

# Gifford Park's Pride

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

January/February 2018

A Publication of the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association

## **Board Election Outcomes**

The GPNA Nomination Committee presented the following 2018 slate of officers and board members for the GPNA. Voting took place at the December 6th, 2017 Holiday Banquet and was unanimously passed by the GPNA membership.

President – Eliza Perry
Vice President – Marie Hélène André
Treasurer – Alexandra Goswami
Secretary – Brent Lubbert
At-Large – Eric Purcell
At-Large – Andy Wessel
At-Large – Tyler Magnuson
Business Rep – Martin Janousek
Landlord Rep – Chris Foster
Yates Rep - Susan Mayberger

# **NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING**

Thursday February 8 6:30 PM

Please note new location
OPS Teacher Admin. Center
3215 Burt Street
Room 4-189

Presentation: 2018 Neighborhood Goals Budget Approval

# **GPNA Neighbor of the Year Eric Purcell**

by Chris Foster

The GPNA honored Eric Purcell as our 2017 'Neighbor of the Year' at the 29th annual GPNA Holiday Banquet hosted by Duchesne Academy on December 6th. Eric's neighborhood volunteer and leadership resume is amazing...and he and his family have only been in Gifford Park since 2011!

A brief background, Eric was actually born in Mexico and attended middle & high school in Arnold, Nebraska (his dad's hometown). He attended college at Midland in Fremont, where he met his wife Lisa. Eric earned his master's degree in Theology at Creighton University in 2009. He moved into Gifford Park 2011, first renting and eventually buying their home at 33rd & Chicago across from Gifford Park in 2013. Eric and his family continue to make improvements to their beautiful old home.

Eric & Lisa have three very active children - Nora, Brennen and Laclan. The Purcell family raises backyard chickens. In fact, Nora raised the baby chicks for last year's community garden chickens, which by the way were very well behaved!

I mentioned Eric's impressive leadership qualities. He has served on GPNA Board since 2012, including president 2013-2014, and vice president 2015-2017! Eric has been involved with many

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### 2018 GPNA Officers

Eliza Perry, President

207-590-9880 | yrrepazile@gmail.com

Marie Hélène André, Vice President

 $402\text{-}769\text{-}9183 \mid mhandre 34@hotmail.com$ 

**Brent Lubbert, Secretary** 

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

Alexandra Goswami, Treasurer

847-477-2156 | omaha\_beef@hotmail.com

#### **Board**

Tyler Magnuson, At-Large

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

Andy Wessel, At-Large

402-916-5030 | ajwessel13@gmail.com

**Eric Purcell, Vice President** 

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

Martin Janousek, Business Rep

402-558-4070 | mjjanousek@leoadaly.com

Chris Foster, Landlord Rep

402-290-8187 | foster3413@cox.net

Susan Mayberger, Yates Rep

402-342-6606 | susanmayberger77@gmail.com

## **Opportunities – Contacts**

**GPNA General Meetings** 

Eliza Perry 207-590-9880

**Community Bike Project** 

Adams Blowers 423-307-4136 adam@communitybikeproject.org

Community Garden/Youth Garden

Chris Foster 402-290-8187

**Adventure Playground** 

Jasmine Frierson 402-213-0223

sfadventureplayground@gmail.com

Midtown Neighborhood Alliance Rep

Adrian Petrescu, 402-769-9070

aspetrescu@alumni.pitt.edu

Gifford Park Market

Martin Janousek 402-558-4070

**Yates Community Center** 

Susan Mayberger 402-342-6606

**Youth Soccer** 

Eric Purcell 402-719-5108

**Youth Tennis** 

Chris Foster 402-290-8187

**Spring Cleanup** 

Luther Larson 402-616-9350

**Newsletter Editor** 

Brent Lubbert 402-213-9646

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 brent.lubbert@gmail.com.

Total

### Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Budget 2018

Proposed to the membership

	_		_	
Cash balances	Ва	ank Accts		llocation
General funds on hand			\$	9,424.75
Checking	\$	9,012.60		
Certificate of Deposit 1	\$	2,740.74		
Certificate of Deposit 2	\$	2,511.41		
Specified funds on hand				
Garden	\$	2,342.22	\$	1,730.02
Tennis				1,740.00
Soccer Field, Turner Park North				2,100.00
Adventure Playground				612.20
Gifford Park Roof Repair (P.Doyle)				1,000.00
Bank account balance	\$	16,606.97	\$	16,606.97
		2018		
		Budget		
Income		Duaget		
Unspecified				
·	\$	1 000 00		
Memberships Donations	Ş	1,000.00		
		7,000.00		
Newsletter Ads		400.00		
Specified		4 000 00		
Neighborhood Market		1,000.00		
Easter Egg Hunt		500.00		
Flower Pots		100.00		
Tennis		300.00		
Soccer		250.00		
Garden		500.00		
Garden plot fees		420.00		
Total	\$	11,470.00		
Expenses				
General				
Banquet	\$	2,000.00		
Newsletter		750.00		
Cultural Event/33rd Friday/30th Annive		1,000.00		
Post Office Box/Bank Fees		200.00		
Organization memberships		200.00		
Website		125.00		
Meeting expenses		400.00		
Flyers and Ad Printing, various events		150.00		
GPNA Board discretionary		1,015.00		
Specific		2,020.00		
WorldPay Fees		500.00		
Neighborhood Market (matched)		1,000.00		
School Design		100.00		
Easter Egg Hunt (matched)		500.00		
Yates		300.00		
		100.00		
Flower Pots		700.00		
Soccer				
Garden		2,000.00		
Basketball		130.00		
Tennis (matched)	_	300.00		

\$ 11,470.00

### From the President

by Eliza Perry

In spite of the temperature, winter is the perfect time for neighborhoods to dream about and plan the upcoming year. The cold demands that we take a step back from the busy activity of summer, and instead turn inward and reflect. 2017 was the best year on record, in my humble opinion, but there's a lot we could have done better. Neighbors have already started planning for the new year. How can we make it an even better, more fun, and more inclusive year in our community?

Key to our success will be your input and time. Do you have ideas for our youth gardening, soccer, tennis, or basketball programs? Or maybe you love our annual events, like the holiday banquet, our Easter egg hunt or ginormous 33rd Friday Block Party. Each neighborhood meeting (also called "general meetings") this year, we'll bring a list of upcoming events and programs and ask who might want to join the planning team. It takes a village!

My term as president coincides with a big year for GPNA: our 30th anniversary! Celebrating is one of my favorite pastimes, so you can expect some hearty gatherings in 2018.

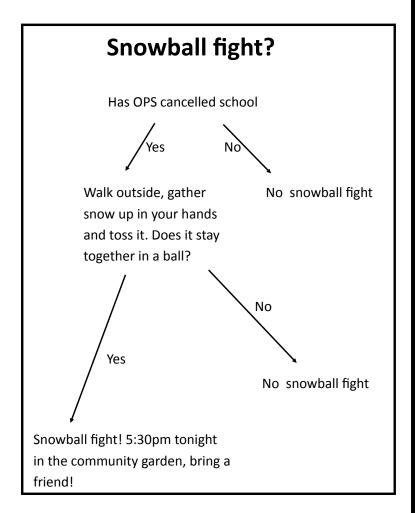
This neighborhood is growing and changing. Our connection to each other is what makes us such a vibrant place to live. I look forward to deepening my own connections and making new ones all year long and always. See you around!

# An Invitation from the Committee for Spontaneous Fun

On Monday January 22nd there was a snowball fight in the Gifford Park community garden at 35th and Cass St. Toddlers, kids and adults threw frozen water at each other and enjoyed being playful while also spending time outside on a blustery day. No one was injured, and hot coco and pizza was enjoyed afterwards.

We would like to invite anyone from the neighborhood to join us next time OPS calls a snow day, this year or any year in the future, for another low key snowball fight. It will start at 5:30pm in the community garden. We have come up with a simple diagram you can place on your fridge to help you determine if a snowball fight will be happening on any certain day.

Until next time, The Committee



# **Community Bike Shop Update**

by Adam Blowers

We're reflecting back on 2017 here at the Bike Project and thinking of ways to make 2018 even better. We've got a couple of new things in the works that I'd like to let you know about. First off is our first ever Volunteer Jamboree! On Saturday Feb 17th from 6 to 8pm we're hosting a celebration of our volunteers and a way for people who may be interested in volunteering to come down and check out the shop and learn more. You'll be able to talk to the current volunteers and we'll have all sorts of fun things going on. There will be jam served, sweet jams playing on the stereo, and people wearing Jams shorts, the 80's surfboard fashion sensation! Cause you know, it is a Jamboree after all.

Along with the all new Jamboree, we're also going to be ramping up our shop rides, we've always (weather permitting) tried to have a Sunday Funday ride on the last Sunday of the month, but this year we hope to do even more. This year we are going to shoot for weekly rides every Saturday morning. Each one of the rides will be different and vary in difficulty, but most will be entry level cause we're all about going slow and enjoying the ride. We want to show people how easy it is to travel by bike in Omaha so some of the rides will be showcasing various routes to different parts of town. So if you don't commute by bicycle but are interested in trying it out these rides will be for you. Stop by the shop to get more details or check out or facebook, as soon as the weather starts warming up we are going to get these rides started.

Lastly, we will be re-working the Youth Earn a Bike programing slightly. Classes have traditionally been held on Wednesday and Thursday from 5pm to 7pm and on Sunday from 11am to 1pm. The Wednesday class from 5pm to 7pm will now be a special class that is reserved for youth who are in

programs at other non-profits in the area. The first of these special classes will start on Feb 7th when the Iowa School for the Deaf will be bringing 5 students to earn bikes! Our goal is to provide Youth Earn-a-Bike to even more youth throughout Omaha and the surrounding area to ensure that even more kids in Omaha have access to a bicycle.

2017 was a fun year for the Bike Project. We got more bikes out into the community than we ever have, held some new events, hired a new part time staff member, and went on an amazing trip. 2018 will be even more fun and we can't wait.`





# **Holiday Market Recap**

by Eliza Perry

This year's Holiday Makers Market at Yates Community Center on Saturday, December 2nd was SO. MUCH. FUN! Gifford Park Neighborhood Market thanks everyone for coming out on a perfectly beautiful day to support local craftspeople. Special thanks to Veronica Hill, Scott Wolfe, Nibras Al-Kadhim, and Matt Wettengell. ENORMOUS thanks to Kim Wettengel for donating so many supplies for our wildly successful holiday cardmaking station!









## 2017 GPNA Holiday Banquet Highlights

by Chris Foster

This year our great neighbor's Duchesne Academy hosted our 29th Annual Holiday Banquet Wednesday December 6th. We had another great turnout of nearly 150 GPNA members, family, and guests who attended. Of course, we cannot thank enough CHI Health - Creighton Medical Center for hosting the banquet for the past 28 years – THANK YOU again! With the redevelopment of the Creighton Medical Center, Duchesne graciously offered to host and provide their wonderful, historic space! Duchesne principal Dr. Laura Hickman gave a warm welcome before dinner.



Many thanks to our banquet chairwoman Eliza Perry for leading the event; Dana Carlton-Flint handled invitations, food, and table decorations - this year's theme was "gingerbread men"; GPNA past president Marie Hélène André did emcee duties; Adrian Petrescu took photos; Brent Lubbert did audio-visual and technical support; Mike Caban helped with 'behind the scenes' planning; GPNA board members and many others pitched in to make this another great celebration! We displayed neighborhood and GPNA memorabilia, including scrap books created by GPNA historian Eva Swanson. Food donations collected went to the Food Bank.

The 2017 events & activities slideshow ran during the first half of the evening as people enjoyed the holiday atmosphere and good conservation. During dinner we elected our 2018 GPNA officers and board members, and Matt Cronin and Adam Sherrerd led the cheerful singing of the "Twelve Days of Gifford Park". After dinner, we gave a neighborhood review of 2017 GPNA activities including soccer,

tennis, basketball, Turner Park North, new elementary school, neighborhood market, 33rd Friday block party, Porchfest, Neighborhoods USA, park activities, and others. Then the GPNA recognized a few very special volunteers. First, we recognized outgoing president Marie Hélène André for leading GPNA the past 2 years. Next, we recognized 15 year-old Andrew Pellerito for his outstanding 'Youth Volunteer of the Year' efforts. And we finished with a bang by presenting our 'Neighbor of the Year' to Eric Purcell (see 'Neighbor of the Year' article in this issue).

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# 2017 GPNA Holiday Banquet Highlights

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We again offer our sincere appreciation to Duchesne Academy for hosting this year's banquet. Throughout the evening door prizes were given to lucky neighbors, and children received presents – all donations came from GPNA members and VIP's - Senator Sara Howard & husband Doug and her mom Gwen, Councilman Chris Jerram & wife Jennifer, Subby & Janice Anzaldo, OPS Board member Marque Snow, Creighton University, Julie Kalkowski, Dana Carlton-Flint, Paul Mileris, Jackie Foster, Nancy Gaarder, Mike Caban, and Bob Hutton (note: again this year Bob Hutton made hand-carved wooden ornaments for gifts!). We'll see you around the neighborhood!





# **Omaha Planning Department Meeting**

**Development** may soon come to the **Walnut Hill Reservoir**! Please come to the 40th Street Theatre on February 5th to provide your neighborhood's input. Your time is appreciated!



Date: February 5, 2018

Time: 6:30—8 P.M.

Place: 4006 1/2 Hamilton Street

## **GPNA Neighbor of the Year - Eric Purcell**

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GPNA projects and initiatives, including Turner Park North Project which is an effort to develop the greenspace (and mountain of dirt) north of 30th & Dodge into recreational greenspace for soccer and other activities. He is also leading our GPNA "Neighborhood Development" plan, it's an ongoing effort to establish guidelines and principles for working with developers and City Planning, and also a "code of conduct" working with landlords and property owners to encourage better development and quality of life for our neighborhood.

Besides these, Eric and his family volunteer for most of our neighborhood activities including the community garden,



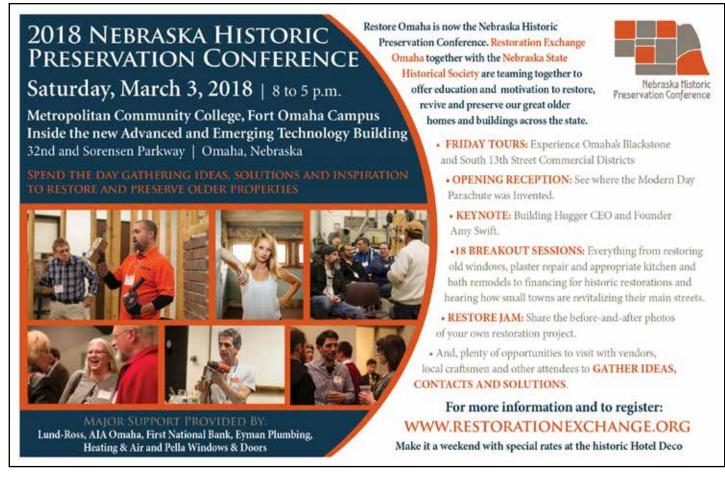
youth garden, Yates Community Center, newsletter delivery, Easter egg hunts, spring & park cleanups, "Save Yates" effort, new elementary school "Ed Spec" design, Porchfest, neighborhood market, Halloween & Christmas events, and others. But everyone knows Eric is "The Man" for the youth soccer camp! He started the soccer camp in 2011, it takes place in Gifford Park over 7 weeks in June-July and has grown every year, including expanding to youth ages 3-11. The program mission is to create a space where kids will be introduced to the game of soccer in a low-pressure environment, and diverse people of Gifford Park can connect around a shared experience. In 2017 there were 100 kids who participated with help from 21 volunteers! The last day of soccer camp volunteers host an awards ceremony and a community potluck.

Oh yes, besides family and volunteer work, Eric has been a youth pastor and director, and currently he is a coach and trainer with Rooted Way, which he co-founded. And if that isn't enough, Eric &

Lisa have partnered with another Gifford Park couple Brandon & Megan Sperry to open Myrtle & Cypress Coffeehouse & Snackery near 33rd & Cass Street, next to Omaha Whole Living. They plan to open in late Spring of 2018 and are committed to the flourishing of the Gifford Park Neighborhood by creating a space where community and connection can thrive.

Congratulations Eric, thanks for your great service and leadership for our neighborhood. I want to personally thank you and Lisa for your family's support for me and many others in Gifford Park! Good luck and see you soon at the coffee shop!





# 2nd Annual Cocoa, Carols and Mitten Drive held December 16

Bringing activity to the neighborhood in the winter months, the 2nd annual Cocoa, Carols, and Mitten drive took place at the Neighborhood Market space to sing songs and gather winter gear for our neighbors that may not have gear to live well in cold conditions.



# **Big Muddy Urban Farm's First Stakeholders Meeting**

Big Muddy strives to accurately and effectively serve our community. To do this, we need your input, your voice, your wisdom involved with our development and growth.

Please attend Big Muddy Urban Farm's first Stakeholders meeting on Monday, February 5th at the OPS Teacher Administration Center.

Joining this meeting starts off with soup from Kitchen Table, then an organization overview presentation, and gamestorming activities facilitated by Todd Mercural-Chapman. All this helps define Big Muddy's 3-year plan moving forward and what to focus on. Hope to see you there!

When: Monday, February 5th from 6pm - 8pm

Where: OPS Teacher Administration Center 3215 Burt Street (Room 4-1887)

# Youth Volunteer of the Year Andrew Pellerito

The GPNA recognized 15 year-old Andrew Pellerito as 'Youth Volunteer of the Year' for his neighborhood volunteer efforts. Andrew is a freshman at Roncalli High School, and on the President's list for academics. He is big into sports, playing on football, basketball and soccer teams...and even referees for soccer on weekends! He has volunteered for the Community Bicycle Shop, neighborhood & park cleanups, community garden & youth garden, Adventure Playground (including helping to build the tree house), youth soccer, youth tennis, and youth basketball programs in our neighborhood. Andrew is a guiet leader, leading by example by putting 150% into what he is doing. Actually these qualities are not surprising to anyone who knows his dad Paul, he also sets a great example with his volunteering. What's most impressive to me is, as crazy busy as Andrew is, he still makes himself available to help, and with a great attitude, even when it may not be convenient for him. Congratulations Andrew...get some rest!



# Mark Matuza New Police Captain

Congratulations to our new Northeast Police Precinct Captain, Mark Matuza. Tom Shaffer, who most recently was assigned to lead the northeast precinct, is now acting deputy chief. Captain Matuza had recently been named to the gang unit as a lieutenant and had worked as lieutenant for 7 years in the Northeast Precinct. Captain Matuza knows Gifford Park well, having attended GPNA meetings to share updates and take neighborhood concerns. We look forward to working with the new Captain!

## Community Garden/Youth Garden/Adventure Playground Update

This is the time of year folks start thinking about gardening. Soon we will start to plan for community garden projects and the youth garden program, as well as Adventure Playground. Stay tuned for more updates in our March newsletter as spring approaches. If you have any questions or are interested in becoming involved with the community garden, youth garden program or Adventure Playground, contact Chris Foster (402-290-8187 or foster3413@cox.net), or Mike Caban (402-341-4722 or caban3321@cox.net).

### **Donations to GPNA are tax-deductible**

In 2015, the GPNA's application for 501(c)3 was approved. Donations to the GPNA are now tax deductible. Make a donation to support the GPNA and all of its activities at any of our events or by mail. Funds go toward furthering the mission of making the Gifford Park Neighborhood a great place to live, work, learn and play.

### Meet the Residents

Big Muddy is excited to introduce the 2018 Aspiring Farmer Residents. Residents are eagerly putting their business plan together and can't wait for all the activity in the growing season ahead!



(from left to right: Gavin Johnston, Kaya Baker, Jess Dooley, Laura Simpson, Shatice Jones)

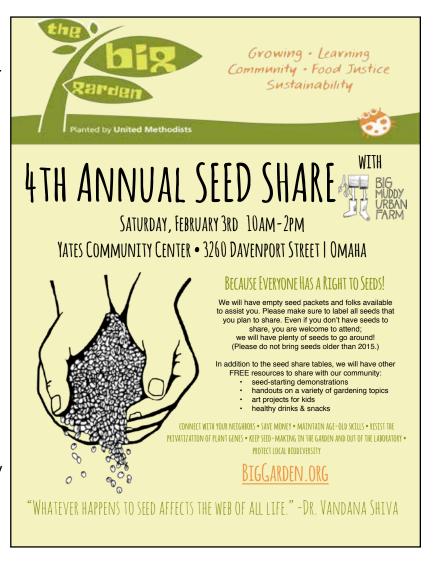
Kaya Baker hails from Grand Rapids, MN by way of Fargo, ND where she was involved with developing community gardens and working with New Americans.

Jess Dooley is a horticulture student at Metro with a vast interest in different farming practices, specifically looking to develop his biodynamic farming skills. From Omaha.

Gavin Johnston is a fellow horticulture student at Metro and works at Indian Creek Nursery. Gavin hopes to bring the skills he learns while in-residence back to his hometown community of Wisner, NE.

Shatice Jones is enthusiastic about advancing her growing skills and pairing this knowledge with culinary endeavours. While in-residency she will be attending the Institute for Culinary Arts. From Lincoln.

Laura Simpson is involved with community projects Omaha Girls Rock and Benson First Friday and will be finishing her Bachelors of Fine Arts at UNO while inresidence. From Omaha.





Place Stamp Here

### Gifford Park Neighborhood Association Membership Application

The GPNA membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. \_\_\_\_ Single (\$10) Family (\$15) Business (\$25) Type of membership: 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... \_\_ Call committee \_\_\_ Holiday Banquet \_\_\_ Neighborhood Watch \_\_\_ Tennis \_\_\_ Tool Lending Cleanup/Beautification Landlord/Tenant Issues Newsletter Distribution Community Garden Memberships School Liason
Easter Egg Hunt Neighborhood Market School Activities
History Neighborhood Walks Soccer \_\_\_ Tree Planting Youth Garden

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