



**Ford Birthsite  
Neighborhood  
Association**

**'Ford'ging Forward**



April 2005



## **SPRING CLEANING:**

**Annual Big Neighborhood Dump**  
**Get it out of your life and bring it to FBNA**  
**Saturday April 16. 9am - 1pm. 1107 Park Avenue**  
**Volunteers will assist members with curbside pickup**  
**Call 342-3943**

## **A Word or Two from Your President**

Hello from the Willits household! There is a lot to go over.

### **DRIVE PATROL UPDATE**

First of all, Park Avenue seems a bit quieter. The activities appear to be pretty well scattered. We're going to come right behind them and do the cleanup this month, and next month we're going to do a "Place Game". **Michelle Roy** is in charge of that and will explain at the General Meeting. The house at 2964 Poppleton has been very quiet the last 2 weeks. **Shane Kouba** has put in a security light at the northwest corner of Park Avenue & Poppleton. That has helped tremendously!

I'd like to thank everyone for their efforts in this endeavor. The many things we have done, along with the Police presence and operations have made a tremendous difference. We still have a couple of "Projects" we are working on; however, they are not of the magnitude that we have seen in the past. Drive Patrol continues to go out Friday and/or Saturday Nights. The last couple have been pretty boring! Good thing! Please continue to e-mail or phone in any tips or information that you may have regarding any illegal activity. Thanks.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP**

Neighborhood cleanup will be **Saturday April 16, from 9am till 1pm**. Bring your unwanted items to the curb for pickup. This year we will not be able to take appliances, paint, or chemicals. This year we can take tires, however they must be out by 12:00 noon, as we have to take them to a different location. We need volunteers with pickup trucks to help with curbside pickup.

While many of us are manning the dump site, we will also be cleaning up Hanscom Park-the northeast corner; Woolworth to Ed Creighton. This is a great opportunity for the children, or anyone else that wants to help, to get involved. We will clean from the street to about 50 feet into the park. That should cover the sidewalks and the trail. We will have gloves and leaf bags available.

We'll have coffee and rolls. What a great way to meet your neighbors! Looking forward to seeing everyone there!

**- Tracy Willits**

**Mayor's Hotline 444-5555, FBNA Drive Patrol 342-3943**  
**FBNA Neighborhood Watch 346-2288**

# Bob Brown: A Friend Remembers

**Bob Brown died this year. He made it to the last FBNA Christmas Party, an institution that he founded and nurtured. He won't be with us for the Cleanup and we can be sure that the flow of junk out of the neighborhood won't go as smoothly. We are all much poorer and the junk in our lives harder to manage without Bob.**

I first met Bob in 1972. I had my dad's old '49 pickup and was driving down Marcy Street where Bob lived then. He yelled at me and asked if I wanted to take a load for him to the junk yard. I ended up taking two loads. I had never talked to him or met him before that day.

I got to know him over the years. He was a strange man, set in his ways, stubborn, but would give you the short off his back! We hit it off right away.

Bob was a cook at the Sharon Grill when I first knew him. The food was great. Eventually Bob owned the grill but lost his lease when Kohll's Drug decided to expand. Bob bought the old Andy's Ark Building, the Saving Center grocery store and a little house by the alley. He had big dreams of opening a restaurant in the Saving Center to replace the Sharon Grill business. He changed his plans and instead took over the old bar and made sandwiches etc. that were vended to businesses.

Bob got active in our neighborhood right away, attended meetings and helped out whenever he could. He let us use his parking area every year for the Annual Spring Clean Up. Neighborhood clean ups were so much better when he ran them and he loved meeting new neighbors.

When Brian O'Connell, president of FBNA at the time decided to move I stopped and talked to Bob and Mary about the upcoming vacancy and tried to explain what the president's responsibili-

ties would entail. I told him to think about it and I would stop back. When I left I thought to myself, "This will never work. These guys are always working their sandwich business." Bob was also working at the time to make the Savings Center into the restaurant that he wanted. He loved to cook for people!

I went back a few days later and we talked more. He said he "would give it a shot." I had mixed feelings. I was happy for the neighborhood that he said yes, but hoped Bob would be OK. With all the extra work I worried about his family.

This ended up being a good move. Bob loved to help people and he wanted a safe neighborhood. He could see a lot of things here that he wanted to change but he also saw the overwhelming good we have in a unique bunch of great people and the old fashioned type of neighborhood where you actually know your neighbors and their families and care about their well being.

Bob was for anything that would help our neighborhood. If the lights were on at the business you just knocked and he would let you in any hour of the day. The lights were almost always on. Unbelievable! I don't know how he functioned and worked as hard as the always did with the amount of sleep he normally got but the Ford Birthsite Neighborhood is much better for it.

Thank you Bob, for all the times you were a part of our lives. We will all miss you.

- Larry Jensen

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## Unboxed

The independent website boxxed.com that was tracking visitors in our neighborhood who were likely customers for drugs or prostitutes has been taken down, probably permanently. Something this controversial is hard to keep sep-

arate from other web business and has had to give way to larger concerns. We thank those who were doing this service to the community with their own time and resources.

## A Word or Two More on Home Ownership

Probably the greatest asset we have in our neighborhood is the history that is associated with our area. This part of Omaha was developed between 1885-1900. At that time it was "The Place to be!" There were wealthy businessmen, managers and supervisors, as well as the people that worked for them, all of whom settled into our neighborhood. They left their mark on this area by building unique homes. Some are big, some are small, and all have some marks of distinction that distance them from the cookie-cutter homes that are now built for the masses. We are fortunate that many of these homes are still intact and have survived the last century. We should take great pride in our efforts to maintain these structures for the future generations.

For anyone wishing to restore or just fix up their old

house, there is a wealth of information available. We have links to goods and services on our website. There is also, in the works, a Restoration Seminar, that will offer more of the same, as well as workshops, hands-on training, and tours through some of the fine houses in our area. We are going to need to dig up a little more funding for this before it is a GO, but as of now it looks like we're on track.

Funding has sometimes been a problem for older homes. At this time we have some very good funding sources; not only for purchasing, but also for renovation-restoration-rejuvenation. We're going to have more on this as we go. We'll talk next month.

- Tracy

## A Development on Redevelopment on Park

At a meeting with the FBNA Board of Directors, representatives of the Park Avenue Square Limited Partnership described their plans to redevelop seven boarded up properties at the intersection of Park and Leavenworth that are currently owned by **Jerry Novak**.

**Louis Wright** from Evolutions Development and Lund Company representatives **Scott Schneiderman** and **Michael Earl** explained the project and the proposed funding. They expect to retain the historical and aesthetic integrity of the buildings while reducing the current number of units from 170 to 92 one, two and three bedroom units. Dilapidated houses will be removed to provide 122 off street parking spots. At this time they expect to hire the Seldin Company as their property manager. This group currently manages the Drake Court Development.

The partnership will need to secure the final segments of their funding before they proceed with the purchase of this property. If they receive TIF, NIFA, and Low Income Housing Tax Credits they have applied for they will be required to hold the

property for fifteen years and meet the reporting guidelines for these programs during that time. A yearly review will confirm that the property is being maintained according to established standards and is financially solvent.

Park Avenue Square Limited requested that both Leavenworth and Fordbirthsite associations write letters of support for the project. The FBNA board and guests were concerned that there's little need for additional "affordable housing" in our area but came to the conclusion that this would be so much better than what is there now and since it doesn't look like anyone else is ready to jump in and buy it this is a good idea.

Considering that condominiums costing up to a million dollars are being developed downtown it could be that properties on Park don't all have to be "affordable" forever but this is what we've got for now. If you know anyone with courage, vision and ten million dollars this is the time to get them moving on a hot real estate deal.

- Lee Murray

## The Park on Park

Ford Birthsite and Hanscom Park Neighborhood associations will jointly develop a proposal to refurbish the northeast corner of Hanscom Park. Field Club has decided to pursue historical lighting instead.

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**April Speaker: Larry Foster from the Parks Department about the Hanscom Park project. Tuesday, April 26, 1107 Park Avenue, 7pm.**

## FBNA 2004

### FBNA 2004/2005

#### Board of Directors and Chairpersons

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President: 342-3943	Tracy Willits TWillits@fbnaomaha.com
Vice President:	Jan Quinley JQuinley@fbnaomaha.com
Secretary:	Kelli Bowen KBowen@fbnaomaha.com
Treasurer/Membership	Mary Brown MBrown@fbnaomaha.com
Neighborhood MRoy@fbnaomaha.com	Michelle Roy
Newsletter:	Lee Murray & Barb Simcoe LMurray@fbnaomaha.com
Web Master:	Randy Roy RRoy@fbnaomaha.com

Ombudsman: This position formally held by Bob Brown has been eliminated by vote of the membership. No one could have replaced Brownie.

# Ford Birthsite Neighborhood Association Membership Application

\$10 – Household & Associate  
\$15 – Business & Apartment Owners  
\$5 – Park Towers

Name \_\_\_\_\_

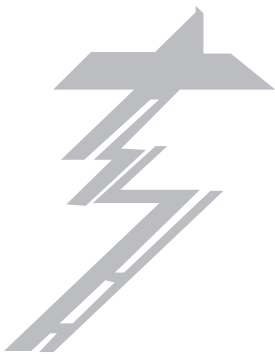
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: 1124 S. 30th Avenue; Omaha, NE 68105

Ford Birthsite Neighborhood Association meetings are scheduled on the last  
Tuesday of each month.

Call 342-3943 for up-to-date information.



## Ford Birthsite Neighborhood Association

1124 S. 30th Avenue  
Omaha, NE 68105  
[www.fbnaomaha.com](http://www.fbnaomaha.com)

- Meeting Monthly on the last Tuesday at 7pm
- Perk Avenue Cafe, 1107 Park Avenue. Call 342-3943