the west and Turner Park North on the east. The GPNA is currently working with the City on plans for a recreational youth soccer field and walk/bike trail in Turner Park North.

Recently OPS hosted community meetings to discuss the Student Assignment Plan which will help determine school attendance boundaries. OPS officials have told us this timeline for our neighborhood school: January 2017 to September 2017 - building design; October 2017 through December 2017 - construction procurement; January 2018 through July 2019 – construction; August 2019 – move in. OPS plans a thorough process for deciding location and design, our neighborhood will be involved in this process.

We also met with Creighton University to discuss any possibilities of them offering to sell existing parking lot property near 32nd Street between Burt and Webster, or sell other Creighton-owned property that OPS could build a new school. These locations would be advantageous for building an “urban” designed school that would fit into our older neighborhood and address parking, traffic and safety concerns, as well as saving the current Yates building. Creighton is still figuring out their master plans and we plan to continue meeting as plans evolve with both OPS and Creighton.

Besides the school location and design questions, there will eventually be discussions regarding school principal, curriculum & programs, PTA/PTO, neighborhood partnerships, etc. – this is where we will need your help and involvement to work toward the best solutions for the future success of the school and neighborhood. For more information, contact Chris Foster 402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net. Stay tuned.

Summer is just around the corner, and so is our 4th year of youth soccer in Gifford Park! If you have a child 3-8 years of age, be sure to sign them up for our FREE kids soccer program. Turn in registrations to Eric Purcell.

Gifford Park Free Soccer Program

For: Youth (3 to 8 years old)

Dates: June 3, 10, 17, 24, July 1, 8, 15

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

Time: 6:30-7:30 PM

The Gifford Park Neighborhood Association is offering a FREE summer soccer league and will provide goals, balls and instructors. Parents and others are welcome to help.

To be enrolled, YOU MUST complete the form shown below and return it to Eric Purcell 3152 Chicago St, Omaha, NE 68131. **Special prize for those who attend every lesson and demonstrate good sportsmanship.** There is limited space available so please be on time. Call (402) 719-5108 for more information.

Registration/Permission Form - Bring this form (completely filled out) with you to the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association summer soccer league.

Youth's Name: _____ Parent/Guardian Name _____
 Street: _____ Street: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____ City, State, Zip _____
 Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Cell Phone: _____
 School: _____ Email: _____

As the parent or legal guardian of the child named above, I hereby give my full consent and approval for my child to participate as a member of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program. I understand that there are certain risks of injury inherent in the practice and play of this sport, as well as related activities incidental to my child's participation, and I am willing to assume these risks on behalf of my child. I hereby certify that my child is fully capable of participating in this sport and that my child is healthy and has no physical or mental disabilities or infirmities that would restrict full participation in these activities, except as listed below.

I hereby waive, release and hold harmless the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program, and the City of Omaha, Nebraska, its Officers, coaches, sponsors, supervisors and representatives for any injury that may be suffered by my child in the normal course of participation in this sport and the activities incidental thereto, whether the result of negligence or any other cause. Further- more, I give consent to any necessary medical treatment in case of emergency. I permit the taking of photos during Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Youth Program activities for publication and use as the program deems.

Signature of Parent/Guardian:

Community Garden Season Opening - Everyone Welcome!
Saturday May 9th, 10 a.m. to noon
at the Gifford Park Community Garden (35th & Cass Street)

Variety of family activities including:

Youth Garden Program registration
Free Library Cards and Books; Ask the Master Gardener
Mother's Day take home project; Face-Painting; Music; Chickens
Information on community garden, Adventure Playground, Big Muddy Urban Farm
Free Seeds, Plants and Refreshments (while supplies last)

Gifford Park Youth Garden Program

2015 Schedule ~ all Saturdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

May 9 Garden Season Opening Event: 10 a.m. to Noon)
May 16 Get to Know Your Garden (prepare plot for planting & paint stakes)
May 23 Plant Your Plot (select seeds & plants, plant your plot)
May 30 Plant Your Plot (select seeds & plants, plant your plot)
June 6 Plant Your Plot (select seeds & plants, plant your plot)
June 13 All about compost
June 20 Art in the Garden
June 27 Wildlife and Animal Care
July 4 Fourth of July (*no program)
July 11 Art in the Garden II
July 18 Truck Farm and Garden Movement
July 25 Sound of Music
August 1 Cooking Matters
August 8 Canning & Preservation
August 15 Herbs & Health Remedies
August 22 Seed Saving
August 29 Pizza Garden Harvest PARTY! (Big Muddy Farm)
Rest of growing season - tend your plot



The Gifford Park Youth Garden is a fun, educational program for school age youth. Volunteers, parents, and children meet **Saturdays from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.** at Gifford Park Community Garden on 35th & Cass Streets.

Ways parents can get involved:

- Post this schedule of activities in your home
- Ask your child what they have been learning at the garden
- Accompany your child to any or all sessions
- Pick a date to bring snacks

To register, complete the attached sign-up sheet and bring to the Season Opening Event on May 9. You can reach Chris Foster with questions or suggestions at 402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net.

Youth Garden Sign-up Sheet

All school-age youth are invited to participate in this free program at the Gifford Park Community Garden on 35th & Cass Street. We will meet Saturdays from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. beginning May 16 through August 29 to work, learn, & play in the garden.

Child's Name: _____

School: _____

Age: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

We would like to bring treats for one of the Saturday's: yes no

My parent/I would like to volunteer sometime: yes no

Waiver and Release of All Claims and Assumptions of Risk

Please read this form carefully and be aware that in signing up and participating in the Gifford Park Youth Community Garden program, you will be expressly assuming the risk and legal liability and waiving and releasing all claims for injuries, damages, or loss which you or your minor child/ward might sustain as a result of participating in any and all activities connected with and associated with this program.

I recognize and acknowledge that there are limited risks of physical injury to participants in this gardening/nature program, and I voluntarily agree to assume the full risk of any injuries, damages, or loss, regardless of severity that my minor child/ward or I may sustain as a result of participating in any and all activities connected with or associated with this program. Further, I permit the taking of photos during Gifford Park Youth Community Garden activities for publication and use as the program deems.

I have read and fully understand the above important information, warning of risk, assumption of risk, and waiver and release of all claims.

Participant's Name (please print)

Guardian's Signature

Date



Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
 PO Box 31462
 Omaha, NE 68131

Place
 Stamp
 Here

**Gifford Park Neighborhood Association
 Membership Application**

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

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

Business Name (if applicable): _____

Business Phone (if applicable): _____

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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