

Protect Your Heritage

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2019 Annual Meeting

PDHA Fall Lecture: *Incredible Bats!*

Do you want to learn about real, live bats, and actually see one up close?



Sharon Peterson

Please join us Monday, October 21st as Sharon Peterson dispels the myths around these misunderstood creatures, and describes how beneficial bats are to our daily lives. Sharon has been trained by Bat Conservation International in the conservation of bats. Her passion for bat education started with a Girl Scout project. The response to the program was so great that she and her husband Dan decided to move forward as bat educators.



Bat Image

by Sharon & Dan Peterson –
IncredibleBats.com

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is presenting this free public program at *Another Round Bar & Grill*, 5141 Main Street, Downers Grove. Please arrive early to purchase a beverage or a bite to eat. The presentation begins promptly at 7 PM. This event is free, but please register so that we have a seat reserved for you. To register [click here](http://pdha.org/bats) or go to pdha.org/bats - Irene Hogstrom and Gordon Goodman

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance Advocacy

PDHA is always looking for opportunities to advocate on behalf of natural areas and historic preservation at the local and state level. This year has been a busy one – along with defending Downers Grove's largest tree, the legacy Cottonwood on Rogers, we participated as follows:

- Reviewing a village project to install improvements and sidewalks along Cross, Drendel, and Indianapolis Street. Due to community interest, the village worked with the contractor to minimize the number of trees to be removed.
- Urging Governor Pritzker to issue an official proclamation for October of every year to be recognized as OAKtober - Oak Awareness Month in Illinois.
- Urging Governor Pritzker and key local and state legislators to improve funding and support for the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC). The INPC oversees the preservation management of 383 preserves, scattered across every region of Illinois, and including our own Belmont Prairie. However, as noted in a July 16, 2019 Chicago Sun-Times editorial, the position of director has been vacant for nearly four years. The assistant director position has been vacant even longer. The agency's strategic plan for 2015-2020 has not been finalized, and the agency has suffered declining funding for the last 16 years.



Belmont Prairie

- Meeting with School District 58 and Park District officials to discuss continuation and potential expansion of educational programs utilizing Lyman Woods. The Little Sprouts program, which PDHA has supported for many years, will be expanded from a half-day to a full-day trip for Downers Grove 1st graders.
- Gathering information on tree-protection ordinances for Village consideration, including several Chicago-area communities that have established tree protection as part of construction permitting. - Ken Lerner

Protect Your Heritage

PDHA Directors

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is a 23-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,
and

PDHA Directors:

Marge Earl,

Irene Hogstrom,

Rich Kulovany,

John Schofield,

& Mark Thoman

We mourn the passing of

Wally Brown,

Director Emeritus

Newsletter

Editing by
G. Goodman

Logo designed by
Kate Earl

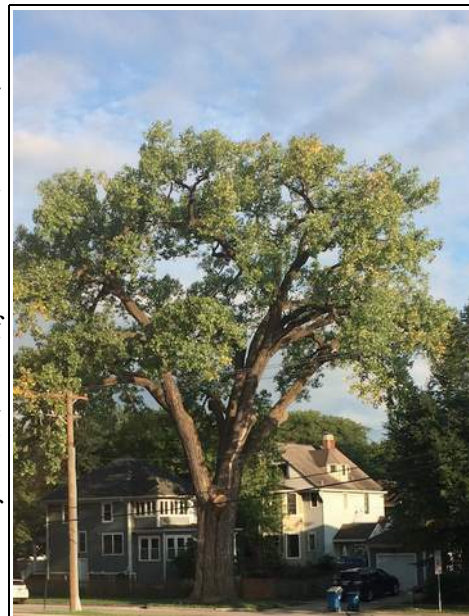
Photos by
G. Goodman &
K. Lerner

Legacy Parkway Tree Saved

The Eastern Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*) is a highly successful native tree species, with a range that spreads from northern Montana to southern Texas and east to the Carolinas. It accounts for the largest trees in northern Illinois. Downers Grove is home to a prime specimen, on Rogers Street opposite the Tivoli Theater. Its trunk is 7 feet in diameter and it is estimated to be 150 years old. Recently it became endangered after dropping a branch that damaged an adjacent fence.

After the tree was assessed by a tree service, the initial suggestion by village staff was to remove the tree. Commentary and reactions from PDHA, the Downers Grove public, and Village Commissioners Rich Kulovany and Marge Earl led to a reassessment of options. The tree was instead trimmed to remove some widely extended lower branches and a few smaller dead branches in the crown. It will be monitored on a regular basis to keep an eye on its health. Examination of the cut ends on the lower branches showed little evidence of decay. With luck this tree will continue to grace the neighborhood for years ahead.

How long can a Cottonwood live? The Balmville Tree in upstate New York was dated through core samples to 1699, and so lived more than 300 years (it was cut down in 2015). Local community groups advocated for its protection, leading to the State of New York acquiring the tree and making it New York's smallest state forest, at 348 square feet. It was also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Eventually due to rapid deterioration it had to be removed; local residents took cuttings to propagate its genetic legacy. See en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balmville_Tree. - Ken Lerner



Rogers Street Legacy Cottonwood

Belmont Pollinator Garden Continues to Grow!

On an unusually warm and muggy Tuesday morning in September, volunteers from PDHA assisted Village staff in planting an additional 80 plants in the pollinator garden. In 2018, two extensive areas adjacent to the Belmont Train Station were seeded with a special prairie mix.

Contractors continue to control any weeds, and Village Forester, Kerstin von der Heide, plans to add 1 gallon plants every year to enhance the plants emerging from seed. Descriptive signs illustrate some of the colorful plant species in the garden that appeal to butterflies, bees, moths, hummingbirds, and other pollinators.

Funding for the pollinator garden and signs is provided by a grant administered by Openlands in the ComEd Green Region Program.

For a special bee's eye view of the new pollinator garden, please visit: pdha.org/bees-eye-view

- Irene Hogstrom



Village staff and volunteers, Mark Bragen & Irene Hogstrom, install additional pollinator plants - Village of Downers Grove.

2019 Wildflower Walks

Naturalist Lance Herning led two informative wildflower walks this year, in early May at Lyman Woods and mid-July at Belmont Prairie. In addition to identifying native plant species, Lance describes their peculiar features and survival strategies, along with past and present uses. Join us next year as we continue this informative tradition! Walks are followed by refreshments and social hour. Thanks to Judi Davenport and Bill Kundert, our post-walk hosts at Belmont Prairie.

Also, we noticed one of our past Lyman walks served as inspiration to artist John Bigelow, whose paintings were included in a recent exhibit at the Peabody Estate in Mayslake Forest Preserve. - Ken Lerner



About Spring Flowers
Lyman Woods
by John Bigelow

Please Join Us
On Our 2020
Highland Ave.
Adopt-A-Highway
CLEAN-UP DAYS

April 18
June 13
August 15
September 26

Saturday
8:30-10:30 AM

Visit our
website to
[sign up to
participate!](#)

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!

Awards for Historic and Natural Area Preservation Efforts

Montrew Dunham and Gordon Goodman have recently been recognized by Downers Grove organizations showing appreciation for their work in historic preservation and natural areas.



The Downers Grove Historical Society named Gordon as recipient of the first Montrew Dunham Award. This award recognizes both Gordon and the late Montrew Dunham, both of whom promoted the Historical Society's mission "To preserve the history of Downers Grove so that future generations can better understand the past." The award cited Gordon's work to preserve Lyman Woods and Belmont Prairie, to create PDHA, to preserve the Lyman House on Maple Avenue, and to save and restore the 1846 Blodgett House. Montrew Dunham, longtime director of the Historical Society, published the Downers Grove sesquicentennial history, "Downers Grove, 1832-1982," available on Amazon and in the Downers Grove Library. The Museum Annex Building was

named for her at a dedication ceremony in July 2019.

Gordon's accomplishments are also being recognized this year by the Illinois Association of Park Districts with an Outstanding Citizen Volunteer of the Year award, one of four awarded across the state. The Downers Grove Park District nominated Gordon in recognition of his dedication and support in preserving natural areas and historic landmarks. As the Park District said, "His knowledge, expertise and advocacy has helped to secure significant land acquisitions, ensured long-term preservation efforts, and evolved educational opportunities at Lyman



Gordon Goodman



Montrew Dunham

Woods Nature Preserve and the Downers Grove Museum . . . which

have provided the community with significant treasures to appreciate and enjoy for generations to come."

PDHA is pleased to see recognition of volunteer work on behalf of natural areas and historic preservation, and proud to see these awards go to our treasurer and organizational founder Gordon Goodman. - Ken Lerner, PDHA Chair

Pierce Downer's
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Alliance
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Pierce Downer
1782-1863

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance Fall 2019 Newsletter
Come hear Sharon Peterson tell us about

Incredible Bats!

at our 2019 Annual Meeting on Monday, October 21st, 7:00 pm
Another Round Bar & Grill, 5141 Main Street, Downers Grove.

Check our website www.PDHA.org for more information.

**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.

[Email us at info@pdha.org](mailto:info@pdha.org) to receive your PDHA Newsletter in its full color digital version with live action links to additional online information!