

Wildwood Cemetery News

Dear members of the Wildwood Community,

I hope this finds you in good health and good spirits. Spring has arrived at Wildwood and how very welcome it is! The robins and bluebirds have returned and goldfinches have donned their bright summer garb. Soon the bluets will carpet the grounds, they're my favorites of the many beautiful wildflowers that adorn Wildwood throughout the spring and summer.

Though the pandemic has made this winter more challenging than usual it's still been a very productive time as you'll see from the news from Rebecca Fricke below. I'm particularly excited about the progress we've made on planning for a new Maintenance Facility. The Executive board is closing in on finalizing the building design and location (special thanks go to John Kuhn, Barry Roberts, Silas Ball and Jeff Pickering for their crucial work on this). And special thanks too to the Fundraising Committee led by Jim Conlon (with important input from Kent Fearber and Jody Babilonia) as they strategize the best course for funding this important and long overdue infrastructure initiative. You will be hearing more about this at the annual meeting in May.

I want to take this opportunity to once again express my appreciation for the dedication, expertise and hard work delivered daily by our wonderful Wildwood staff, Rebecca Fricke and Silas Ball.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Annual Meeting if not before. And in the meantime please stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Nordstrom, President of the Board of Trustees

Jack Fair—Rest in Peace

Jack passed away in November, 2020. At the 2021 Annual Meeting the Amherst Cemetery Association will hang a plaque in the office to honor Jack. Jack's kindness and good work lives on for all to enjoy in the beauty and serenity of Wildwood.

Spring 2021 General Manager's Report



Some day, hopefully soon, it will be much easier to direct people to Wildwood Cemetery. We are in the process of applying for a Town of Amherst permit so that we can install a sign at both our entrances. This will make us more visible to the public, but more importantly it will help our new families and friends find us quickly and easily on their first visit. Photos show what the signs will look like and their placement



Cemetery Signs Are In the Works

Front Entrance Improvements

Besides staying on top of the usual plowing and preparing for burials, Silas has spent the winter working on improving our tool stock, reorganizing the tight spaces in the basement and doing repairs to our equipment. Silas and Paul have also taken care of clearing the invasive species and brush from several areas of the cemetery, including the area where we will locate our new maintenance facility. One of the major challenges we have is removing the Tree of Heaven which the USDA thinks is a special favorite food of a new kind of invasive insect called the Lantern Fly. It grows as fast as sumac and in the past was planted as an ornamental. The trees we have at the cemetery were not planted.

Thanks to a generous donation from David Hosford and matching funds raised by the Executive Committee, the front entrance work has begun. Silas has pulled at least a dozen large stumps and lowered the grade of the slope next to Strong Street. This will allow people to exit the main entrance with a much better view of the approaching traffic. Two new drains are being installed and the pavement will be smoothed out and patched in the coming months.



Records Management

While I am listing the progress we have made in this area, I want to recognize Baer Tierkel for his volunteer work. Baer helped both me and the Executive Board choose the cemetery database software that we are now using for our records and the map. The company has proven to be extremely responsive when technical issues and questions arise. Since the last newsletter Baer helped to move all of our fundraising data from a spreadsheet that Barbara St. Onge created and maintained meticulously for decades into a donor software program called Little Green Light. This new program can track donations, generate reports and most importantly upload new data with our cemetery software. I am still learning the ins and outs

of this program, but it has already proven to be very practical. In addition to the programming help he has given us, Baer has spent hundreds of hours uploading records into the new system. I am guessing that Baer donated over one thousand hours to Wildwood and we are so very grateful for his expertise.

Phase 1 of the mapping project is complete! The mapping data has been turned over to our CIMS Database company and they are in the process of uploading our GIS data and matching our maps with the burial and deed files that are associated with each lot. In the meantime, I am able to print out the new maps to use with customers, for the lot sale process and to help Silas with his landscaping work.

Please let the office know if we need to make corrections to your name or mailing address. When we merged our two new systems there were a few glitches and we tried our best to catch them, but a few may have slipped through. Thank you for your understanding.