

2007 Annual Meeting

Urban Forestry in Downers Grove and the Threat of Emerald Ash Tree Borer Infestation

After a short business meeting, the main topic for the next meeting of Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is "Urban Forestry in Downers Grove and the Threat of Emerald Ash Tree Borer Infestation." We are holding our 12th Annual Meeting in Room 503 at the Lincoln Center, 935 Maple Avenue, at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, December 12, 2007. Our featured speaker is Kerstin von der Heide, Downers Grove Village Forester.

Kerstin has worked as Village Forester in Downers Grove for the past 16 years. She holds Bachelor and Master of Science Degrees from Northern Illinois University and is a Certified Arborist/Municipal Specialist. In 2006, Downers Grove's forestry program received accreditation from the Society of Municipal Arborists. At present, only two other SMA-accredited forestry programs exist in Illinois.

During her tenure in Downers Grove Kerstin has designed and implemented a comprehensive Urban Forestry and Municipal Landscape Maintenance Program that includes regularly scheduled parkway tree trimming and replacement of weakened and diseased trees.

The potential for Emerald Ash Tree Borer infestation in Downers Grove now provides a significant challenge to our urban forestry program. Ash trees represent a major component of our urban forestry program.

Forestry staff has a computerized tree inventory of all the public parkway and Village property trees. Currently on the parkways, there are more than 3300 green ash, 1100 white ash and a handful of blue ash and European ash. This represents over 18.6% of the public parkway tree population. The parkway ash tree inventory is graphically displayed on the attached map titled Downers Grove Parkway Ash Trees. Each black dot represents a parkway ash tree, and some streets are colored almost a solid black due to the large numbers of ash trees. Another 35 ash trees are on Village-owned properties for a total of 4435 public ash trees. Most of the public ash trees were planted in the 1970s and they now have an average trunk diameter of 13.2".

Due to the likelihood of Emerald Ash Borer beetles infesting ash trees within the next 3 years in Downers Grove, staff has requested and the 2008 Village Budget now includes funding of \$250,000 to begin a proactive program of removing and replacing public ash trees.



Kerstin von der Heide



Protect
Your
Heritage

PDHA Annual
Meeting
Wednesday
December 12
7 PM
Lincoln Center
Room 503

IN THIS ISSUE:

2007 Annual Meeting

1846 Blodgett House

Rita Martin
Memorial Trees

Annual Election
of Directors

Lyman Woods &
Little Sprouts
Program

Visit us
on the world
wide web
at

www.PDHA.org

Pierce Downer's
Heritage Alliance
P.O. Box 422
Downers Grove
Illinois 60515

Protect Your Heritage

"Trees enhance and preserve the air quality... reduce noise... reduce topsoil erosion... reduce energy consumption... provide nesting areas for birds... which in turn assist in the control of insects... reduce storm water runoff... replenish ground water supplies... and... protect property values," according to Downers Grove Ordinance # 4673, adopted 5/17/2005.

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Update about 1846 Blodgett Home Now at 812 Randall Street

Last Spring Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance helped with formation of a new group that is working to preserve and restore one of the oldest houses in the village, the 1846 Blodgett House. Early Downers Grove residents Israel and Avis Blodgett built this house to replace their first log cabin home on land along Maple Avenue where the Downers Grove Historical Museum is currently located. The new group, *1846 Blodgett House ... on the Move*, is currently working with the Village of Downers Grove and the Downers Grove Park District to preserve and restore this important part of our Downers Grove heritage.



Avis Blodgett and six of her sons at a family reunion sitting on the front lawn of the 1846 Blodgett House at its Maple Avenue location. Photo courtesy of P. Burley

On November 1st the Park Board gave its approval for moving the 1846 Blodgett House onto the Museum Campus so that it can be preserved and restored to evoke the era 1846-1865. During that time the Blodgett family was acting on their abolitionist beliefs and using their home as a stopover point on the Underground Railroad to help fugitive slaves reach freedom in Canada. For more information, please visit www.1846BlodgettHouse.org.

In the meanwhile, Peter C. Burley, a great-great grandson of Israel and Avis Blodgett learned about the project to preserve and restore the 1846 Blodgett House by surfing the Internet. Peter has now supplied the *1846 Blodgett House ... on the Move* group with photo of a 19th Century Blodgett family reunion on their front lawn on Maple Avenue with the house in the background. This photo will be of great value in designing the restoration work.

Rita Martin Memorial Trees



*Rita Martin Memorial
Prairie Fire Crabapple,
Ed Martin and
the Martins dog*

Next Spring two new trees will flower in Hummer Park. A Prairie Fire Crabapple will have purple flowers, and a Firebird will have white flowers. Purple and white are the colors of Downers Grove North High School and will serve as a memorial tribute to Rita Martin, who died on Sunday, April 1, 2007 and was, for many years, a director of the Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance.

These trees seem a fitting memorial for Rita, who spent most of her life in Downers Grove. She and her husband, Ed, lived near Hummer Park for many years. And all of her children went to Downers Grove North.

An avid naturalist, Rita worked tirelessly for protection of the natural heritage of Downers Grove and advocated for environmental causes all of her life. She was never afraid to raise her voice at public meetings - whether it was before the Park Board, Village Council, County Board, Forest Preserve District or Illinois Nature Preserves Commission - in support of preserving natural areas.

We miss Rita, as do many other people around Downers Grove. But we can now stop by Hummer Park to remember her under purple and white flowers.

Annual Election of Directors

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is a 12-year old, Illinois not-for-profit corporation that the Internal Revenue Service recognizes as suitable for charitable contributions. Its Board of Directors manages activities of the Heritage Alliance. Bylaws of the corporation provide that the Directors are to be elected each year at Heritage Alliance's Annual Meeting. At present there are eleven directors, but the Bylaws permit up to fifteen directors to be elected.

Long-time Director Aspasia Colias is retiring as a director at the end of her current term. During the past year three other directors, Laurel Bowen, Lee Forsythe and Matt LeCren, have resigned from the Board. We are very grateful to each of them for important support over many years and wish them well in their future endeavors.

This year the Nominating Committee is considering proposing the election of two new directors, John Schofield and Mark Thoman, along with the re-election of the following ten incumbent directors: Jane E. Amorosi, James Cavallo, Gordon L. Goodman, Ihor Hlohowskyj, Ken Lerner, William M. Runyon, Chris Saricks, David Schulz, Charley Smart and Jerry Yoksoulion, all of whom live in Downers Grove. If you want to become more active and are interested in serving as a director of Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance, please contact one of the Nominating Committee members: Ken Lerner, Gordon Goodman or Jerry Yoksoulion.

Current officers of Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance are James Cavallo, Chair, Jerry Yoksoulion, Chair Pro-tem, and Gordon L. Goodman, Treasurer. For 2007-08, the nominating committee is considering proposing that these officers be re-elected along with the election of Ihor Hlohowskyj as Secretary.

Lyman Woods & Little Sprouts Program

By Shannon Forsythe



Students peel back the seed coat on their bean seed to reveal the baby plant embryo inside.

In 2003, the Downers Grove Park District and the Downers Grove Elementary School District 58 formed a partnership to meet environmental education needs of first grade classes. The partnership created the Little Sprouts Program for the first graders in Downers Grove. After evaluation and modification, a half-day, minds-on, hands-dirty field trip was scheduled for each school at Lyman Woods. Little Sprouts was developed not only to meet curricular needs, but also to foster the important values of conservation and stewardship in the participants. Since 2003, every first grade student in Downers Grove has participated in this award-winning program.

In 2007, the program received funding through small grants from the Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance, The Grove Foundation, The Education Foundation, and Illinois Department of Natural Resources. This funding was used to pay for instructor and coordinator salaries, student transportation, and materials and supplies.



Students participate as part of the studio audience of the Chef Soil-ar-dee Show. Today's recipe: SOIL!

Please watch next year for our 2008 Highland Ave Adopt-A-Highway CLEAN-UP DAYS.

We work on Saturdays from 8:30-10:30 am.

Check our website for updates!

Have you renewed your membership in the Heritage Alliance?

See the back page of this newsletter for more info and how YOU can make a difference!

Did You Know that our website features links to other environmental websites that you may find of interest?

Check us out at

www.PDHA.org

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance
P.O. Box 422
Downers Grove Illinois 60515



Pierce Downer
1782-1863

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance Fall 2007 Newsletter

You are invited to join us at our 2007 Annual Meeting
Wednesday, December 12, 7:00PM
Room 503, Lincoln Center, 935 Maple Ave., Downers Grove.
Check our website www.PDHA.org for more details.

Your membership in the Alliance helps in our efforts to petition local government officials to preserve our heritage resources. Your participation in our programs demonstrates to our community the strength of our alliance to protect Downers Grove's natural and cultural heritage.

Please join Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance or renew your membership now as we work for protection of the natural and cultural heritage of Downers Grove.

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance
P.O. Box 422, Downers Grove, IL 60515

Yes, I want to begin/renew my membership in Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance.

Name(s): _____

Street Address: _____ Telephone: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Email Address: _____

Contribution: \$ _____ (Employer matching contribution?) _____ I/We can also volunteer some time.

A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION of \$10 or more will help the Alliance defray expenses, but is **not** required for membership. Your email address will allow us to keep you informed of future events.