

Spring 2007 Newsletter

Protect Your Heritage

PDHA Next
Meeting
Wednesday
May 16
7 PM
Lincoln Center
Room 202

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In memory of
Rita Martin

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Ordinance

Visit Us
on the world
wide web
at

www.PDHA.org

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

Woodsfest at Lyman Woods

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is cooperating with the Downers Grove Park District to welcome spring and honor the 20th anniversary of the purchase of Lyman Woods. The Heritage Alliance is helping to prepare exhibits about volunteer efforts that eventually succeeded in saving "Downers' Last Grove" as a publicly owned nature preserve. Please come on Sunday, May 6 from 1 to 4 p.m. for **Woodsfest** at the Lyman Woods Interpretive Center, 901 31st Street.

Let the Lyman Woods Interpretive Center be the starting point for your exploration of more than 150 acres of old- and second-growth oak woods, meadow, and marsh. Hike the more than two miles of marked trails and discover over 400 species of plants, some of which are rare in the Chicago region. You may see white-tailed deer, great horned owls, red fox, coyote, and Cooper's Hawks on your walk if you are in the right place at the right time.



Hepatica Blossoms

May is a wonderful time in Lyman Woods to see beautiful spring wildflowers, to welcome back migratory birds after a long winter, to listen to a storyteller and to see live raptors. Participate in guided trail hikes through the woods, children's crafts and games, and more. The event on May 6th is free, but donations are welcomed to benefit natural resource management at Lyman Woods. For more information, please call the Lyman Woods Interpretive Center at (630) 963-9388.

During 2007, Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance together with the Downers Grove Park District, the Village of Downers Grove and the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County is celebrating the 20th anniversary of the purchase of Lyman Woods. The purchase of the many parcels that now make up the Lyman Woods Nature Preserve is a tribute to the leadership of these organizations as well as many dedicated individuals.



Can you find the deer in these woods?

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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The 1846 Blodgett Home Now at 812 Randall Street

Early Downers Grove residents Israel and Avis Blodgett built the 1846 Blodgett House to replace their first log cabin home on land along Maple Avenue where the Downers Grove Historical Museum is currently located. This simple one-and-a-half story, two- bedroom frame structure was completed in 1849. Now one of the oldest houses in the village, the 1846 Blodgett House, with rustic hand-hewn black walnut joists and simple clapboard structure, reflects early pioneer style, craftsmanship and living space.



Artist's concept for a front view of restored 1846 Blodgett House

Before the turn of the 20th century, the 1846 Blodgett House was on the side of the Blodgett property. Now the 1846 Blodgett house at 812 Randall Street has been purchased for redevelopment. In support of efforts to preserve this house, its history and our heritage, Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance helped with formation of a new group called *1846 Blodgett House ... on the Move*.

1846 Blodgett House ... on the Move is currently working with the Downers Grove Park District and the Village of Downers Grove to find a suitable way to preserve, restore and utilize this important part of our Downers Grove heritage.

The group is partnering with the Village to hold a fundraising concert featuring the Gin Blossoms on June 21st just before Heritage Festival this year. Please visit their website 1846BlodgettHouse.org for additional information and to learn how you can help.



Rita Martin, 1927-2007

Rita Martin died on Sunday, April 1, 2007. Rita had worked tirelessly for protection of the natural heritage of Downers Grove. She was a strong advocate for all living creatures. Rita was skillful and persistent in researching the background of complex issues. She served for many years as a Director of Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance. PDHA Directors intend to select an appropriate tribute in memory of Rita Martin at their upcoming meeting on May 16, 2007.

Cool Cities: Solving Global Warming One City at a Time

Communities all over America are responding to the threat of global warming with smart energy solutions. These "Cool Cities" are taking decisive action to reduce heat-trapping emissions, lower energy bills, save taxpayer dollars and protect our environment by joining the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection initiative. Please visit www.CoolCities.us to learn more about this important program to reduce global warming pollution.

In a letter dated March 22, 2007, PHDA Chair James Cavallo wrote to all members of the Downers Grove Village Council and Commissioner Candidates requesting our Village to adopt the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. On April 12, 2007 the Village of Downers Grove Environmental Concerns Commission made a similar recommendation.

Historic Preservation Ordinance

Last year the Architectural Design Review Board (ADRB) recommended that the Village Council adopt a historic preservation ordinance that relies on owner consent to identify and help protect historic structures and neighborhoods in Downers Grove.

The ADRB further recommended that the Village also investigate the concept of Neighborhood Conservation Districts, which could be used (again with owner consent) to preserve the character of neighborhoods that are not necessarily "historic" but that have qualities that the residents value and want to preserve. Since the Village is a mosaic of neighborhoods built in different eras, the benefits of neighborhood preservation should not be limited to those who live in the oldest parts of town.



Homes in Prince Pond Neighborhood

Earlier this year the ADRB held additional hearings at the request of the Village Council to refine the proposed Historic Preservation Ordinance. Now the Village staff has prepared a revised draft ordinance based on the ADRB's detailed recommendations. The ADRB is currently being asked to meet again as soon as possible to consider and make recommendations on this new draft Historic Preservation Ordinance. Currently, it is expected that Village Council will discuss the revised draft Ordinance at a workshop meeting in late May or June of this year.

Additional information about progress on adopting a Historic Preservation Ordinance for Downers Grove is available at the website of the Downers Grove Coalition for Managed Redevelopment (DGCMR), www.DGCMR.org.

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance helped to form the DGCMR group in 2005.



Victorian Architecture in Downers Grove

*Please Join Us on
our
Highland Ave
Adopt-A-Highway
CLEAN-UP DAYS*

*April 21
June 23
August 25
October 13*

*Saturdays
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 Spring 2007 Newsletter

**You are invited to join us at our next 2007 Meeting
Wednesday, May 16, 7:00PM**

**Room 202, 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.