

### Protect Your Heritage

**PDHA  
Next Meeting  
Wednesday,  
May 31<sup>st</sup>, 7 PM  
Lincoln Center  
Room 307**

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## Wilderness & Wildflower Walk, Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>

Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, Volunteer Naturalist Lance Herning will guide a Wilderness & Wildflower Walk in Lyman Woods. The walk begins and ends at the Interpretive Center, 901 31<sup>st</sup> Street, Downers Grove, IL (just east of Highland Avenue).

The walk starts at 1:00 PM and lasts about 1 $\frac{3}{4}$  hours.

The date is relatively early again this year in view of our mild winter and warm spring. Each year there is something different in the woods. Walkers are asked to be prepared for the weather of the day, and for wet ground along the paths.



*Lance Herning explaining wilderness lore.*

The group is limited to about 18 participants. In order to take part in this special exploration of Lyman Woods, participants need to register in advance and are asked to make a \$25 donation to support the educational activities of Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance (children under 13 free).



*Sharp-Lobed Hepatica  
Hepatica acutiloba*

To reserve a spot, visit the PDHA website, [www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org), and click on the link to the [registration page](#). The registration page will ask for the number of walkers in your party and an email address. A few days before the walk, you'll receive an email reminder. You can pay with a credit card using PayPal, or mail a check to: Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance, PO

Box 422, Downers Grove, IL 60515 – *By Ken Lerner*

## Yard Waste

Every wonder where all that yard waste you put out by the curb goes? Mike Baker, Deputy Village Manager for Downers Grove, explained it as follows.

Yard waste is taken to a state-permitted yard waste composting site. At these sites it is processed in a tub grinder so the material can be composted.

At some sites, it is then placed in large, long piles of yard waste, which are called windrows. These piles are then turned and in some cases watered. The piles are turned to maintain aerobic digestion of the material. Typically the material is screened at the end the process to remove contaminants.

In other cases, the ground yard waste is applied to farm fields and then turned into the soil.

In the both cases, the state recognizes these as environmentally beneficial. The material from windrows can be used in place of soil for landscaping projects, including road construction, and in some cases is sold as soil or a soil substitute. When the material is tilled into the soil, it is done at an agronomic rate and increases the amount of humus in the soil. – *By Ken Lerner*

**Protect  
Your  
Heritage**

**PDHA Directors**

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is a 21-year old, Illinois not-for-profit corporation with charitable group status from the Internal Revenue Service. PDHA's Board of Directors manages its activities.

The following people are PDHA Officers:

Chair Ken Lerner,

Chair Pro-Tem  
Chris Saricks,

Secretary  
Mark Bragen,

Treasurer  
Gordon Goodman,

& PDHA Directors:

Sue Carroll,  
Jim Cavallo,  
Marge Earl,  
Irene Hogstrom,  
Rich Kulovany,  
John Schofield,  
& Mark Thoman.

**We warmly thank  
retiring Director  
Wally Brown  
for his many years  
of public service  
and have dedicated  
a bench in the  
Lyman Woods  
Preserve in his honor.**

Newsletter

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K. Lerner

**Downers Grove Hosts  
Chicago Suburban Preservation Alliance**

The Chicago Suburban Preservation Alliance, a networking group of historic preservation officials and advocates, held its winter meeting on Saturday, March 11 at the Avery Coonley School, a site listed on the National Register of Historic Places, located on Maple Avenue in Downers Grove. The meeting was co-hosted by the Village of Downers Grove and Friends of the Edwards House.

Avery Coonley School graciously welcomed over 50 guests from 20 municipalities, ranging from Joliet to Highland Park. Downers Grove was well represented with seven organizations in attendance, including seven board members of Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance. Other Downers Grove groups included American Foursquares of Downers Grove, the Architectural Design Review Board (DG's version of a Historic Preservation Commission), the DG Historical Society, Downtown Downers Grove Management Corporation, Friends of the Edwards House and the Village of Downers Grove, including Mayor Martin Tully.

Lisa DiChiera of Landmarks Illinois was the MC for the morning sessions and mentioned upcoming events, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation annual meeting which will be held in Chicago in November. She also summarized current legislative issues in Illinois and Congress that may affect historic preservation.



*Lisa DiChiera*

Stan Popovich, Downers Grove Director of Community Development, spoke on the evolution in historic preservation efforts of the village. Recent changes to the village's ordinance



*Stan Popovich*

were designed to make the process of landmarking easier, by eliminating fees, simplifying the application process, and eliminating burdensome requirements on landmarked properties – while preserving requirements that are needed to meaningfully protect them.

Rich Kulovany and Tom Nybo of the Friends of the Edwards House then spoke about the valiant efforts to save the Edwards House, which did not succeed, but energized historic

preservation efforts in the village leading to changes in the historic preservation ordinance and a burst of landmarking activity. Two properties were landmarked in the eight years between 2007 and 2015 under the original ordinance compared with 10 that have been landmarked since the revised ordinance was unanimously adopted by the DG Village Council in December, 2016 - with more in the pipeline. Rich and Tom noted the effectiveness of social media to let people know what was going on and get them interested in the issues and how voluntary landmarking has virtually eliminated opposition to landmarking. (Continued on page 3)

## Chicago Suburban Preservation Alliance (continued)

Liz Chalberg described activities of the Downers Grove Historical Society. Their Historic Homes Program dovetails nicely with the Village's landmarking process. The Society reviews an application from the home owners. Buildings designed as historic are eligible for a plaque and information about the building is kept on file, publicly available to researchers at the Downers Grove Museum.

Amy Gassen gave a presentation on the efforts to document and celebrate the American Foursquare homes in Downers Grove, which has been a Gassen family project. Their Facebook page maps 130 homes of Foursquare design in the village, identified through their survey work. They have reached out to the owners, have been able to tour several of the homes, documenting the variety of interior designs and features of these houses that were mostly built in the 1920s.

The meeting included a lunch-break tour of the Avery Coonley School, a private school for gifted students, which moved to Downers Grove in 1916. Attendees also received a book documenting the history of the school and the mission of its founders.



*Mayor Tully honoring the Frigo family*

After lunch, Downers Grove Mayor Martin Tully awarded a landmark certificate and plaque to Art and Judy Frigo, owners of the original Pierce Downer house on Seeley Avenue, which they recently landmarked. The Mayor spoke about the significance of preserving the home of the town's founder and namesake – desire to protect this home was a key driver in establishing the

Village's historic preservation program. The Frigos added their perspective on being "stewards" of the home, in which they have lived 46 years, and their pride in preserving this link to the past. The house, dating back to the 1840s, served as a stop on the Underground Railroad for runaway slaves.

Anthony Rubano of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency gave an informative and surprisingly entertaining presentation on historic preservation tax credits, including the Illinois property tax freeze program for historic properties, and a handful of federal income-tax credit programs for rehabilitation of residential and commercial historic properties.

Lastly, the group heard from Willis Johnson about a project he undertook to renovate and add on to a historic movie theatre in Woodstock, Illinois. Willis and Shirley Johnson are the owners of Classic Cinemas, which includes the Tivoli Theatre in Downers Grove. The Woodstock project benefited from the federal tax credit program, allowing the original theater from the 1920s to be preserved and restored, while an addition provided additional space for several more multiplex theaters.

Visit our [links page at www.pdha.org](http://www.pdha.org) for links to the Friends of the Edwards House, Downers Grove Historical Society, Landmarks Illinois, and the Village's historic preservation page. – *By Ken Lerner & Rich Kulovany*

*Please Join Us on  
Our 2017  
Highland Ave.  
Adopt-A-Highway  
CLEAN-UP DAYS*

*April 15  
June 10  
August 19  
September 30*

*Saturdays  
8:30-10:30 AM*

*Check our  
website for  
updates. If you  
would like to help  
us keep Highland  
Avenue clean,  
please contact us  
at [info@PDHA.org](mailto:info@PDHA.org)  
to learn more  
about  
volunteering.*

*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!*

*Check us out at  
[www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org)*

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

## Protect Your Heritage

Visit us  
on the  
world wide web  
at  
[www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org)

To receive your  
**Newsletter**  
in full color!  
Send your  
e-mail address  
to us at  
[info@pdha.org](mailto:info@pdha.org)

National Arbor Day  
is April 28, 2017.  
Let's get together  
to celebrate the  
importance of trees!  
You will find a  
wealth of information  
at  
[www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org)  
and at  
[www.mortonarb.org](http://www.mortonarb.org)

## Founders Day Activities

This year a full program of Founders Day events celebrating the history and heritage of Downers Grove spans two weekends.

### Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>:

**11:00 AM**, the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Pine Hollow Open Golf Tournament, tees off at the [Downers Grove Golf Club](#), 2420 Hadow Avenue.

**1:00 PM**, PDHA's [Wilderness and Wildflower Walk](#) sets out from the Lyman Woods Interpretive Center, 901 31<sup>st</sup> Street. Turn to the 1<sup>st</sup> page of this newsletter for details.

### Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>:

**9:00 AM**, [Windy City Walkers](#) start out from Wandschneider Park, 831 Maple Avenue, offering both 5K and 10K walks through historic sites, including one of the largest concentrations of Sears Catalog Homes, the Historical Museum, a stop on the Underground Railroad and more.

**10:00 AM**, a [Family Bike Ride](#) sponsored by Downers Grove Bicycle Club starts out from Fishel Park, 1050 Grove Street.

**11:30 PM**, the [Downers Grove Historical Society](#) is dedicating two plaques at Downers Grove's Main Street Cemetery, 5190 Main Street: one plaque honors Israel Blodgett as *2017 Founder of the Year* and the second plaque commemorates our community's involvement with the Underground Railroad.

**12:00 Noon to 3:00 PM**, "[Country in The Park](#)" in Wandschneider Park, 831 Maple Avenue, gives families a chance to visit with farm animals, view historic crafts like blacksmithing as well as candle and butter making demonstrations. They also learn how to play 1850-era games and enjoy a cool glass of lemonade. This activity is sponsored by The Grove Foundation and the Downers Grove Museum.

**1:30 PM**, The Underground Railroad: "[Following In the Footsteps of Israel & Avis Blodgett](#)" is to be presented by Glennette Tilley Turner at the Downers Grove Public Library, 1050 Curtiss Street.

### Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup>:

**2:00 PM to 3:30 PM**, [Friends of The Edwards House](#) invite you to learn more about "*How to Landmark Your Property & the Historic Home Program*" at Lincoln Center Auditorium, 935 Maple Avenue. [Click here to register for this free event.](#)

**4:00 PM**, Come to the Fairview Station, Fairview Ave. & 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, for the *Fairview Station Heritage Site and Landmark Dedication Ceremony*. – By Gordon Goodman & Rich Kulovany



*Visit with farm animals and celebrate the rural heritage of Downers Grove!*



*Centennial Home Plaque presented by the Downers Grove Historical Society on Founders Day 2014*

## PDHA will again partner with Village on Green Initiatives

A meeting with Downers Grove public works staff on March 6 confirmed that, as in recent years, PDHA will again in 2017 be providing cooperation and assistance to the village in carrying out initiatives and activities that further the implementation of green best practices for the natural environment. In 2016, the village planted 650 trees on public land including parkways, both to replace ash trees lost to the emerald ash borer



*Two parkway trees  
planted in 2014*

and to enhance the overall tree canopy. A target of at least 650 new trees has again been set for spring and fall plantings in 2017, and will involve oaks, maples, ginkgoes and other hardy and appropriate species. PDHA will work with the Village Forester in the identification of suitable parkway sites for planting. Although the ash borer catastrophe has reduced the share of ash trees on public land in the village from 19% in 2000 to 8% (and declining) today, the annual tree planting initiative seeks to replace as many of these as possible with disease-resistant tree varieties.

PDHA will have volunteers assisting with the village's tree and native plant sale, currently scheduled for May 19, and with a rain barrel sale to be conducted in conjunction with the Conservation Foundation. There is continuing interest in expansion and enhancement of rain gardens, also a Conservation Foundation emphasis, and in the potential conversion of land adjacent to the Belmont Ave. Metra station, currently occupied by turf grass, to prairie vegetation attractive to pollinators, in order to take advantage of grants offered through Commonwealth Edison (Exelon). Also, when the village schedules its recycling extravaganza for next fall, PDHA will provide volunteers.

PDHA remains concerned about two other topics: first, invasive species on publicly owned lands and second, proper management of publicly owned flood plain properties. When village yard waste is disposed of or composted, compost potentially containing the seeds of noxious species such as Japanese knotweed should not be spread on fields. Grants from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) have recently enabled the Village to acquire previously developed properties that have been chronically damaged by floodwater. But, the Village's stormwater planning and funding does not currently include the analysis or funding of procedures needed to improve overall surface and ground water management for affected streambeds and subsurface water courses. The Village is currently working with a consultant to develop plans for managing Village-owned properties for flood control in a sustainable, "green" way, and will likely have neighborhood meetings to discuss and get feedback on particular site plans as they are developed. – *By Chris Saricks*

### Volunteer workdays at Lyman Woods

REAP (Restore, Educate and Preserve) is a volunteer group dedicated to restoring and protecting the Downers Grove Park District's natural areas. Interested in joining us for a land management workday? Contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 630.960.2079 or [msmith@dgparks.org](mailto:msmith@dgparks.org) for more information.

Workdays are the third Saturday of each month and begin at 8:00 AM. Upcoming dates are:

April 22  
May 20  
June 17  
July 15  
August 19

For more about these and other volunteer opportunities in the parks, see <http://www.dgparks.org/get-involved/volunteer>.

*Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance*

**P.O. Box 422**

**Downers Grove, Illinois 60515**



Pierce Downer  
1782-1863

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance Spring 2017 Newsletter

**You are invited to join us at our next 2017 Meeting**

**Wednesday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, 7:00 pm**

**Room 307, Lincoln Center, 935 Maple Ave., Downers Grove.**

**Check our website [www.PDHA.org](http://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.

**Help us save trees & receive a full color digital version of this Newsletter electronically by sending us your e-mail address at [Info@PDHA.org](mailto:Info@PDHA.org)!**