



Downers Grove Township

Barbara J. Wheat • Supervisor

www.dgtownship.com

Issue 2 • Fall Newsletter 2008

Elected Officials

Assessor

Theresa A. Cockrell

Phone: (630) 968-2100

Fax: (630) 968-2142

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Clerk

Diane A. Konicek

Phone: (630) 968-0451

Fax: (630) 968-7302

Highway Commissioner

Edward P. Smith

Phone: (630) 968-5020

Fax: (630) 968-5094

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Supervisor

Barbara J. Wheat

Phone: (630) 968-0451

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Trustees

William J. Swanston

Robert C. Del Sarto

Frank Wurster

Rita Carlson

Additional Departments

Human Services

Phone: (630) 968-6408

General Assistance

Phone: (630) 968-0451

Downers Grove Township

4340 Prince Street

Downers Grove, Illinois 60515

Office Hours:

8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Monday - Friday

A message from the Supervisor...



As a lifelong resident of Downers Grove, I started to think about all the changes and developments over the years. Reflecting on my years serving our community, I started with the township as a town board member in 1969 until 1977. At that time I was also the general assistance case worker. I participated in youth programs and began the now active Youth Advisory Committee in May of 1970.

I was elected Township Supervisor in 1977 and served until 1985. During that period I was instrumental in relocating the township offices to our current building in May 1981. It was paid for by Federal Revenue Sharing funds (now discontinued) and the sale of our previous building in Westmont. In 1985, I was offered the opportunity to work with Congressman Harris Fawell, as his Executive Assistant. I left as supervisor to fill this position.

I returned to the Township Supervisor's position in 1993. Many changes and new programs have since been implemented by our human services department. As Supervisor I have participated in 26

annual town meetings, 9 township caucus', some community programs and I have strived to keep spending within budget. I am proud of the work and programs offered by our township staff. As Supervisor I have started services, such as Youth Drop in Center in 1977 for counseling and crisis intervention, mosquito abatement, DuPage Medical Society which was formed with all nine townships, State of Illinois Job Services in May, 1993, new computer accounting system, Pace bus services in the early 1980's, and township newsletters which were awarded the "Best Newsletter" from Township Officials of Illinois, just to name a few.

During all my years as resident and supervisor of the township, I have seen our community develop and grow into a beautiful area for families to live. As Downers Grove Supervisor of twenty six years, I take great pride in serving our community in some capacity for a total of forty years.

Barbara J. Wheat - Supervisor

A message from the Assessor...



The Economy's Impact on Assessments

Properties are selling in Downers Grove Township but nowhere near as many as in the last few years. Driving in your community you see the same 'for sale' signs for weeks and months. Many have dropped their listing price again and again. Some have just taken their property off the market in sheer frustration. Others, unfortunately, have lost their homes to foreclosure.

The economy is in a BIG slump and the real estate market is suffering as well as new development. Projects are halted and there is a glut of property on the market. So why do the assessed values still increase? Let me explain.

We must consider only prior sales activity to determine the current year's assessed values. The sale amount and assessment information from 2005, 2006 and 2007 is used to determine the 2008 multiplier. The mass appraisal system in the State of Illinois is based on the ratio between the sale and the prior year's assessment. It is not the amounts of the sale or the assessment; it is the relationship between the two that is studied. Compiling all the ratios of valid sales and their assessments is known as a sales ratio study.

The Illinois Department of Revenue determines the guidelines for sales ratio studies. The results of the 2008 study, calculated by the DuPage County Supervisor of Assessments, was that Downers Grove Township needed a 1.059 multiplier to arrive, on an overall basis, at 33.33%. What is occurring in 2008 cannot come into play until 2009.

The 2008 study, which included all valid sales from 2005, 2006 and 2007, consists of 10,055 ratios:

2005	4,206	Healthy market year, still increasing
2006	3,316	About 6 months in the market began slowing
2007	<u>2,533</u>	Slow market showing decrease in value
	10,055	Total Sales

To calculate a ratio: a property sells for \$700,000. The prior year's assessment is 220,500. The assessment ratio is 31.50% of the sale. ($220,500 \div \$700,000 = .3150$ or 31.50%). That calculation is made for each sale, resulting in 10,055 ratios. The ratios are arranged from high to low; it is the median ratio that determines the multiplier. Say the median ratio is 31.15%, then 33.33% the statutory level, divided by 31.15% indicates a 1.07 multiplier must be applied to all properties. When we talk about sales ratio studies, now you'll have a better idea of how the economy affects the assessment process.

Preliminary studies indicate that the multiplier for 2009 may be as low as 1.01, when the 2005 ratios are no longer a part of the formula and 2008 ratios come into play.

Note: We will review sales whose ratio is over 33.33%. We ask for a copy of the sales contract and closing statement. According to the Department of Revenue, we are unable to adjust foreclosure sales; those property owners can request a review based on uniformity or market value but not the foreclosure amount.

Theresa A. Cockrell - Assessor

A message from the Clerk...

Your vote does make a difference

Many people feel that if they don't vote it really doesn't matter all that much. The following examples illustrate how wrong they can be.

By one vote...

- 1845, Texas brought into Union **by one vote**
- 1868, President Andrew Johnson saved from impeachment **by one vote**
- 1875, France changed from a monarchy to a republic **by one vote**
- 1876, Rutherford B. Hayes elected President **by one vote**
- 1923, Adolph Hitler elected leader of the Nazi Party **by one vote**
- 1941, Selective Service (the "draft") saved just weeks before Pearl Harbor was attacked **by one vote**



So you see your vote can make a difference and possibly alter the course of history. Soon you will be voting for the next President, members of Congress, state senators and representatives, county board members and others. The right to vote is a privilege so make your voice heard and vote in the November 4th election.

A sure reminder that we are into the Fall months is the ending of Daylight Savings Time. Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour on the 1st of November.

Township Government in Illinois

Townships were established in 1848 under the 2nd Illinois Constitution. In 1849 voters in Illinois were given the opportunity to adopt a township form of local government. This enabled voters to elect officials from their local communities. Today, 85 of Illinois's 102 counties operate under a township form of government, with 1433 townships serving more than eight million people. Voters elected to form a township form of government on November 6, 1849. Some of the first township officials were:



- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| L.K. Hatch | Supervisor 1850 |
| A. Havens | Town Clerk 1850-1854 |
| O.B. Herrick | Assessor 1850 |
| Peter Warden | Collector 1850 |
| Albin Lull | Overseers of Poor |
| Silas Culver | Commissioners of Highways 1850 |
| W. Lutiens | |
| L.M. Lull | |
| John Marshall | Justices of the Peace 1850 |
| Benjamin Fuller | |
| Peter Warden | Constables 1850 |
| Joseph Boyd | |

Today we elect a Supervisor, Town Clerk, Assessor, Highway Commissioner and four citizens to serve as Trustees. All are elected for a 4-year term. The township also serves many through the General Assistance Department and the Human Services Department.

Downers Grove Township is the largest township in DuPage County in area and population, serving all or portions of: Burr Ridge, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Downers Grove, Hinsdale, Westmont, Willowbrook, Lemont, Woodridge and Oak Brook. We are bounded on the east by County Line Road, the west by Woodridge Avenue, the north by 39th Street and the south by the Des Plaines River.

Diane A. Konicek - Clerk

A message from the Highway Commissioner...

Storm Sewers Maintenance

Storm sewer basins are cleaned as needed. If you have a storm water grate on the street in front of your property, please keep the grate clean of leaves and debris, so storm water can flow freely down the storm sewer.



Street Lights

Within the unincorporated Township, street lights are maintained by Commonwealth Edison. If you see a street light with a burned out bulb, call Commonwealth Edison's customer service number **1-800-334-7661**. Should a replacement not be made within a reasonable period of time, please call this office.



Mailbox Check

Please check your mailbox before the first snowfall. Is your mailbox securely attached to the post? Is the post free of rot and rust?

Tree Trimming

Routine trimming of parkway trees will be done during the fall and winter months. Most diseased and dying trees will also be removed at this time. If you notice a tree that may be hazardous to pedestrians or motorists, please notify us.

Brush Pickup Program

Our brush pickup for 2008/2009 is scheduled as follows for the areas identified below. The dates listed are target dates for pickup to begin in each area. Edward P. Smith - Highway Commissioner

		FALL 2008	SPRING 2009
Area 1	County Line Rd. to Route 83	9/01/08	3/30/09
Area 2	Route 83 to Clarendon Hills Rd.	9/15/08	4/13/09
Area 3	Clarendon Hills Rd. to Cass Ave.	9/29/08	4/27/09
Area 4	Cass Ave. to Main/Lemont Rd.	10/13/08	5/11/09
Area 5	Main/Lemont to Woodward Ave.	10/27/08	5/25/09

A message from Human Services...

Life Skills

The Life Skills Programs at the Township of Downers Grove have many different facets with the aim to reach out to the community in as many different ways as possible. With two Youth Educators and two Prevention Specialists, the Township focuses on educating kids about how to live a healthy, ATOD (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs) free lifestyle. Each position carries with it a unique responsibility and adds something different to the overall program.

Jason Shiliga and Rebecca Adelman are the Youth Educators that go out and teach to fourteen Middle and Junior High Schools that are within the boundaries of the Township. Our focus is on Character Education. Specifically, we spend time in three separate grades, each of which has its own curriculum. Each of these curriculum modules have been aligned with the State of Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards.

In sixth grade we spend time discussing bullying. Keeping schools bully-free is a goal of this curriculum. We focus on defining what bullying is and identifying bullying behaviors. We also spend time discussing what effects bullying has on children. Just as important, we spend time teaching students empathy. Empathy is the key to stopping bullying problems. If we are able to help children understand that their words and actions have consequences, then they can begin to appreciate how others feel when they may be picked on.

Seventh grade is a time to focus on the risk taking behaviors that children of this age group are prone to take. We spend time developing their self-awareness, emotional self-management, social skills, thoughtful decision making, and responsible behavior skills. Most of our time spent in the seventh grade classrooms deal with alcohol, drug and tobacco prevention. It is during this time we can work with this age group of very impressionable young people, to gain insight into the negative impacts that can take place on a persons' life if they were to use these substances. Our focus is on social and real life outcomes.

Lastly, in eighth grade we spend time on helping these young people prepare for the larger life of high school that they will find themselves in after junior high. Some of the focus is spent on developing and setting of goals, not only short term but also that of long term (beyond high school). Additionally it is at this time in life that students are given much more freedom than at any time in their past. It is the reason that we spend time on decision-making as previously discussed, but why we also help them look at skills and strategies to manage their stress. Life for eighth graders will only become more hectic for them as they enter high school. Thus, understanding how stress can affect them and how to manage it will allow them to make the best decisions for their successful journey through the next four years of school and beyond.

Funded by a grant from the Illinois Department of Human Services, Cathy Rager works as a Prevention Specialist. Specifically, she works to educate youth on the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) and violence. She presently teaches a model program called Too Good for Drugs to the 6th and 7th grade students at Burr Ridge Middle School. A model program is one proven to have positive results. Students not only learn the facts about drugs that exist in their everyday lives, but learn how to set goals, make good decisions and resist peer pressure through discussion and role-play. Parents are engaged by sending home newsletters and attending local events. We also take opportunities to coordinate other prevention-oriented campaigns. For instance, the week of October 23 to 31 is Red Ribbon Week. We will coordinate with the Art teacher to have these students create posters for the campaign. Originals will be displayed at the school and copies will be sent to Burr Ridge Police Department where they will be judged with other local school posters for a prize. We have also developed a Peer Leader Group at the school, which is being trained to help other students resolve conflict through compromise in order to avoid further consequences and promote the use of healthy conflict resolution skills. We are able to connect these students as they progress to high school with other positive Township and school activities.

Also funded by the same grant, yet working in a different area, Tyler Hill works as a Prevention Specialist. He runs a section of our Life Skills program that is focused on Peer Led Life Skills. While he is focused on teaching about the dangers of ATOD (alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, he accomplishes this by training high school students themselves to become leaders in living an ATOD free lifestyle. We train high school students to prepares them to become the positive role models that their peers look up to. Instead of looking up to and listening to just adults, we try to give students people their own age that they can relate to and also look up to. Not only do we hope that our peer leaders have a positive influence on those they teach and lead, but we also hope that they develop their own lives and make decisions that lead to a healthy lifestyle. The main program that he runs is The Westview Hills Peer Led Life Skills Program. For this program, he prepares the high school students to teach Life Skills classes to the 7th and 8th grade students. Lessons area taught on a variety of topics including stress management, character, media influence, to name a few. Junior high can be a difficult period, and so can the transition from junior high to high school. By having actual high school students interact and teach the junior high students, they are shown that there are high school students who make healthy decisions.

Both Tyler and Cathy are involved in the community in a variety of other programs. Cathy is involved in serving community members in an area known as "Willowbrook Corners" which is located in the southeast part of the Township and is unincorporated. It consists of four apartment and condominium complexes. In this area, she serves the residents in a variety of ways which include: a Community Pride group which seeks to improve the quality of life for local residents, Summer Fest, summer recreational programs for youth, providing information and resources at new resident orientations, parent nights, youth nights, and assisting a local coalition in a variety of other programs to the youth and adult residents. Tyler is also involved in the Operation Snowball events at Downers Grove North and South, the Downers Grove DARE lock-in events, and also an Intergenerational Dance at Fairview Baptist Home, which is planned and run by high school leaders.

The more ways we find to collaborate with the families and people who live in this community, the more youth benefit by feeling protected and safe within those boundaries to dream about their goals and create a positive future.

- Human Services Department

Page 5

A message for Seniors...

Township Services for Senior Citizens

Dial-A-Ride - provides transportation for residents over age 65 and for disabled persons of any age within the Township boundaries, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The cost is \$3.00 per one way trip. It is necessary to register and reserve rides in advance and an "RTA Free Ride Permit" is required.

RTA Free Ride Permit - applications are available at the Township office for persons over the age 65. Identification such as a driver's license, state I.D. or passport is required. A photo is taken for \$3. Applications for Disabled persons are available at Lisle Township, 630-968-2087, ext. 211.

Vintage Times Cable Television - topics of interest to older persons are discussed on Channel 6 in Downers Grove on Mondays and Fridays at 10:30 AM, and on Comcast channel 19 on Thursdays at 6 PM. The October program discusses Medical Equipment & Supplies. The November program discusses Home Ownership Preservation for Older Persons.

File of Life - is a card which lists vital medical information to assist emergency response personnel. The card is inserted in a magnetic pouch which is placed on the refrigerator door. A pocket size card is also provided. The card accompanies you to the hospital. Available for \$1.00 at the Township office.

Information and Referral - questions are answered regarding services for senior citizens in our area. Help is offered in the office with programs, such as the Circuit Breaker/Illinois Cares Rx and the Real Estate Tax Deferral Program.

For information about these and additional programs call 630-968-5029 or 630-968-6408.

Hanna Benioff - Senior Services Coordinator

Our Township Board

Pictured from left to right

Front row: Barbara Wheat, Diane Konicek, Rita Carlson; Back row: Frank Wurster, Robert Del Sarto, William Swanston



Visit www.dgtownship.com for more Township news.