2016 Annual Meeting
PDHA Fall Lecture: Chicagoland’s Urban Coyotes

PDHA is sponsoring a free public presentation on Chicagoland’s Urban Coyotes, Thursday, October 13th at 7:00 pm in the Lincoln Center Auditorium, 935 Maple Avenue, Downers Grove. Ms. Ashley Wurth of the Urban Coyote Project will be our speaker.

The Urban Coyote Project has followed more than 900 coyotes in the Chicago area over the past 15 years. It has been featured on WTTW’s Chicago Tonight program as well as WGN Radio, the New York Times, and National Geographic.

The project team has used GPS collars and “crittercams” to study coyote behavior including their movements and the size of their ranges. They have found, among other things, that urban coyotes are more nocturnal than their wild-land counterparts. The coyotes have learned to negotiate the hazards of roads and railroads, generally avoiding injury and seldom being seen. Dens have been found in golf courses, parks and cemeteries. The Chicago area coyote population is estimated at 2,000 or more.

An overview of the project along with many accounts of particular coyotes that were tracked can be found at the project website, UrbanCoyoteResearch.com.

Ashley Wurth graduated from Colorado State University in 2013 with a BS in Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Science and a BS in Equine Science. She is currently working on her PhD through The Ohio State University School of Environment and Natural Resources Department, conducting her research through Dr. Gehrt’s wildlife lab. She works with the Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation on the Cook County Coyote Project. The focus of her research involves the connections between coyote behavior, genetics, and ecology. She will speak about the coyote project, her findings and how to live with the coyotes in our midst. - Ken Lerner
American Foursquare Homes

Does your house have a square plan, a hip roof, wide eaves, a central attic dormer, and a front porch across the front? Then you may very well have an American Foursquare.

Amy and David Gassen, architects in Downers Grove and proud owners of a landmarked American Foursquare house, note that, “the American Foursquare is a post-Victorian house type that emerged in the early 1900s, and was an architectural reaction against the ornateness and complexity found in Victorian homes. The Foursquare was designed to maximize square footage on small lots, and was an inexpensive home that provided large amounts of comfortable living space. Its simple form allowed styles such as Colonial, Craftsman, and Prairie to be applied to it.”

The Gassens have compiled a catalog of about 130 American Foursquare houses in Downers Grove. Information about this home style, including several photos, designs, blueprints, a map of locations of them in Downers Grove, and more can be found on their Facebook page, Facebook.com/dgfoursquares/.

Amy served on the Ad Hoc Committee that recommended changes to the DG historic preservation ordinance, and currently serves on the Downers Grove Plan Commission. -Amy & Dave Gassen with Ken Lerner
Arbor Day Event 2016

Each year PDHA makes a donation to the Park District to support the Arbor Day event planned for elementary students who participated in the Little Sprouts program the previous fall. The Park District matches our funds allowing two trees to be acquired and planted in a park, with assistance from the students.

This year’s Arbor Day planting took place at Patriot’s Park, just south of Barth Pond near its west end. Two oak trees, a white oak and a chinquapin oak, were planted by the first grade glass from Whittier School. First grade teachers Heather Richards and Ashley Pawlowski led their classes to the site, where Park District Forester Mike Stelter gave the students a talk about tree care and supervised the planting along with Executive Director Bill McAdam and other Park District staff. After planting the kids named the trees, “Charlotte” and “Apple Blossom.” - Ken Lerner

Wilderness & Wildflower Walks

Volunteer Naturalist Lance Herning guided two Wilderness & Wildflower Walks this year, a spring walk in Lyman Woods and a summer walk at Belmont Prairie. Both walks were well attended and Lance gave a “hands on” description of our native woodland and prairie plants.

Refreshments and conversation followed the walks. Again this year, after the Belmont Prairie walk Joellen Siddens was kind enough to host refreshments at her nearby homestead.

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance looks forward to offering again next year similar explorations of these outstanding natural areas and we hope that you may want to participate then.

- Ken Lerner

Wild Indigo (Baptisia tinctoria)
Belmont Prairie Nature Preserve

Hoary Pucoon (Lithospermum canescens)
Lyman Woods Preserve

Please Join Us on Our Final 2016 Highland Ave. Adopt-A-Highway CLEAN-UP DAY

October 1
Saturday
8:30-10:30 AM

Check our website for clean-up dates in 2017 and 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!

Check us out at www.PDHA.org
DG Museum News & Oaktober at Lyman Woods

The Downers Grove Museum was awarded an Award of Excellence from the Illinois Association of Museums (IAM) for its virtual tour project. The Museum partnered with Slav Polinksi-Real Estate to create a virtual tour to help visitors with accessibility restrictions view the second floor of the museum in an interactive manner. The tour can also be accessed from home online on the Museum page at dgparks.org.

An Award of Excellence is the second highest recognition awarded by IAM and is the highest level of recognition the Museum has received from IAM to date. Awards of Excellence recognize work of excellent quality, that uses available resources well, is creative, and meets professional standards. Ashlee Grude will attend the IAM conference at the end of September to accept the award on behalf of the Museum.

The Museum has several new programs upcoming this fall including the Museum Collection Series, Victorian House Walks on September 8 and October 8, and Historic Homes Tours on September 17 and October 26. For more information about these and other Museum programs or to register online, click here or visit dgparks.org.

Out at Lyman Woods, the District is gearing up for Oaktober!

Parks Forester Mike Stelter has been busy partnering with Possibility Place on three exciting projects. On October 1, the Park District will be giving away 70 1-gallon oak seedlings at HarvestFest 2016 to help kick off Oaktober in Downers Grove. Throughout the fall, Mike is collecting bur and white oak acorns at Lyman Woods to use in a trial propagation project. Possibility Place will germinate them and grow the seedlings, and hopefully in a couple years’ time, the new trees will return to Downers Grove to be planted in restoration areas. There is a volunteer workday scheduled at Lyman Woods on October 15 to plant 20 oak trees donated by Possibility Place. Starting at 9 am, volunteers and staff will plant 5 swamp white oak and 15 bur oak trees. Other upcoming workdays are September 17 and November 19 at Belmont Prairie.

For more information or to register for an upcoming volunteer workday, please visit dgparks.org/get-involved/volunteer/ or contact Melanie Smith at msmith@dgparks.org.

- Shannon Forsythe
Update of the Comprehensive Plan

Beginning in April, a Comprehensive Plan Ad Hoc Committee started meeting monthly to review and update our current Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2011 to guide the Village's future land use decisions. View the full Plan at downers.us. The Committee's charge also includes a review of zoning regulations for the Downtown Business District. Three PDHA directors serve on the Ad Hoc Committee and other PDHA directors have provided valuable input during the public comment portion of the meetings.

This update 5 years after the Plan's adoption is intended to reflect recent significant developments in the downtown area and to reexamine what are termed catalyst sites, those sites that are judged to be particularly significant to stimulate and influence neighboring future developments.

So far, priority has been given to analysis of the Downtown Key Focus Area Plan, with the Ad Hoc Committee suggesting identification of three subareas within the Downtown: Core, Edge, and Transition. Proposed revisions were presented by staff at the June 27 Plan Commission meeting, where members of the public expressed concern about allowable building heights, especially with respect to the effects on historic buildings in the Downtown, as well as on the streetscape, particularly as the Downtown transitions into residential areas.

Updating the Plan provides an opportunity to strengthen recommendations on issues important to PDHA, such as sustainable development, historic preservation, protection of the mature tree canopy, as well as improved and expanded trails and green space. The Ad Hoc Committee has identified improved access to Hidden Lake Forest Preserve by Downers Grove residents as an important issue.

The Village Council is to review a follow-up status report on the Downtown Key Focus Area Plan at the conclusion of its meeting on October 4, 2016. The next meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee is scheduled for October 5 at 7 pm at Village Hall. Proposed changes will be presented at upcoming Plan Commission meetings. Please check the Village website to confirm meeting dates and agendas. Public input is strongly encouraged! - Irene Hogstrom
Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance Fall 2016 Newsletter

Come hear Ashley Wurth describe her studies of Chicagoland's Urban Coyotes at our 2016 Annual Meeting on Thursday, October 13th, 7:00 pm Lincoln Center Auditorium, 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.

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