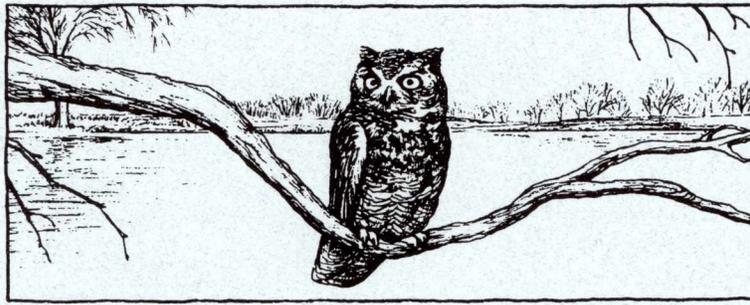


STILLMAN NEWSLETTER



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DUMB GROWTH VS. SMART DEVELOPMENT

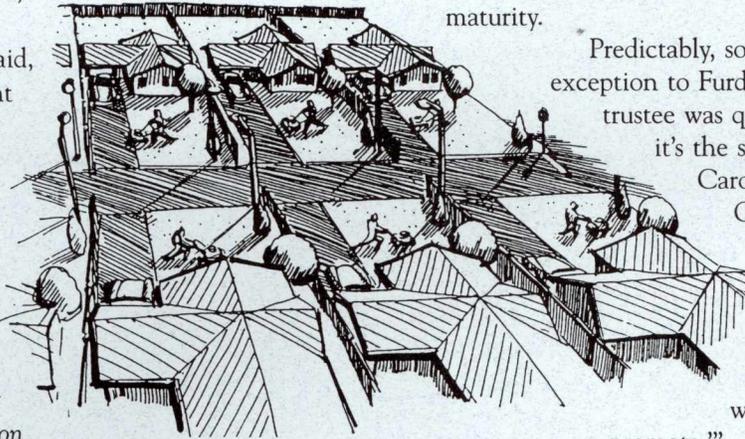
-- Mark Spreyer

On Oct. 30, Gov. George Ryan awarded a \$2 million grant to the Cook County Forest Preserve to purchase 65 acres of wetlands near the corner of Sutton and Penny Roads. This land, formerly part of the Klehm nursery, will be named in honor of Walter Payton.

Connie Payton, Walter's widow, recognized the importance of preserving open space when she said, "Everywhere you look, people want to build, build, build."

I've heard similar observations from Stillman members and visitors. Whether it's the Klehm, Jung or MacArthur properties; people are concerned.

With this in mind, what follows is a column that originally ran in the Dec. 17, 1998. *Barrington Courier-Review*. Please note that neither Greg Furda nor Carol Beese currently occupy the positions they did at that time.



"Cactus Ed" wrote those words a dozen years ago. They were true then and are even truer now. This column is a tip of the hat to Greg Furda, chairman of the Barrington Plan Commission, who, by suggesting a one-year moratorium on all building permits, dared to consider the possibility that Barrington is approaching maturity.

Predictably, some local officials took exception to Furda's proposal. A former trustee was quoted as saying, "I think it's the stupidest thing ever."

Carol Beese, director of the Chamber of Commerce, observed, "People are literally laughing at me saying, 'Well, you may as well close your doors, because you won't have anything to promote.'"

Forgive me, but the absence of growth-- buildings, roads, parking lots, congestion, noise-- is exactly what those of us in natural areas promote. Barrington has been blessed with a variety of attractive natural areas, a fact which the Chamber acknowledged when it depicted the Crabtree Nature Center on its 1996 Christmas ornament. Now, even though the "Welcome to Barrington" signs feature a leaping horse, I realize that Barrington is not a one-horse town. Nonetheless, the absence of growth can be an attraction in and of itself.

O.K. I can hear the arguments now. Perhaps, they were best summarized by Diane Feinstein when, as mayor of San Francisco, said, "A city not growing is

Why not consider the possibility that a city, like a man or woman or tree or any other healthy living thing, should grow until it reaches maturity--and then stop? Who wants to live forever under the stress, strain, and awkwardness of adolescence? ... We passed the optimum point of urban growth and population increase many decades ago. Now we live in the age of accelerating growth and diminishing returns.

--Edward Abbey

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dying." I wouldn't be so sure about that. Growth in the suburbs inevitably follows roads and what do our suburban roads look like? The following passage from James Kunstler's book, *The Geography of Nowhere*, best sums it up.

The landscape it [the road] runs through is littered with cartoon buildings and commercial messages. We whiz by them at fifty-five miles an hour and forget them, because one convenience store looks like the next. ... There is little sense of having arrived anywhere, because everyplace looks like noplac in particular.

The problem here is we have confused dumb growth with smart development. Business leader Paul Hawken expresses his concerns about growth this way:

We have reached a point where the value we do add to our economy is now being outweighed by the value we are removing, not only from future generations in terms of diminished resources, but from ourselves in terms of unlivable cities, deadening jobs, deteriorating health, and rising crime.

Fortunately, for most of us in Barrington, serious crime is not a problem. However, you can't get to Chicago or even through Barrington as quick as you could ten years ago. Thanks to the glow of suburban lights, you can't see as many stars at night. Hell, you can't see as many cows as before. Has all this growth improved our quality of life?

Some argue that growth is a measure of progress. Edward Abbey would disagree. In his book, *One Life at a Time, Please*, he writes, "If 'progress' means change for the better--and I'll support that-- then Growth as we have come to know it means change for the worse. Let me try out another new-fangled maxim here: Growth is the enemy of progress." Here, here, Ed.

So what's the difference between dumb growth and smart development? I'll let system analysis expert Donella Meadows answer that one:

What we need is smart development, not dumb growth.... When something grows it gets quantitatively bigger. When something develops it gets qualitatively better.... Smart development... ensures that forests and fields continue to ... recharge wells, harbor wildlife, and attract tourists. Dumb growth ... covers the landscape with the same kind of honkytonk ugliness tourists leave home to escape.... We need to meet dumb growth with smart questions. What really needs to grow? Who will benefit? Who will pay? What will last?

According to *The Village Report*, Barrington's newsletter, instead of the permit moratorium, the Village Board plans to stress "the importance of accelerating the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance updates to appropriately regulate land development."

As I sit in traffic and gaze at the "Welcome to Barrington" sign, I can't help but wonder if this is not a classic example of closing the barn doors after the dumb horses of growth have escaped.

Renewal Reminder. As one long-time Barrington resident recently said to me, "It's a good thing your nature center is not going to be developed." No it's not! However, in order to keep Stillman a viable and diverse natural area, we need your support. So, if you see an 0 after your name, this will be your last newsletter until you renew. If you didn't receive our annual membership letter, just use the form on the back of this newsletter. Thank you.

PROGRAMS

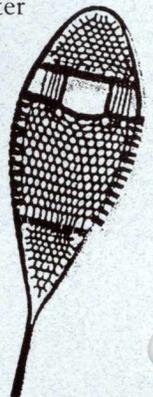
Program Basics: PLEASE CALL OR FAX US AT 428-OWLS(6957), OR EMAIL STILLMAN AT: stillnc@flash.net TO MAKE RESERVATIONS for programs. Remember to include your name, phone number, and the number of people that will be attending.

If less than 5 - 10 people (varying with the activity) have called two days prior to a program, the program could well be cancelled. So, remember to call the nature center in advance. If you discover that you are unable to attend, please call to cancel your reservations. This courtesy will be greatly appreciated.

SNOWSHOE SUNDAYS

Fresh snow can add a peaceful hush to the landscape and a surface that glitters in the bright winter sun. In order to help you sample the winter scenery in a novel way, we've purchased 20 pairs of snowshoes. So, bring your own snowshoes or use ours and join us on a winter walk. Please, don't forget to call 428-OWLS to make reservations.

Date: Sundays, Jan. 14, 28 & Feb. 11
Time: 2:00PM
Fee: None



MAKING TRACKS

Join Susan Allman as she shows you how to recognize the different types of tracks made by winter's active animals. After an indoor introduction, explore Stillman's trails for signs of rabbit, squirrel, deer and fox. If there is no snow on the ground (HA!), the program will be cancelled. Bring your own snowshoes or borrow ours.

Date: Sunday, Jan. 21
Time: 2:00PM
Fee: None

OWL PROWL

While the groundhog checks for his shadow, the owls are pitching woo or, should I say, pitching hoo, hoo-hoo, hoo. Stillman Director Mark Spreyer will present an indoor presentation on owls. Afterwards, we will walk the trails in search of Stillman's Great Horned Owls. Space is limited so call 428-OWLS to make reservations.

Date: Saturday, Feb. 3
Time: 6:00PM
Age: 10 years and up
Member's Fee: Free
Non-member's Fee: \$2.00



NAME THAT TREE or THIS BUD'S FOR YOU!

Imagine that George Washington chopped down that cherry tree on his birthday. How could he tell which was the cherry? With the help of Stillman's naturalist, you'll learn how to identify black cherry, maple, sumac and other midwestern trees. Easy to remember tips and simple hand-outs will help you open your own branch office! Come prepared for the weather. Teachers and garden club members are especially welcome.



Date: Sunday, Feb. 18
Time: 2:00PM
Age: 10 years and up
Fee: None

Please note that the Stillman Nature Center is also available, by reservation, during the week to school classes. For a brochure that describes the programs and fees, just call or email us at stillnc@flash.net and we'll be happy to send you one.

CONSERVING NATURAL GAS

O.K., now that you've picked yourself up off the floor after opening your gas bill, you might be wondering what you can do lower the future bills. I have a few ideas for you.

1. Turn down the heat. It's just that easy. During the winter, you can save as much as 3% of the energy your furnace uses simply by lowering your thermostat 1°F. This assumes you have it set between 65° and 72°F. Recommended winter settings are 68° in the day and as low as 55° at night. A variety of thermostats are available that will adjust the temperature automatically. If everyone in your house is away at work or school during the middle of the day, you can save more by turning the thermostat down during this "down" time.

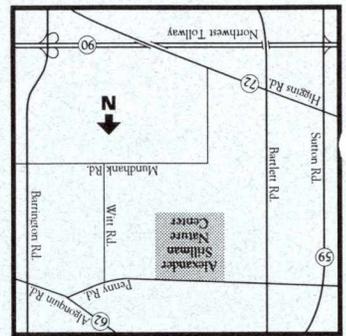
2. Break Out the Duct Tape. It is estimated that 99% of all houses in America with central air conditioners or furnaces have duct leaks. You can save up to 10% of your heating costs by insulating and tightening up ducts. How can you check your ducts? Start by dialing up the furnace.

If the first air that comes out of the vent is chilly, and it stays cool for a while, you know the ducts are uninsulated and you're wasting heat and gas. Before you start working around ducts, particularly in older houses, check to make sure the insulation isn't asbestos. If you're not sure, call an expert.

3. Plant trees. If you have the space, borrow a tip from conservation-minded farmers and plant a shelterbelt along the north and west side of your property. By putting trees there, you'll break up the prevailing winter winds. Deciduous trees are recommended for the outside, where the winds first hit the trees, and conifers along the inside of a windbreak.

If you plant small trees, it will take a while before you realize significant energy savings but, in the meantime, you'll be able to enjoy the birds that will be attracted to the trees. The birds that come to your feeder like to get out of the winter winds as well and they will welcome the cover offered by the boughs of an evergreen tree.





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 South Barrington, IL 60010
 33 West Penny Road

STILLMAN nature center



Open Sundays 11-4

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Mark Spreyer, Director & Newsletter Editor

Jill Kohler, Newsletter Illustrator

If you aren't already a member, please consider joining us.

- Yes, I'd like to become a member of the Stillman Nature Center. I enclose my tax deductible contribution of \$_____.
- I'd like to help as a volunteer with programs or land management at the Stillman Nature Center, please call me.
- Please send a gift membership from _____ to the name and address listed below.

Name _____

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Student	\$10.00
Member	25.00
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