



Field Club

Issue #13 *Jewel of the Emerald Necklace* Spring 2004

Tour of Field Club Homes

By Val Himes

JUNE 12, 2004

The Field Club Homeowners League and eight homeowners will host a tour of Field Club homes on Saturday, June 12, 2004. The Board of Directors of the FCHL formed a committee consisting of Val Himes, Tim Holland, Laurie Ortman, and Jack Pepitone to make the initial plans for the Tour.

The homes will be open from **11 A.M. to 5 P.M.** We hope to have some food stands operating during the tour. **Ollie the Trolley** will be in the Neighborhood 11A.M. to 3 P.M. to take viewers from one home to the other if they want to ride. Also, **Tom Kuhlman**, from Creighton University, will be dressed in a period costume and will be speaking to people about some of the homes and some history of the area. The Gerald Ford Conservation Center will also host hourly tours .

Homes on the tour will be marked with banners or balloons. You might start at the corner of 36th Street and Pine at the home of Susy Westerholm. Next, go around the corner and turn right and you will be at the home of Mary Gryva at 3541 Woolworth Avenue. Across Woolworth at 1338 35th Avenue, visit the home of Mike & Becky Smart. Cross the street to 3520 Woolworth, the home of George & Val Himes. Heading east on Woolworth Avenue three homes will be open: 3322 Woolworth, the home of Mike Bednarz & Laura Sparks; 3316 Woolworth, the home of Tim & Jonna Holland; and the home of their neighbors, Tony & Claudia Deeb at 3302 Woolworth. Then, if you would like, walk up the block to the Ford Conservation Center and take one of the

hourly tours. Or continue on the tour. Walk South on 32nd Avenue (or take Ollie the Trolley) to the corner of Hickory and 32nd Avenue where you can tour the large white house at 1624 South 32nd Avenue which is Katie Kelly's home. Enjoy the flowers in Hanscom Park and perhaps have a hot dog and chips or a piece of pie and ice cream at a stop along the Boulevard.

The Field Club Walking Tour Brochures (which were published last year) will be the cover for the Home Tour Guide. The brochure will include information about each home on the Tour as well as other homes in the Field Club area. It will also note those who have given time, money or products to help with the tour.

Tickets will be sold at each home at a cost of \$8 per person. (A senior discount is being considered.) A ticket will allow the holder to visit each home, in any order. The monies earned will be used for a water system for the Boulevard and/or for the historic street lighting project. This is a neighborhood effort. Many neighborhood residents have already volunteered to assist with the tour, but there is always a need for more assistance.

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If you are able to volunteer, call
Val @ 345-1339 or
e-mail gvhimes@prodigy.net.

From the President

The Field Club neighborhood has become one of Omaha's choice communities. We have much to be very proud of – the historically rich homes, the parks and boulevard, the schools, the Field Club of Omaha, the events such as the Forth of July parade, the diversity, the retail shops and most importantly the people.

Yet we all know that there is much more that we need to be sustainable and vibrant. We continue to reinforce the character of our community with additional events such as the Music in the Park and the Center Street Food Festival; physical upgrades such as the new neighborhood signs and hopefully historical light fixtures; and even the opening up of our homes for all of Omaha to appreciate with our historic home tour (June 12, 2004).



Our neighborhood is very strong, but we must also realize that some of our adjacent neighborhoods are struggling. It is obvious that the stronger our neighbors are the stronger and more desirable our neighborhood will be. Therefore, over the last year, we have participated strongly in the Destination Midtown master plan. Many neighbors participated in numerous meetings; from the Analysis meetings to the Design meetings. One such Design meeting involved 36th and Center and the potential for a mixed-use development with commercial at the street level and housing above. The designs included traditional character and appeal that would “fit” into our historical neighborhood.

Another of the very positive and immediate results of the Destination Midtown efforts has been the communications that have developed between the 11 neighborhood

associations on the study area. Together we have formed new alliance to help work together for the entire community. The new group is call the “Midtown Neighborhood Alliance” (MNA) and represents over 28,000 residents. The mission statement for MNA is:

“MNA is an alliance of midtown neighborhood associations whose common mission is to preserve the integrity of and advocate for a vibrant community which is sustainable, secure, diverse, historically rich and economically strong.”

The Field Club Homeowners League will continue to focus our immediate needs, but we will also participate in MNA to assist with all the common midtown issues.

MNA will play a large role in the implementation of the Destination Midtown efforts. A representative of MNA will be a board member of the Midtown Development Corporation and the Midtown Redevelopment Fund, both of which are currently being set up and funded as part of the Destination Midtown efforts.



Since the Destination Midtown Master Plan has such major potential to affect our community, we have asked Master Planner, Doug Bisson of HDR, to be our guest speaker at our general FCHL meeting, April 22nd, 6:30 at the Field Club of Omaha. Please plan on attending to see and hear about the proposals to the midtown area and the impact that it will have not only for us but our neighbors.

Tim Holland
President, Field Club Homeowner's League.

These Old Houses

By Tom and Kay Williams



We have lived in the Field Club Neighborhood for more than 25 years and bought our current home at 1313 Turner Boulevard 15 years ago. The first thing we discovered about our new home was that it was the Ed P. Smith House.

Ed P. Smith built the home in 1906. He was an attorney who became Mayor of Omaha in 1918. He was the Mayor lynched in the riot at the courthouse in September 1919. The police were right behind the rioters though and cut the Mayor down. He lived until 1930.

The second owner was John Hopkins, who worked for the city. He became the Douglas County Sheriff and later was a vice president of one of Omaha's breweries. Harry Truman eventually appointed Hopkins Postmaster of Omaha. Because of Hopkins, 34th Street from Poppleton to Woolworth was added to Turner Boulevard. Turner Boulevard originally ended at Poppleton, but that is another story.

When we moved in the house, it needed a lot of work. Most of the plaster was badly cracked. Some of the rooms had cheap paneling covering the plaster. Some rooms had a dry wall wrap that obscured the reveal of the woodwork. Some rooms even had suspended false ceilings. In the rooms without false ceilings, someone had attempted to hide the cracks in the ceiling by texturing the ceiling with a Wisk broom and joint compound. It was a pretty weak attempt. We now have smooth, non-textured ceilings everywhere, as it is age-appropriate to the house.

In going into the walls we found that the house had been built with gas lights. The black gas pipes were still in place but the gas fixtures were gone. When

the fixtures were removed the holes in the walls were plugged with newspaper and then spackled. So, we found all this old crumpled up newspaper which told us that the gas fixtures were removed in December 1951. Not much else was found behind the walls, just a few coins, a couple of pencils and one small photograph.

We removed, stripped, sanded, reinstalled and refinished all the wood trim. The finish carpenter who trimmed out the house when it was built in 1906 had signed the back of about every fifth piece of his work. He signed it: "A. W. Akins, Omaha, Nebraska".

We have learned a lot more about refinishing wood than we ever wanted to. Our refinishing has included both a front and a back staircase, without a common landing. All the wood on the staircases was refinished in-place, without being removed. The 82 balusters and 7 newel posts of the front staircase proved to be a real challenge.

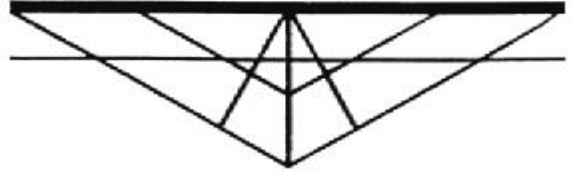
The floors had all been carpeted. We removed the carpeting and had professionals refinish the floors. (That was just too big a job for us to take on.)

The third floor is one large open room and was built as a ballroom. We may eventually restore the wood flooring up there, but we currently have it carpeted for warmth.

The house is still a work in progress, although it looks a lot better and is much more livable than it was 15 years ago. We probably can't put off doing the kitchen for much longer, but there are always other projects that seem to take precedence -- and yet, the kitchen keeps calling.

Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center

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Living History

By Kurt Stecker

Recently my two brothers and two sisters were in Omaha for a family gathering. The reason that we were together was primarily to see each other and visit, but also to look through some of my Mother's belongings.

Mom passed away last September and we had not been together as a group since the funeral. Although the process was difficult at times, for the most part it was filled with warm memories and laughter. Fortunately, there were a lot more smiles than tears, but still a mixture of both. Looking at a jacket that Mom wore, her favorite necklace or the thousands of pictures and old letters she kept reminded us of her and our heritage as a family. It was a time of remembering and a time of learning interesting aspects of my past.

I began to realize how important our family history is to me. The record of our lives that will never change and is recorded in our hearts and minds. Some of the most touching moments came when I was able to talk to my children about the past and make them a part of the history. They both loved hearing the stories of my childhood and stories of their Grandma's childhood. It was a new generation, the generation of our future, becoming a part of the past.

One day, as I was shuffling family members from one location or another, we began to drive around the neighborhood. My entire family knows how much this neighborhood has meant to Debbie and I. And, they always remark about the beauty of the homes and area in general. As we were driving through the streets, I began a litany of the houses and the families who lived in the houses now or lived in the house in the past. We talked about events as recent as the Christmas caroling and Fourth of July Parade but also discussed events as old as the homes themselves.

It was at that time I began to understand how important the history of this neighborhood was to me

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and my family. Much like my family history, it is an aspect of my life that will always be in my mind and my heart. This is so much more than a neighborhood, it is my neighborhood. It is where my children grew up, where my dreams became reality, and where my closest friendships were formed. This neighborhood, and the neighbors who make it a neighborhood, are as much my home as the house I live in. This is my family's history in so many ways.

I went home that night happy and so grateful that of all the places we could have chosen to live these last 15 years, we somehow chose Field Club. A neighborhood filled with love and caring, and a neighborhood not only rich in history but with a promising future as well.

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Who Is Responsible?

By Mary Rae Wolf

Have you ever wondered who the wise Field Club Home Owners were that stopped the trend toward making our beautiful single family homes from becoming multi-unit dwellings? They stopped what would have been the demise of the beautiful Field Club Neighborhood as we know it today.

There was a housing shortage after the war. In the 1940's, homeowners were encouraged to rent out rooms, or even a whole floor in their home. During this time, it was also very difficult to maintain a large home. The extra income that was possible with rentals became very attractive.

On the outside of the homes, unsightly staircases started popping up around the neighborhood. Inside, walls were moved, bedrooms were converted into extra kitchens, and dining rooms were converted into bedrooms. More families in

one home also meant more cars on the street.

Some very wise, and foresighted, neighbors began to look in horror at what was happening to the neighborhood. They worked diligently to get the zoning changed that would block the conversion of these single family homes into multiple unit dwellings. This was no small feat. Generally, it is almost impossible to have zoning reversed. But, look at what we have now because they would not give up!

That same group went on to incorporate, selecting a board of directors and forming the Field Club Homeowner's League, Inc. The rest, as they say, is history. The original names and addresses are below. If you recognize a name, or know of a descendant (some still live in the neighborhood), take the time to tell them thanks.

The Original Field Club Homeowner's League Board of Directors October 29, 1965

William T. O'Hanlon	3325 Woolworth Avenue
Ellis Sheldon	1509 South 33rd Street
Louise Shearer	1316 Turner Boulevard
Robert Lacy	1610 South 35th Street
Helen Strnad	1122 Turner Boulevard
James Corcoran	1701 South 33rd Street
Howard Harvey	3222 Center Street
Lottie Krogh	1326 South 35th Street
Rita Dickinson	3504 Woolworth Avenue
Jack H. Dodendorf	3537 Pine Street
Ray Dodendorf	1936 South 32nd Avenue
John M. Goodsell	1327 South 35th Street
Russell Aschinger	3536 Pine Street

Community Sing Alongs

By Mary Rae Wolf

We have been so fortunate to have the Sunday evening concerts in Hanscom Park the past few years. You don't even have to go down into the park since the bands play just off the street in the gazebo, next to the greenhouse. And, since the concert is free, you can not beat the price. We even stop on the way down Center Street to grab a picnic lunch at Richies or Valentinos. For some strange reason, even on the hottest days there seems to be a breeze rustling through the trees. A blanket or folding chair is all we need. The concerts only last an hour and for that amount of time, we can all forget our troubles and share a good time with our neighbors.

These concerts have always reminded me of the "Good Ole Days" when the Omaha World Herald sponsored the ever popular sing alongs in the parks. I was sure that some of them were in Hanscom Park, but my research showed that most were held in Elmwood Park, and some in Riverview Park, Fontenelle Park, and Miller Park. After the war, at least one was held in Memorial Park.

Our claim to fame in this area is that Billy Meyers, the well known Omaha City Recreational Department Director who conducted the sing alongs lived on 33rd Street, between Martha and Castelar. The community outings began approximately in 1939.

World Herald articles and letters to the editor sing the praises of the incredible job that Billy Meyers did through the years. Some sing alongs drew as many as 15,000 to 20,000 to the park on any given

Sunday Eve. The public came by street car, bicycle, bus, car or on foot. They sat on blankets, folding chairs, playpens, inside cars, and on running boards. There were lawyers, bankers, butchers, and bakers. They came in their Sunday best and their play clothes. Soldiers, in uniform, came with their sweethearts on their arms. Three generations of families all came together to enjoy the evening. People brought their elderly or handicapped neighbors and bridge clubs were even set up.



Special guests were fifty two boys from the Masonic Home for Boys (which by the way was where Our Lady of Lourdes playground now is on 33rd Street between Frances and Martha Streets). Forty two children from St. James Orphanage were also special guests. The Burlington Trailways loaned out two new diesel buses to transport the children to the concert.

Every choir and musical organization in Omaha and surrounding area was invited to participate. Some who took advantage of the invitation were the Elks Glee Club, St. Joseph Men's Chorus, the Police Glee Club, a Methodist Choir, Swedish Men's Chorus, First Baptist Choir, Farm Women's Mother's Chorus and the South High Alum Acappella choir. The project had the approval of the Chamber of Commerce, the Omaha Public Schools' Music Department, the Omaha Musicians' Association and the KOWH Radio Station, among others.

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The public sat on the park hillside. The World Herald carpenters built a permanent bandstand and Billy Meyers stood up there with his electronically lit baton. Words to the songs were flashed on an eighteen foot screen and they were also printed in the World Herald before the event. There was an unusually efficient public address system. The police were on hand to direct traffic and often joined in the singing. On one occasion Billy Meyers, in his exuberance, accidentally let go of his lit baton and it flew off the stage. A nearby police officer, not missing a beat, quickly handed the director his flashlight.

The World Herald answered the question of who should come to the sing with the following: any person in need of relaxation. It is free, fun, relaxing for tired brains, tired eyes, tired bodies, and informal place to enjoy the spirit of fellowship. It was suggested as a place free from war worry, business blues and the day's heat.

An unnamed Omaha psychiatrist described the events as a healthful and emotional stimulus. When a college psychology department director was asked why 15,000 to 20,000 would show up to sing on Sunday night at a time of so much national defense tension, his answer was that it gave a means of expressing a unified feeling of Americanism. The director thought it was a fine idea for any community to forget their fears, anxieties, antagonisms, and intolerances with outbursts of song.

The program opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. The songs were old favorites of the barbershop quartet era. Also popular during the 40's were the songs America, the Star Spangled Banner, The Grand Old Flag, and Where Else But Here? And the words flashed across the screens for all to follow along with. One elderly couple sitting close to each other during the old fashioned songs was quoted as saying, "we were not saying anything, we were just listening. It is all so beautiful".

One letter praising Billy Meyers for his many years of dedication to the popular sing alongs said "even when the crowd didn't stay together, he would say it

was good. He never forgot to end the evening with God Bless You". Now we can say to our former neighbor, "God bless you Billy. Thanks for the memories".

The good news is that Billy Meyer's son still lives in the neighborhood. In fact, he is now in the very same house he grew up in. He and his wife, Nancy, have raised a wonderful family. Wouldn't it be great if we could talk him into continuing in his father's footsteps. He has been a member of Our Lady of Lourdes choir for years and is a member of a very popular and extremely entertainign quartet. Do you suppose that he still has his father's baton?

Information taken from very old World Herald news clippings.

Is it a Stroke?

Reprinted for the American Stroke Association

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say any bystander can recognize a stroke asking three simple questions:

- ask the individual to smile.
- ask him or her to raise both arms.
- ask the person to speak a simple sentence.

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

After discovering that a group of nonmedical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness and speech problems, researchers urged the general public to learn the three questions. They presented their conclusions at the American Stroke Association's annual meeting last February. Widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of the stroke and prevent brain damage."

If This House Could Talk Learning Your Homes' History By Reading the Abstract

By Carol Gottsch

Buy a house and you will get piles of paperwork. One which bears your attention, especially if you are a history buff, is the house abstract. Every detail about the house history and past owners is recorded. Here are just a few highlights for our home at 3331 Pine Street. Many of the details will fit the homes of our neighbors, especially those whose homes are within the boundaries of the original plot.

Our house abstract runs several hundred pages starting in 1957 when Jane North bought 80 acres in this area. It was unusual that a woman would make the purchase, but a little research about the North family explains why. Her husband was a surveyor for the railroads and died when he froze in a snowstorm. Jane took her boys, and her assets, and began buying land in the Omaha area. The first page of the abstract shows her purchase in our neighborhood, which cost \$4,000.

The original abstract is several hundred pages long. Here are a few details which I thought were be interesting: In late 1857, Jane's purchase was declared fraudulent and the issue was taken to court. One of the lawyers involved was James Woolworth. The Deputy Clerk at the time was Byron Reed. Jane took the issue to the Nebraska Supreme Court. She won the petition and began to parcel the 80 acres. Several of the buyers include James Woolworth, Joel Griffin, and Rollin Smith. If you live in the Field Club area, look at your abstract and you may see that even today, the legal description of the area is the "Griffin and Smith's Addition".

George O'Brien next took ownership of the land in the area. His ownership continued through the 1870's. George O'Brien's family had come from Ireland. He was commissioned by President Lincoln to protect the White House and later commissioned to lead a new regiment formed during the Civil War. This regiment later included the 41st Iowa Infantry, which brought O'Brien to our area. He became a lawyer in Omaha, working and living in the same area as James Woolworth.

Continuing with the house abstract history, the date the house was built is recorded. On December 8, 1882, lots 7-10 in the Griffin and Smith's Addition a lien was filed for labor and material for constructing houses. Lot 8 eventually became 3331 Pine Street.

Meanwhile, Jane North Died and her sons took over the fight for the land. This fight continues through the 1890's. Eventually, George O'Brien was declared the legal owner of the land. Through the years the house, and the land it is situated on, changed owners. Several times a Sheriff's sale was held when the owners were unable to meet tax payments.

In 1915 running water was brought into the house through an agreement with the Metropolitan Water District. In 1919 the street was paved and the curbs were installed. The abstract even records that one of the owners died in the house in 1944. Over the next 50 years, ownership of the home and property changed until 1990 when Jim and I bought the house.

There are many other details about the land, and the owners, recorded in a house abstract. If you were lucky enough to get the abstract when you purchased your home, take a few moments to read through yours. You will learn more about the history of your own home.

Craft Show

Benefit for Missions

Saturday, April 24, 2004

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

**Including:
Backyard Boutique
Gift Baskets
Bake Sale
Book Sale
&
Lunch**

**Hanscom Park United Methodist Church
4444 Frances Street
(1 block south of 45th & Center Streets)**

Local Centurian Recalls Special Memories

BERTHA COUNSELL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF MEMORIES

As told to Susy Westerholm

Bertha seems to live each day fully and plan for the next.....maybe that's why she has lived to celebrate 100 years. Read on about her life and thoughts.

I'll share with you thoughts of the many things that brought to me much happiness during my life journey to 100.

I was Born February 21, 1904 in Tara, Iowa. My family moved to Woodbine, Iowa when I was three. Of six brothers, two were older than me. I also had a sister 4 years younger. The older children helped care for the younger ones, as was customary in those days. We had to burn coal to cook and to heat bath water. We shared the task of pumping the water. We had a wall telephone that we had to ring by hand to reach an operator who rang the number we wanted. We had a Victrola and eventually a Model T Ford. We had no paper towels or tissue and of course, no air conditioning.

My father was Section Foreman for the Illinois Central Railroad for 42 years and our dear mother made sure we were clean and our hair combed before attending Sunday school at the Methodist Church.

How happy and excited I was when I could start school - I could learn to read, spell, study arithmetic, geography, English - and meet new friends! Every teacher was so very nice too!

At 8 years old, I taught myself to knit and made an American flag for each of my 2 older brothers. During 8th grade I worked as a telephone operator before and after school, weekends and holidays.

My father had come from Norway when he was 17 years old. At a local Lutheran school he learned to play the organ. So, on Sunday evenings he'd play some religious songs and we all sang. Then he'd play something more rhythmical and Mother and I would dance all around the living room. (My sister and I were not allowed to go to dances.) About this same time we bought a TV and all the neighbors would come over to watch "As the World Turns".

My grade school and high school years were truly enjoyable. I was persuaded to go to Gregg Shorthand &



Typing School in Chicago after my graduation in 1921. I just recently found in my possessions certificates for speed and beauty of type. After a year at Gregg I was able to get a good job here in Omaha, at Nebraska Power. General Electric (the company my husband worked for) and Nebraska Power were having a dinner dance at the Regis Hotel in Omaha. It was there my husband and I met for the first time. He signed every line on my dance card and the next morning I was the recipient of a dozen long stem red roses!

My husband was an electrical engineer and designed materials for GE in Schenectady, NY before coming to Omaha. Here he visited municipalities, analyzed the needed electrical equipment for the power plants and sold it to them for GE. We were married in Kansas City in December of 1927. We lived in the Minne Lusa neighborhood for a couple years. Then we lived near Hanscom Park before moving to my present home on Pine Street. Our three children, Richard, Mary Ellen and Ruth Elaine were born in the same room, at the same hospital and were delivered by the same doctor.

How fortunate we were to be so close to Field Club School and Westminster Presbyterian Church. The children liked their fine teachers at Field Club School. I was active as a Girl Scout leader and President of the PTA. There were also violin and base viola lessons, piano lessons, and dancing lessons during those years, and of course many parties. I was also the President of my Delphian Chapter. We would meet at each others homes and study lessons on different countries, their people and their government. Chapter meetings were

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held at Joslyn Museum. My husband was determined to provide a good home for his family. He loved that the children would get a good education. All three of our children went to college. He also felt that without faith, life was not complete.

Many wonderful friendships were made with our Field Club neighbors. Many of these friendships have lasted through the years bringing me and my children much happiness.

My husband was killed in a car accident years ago and I was in the hospital for several months. Two years later my son, Richard died. I've lost all of my childhood family, all old neighbors and friends, and my dear young grandson, Sam. One has to overcome sorrow by making a choice to continue. So, I choose to be happy and think happy thoughts.

I've done a lot of traveling (which makes me happy). My husband and our family visited every state in the union.

My daughter, Mary Ellen, and I took a cruise to Alaska. (What beautiful scenery and what a great and memorable experience.) I have traveled to Switzerland and exciting places near there with my other daughter Ruth. I've been to Portugal, Italy, Belize, the Western Caribbean, Canada, the Baja, and I spent a month on the Hardanger fjord in Norway. Daily I recall never dreamed of pleasures like seeing the different cultures and having experienced so much joy, happiness, and so much beauty during my life.

My childhood was a very happy one. We all loved each other so much. My children, grandchildren and great grandchildren are my great loves and have each given me good reason to love them. Such lovely, kind, thoughtful things they say and do for me and I say thanks many times a day for all the blessings that I receive. I've always liked people. I like to look for the good in them because I feel there is good in everyone. I can truly say my life journey to 100 has been filled with so much love and caring that has touched my soul. I'm so very thankful and grateful to all who have brought

The Old Phone

Unknown Author

This was forwarded to me by e-mail, and I thought I would share. - Cynde

When I was quite young, my father had one of the first telephones in our neighborhood. I remember the polished, old case fastened to the wall. The shiny receiver hung on the side of the box. I was too little to reach the telephone, but used to listen with fascination when my mother talked to it.

I discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person. Her name was "Information Please" and there was nothing she did not know. "Information Please" could supply anyone's number and the correct time. My personal experience with the genie-in-a-bottle came one day while my mother was visiting a neighbor. Amusing myself at the tool bench in the basement, I whacked my finger with a hammer, the pain was terrible, but there seemed no point in crying because there was no one home to give sympathy. I walked around the house sucking my throbbing finger, finally arriving at the stairway. The telephone! Quickly, I ran for the footstool in the parlor and dragged it to the landing. Climbing up, I unhooked the receiver and held it to my ear. "Information, please" I said into the mouthpiece just above my head. A click or two and a small clear voice spoke into my ear. "Information." "I hurt my finger..." I wailed into the phone, the tears came readily enough now that I had an audience. "Isn't your mother home?" came the question. "Nobody's home but me," I blubbered. "Are you bleeding?" the voice asked. "No," I replied. "I hit my finger with the hammer and it hurts." "Can you open the icebox?" she asked. I said I could. "Then chip off a little bit of ice and hold it to your finger," said the voice.

After that, I called "Information Please" for everything. I asked her for help with my geography, and she told me where Philadelphia was. She helped me with my math. She told me my pet chipmunk that I had caught in the park just the day before, would eat fruit and nuts. Then, there was the time Petey, our pet canary, died. I called, "Information Please," and told her the sad story. She listened, and then said things grown-ups say to soothe a child. But I was not consoled. I asked her, "Why is it that birds should sing so beautifully and bring joy to all families, only to end up as a heap of feathers on the bottom of a cage?" She must have sensed my deep concern, for she said quietly, "Paul, always remember that there are other worlds to sing in." Somehow I felt better.

Another day I was on the telephone, "Information Please." "Information", I said, in the now familiar voice. "How do I spell fix?" I asked.

All this took place in a small town in the Pacific Northwest. When I was nine years old, we moved across the country to Boston. I missed my friend very much. "Information Please" belonged in that old wooden box back home and I somehow never thought of trying the shiny new phone that sat on the table in the hall. As I grew into my teens, the memories of those childhood conversations never really left me. Often, in moments of doubt and perplexity I would recall the serene sense of security I had then. I appreciated now how patient, understanding, and kind she was to have spent her time on a little boy.

A few years later, on my way west to college, my plane put down in Seattle. I had about a half-hour or so between planes. I spent 15 minutes or so on the phone with my sister, who lives there now. Then without thinking what I was doing, I dialed my hometown operator and said, "Information Please". Miraculously, I heard the small, clear voice I knew so well. "Information" I hadn't planned this, but I heard myself saying, "Could you please tell me how to spell fix?"

There was a long pause. Then came the soft spoken answer, "I guess your finger must have healed by now". I laughed, "So it's really you," I said. "I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during that time?" I wonder," she said, "if you know how much your call meant to me. I never had any children and I used to look forward to your calls." I told her how often I had thought of her over the years and I asked if I could call her again when I came back to visit my sister. "Please do", she said. "Just ask for Sally."

Three months later I was back in Seattle. A different voice answered, "Information." I asked for Sally. "Are you a friend?" she said. "Yes, a very old friend," I answered. "I'm sorry to have to tell you this," she said. "Sally had been working part-time the last few years because she was sick. She died five weeks ago." Before I could hang up she said, "Wait a minute, did you say your name was Paul?" "Yes." I answered. "Well, Sally left a message for you. She wrote it down in case you called. Let me read it to you." The note said, "Tell him there are other worlds to sing in. He'll know what I mean." I thanked her and hung up. I knew what Sally meant. Never underestimate the impression you may make on others.

Whose life have you touched today?

Field Club Neighborhood Watch Block Captains

Name	Phone
Courtney Gieselman	345-7841
Connie Clark	344-2130
Gayle Crawford	345-5895
Nancy Gilliland	341-7954
Annika Phillips	345-5438
Carl Cohen	345-5387
Brent Bower	933-1450
Deb Stecker	346-6904
Carol Gottsch	932-3331
Janice Shoemaker	341-4287
Dick Koesters	345-6059
Carol Smolsky	344-2734
Cherie Ferber	341-6757
Liz Hanlon	346-0867
Val Himes (co-chair)	345-1339
Jonna Holland	346-5116
Claudia Deeb	345-1527
Cindy Brown	345-6435
Patty Zieg	344-0162
Tim Buckley	346-2553
Tom Williams	341-2847
Katie Novotny	342-6785
Bob Perrin	341-0232
Joe Grier	346-7948
Frieda Linschmidt	345-9939

If you do not know who your captain is
please call Cynde McCall, 345-1881

Report Suspicious Activity

If you are witnessing a crime call 911.
If you notice unusual or suspicious activity in the
neighborhood please call your Neighborhood Watch
Captain.

You can also e-mail a message to
Cynde McCall, the Neighborhood Watch Chair.
skidragons@cox.net
345-1881

Help keep our neighborhood safe

**If your block captain has not contacted you to
update your information for the watch list
YOU NEED TO CALL THEM!**

Please include your e-mail address when possible
to allow your block captain to get information to
you in a timely manner.

If you are able to help the block captain in your
area please call them to volunteer with the calling
tree, or to host the yearly meeting with your
neighbors.

**We have a need for a block
captain on Center Street. If you
can volunteer please call
Cynde McCall 345-1881**

Neighborhood Watch Captains,

Have you had your meetings for this year?

Are your calling lists updated?

Have your new neighbors been added to your lists?

Do you have neighborhood watch signs posted on your block?

Have you forwarded your information to Cynde McCall?

345-1881 or skidragons@cox.net

Historic Neighborhood Images

By Tim Holland

Have you ever thought about the decisions that were made in the past that impact your current lifestyle daily – the design of your home (size, orientation of rooms, material choices, etc.) or the neighborhood design (street patterns, alleys, landscaping, spacing of houses, etc)? Our perception of the present is always influenced by past events and the accumulation of past knowledge. Such is true with our neighborhood community in terms of its design and your current use of it.



Woolworth Ave. looking west from the Ferber's home, 1917

There is a great deal that we can learn from the past and use to appreciate the present. One such case has recently brought to light (literally) the need to accumulate some of this past information. The FCHL is currently involved in a major grant application with the state for the funding of some historical street light fixtures for the neighborhood. The grant would pay for 80% of the cost and

installation of the new fixtures. However, this state grant will only support new fixtures that are replicas of the original fixtures in the neighborhood.



33rd & Woolworth Ave. looking at the Deeb's Home

In our last FCHL newsletter, we put out a request for historical images that some of you might have. We received some postcard images and a few photographs. We still need more to document lighting. We are digitally scanning the images and creating a long term archive of information for future reference.

Please check your collections and let us know if you have any images that would be good to archive in general. (Give any photos to Tim Holland. They will be scanned and returned.)

With regards to the historic light fixtures, OPPD will also require that the replacement fixtures meet their criteria for light levels, safety and maintenance. We hope to find documentation that will meet both the state's and OPPD's requirements. In order to do so, we need your help.

Our Own Celebrity

Tuesday, March 22, 2004 was declared Buster Brown Day in Omaha, by Mayor Mike Fahey. Brown was recently recognized as the outstanding city clerk by the Nebraska Municipal Clerks Association.

Brown has been the city clerk since 1997. The Mayor made the proclamation in honor of the

service, professionalism, efficiency, and dedication that Brown exhibits as the Omaha city clerk.

Brown has overseen the computerization of his office, making it easier for the citizens of the city to access public documents and agendas. Congratulations Buster!

Information reprinted from an article in the Omaha World Herald, written by Joseph Morton



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**Many volunteers are needed
to make our neighborhood
activities successful.**

**Please volunteer to help.
Contact a board member
if you need more information or want**

Field Club Citizens Patrol

By Pat McCall

The Citizen patrol group is out and about in our neighborhood. They patrol our neighborhood streets at night to be additional eyes and ears for the police department. All homeowners should also be surveying the neighborhood, watching for unusual activity. This enables our neighborhood to be more closely monitored by the Omaha Police Department.

The patrollers carry a copy of the neighborhood directory with them on patrol. Keep your phone numbers updated with your neighborhood watch captains. This will enable the patrollers to contact you right away, if they notice any unusual activity

in your area. Make sure your house number is on the back of your home or garage, as they also patrol our alleys.

The patrol group could use some help. If you are interested in volunteering four hours of your time once a month to help keep our neighborhood safe call:

Pat McCall at 345-1881.

The cell phone number that patrollers have carried in the past is no longer active. Please update your numbers.

WHEN TO CALL 911

Reprinted from the Omaha Police Department web site: <http://www.opd.ci.omaha.ne.us/FAQ/Docs/OPD-MR-TAB5-88.htm>

Determining when it is appropriate to dial the emergency line comes down to these few basic guidelines:

- Call if you need to see a law enforcement officer immediately. Those staffing the 911 phones are responsible for dispatching officers, so the quickest way to get help is to call the line directly.
- Call if you have been involved in any type of an auto accident, if you have a crime to report to police or if you are in immediate danger. A person whose car has stalled on the highway in dangerously cold weather or whose car is blocking traffic, for example, needs to dial 911. A person whose car stalled on the side of the road in fair weather would be wiser to call a tow company.
- Call if you have a medical emergency. This can range from difficulty breathing, a broken bone, and chest pain to an open, bleeding wound. People who are sick or injured but not in immediate danger, should call a private ambulance service or someone with a car.
- Call if you see smoke. Dialing a non-emergency number will slow response time.
- Call if you see persons lurking in shadows or prowling near autos or homes.
- Call if you see juveniles drinking, anyone racing in a vehicle, or driving recklessly.
- Call if you see vandalism or fights in progress. (Graffiti should be reported, as well as descriptions of those who are putting up the graffiti).
- Call if you suspect any drug activity.
- Lost or disoriented elderly/mentally unbalanced persons should be reported.
- Call if you are unsure whether you have a 911 emergency on your hands. Look and listen for breaking sounds, gunshots, screaming, open or broken doors and windows, as well as any other suspicious activity.
- It is better for officers to find out there is nothing wrong then to let a crime be committed

Association Dues

**To all Field Club Homeowners.
We need you! We need your support!**

The Field Club Homeowner's League is once again starting its 2004 Membership Fund drive. That's why we are asking you to please send in your \$10 membership dues, if you have not already done so. You ask, "What does my \$10 help with?" While some of the larger projects get funding from grant monies, your \$10 contribution helps provide the funding necessary to keep some of the traditional activities running.

Here are some of the items that your dues help to fund:

- 4th of July Parade
- Christmas Party
- Chili Cook-off
- Neighborhood Watch and Citizen's Patrol
- Monthly and Annual Newsletters
- Neighborhood Garage Sale and Cleanup
- Updates/Improvements to the neighborhood
- Neighbor to Neighbor Program (Not Active)

Check out the website for the neighborhood. You will find historical information, neighborhood events, photos, schedules of board meetings, links to many city and historical web sites and more!

fieldclubneighborhood.homestead.com

**Support your neighborhood
Join the Field Club Homeowner's
League today. Complete the
membership form below or phone
Jack Pepitone at 346-6110
or
Susy Westerholm at 341-1360.**

Please thank all of your neighbors who work on the various committees for the neighborhood. The volunteers are too numerous to list here. Watch for their names as the year goes by and make a special point to tell them thank you. It will make their day!

Field Club Homeowners League 2004 Membership Form Annual Dues: \$10.00

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE(S) _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

This information is used to help compile the neighborhood directory.
If you do not wish to be in the directory please indicate so

Make checks payable to : Field Club Homeowners League.

Send dues with this form to: **Jack Pepitone** 1309 South 35th Avenue Omaha, NE 68105

Or **Susy Westerholm** 3540 Pine Street Omaha, NE 68105

Neighborhood Happenings

Look for details forthcoming in the monthly newsletters on the following activities:

Monthly Board Meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of each month at a Board Member's home.

Watch monthly newsletters for the location.

- April 22** **Bi-Annual Meeting**
April 24 **Neighborhood Cleanup**
June 5 **Neighborhood Garage Sale**
June 12 **Field Club Home Tour**
July 4th **Parade**

Coming this Spring:

Placing of street/ground signs on Woolworth

Visit the Field Club Neighborhood Web Site
[Fieldclubneighborhood.homestead.com](http://fieldclubneighborhood.homestead.com)

If you have an article or want to place an advertisement in this newsletter please call:

Cynde McCall 345-1881 or e-mail: skidragons@cox.net

(The next issue will be due out in October 2004)

FIELD CLUB

is published by
the Field Club Homeowner's League

The League Board Members:

Tim Holland, Pres. - 346-5116
Dave Fortina, Vice Pres. - 346-1638
Val Himes, Secretary - 345-1339
Greg Cherek, Treasurer - 932-6632
Libby Barnette - 341-6195
Mark Barnette - 341-6195
Hank Bauer - 932-6789
Mike Bednarz - 345-1827
Ed Castro - 342-9494
Tony Deeb (Monthly Newsletter) 345-1527
Tom Hart - 341-7456
Connie O'Boyle
Laurie Ortman 561-9764
Peggy Pavlik 344-7963
Jack Pepitone - 346-6110
Bob Perrin - 341-0232
Susy Westerholm - 341-1360

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