

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Cynthia Nielsen-Morgan
Chicago District Campground Association
773.898.8738
shift2greennow@gmail.com
www.hmc1860.org

History Hunters Uncover Historic Treasures

Des Plaines, IL – November 17, 2017. Members of the Midwest Historical Research Society uncover artifacts at the 157-year old historic Chicago District Campground in Des Plaines, IL as part of historic sustainable community preservation project.



Stan Kotecki© & Marina Samvosky© Photo Credits

Top Left: Artifacts, Top Middle: Old Coins, Top Right: Old Coins, Bottom Left: Old Coins, Bottom Right: MHRS Members: Left to Right - John Ramoska, Rose Kilanski, Jeff Hungerford, Steve Crundwell, Jan Kilanski, Pam Hungerford, Eugene Zschernitz, Tom Halek)

Along the banks of the Des Plaines River among old growth trees, lies a historic gemstone. The Chicago District Campground has been in operation for 157 years, and resides on 36-acres bordered by the Des Plaines River, Forest Preserve land and the 56-mile River Trail.

It houses 129 historic and architecturally relevant buildings circa 1860-1930. 100 summer cottages, Epworth Dining Hall, 30-Room Red Gables Hotel, Wesley & Waldorf Tabernacles, Community Building, and Olympic Swimming Pool. Minutes from O'Hare Int'l. Airport and walking distance to a Metra Train Station.

Predating the civil war, this historic site is slated for redevelopment as a modern day Chautauqua, serving as a model for Sustainable Community Development. All accomplished through Service Learning Projects in partnership with local academic, historic, and green organizations. Funding is under development through a combination of donations and foundation grants.

As part of the early stages of redevelopment, vetted members from the Midwest Historical Research Society were granted a limited permit to help uncover the site's historic treasures; coins, artifacts, tokens, jewelry and more. All finds are documented, cleaned and cataloged for future educational programming initiatives in partnership with the Des Plaines History Center.

This historic campground offers a treasure trove of data that can shed light on Des Plaines early environment and long-ago residents. But increased flooding threatens the future of the campground.

In order to protect the state's cultural heritage and despite those pressures, local not-for-profit, Shift2Green aims to bring a network of state and local agencies, historians, architects, and academic institutions together to show how to do more with less.

By involving local institutions and individuals, they hope to develop a sense of ownership, pride and involvement. The camp offers direct evidence and information about our ancestors. There is much to learn from our past, from the ancient traditions of the early native settlers, to the camp's founders with direct ties to the Chautauqua Education Movement, the Methodist Movement, the City of Evanston, the Garrett Seminary, and Northwestern University.

Over the last two years, Cynthia Nielsen-Morgan, Executive Director for Shift2Green, along with other caring citizens have been busy working with the camp's board of trustees to lay the foundation for a master plan that addresses the buildings, grounds, infrastructure, and programs.

"We're looking to work with land trusts, conservation, academic, architectural, and historic groups to preserve this rare piece of history for future generations."

Prospective partners are invited to email to shift2greennow@gmail.com

About the Chicago District Campground Association. Listed on the National Registry of Historic Places (NRHP) this quiet community is located 20 miles north of the City of Chicago offering a relaxed-filled pleasant refuge in the wilderness. The spirit of the Chautauqua lives on, celebrating intimate, face-to-face conversations, providing a sense that you are a part of an experience and a community. www.hmc1860.org

About the Midwest Historical Research Society. MHRS is an open membership club available to all adults as well as their children. MHRS represent a diverse group of people drawn together by a shared interest in the hobby of metal detecting. Our club is dedicated to cultivating this shared interest and a safe and secure environment for members to explore and pursue their hobby. www.mhrsusa.com

About Shift2Green. Shift2Green helps organizations incorporate sustainable principles into their business strategies through programs and services designed to enhance their corporate social responsibility and environmental profiles. www.shift2green.org