

# Downers Grove Township

## 2012 Newsletter

Balancing local response and centralized efficiency...

### Your Township does it best

Ask citizens what they want from effective government. Most say they expect it to be locally responsive to their needs, while utilizing centralized resources efficiently. These goals can be at odds. Yet we have proven that they can be balanced by capitalizing on the combined strengths of Township and County service and administrative structures.

As a resident of Downers Grove Township, ask yourself if the snowplowing and road maintenance of unincorporated areas would be more efficiently served by local crews and equipment closer to your home or by those crews scheduled throughout the county. Supervisory and labor expenses might be the same, but timeliness, proximity and overall fuel expenses would be different. Our Township response to residents for these services has already demonstrated our effectiveness and cost efficiency at the local level.



Consider another crucial Township office that provides a local-level advantage for its residents – the Assessor. Your property tax bills are at stake. A Township assessor brings local market expertise for assessing properties fairly. DuPage County does not have the capacity to assess all 325,000+ parcels within its boundaries. In this situation, your assessments are best established by utilizing local market knowledge, closeness to people and effectiveness of your Township structure.

### Frank Wurster

*Supervisor*

Imagine our senior residents having to travel to the county office mega-complex in Wheaton when seeking senior service information versus going to their local Township office. Now think about the difficult circumstances of low income households seeking help. Where are those services best administered – nearby or at a distance? And finally, shouldn't a Human Services office have day-to-day familiarity with local area concerns, strengths and the support of nearby agencies and businesses?

I believe the best option for all these services is our Township structure.

Balancing local response and timeliness with large-scale county efficiencies to meet our residents' needs is a constant focus of Downers Grove Township. We regularly monitor and review which body can most efficiently deliver the level of services our residents require in the most cost effective manner.

As your Township Supervisor, I am here to serve all our residents and am available to listen to your needs and concerns. You can reach me via email at [frank.wurster@dgtownship.com](mailto:frank.wurster@dgtownship.com) or by calling me at (630) 719-6600.

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### The Township welcomes our new Trustee, Mark D. Cuthbert

Mark D. Cuthbert was appointed to the Downers Grove Township Board in June 2012. Mark has a B.A. degree in both Physics and Mathematics from the University of Chicago, a B.S. degree in Meteorology from the Naval Postgraduate School, and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He is currently a management consultant focused on advising senior executives of Fortune 500 companies on corporate and business strategy. Additionally, Mark is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom having served in the United States Air Force and deployed with the Army's 101st Airborne Division. Mark is married with one young child. He and his family are parishioners at St. Isaac Jogues Catholic Church.

Downers Grove Township • 4340 Prince Street, Downers Grove, Illinois 60515  
Phone: (630) 719-6600 • Fax: (630) 719-6608 • Township Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

**Sign up for the DGT News Mailing List.**

Get emails with Township news and events at [www.dgtownship.com](http://www.dgtownship.com)

**Why did assessments decrease and tax bills increase?**

In 2011 many Downers Grove Township property owners saw their assessment decrease and their tax bill increase. This was experienced throughout the County.

Even though the average assessed value decreased by 6.6%, the average tax bill increased 2.53%. Why? Despite belt-tightening tactics to help maintain existing standards of service, taxing bodies increased levies 9.13% over the prior year. This is due to continuously rising costs for utilities, insurance, supplies and more. Increased rates increased tax bills.

This pattern will continue in 2012, 2013 and possibly beyond until we see the economy and market turn around. Assessments will continue to decrease\* in most cases, to reflect the past three years of sales to assessment ratios.

To learn more about your taxing bodies, their levies or tax rates contact the DuPage County Clerk. Questions about the assessed value of your property should be directed to the Assessor's Office, you can email [assessor@dgtownship.com](mailto:assessor@dgtownship.com).

DuPage County Clerk Gary King compiles interesting property statistics annually, including:  
The 2011 parcel count in DuPage County was 334,899. The Downers Grove Township portion was approximately 58,000.



**Theresa A. Cockrell**  
*Assessor*

Out of the 334,899 parcels in the County there were:

270,834	Residential exemptions
49,664	Senior exemptions
9,119	Senior Freeze exemptions
2,414	Disabled Person/Veterans exemptions
9,108	Home Improvement exemptions

\*Some areas may increase due to the assessment lagging behind the market value in the neighborhood.

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**Who can register to vote?**

You can register at the Township office, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:00 pm.  
Who can register?

- You must be a United States Citizen
- You must be 18 years of age on/before the next election
- You must live in your precinct at least 30 days before the next election

You must bring two forms of personal identification; one must have your correct address on it. Please remember if you have moved or changed your name you must reregister.

**Diane A. Konicek**  
*Town Clerk*



**Are you interested in becoming an election judge?**

Judges are always needed. The base pay for judges is \$130 for Election Day. Judges who complete training and pass an Election Commission test receive an additional \$30. For more information on the duties and pay of election judges, please contact the Election Commission at (630) 407-5600.

### Why do we fill asphalt cracks?



Water is the most destructive and costly element to our pavements. If it rained and snowed everywhere but on our roads and bridges, 90 percent of highway and street work would be eliminated. Since that won't happen, we fill or seal pavement cracks to prevent water from entering the base and sub base. This extends pavement life by three to five years. Our investment in asphalt maintenance helps prevent much more costly asphalt replacement.

#### What is the process?

We ask residents not to park on streets where the pavement cracks are being filled. The contractor will apply a band of asphaltic sealant over cracks in the surface of the road. This seals the opening and prevents water from entering the subsurface of the

roadway. It retards the formation of additional cracks and potholes. The agents used in this product are environmentally safe. The sealant is sticky until it has thoroughly bonded with the pavement. Fiberglass strands are suspended throughout the sealant to give it strength and decrease melting on hot days. Sand will be applied on top of the product to help prevent tracking of the material.

### Brush Pickup Program 2013-2014

We have established the following dates for our Brush Pickup Program, covering **Unincorporated Downers Grove Township Areas ONLY**. Please remember that while these are our target dates, delays (due to equipment failure, weather conditions, etc.) are always a possibility. Crews will only pass a house once during the scheduled pickup period.

Area Location	Spring Pickup 2013	Fall Pickup 2013	Spring Pickup 2014
1. County Line Rd. west to Rt. 83	4/1/2013	8/26/2013	4/14/2014
2. Rt. 83 west to Clarendon Hills Rd.	4/15/2013	9/9/2013	4/28/2014
3. Clarendon Hills Rd. west to Cass Ave.	4/29/2013	9/23/2013	5/12/2014
4. Cass Ave. west to Main St./Lemont Rd.	5/13/2013	10/7/2013	5/26/2014
5. Main St./Lemont Rd. west to Woodward Ave.	5/27/2013	10/21/2013	6/9/2014

### Brush Pickup Guidelines

Brush is to be placed on the parkway no earlier than one week before the pickup is scheduled to start in each area, and no later than 7:30 am on the date pickup begins. All brush must be cut in lengths under 6' with pieces no larger than 3" in diameter. We prefer that all brush be securely bundled with string or twine; no bundle should exceed 25 pounds. Wire is not acceptable for tying bundles. The Township will not pick up items that do not conform to these guidelines; it will be the sole responsibility of the homeowner to dispose of them.

Brush consists of branches from bushes, shrubs and trees. We do not pick up: flowers, grass clippings, leaves, lumber, logs, plants, roots, stumps, thorny branches, weeds, and anything in bags or other containers. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Christmas tree pickup is within the first two weeks of each year.

Lawrence "Andy" Anderson

*Highway Commissioner*



## Electronic Recycling Program

Starting January 1, 2012, a new State of Illinois Law PROHIBITS any person or business in Illinois to throw out old electronic devices. They must be recycled or the State can fine you up to \$7,000 for just the first occurrence.

The Township offers a free electronic recycling program through COM2 Recycling Solutions on the third Saturday of every month from 8 am to 12 pm (except holiday weekends). Electronics may be dropped off at the highway garage during this time. Highway garage address: 318 East Quincy Street, Westmont, Illinois 60559.

### 2012 - 2013 Drop Off Dates:

10/20, 11/17, 12/15, 1/19, 2/16, 3/16, 4/20, 5/18, 6/15, 7/20, 8/17, 9/21, 10/19, 11/16 & 12/21.

For further information or questions please call, the Highway Department at (630) 719-6620. The equipment listed below details what we will recycle.



- **Computers and Peripherals** - CPU's, laptops, monitors, flat panels, keyboards, mice, cable, printers, plotters, external hard drives, tape drives, network hardware (servers, routers, hubs), communication hardware (modems) and subassemblies of any of the above.
- **Data Center Equipment** - Power Distribution Units (PDU's), uninterruptible power supplies (UPS Systems).
- **Office and Telecommunication Equipment** - copiers, fax machines, phone systems, cell phones, hand held devices, projection equipment, audio equipment, video equipment, TV's, calculators, security equipment, videotapes, beepers and typewriters.

For additional information about COM2 go to [www.com2computer.com](http://www.com2computer.com)

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## STEM Exploratory Conference for school district collaboration

Your Township continually looks for efficient, innovative and effective ways to serve residents and businesses. In August the Township Board committed to support a STEM Exploratory Conference, to create and leverage future collaboration among multiple school districts across DuPage County. STEM education focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math as a rigorous educational pathway, vital for success in the 21st century global economy.

The conference, a county-wide event was scheduled for November 13th at the Argonne National Labs Conference Center, it was co-hosted by the Regional Office of Education, and Argonne National Labs. School administrators and educators discussed how coordinated planning, shared effort and pooled resources can better prepare all of our children to tackle the hard science and math curriculums that are needed for success in the 21st century economy.

STEM Exploratory Committee Coordinator and SALT President Mark Thoman: "The Township's involvement in social services, particularly youth services, made this a natural fit. Forward thinking public/private economic development groups immediately grasp the multiple benefits to the wider community here in DuPage County, and have enthusiastically supported this initiative. We're seeking donations from the private sector, so there will be little to no impact on the Township budget."

Successful STEM collaborations make communities more desirable places to live and work. Economic development professionals recognize good schools and a well educated workforce as keys to economic success. Going forward, your Township looks to support and leverage regional initiatives that will coordinate local municipalities, school districts and other governmental bodies with private sector partners and other stakeholders to better serve the entire region.

For additional information about STEM go to [www.istem.illinois.edu](http://www.istem.illinois.edu)

## Human Services... Seeking to Serve

### Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention Programs

Since the recent renewal of our DHS Drug & Violence Prevention Grant, we will continue to provide Township residents with much needed services. Our efforts have focused on youth leadership development through efforts such as a Peer Led Life Skills program and Operation Snowball and Snowflake. Our Youth Community Foundation, started just over a year ago, has inspired many high school youth to serve local organizations through donation of time and money.

While those services target youth across the Township, there is an underserved area in the southeast portion of our Township that has greatly benefited from prevention programming. Collaborating with local residents, a coalition of schools, police, property management and businesses is able to provide programming, support, assistance and information.

New for this year is our long awaited, totally revamped curriculum, Too Good for Drugs, aimed at 6th & 7th grade students. We'll also raise the bar with our new group of student leaders to be peer mediators and volunteers reaching out to help their schools and local community. Anti-drug/positive lifestyle messages will be circulated via community meetings, flyers, posters, letters, pamphlets and speakers. Our purpose: to raise adult awareness of any pertinent issues and ways to resolve them through information, communication and support.



Jason Shiliga-Youth Education Coordinator

### Life Skills Programs

The Township's Social Emotional Learning program completed another successful year. When teaching in area schools, we target three major topics:

- Anti-Bullying with a focus on Empathy
- Drug and Alcohol prevention
- Life Goals and Stress management

During the 2011-2012 school year, twenty-two schools were visited in the Township where the Life Skills program was taught by Jason Shiliga and Rebecca Adelman. We spent approximately 505 hours teaching in the classroom and educating over 3400 students during the school year. We look forward to another successful school year with new activities to help our local schools and meet the Social/Emotional needs of their curriculum and those of their students.

### What Program Recipients Have to Say About Township Programs

"As a resident I appreciate the Township's presence in our community. It is positive and helpful in many ways. Not only do they teach drug education at the school, but are always involved in coalition activities, and are willing to help support residents' efforts outside the coalition." *Wendy Williams - Community Resident*

### The Peer Jury Program

**Parent of Offender:** "The Downers Grove Township Peer Jury program is a very valuable service to have in the community. Our experience with this program has provided some good life lessons for the family. After a minor infraction our son was required to attend SMS classes (Self Managed System) where he was asked to participate in group discussions, prepare homework and listen to other teens as they explored the reasoning behind their decisions. Lori Wrzesinski held one session with our family and discussed at great length how bad decisions impact the entire family. We are very lucky to have this program. It really required our son to stop and think about his actions. His final step in this process was to read out loud a letter to his peers on the jury. He wrote a very heartfelt letter about letting his family down and how he was aware that he has to earn trust back."

## The Peer Jury Program

**Current Juror:** “Peer Jury provides a great alternative for juvenile offenders in Downers Grove Township. The principles of restorative justice promote a proactive, not reactive approach to their consequences. The offender does not face punishment, but has the opportunity to solve the source of the problem, whether that be domestic issues, peer relationships, or emotional struggles. Peer Jury encourages offenders' strengths through community service, assigning them in a location that fosters both responsibility and their interests. Peer jurors also reap its benefits as well by strengthening leadership skills. I strive to be a role model and upstanding citizen. The satisfaction of observing a return



*Peer Jury Swearing In Ceremony at Downers Grove Village Hall - August 2012*

hearing demonstrates the efficacy of the program. I have enjoyed participating in government capacities and political simulations. Peer Jury is unique. It directly and positively impacts youth in our community.”

**Current Juror:** “My experience as a juror in the Peer Jury program has helped me become a more well-rounded, empathetic and patient person. Also, I have acquired the skill set to help guide my peers through their decision making process, ultimately helping them make the "right" decision. I have grown as a communicator, in the classroom, on the field, and in my own home. At Peer Jury hearings each month, I see offenders who take our program and what we have to say seriously. In turn, they commit to better themselves and their future.”

**Belle Aire Teacher:** “It was a wonderful presentation on empathy and what bullying is and how to stop it. Rebecca Adelman connected with the students and allowed for good discussions of the topics.”

**St. Isaac Jogues Teacher:** “We still refer to strategies and comments “Mr. Jason” taught us. He did a great job!”

**Youth Community Foundation Member:** “When I learned about the YCF, I could tell it was a great way to step up and help the community and I was excited to give my time to a good cause.”

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## Senior Services: “And the Survey Says...”

A survey of the Downers Grove Township S.A.L.T. Council (Seniors and Lawmen Together) was distributed in the Township’s Banner News newsletter and by local senior citizens organizations. Over 500 seniors responded. We will make all efforts to address concerns expressed by respondents. Highlights are published in this newsletter. Survey results are shared with respective Villages, Police Departments and Fire Departments. For the complete survey results, please see our website.

### **Worries about safety...**

- 33.8% worried about solicitors at their door
- 31.8% worried about being the victim of a crime

### **Of those 31.8% who feared being a crime victim...**

- 81.8% worried about burglary
- 77.3% worried about theft
- 12.0% had other concerns about crime

### **Concerns about safety...**

- 86.3% did not have a home preparedness kit with supplies that will last for at least 72 hours
- 59.7% did not test their smoke alarms each month
- 48.0% did not have a list of emergency contacts and medical information (such as the File of Life) in an easily accessible place for first responders

**Desired information and assistance...**

- 67.6% wanted more information about the Sheriff's "Guardian" program which checks on their well being
- 46.4% would like to know more about neighborhood Watch Programs
- 40.5% desired more information about safety inspections conducted by police and fire departments

**Who answered the survey?**

Male: 29.3%    Female: 70.7%    Age: 55-65: 5.2%    66-75: 44.3%    75+: 50.5%

**Type of residence...**

House: 68.6%    Town House: 7.6%    Condo: 13.5%    Group Home: 9.9%    Apt. 0.4%

*Resources can provide solutions for some survey concerns, including:*

**Transportation**

- **Dial-A-Ride** - a shared ride service provided by Downers Grove Township to township residents 65+ and other qualified persons with disabilities of any age, within the Township boundaries, Monday through Friday from 8 am to 4 pm. The fare is \$5.00 for each one-way ride. Call (630) 719-6670.
- **Discounted Taxi Fare Programs** - provide a subsidy to offset the cost of taxi services for eligible persons: Burr Ridge (630) 654-8181, Downers Grove (630) 434-5959, Darien (630) 852-5000 and Willowbrook (630) 323-8215.
- **ADA Special Services for Disabled Persons** - Pace (312) 663-4357

**Safety**

- **File of Life** - a card that lists your vital medical information to assist emergency response personnel. The card fits inside a magnetic pouch that is placed on the refrigerator door for immediate access. A pocket size card is also provided. The card accompanies you to the hospital. This potentially life-saving kit is available for \$1.00 at the Township office. **Get a File of Life for yourself, your relatives, friends and neighbors!**
- **Home Safety Inspections** - provided by local police and fire departments. Call your police or fire department to inquire. A "Home Security and Safety Checklist" is available from the DuPage County Sheriff's office (630) 407-2400 or at the Township office.
- **Emergency Preparedness** - information available at the Township office.
- **Information about services for older persons** - a large number of services are available for older persons in our community. The Township office has information about programs such as transportation, safety programs, senior housing, health care, legal programs, caregiver support and more.

**Documents and Lists**

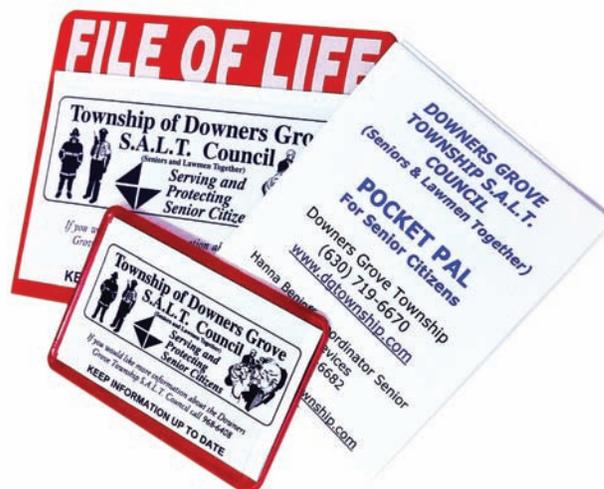
Available at the Township office include: Services for Seniors, Home Health Care Agencies, Senior Housing, Long Term Care Facilities, Support Groups, Living Wills Vision Specialist Report, and our new Pocket Pal (image on right).

**Pocket Pal Guide**

A new 8-panel sized guide that lists community resources and information for older persons is available at the Township office.

**Question about Senior Services?**

Please contact us at (630) 719-6682 or the DuPage County Senior Services at (800) 942-9412.





# Downers Grove Township

4340 Prince Street, Downers Grove, Illinois 60515

*my township*

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## Downers Grove Township Resident



### 2012 Newsletter

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#### **Residents save with discount prescription card program**

After one year the results are in! The FREE Coast2Coast RX discount prescription card is a great success for Township residents who participated in this program. Since our Township program introduction in August 2011, residents have realized a net savings of \$74,300.00 or 51% of their prescription costs.

Downers Grove Township participates with 60,000 pharmacies. This program contains no limits on usage, no paperwork, health restrictions, fees, no expiration date, and savings on generic as well as brand name drugs.

Residents who use this discount card can possibly see savings as high as 75% on prescriptions. Additionally up to 60% savings can be seen for family dental, vision and even pet prescriptions! To obtain a Coast2Coast Rx card one can stop by our Township office.

Print one at [www.coast2coastrx.com](http://www.coast2coastrx.com) click on "Townships" then click on "Downers Grove Township". Simply add your name and phone number to the card! \*PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS NOT AN INSURANCE CARD\*

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#### **Township Board of Trustees Here To Serve You**



William J. Swanston



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