



DATE: August 31, 2026

TO: Sarah Knizhnik, Chair
Operations Committee

FROM: Alyssa Firkus
Director of Education

RECOMMENDATION: Approve and Accept New Acquisitions and Donations to the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County's Collections.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED: Communication, Education, and Outreach

FINANCIAL DATA: The Education Department's FY2026 approved budget includes funding for the acquisition of items for the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County's ("Dunn Museum") collections when deemed appropriate. Three items recommended for acquisition would be purchased for \$6,302.00 and charged to an appropriate line item in the Education Department's collections budget (76413800-643000). The other items are being donated to the Dunn Museum.

BACKGROUND: The Dunn Museum "collects material culture representing the people, places, and events of Lake County, Illinois" (Collection Policies, Scope of Collections, p. 5). The majority of the Dunn Museum's historic collections were acquired by the County of Lake from the privately run Lake County Museum of History in 1965 for the purpose of "preserve(ing) and maintain(ing) for future generations the cultural history of Lake County" (Resolution No. 24, dated October 12, 1965). These collections were officially transferred to the District in 1989.

The Dunn Museum is frequently offered donations by members of the general public. Each donation offer is considered against criteria established in the Dunn Museum's approved Collection Policies. Donations that do not meet these criteria are declined. Since March 2026, the Dunn Museum has received offers for 10 donations, one of which was declined by the Dunn Museum's Collection Committee. Additionally, staff has identified three items that it recommends be purchased to add to the collection.

The acquisitions and donations listed on the attached Exhibit A meet the criteria established in the Dunn Museum's approved Collection Policies and have been reviewed and recommended by the Dunn Museum's Committee for acceptance into the Dunn Museum's historic collections. There is adequate space to properly store and care for these items. Under the Collection Policies, the Operations Committee is authorized to approve and accept these acquisitions and donations, because they do not require a purchase of more than \$30,000.00.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Exhibitions and Collections Manager, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Finance, Manager of Board Operations and Corporate Counsel

MOTION: Motion to approve and accept new acquisitions into the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County's Collections as provided in Exhibit A to staff's August 31, 2026, memorandum.

APPROVED:

Date: _____ ☐ Roll Call Vote: Ayes: _____ Nays: _____
☐ Voice Vote Majority Ayes; Nays: _____

New Acquisitions Inventory

August 31, 2026

Donations:

1. Lake County Folk Club stage used and signed by local musicians.
2. Final Examination diploma from 1890 for Maggie Hastings of Five Points.
3. Aerial photo of Hawthorn Mall ca. 1973.
4. Brighton Rod and Gun Club (Fourth Lake) Ledger, record book, membership book and seven slide images.
5. Items from Libertyville/North Chicago family including a business card from family-owned clothing store, jacket, Johnson Mothers sign, doll, pillowcase, bag and digital donation of items from family photo album/scrapbook.
6. Items from Waukegan area family including handsewn wedding dress with hat and shoes; purse; shoes with shoebox; report cards; dance recital programs; 1949-52 Waukegan High School yearbooks; class reunion programs; booklet outlining the history of the Jewish community and Temple in Waukegan; early reader schoolbooks.
7. Lake Zurich Peace pole blueprints and plans.
8. Civil War rifle and grain cradle (Bonner-family related).
9. Dannis Downes trail tree sculpture purchased for the old museum between 2008-2013.

Purchases:

1. Reima Ratti Painting for \$1,302.00
2. Two Native American handmade baskets for \$5,000.00 (\$2,500.00 each).