Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association

November 2026

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jcnaomaha.com

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JOSLYN CASTLE NEIGHBORHOOD

A Neighborhood Challenge

JCNA President's Column
By Amy Wagenknecht

At the beginning of 2026, Mayor Ewing challenged us all to be better neighbors to each other and to our community, calling it "Year of the Neighbor." I want to task all with 2 ways you can be a better neighbor.

We have 5-10 loyal "trash mobbers" who come out the first Saturday of each month to pick up as much trash as possible in an hour. They do an amazing job. Think how much cleaner our neighborhood could be if **each** of us picked up more. I challenge you to pick up trash at the least in front of your house or on your block once a month.

My other challenge to you is to utilize the Mayor's Hotline website to report issues and concerns you see. Visit www.omahahotline.com/ to report on everything from overgrown weeds to potholes, abandoned vehicles, or that someone has yet again knocked the stop sign over at 40th & Davenport. ;)

The adage "If you see something, say something" applies and is true. It takes a very short time to submit a report. It is then directed to the appropriate work queue and city department for action. I have seen potholes repaired that I had submitted a report on as quickly as 24 hours before!

Our neighborhood is better when we care for it and each other.





Slightly Larger, More Colorful

Newest Little Free Pantry Provided by 2026 Mayor's Grant

A slightly larger, more colorful Little Free Pantry replaced the thrice repaired old pantry that had been installed during Covid. Amy Wagenknecht, JCNA President, wrote the Mayor's Grant application

Continued Page 4

Ode to a Renter



Jim Winston

By Margie Magnuson

Have you ever thrown the neighborhood newsletter to the side, thinking I am just renter, I don't really need to get involved in this neighborhood?

Or maybe you have thought about attending a meeting or looking to volunteer at one of our events, but thought, I am not that invested in this neighborhood so why bother?

Let me tell you about Jim Winston.

Continued Page 4

Neighborhood Crime Stats and Prevention; Always Report Suspicious Activity to Police

By Jim Winston

Crime in our neighborhoods has declined for the last two years, including a reduction in property crimes while overall violent crimes remained essentially flat.

In 2025, Omaha had 26 homicides, which is below the historical average for those crimes. Every homicide for the last three years has been successfully cleared. Omaha Police Department (OPD) uniforms, detectives and investigative units work together to make this possible. They deserve our thanks and support.

By calling 911, using the Mayor's Hotline, and other resources, we enable OPD to do its job.

Even if you just think there is a problem, call 911. Operators are trained to prioritize the calls.

OPD currently operates with about 87% of budgeted officers. Thankfully, a couple of relatively new tools are available to OPD.

The Real-Time Operations Center (ROC) allows access to live video feeds throughout the city. Suspects and vehicles can be identified faster and that information can be passed on to the responding officers in real time. In 2025, the ROC assisted with nearly 4,000 911 calls.

Similarly, the Drones as First Responders program allows drones to be deployed to active or high-risk incidents. The drone program is managed and staffed under the direction of Omaha Police Air Support Unit. OPD is the first law enforcement agency in Nebraska to receive certification beyond visual line-of-sight in drone deployments.

A Behavioral Health and Wellness Unit manages behavioral health crisis response for OPD. The unit responds to crisis calls alongside OPD officers (when feasible).

And, then there is all of us —the first line in reporting and helping to solve crimes. In 2025, Omaha Crime Stoppers received 4,028 tips, leading to numerous felony arrests and the seizure of illegal firearms and narcotics. The 911 center fielded more than 500,000 calls in 2025.

The Mayor's Hotline is a great resource for reporting non-emergencies such as littering, code violations and homeless encampments. I personally use the Hotline to keep our streets free of potholes, abandoned cars, building code infractions, and graffiti. It's an awesome, easy to use tool. If you don't want your name associated with a report, you can call it in.

Links and information:

911 - dc911.douglascounty-ne.gov/

Mayor's Hotline - www.omahahotline.com/

News -

police.cityofomaha.org/latest-news/487-omaha-crime-continues-to-decline-as-community-partnerships-and-technology-drive-results

nebraskapublicmedia.org/en/news/news-articles/eyes-in-the-sky-new-technology-has-changed-policing-in-omaha/

2026 JCNA Treasurer's Report

1/01/26 — 10/01/26

Submitted by Karl Kehm, JCNA Treasurer

Hello, JCNA Neighborhood:

This report shows $$ received and $$ spent during the first nine month of the year. It includes, but is not limited to, the following sponsored activities:

Summer Yoga (June, July)
Summer Picnics at the Castle
Kids Art Workshops at Cali Commons
Annual Holiday Party at the Castle
Retree Program
Quarterly Newsletter
Spring & Fall Dumpster Days
May-Sept. Third Thursday Art Walks
New Child Swings for Clarkson Park
Clarkson Park Cleanup & Maintenance
Monthly Meetings at Cali Commons
First Saturday Trash Mob Cleanups

Beginning Balance (01/01/26)	**$6,596**
Revenues:	
Membership Dues	$815
Deca Membership Dues	1,185
Business Membership Dues	506
Ad Revenue	1,680
Grants Received	9,693
Donations	450
Total Income	**$14,329**
Expenses	
Newsletter	$2,857
Grants Distributed	7,529
Misc.	1,440
Total Expenses	**($11,826)**
Designated Grant Funds	
To Be Distributed	($2,164)
Available Balance 10/01/26	**$6,935**

Holiday Party at Joslyn Castle!

Sunday, December 6th

6:30 - 8 p.m.

Have your wish list ready,
Santa & Mrs. Claus arrive at 7 p.m.



Kick off the season with cookies, hot chocolate and caroling. It's a JCNA and Joslyn Castle tradition of merriment!

This and That

Fall Park Clean Up

Clarkson Park looked mightily spiffed up after 12 volunteers spent Sunday afternoon, Sept. 20, weeding, raking and picking up litter. Sad to see the sunflowers come down but their time had come after feeding the birds, bees and butterflies this summer.

JCNA New Website

Many thanks to NeEtta Gillespie for updating our JCNA website with a fresh look and new features. It has gone from ".org" to ".com". The old domain will redirect you to the new one if you happen to click on it. So, check out: www.jcnaomaha.com. You can see the newsletters with color, too!

Recap of October Dumpster Day

Jim Winston, last time out as lead dog for Dumpster Day, summarized the October 10th event: It was a successful, if somewhat slow day. We sent approximately 35 tons to the landfill, 3,200 cubic feet of metal was recycled and 600 cubic feet of usable goods were reclaimed to be resold. Jesse Barnes Jr. & Sr. brought a whole bunch of folks to help out and, boy, did they.

I believe these were the best "metal guys" we have had, at least on my watch. I would recommend bringing them back next time.

Jim is moving to Bensen and the JCNA will always miss him and be grateful for his years of service and dedication to improving and protecting our neighborhood.



Happenings in the Joslyn Castle Neighborhood

First Saturdays: Trash Mob one-hour neighborhood cleanup, 10-11 a.m. Meet in front of Cali Commons, 518 N. 40th St. Buckets, vests and pickers provided. Bring your own gloves. Dec. 5, Jan. 2, Feb. 6, March 6.

Second Mondays: JCNA Meetings, Cali Commons, 518 N. 40th St., 6:30-8 p.m.. No December meeting (the new Board meets to create 2027 goals). Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 8.

VINTAGE WOODS

Oak & Pine, most over 100 yrs old.

Window trim, baseboards, lintels & doors

contact John Hruska

johnchruska@gmail.com

Fiber Arts, Vintage Market, Teas & Symphonic Chorus

There is much to look forward to this season with events sponsored by the Cathedral Arts Project (CAP) from November through January.

The **Holiday Fiber Arts Show** opened in October and runs through Dec. 23.

The **Christmas Vintage Market** opens Nov. 8, from noon to 4 p.m. and also runs until Dec. 23. It will again include **English Afternoon Teas**, which begin Nov. 10. Delectable and scrumptious sandwiches and pastries served on vintage china with elegant settings will brighten your afternoon. Reservations recommended.

The Fabric Art Show, Christmas Vintage Market and English Teas all take place in the Cultural Arts Center off Webster Street, behind the Saint Cecilia Cathedral on 40th Street. Hours are Noon to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, and 11:30 am to 2:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.

The Omaha Symphonic Chorus will perform its annual **Christmas at the Cathedral** at Saint Cecilia Cathedral beginning at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4 and again Sunday, Dec. 6, at 2 p.m.

January brings a Flower Festival Retrospective on Sunday, Jan. 10, from noon to 3 p.m. The annual **Flower Festival** will be at the end of January, and will run from Thursday, Jan. 28 with a patron dinner through Sunday, Jan. 31, with multiple viewings to include special needs and the general public.

Newest Little Free Pantry

Continued from Page 1

that provided the funds to hire an Iowa craftsman to build a new one. This one allows people to easily see what is available on the two inside shelves, and it is a rare day when no one has contributed a donation to it.

The JCNA concentrates on supplying hygiene products and winter wear in season. Two generous donations allowed us to order from a business that sells in bulk to non-profits. Wool blend socks, shampoo and toothpaste will be put in sealed bags to further protect them.

We are also grateful that the Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart will be organizing a winter hat/scarf/glove drive for the pantry, led by Scott Quinn, the campus ministry director. This is the second time that Duchesne has done this drive and we thank them!

If you donate cans of food, please aim for cans that have a built-in opener. Not all people in need have a can opener available to them.

Ode to a Renter *Continued from Page 1*

He has been a renter in our neighborhood for a long time, probably 25 plus years, and I have known him about that long when he became involved in JCNA. He has served on the board for close to 20 years as our renter representative. He even stepped up to serve as board president when called! So, renters, your involvement does matter. Whether you are here for a year or 10 years you can become involved just like Jim did!

I am not sure what brought Jim to his first neighborhood meeting, but he came and he stayed. He and I were involved at the beginning of the JCNA citizen patrol, driving around the neighborhood on the first Friday of the month to help be the eyes and ears for the OPD.

After many years, we transitioned to patrolling in the summer months on the first-ever bike patrol. It was a challenge with the hills, but it was a great way to interact with neighbors and be a visible presence to residents.

Later, Jim's interest in public safety led him to serve as the JCNA liaison with the northeast police precinct and area neighbors to focus on ways to deter crime.

Jim's biggest role for many years has been to organize and run our dumpster clean-up program. This event every spring (and recently in the fall as well) requires planning and coordination with multiple organizations. Jim makes it seem easy, but it is a lot of hard work, and while we do have volunteers to help at the event, most of the heavy work has fallen on his capable shoulders. So if you see him, be sure to thank him!

All these accolades are not only to highlight his dedication as a renter wanting to make a difference in his neighborhood but also a way to say thanks and goodbye to a good and trusted friend. Jim is building a small house in a different part of Omaha and will be moving out of our neighborhood, so he will step down from our board by the end of the year. Jim will be sorely missed, and we wish him the best on his new adventure as a homeowner!

Poet Ends Castle Residency with Poem

Matt Mason, former Nebraska State Poet, concluded his six-month Artist-in-Residence time at the Joslyn Castle with a poem describing his experience there.

Keys to the Castle

By Matt Mason

I have been given keys
to a castle.

That's not a metaphor.

It's George and Sarah Joslyn's
home and they weren't the
type to wield money like
a knife, crush workers and
widows and orphans so that
they could sit alone, cackling
on a hill of gold coins and
large bills.

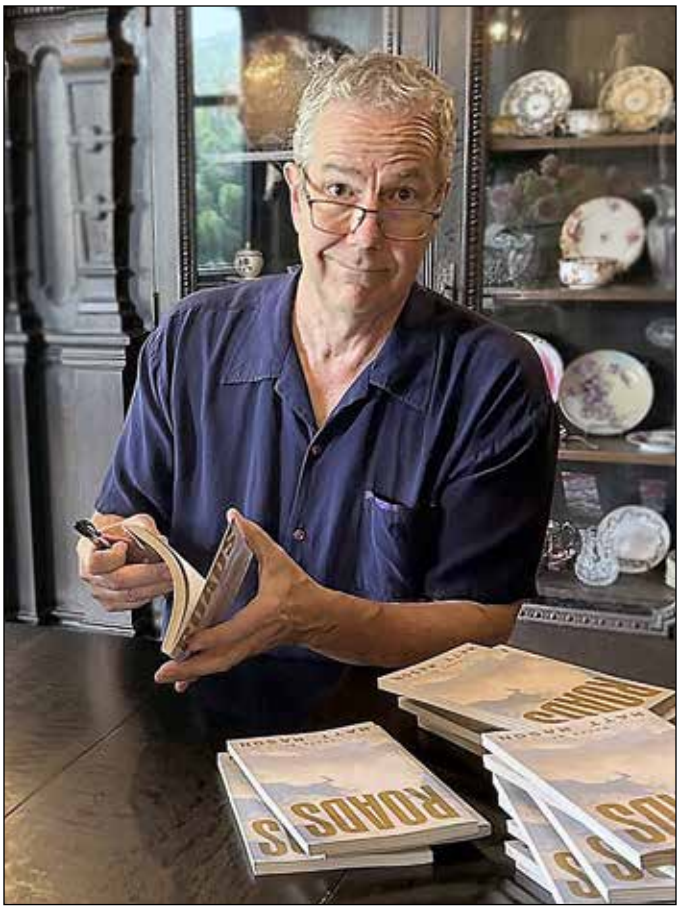
They bought art.
They made gardens.
They built a castle
in Omaha.

When I walk to my desk,
the floor boards creak
like musical notes,
like a footstep symphony.

And the castle
is filled with art again,
is, now, nobody's home

(though
I do
have keys), nobody's home but

ideas, but
gardens
opened to the world, but
a turret
opened
to poetry.



Matt brings his poetry residency to a close.

Holiday Festivities at the Castle

By Melissa McCarthy
Programming Manager

Joslyn Castle Guild Holiday Boutique

Gather with friends and family to shop in the warmth and beauty of Omaha's historic treasure decorated in full holiday splendor.

Join us as we host the annual Joslyn Castle & Gardens Holiday Boutique and Preview Party on Friday, Nov. 13 and Saturday, Nov. 14, 2026.

Shop from dozens of local, small business vendors offering wares for everyone on your holiday list.

All three levels will be filled with vendors ready to help you tackle that shopping list: artisan candles, vintage treasures, original artworks, jewelry, menswear, accessories and more! Admission to the boutique benefits Joslyn Castle & Gardens, a non-profit organization with a mission of preserving and sharing the space for the community.

Joslyn Castle Candlelight Tours
Wednesday, Nov. 18 at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Join us for a rare opportunity to tour the Joslyn Castle by candlelight, as we offer limited evening tours! Together, we will delve into the history of Omaha's original philanthropists, George and Sarah Joslyn, and admire the details of John McDonald's architectural masterpiece by the glow of (battery operated) candlelight.

The Castle bar will be available and in keeping with the holiday spirit, will serve a non-alcoholic spiced cider and a mulled wine for those who choose to imbibe. The ticket price includes one featured refreshment.

Krampus Ball
Saturday, Dec. 5, 9 p.m. - 1 a.m.

You won't want to miss our Krampus Ball! This is a night to celebrate some of our lesser-known figures from winter lore — Krampus, Frau Perchta, La Befana, Mari Lwyd, Belsnickel, Grýla and the Yule Lads to name a few.

Creative dress is highly encouraged. Register your costume to win a grand prize that will be announced at midnight! Dance to the sounds of DJ Cemetery Gates who will be spinning some Post Punk, Dark Wave, New Wave, Goth, Synth and Alt classics.



A crew at the Rice Bowl sends greetings.

Rice Bowl Joins JCNA

Neighborhood Landmark for 32 Years

Happy to announce that the RICE BOWL restaurant has joined the JCNA this fall as a new Business Member. For close to 32 years their sloping red roof has been a familiar landmark when driving on Saddle Creek Road. And if you happen to be walking by the RICE BOWL the tantalizing scents floating out their door makes the mouth water. A luncheon outing there discovered fast, friendly service and plates of delicious steaming entrees. We welcome them and appreciate their support.

Razors & Blazers Barbershop Now a JCNA Deca Booster



Razors & Blazers, a JCNA Business Member, renewed this year as a Deca Booster! Malachi Brown's barber shop at 3828 Dodge Street has more than 130 five-star reviews and a Best of Omaha designation. We appreciate his support of our neighborhood.

JCNA Business Member: Psychotherapy Office on Cuming St.

SLADEK PSYCHOTHERAPY
MANIFEST ABUNDANCE

The office complex next to Amateur Coffee at 3915 Cuming is now occupied by one of our newest JCNA Business Members, Sladek Psychotherapy, opened by Asia Sladek LIMHP, CPC, NCC. She can be reached at: asia@sladekpsychotherapy.com.

Some of her background:
This year, I was excited to expand into my current office location and began seeing clients in June. I specialize in working with trauma and anxiety and am passionate about providing affirming, inclusive care, including being a strong advocate for the LGBTQ+ community.
My long-term vision for the space is to create a collective of independent mental health clinicians who can offer a variety of services while helping make high-quality mental health care more accessible to people in our community. I'm excited to be part of the neighborhood and look forward to building connections with the people and businesses that make this community special.

Appreciating the Generosity of JCNA Deca Boosters

The JCNA welcomes the generosity of our growing list of Deca Boosters. You can save money and join them, gaining 12 years of membership in your neighborhood association while only paying the price of 10.

For details, turn to the back page membership form.

John and Joyce Passarelli, Fergus and Orna Hoban, Aaron and NeEtta Gillespie, Michael and Kimberly Joyce, Jim Winston, Steven and Deirdre Evans, Natasha Kraft, Jerry and Millie Johnson, Ryan and Mandy Vandement, Paul Mileris and Robin Behlers, Thomas and Marcia Riley, Michael and Joy (Voltz) Doll, James DeVaney, Lori Reed and Jon Iversen, Jeanne DeMars, Mary Helen McDermott, John Campbell and Robyn Tait, Brad and Amy Schaap, Matt and Maggie Jones, Michael Berry, Bob Broom and Mary Clarkson, Alex and Lia Nester, Madison Haugland, Karl and Suzanne Kehm, Doug and Joyce Sasse, Michael and Katie Schill, Roger and Cathy Carroll, Ryan and Kim Isherwood, Patrick Murray and Jeanne Schuler, Adella Wacker, the Mental Health Association of Nebraska, Barb Bakhit, Joseph A. Ramirez, Razors and Blazers, Russell Bowie, Craig and Cathy Lyons, Tim and Megan Smith, Scott and Jenni Herchenbach, Jason Payne, Rose Kohl, and Jane Florence.



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We value the support of our JCNA Advertisers and Business Members and encourage our neighborhood to support them in return.

Our Advertisers are essential to our quarterly newsletter reaching the entire neighborhood and we thank them: **Sonny Gerber Auto Sales, Dino's Storage, Ideal Hardware and Window Repair, and Indian Creek Nursery.**

We also welcome the support of our JCNA Business Members and thank them:

The Artisan at 39th Street
Amateur Coffee
Cathedral Arts Project
St. Cecilia Cathedral
The Law Center
Premier Bank
Ideal Hardware and Window Repair
Joslyn Castle and Gardens
Cali Commons
Lisa's Cafe
Santa Monica
Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart
Legacy Preservation
Jimmy John's
Refugee Women Rising
Mental Health Association of Nebraska
Cuming Corners LLC
Noteworthy Music TM
Ives PM, LLC
Rice Bowl
Sladek Psychotherapy

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Save the Date

Holiday party at the Castle
Sunday, Dec. 6, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

JOSLYN CASTLE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Current JCNA members will receive postcard or email reminders of when they need to renew their membership. If you have a question about your status, please email Deirdre Evans at devans1950@gmail.com or call: 402-551-9005

If you received this newsletter then you live within the boundaries of the Joslyn Castle Neighborhood Association, which goes from 37th Street to Saddle Creek Road and from Dodge Street to Cuming Street.

Dues for a year's JCNA Membership are $15.00, $30.00 for a Business Membership.
A new category of JCNA Membership is DECA BOOSTER. You can now get 12 years of membership for $150.00, saving $30.00.

Send payment and this form to:
JCNA
PO Box 31764
Omaha NE 68131

Or use PayPal link on our website:
www.jcnaomaha.org

Thank you for joining us in making our neighborhood a great place to live!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

❑ I would like to hear about volunteer opportunities