

## **EVERGREEN CEMETERY ASSOCIATION**

**1105 Third Avenue N.E. Brainerd, Minnesota 56401**

**(218) 829-5898** EMAIL [evergreencem@brainerd.net](mailto:evergreencem@brainerd.net)

WEB <http://www.brainerd.net/~evergreencem/>

May 2016

Dear Lot Owners, Families, and Friends,

Greetings from Karen, Rusty, the three seasonal workers, and the Cemetery Board. And THANK YOU for the financial support many of you provide through your donations. After a relatively mild Winter and an early Spring, we are back at it with the normal Spring cleanup in preparation for Memorial Day and the Summer months.

2015 was a busy year for the Evergreen and Memorial Gardens Cemeteries. Our number of lots sold was up from recent years, the majority of the lots sold being in Memorial Gardens. Burials for 2015 were up from the past couple years but not near the number of the 2005-2012 period. Interestingly, cremation burials exceeded traditional burials for the first time in history.

With the trend towards more cremations, it is our hope that Brainerd area residents will continue to memorialize their deceased loved ones by using the services we provide for cremated bodies. We have both in-ground and above-ground options for cremated bodies. Our columbarium at Memorial Gardens provides the above-ground option that many families are now seeking. While ashes of cremated bodies are being scattered or kept in various ways, a permanent place of remembrance will provide comfort for future generations of family and friends.

The severe windstorm last July did considerable damage at Evergreen and Memorial Gardens; however, our damage was not as extensive as in some areas. We lost 28 trees completely at Evergreen and had many limbs and branches blown to the ground at both cemeteries. Due to the hard work of our grounds crew and of a number of volunteers, we were able to do most of the cleanup ourselves, thereby keeping the hiring of outside contractors to a minimum. We also received a generous donation that covered most of the additional expenses we had due to the storm.

As we look forward to our activities for this year, we have purchased a new 50" riding mower. We are also planning to add more signage at Evergreen that will help people more easily locate the gravesites of loved ones. Due to last year's storm and the general aging of our trees, we will be working further on plans for new trees at both cemeteries and further landscaping work at Memorial Gardens.

Another issue we are dealing with is the age and condition of our irrigation/watering system at Evergreen. We have been looking at our options over the past several months. It is likely that a complete new system will not be feasible and that we will need to work on the existing system to keep it operational. This could possibly result in eliminating some of the current water lines and faucets. In so doing, we will be mindful of the need to have faucets within a reasonable distance of gravesites.

Each year during the Brainerd History Week, Evergreen has hosted a Cemetery History Walk. In 2015, History Week focused on Brainerd's North Side, and we had 44 participants in the Walk highlighting the residents of the homes visited during the Northside Neighborhood History Walk. The theme for 2016 is Northeast Brainerd. Our History Walk will be on Saturday June 18, at 10:30 AM. It will focus on people with businesses or homes in Northeast Brainerd around the turn of the century. Please join us in learning more about Brainerd's history and its people.

You will note this year we have added a new section to this letter. We would like to increase the number of volunteers to help us with grounds maintenance and general office activities. We also from time to time have openings on the Board of Trustees of the Cemetery Association. If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information on the Board of Trustees, please tear off and complete the questionnaire on the bottom of this letter. We will also use this information to update our records.

As we have noted in previous letters we are a non-profit organization and receive no financial support from the city, county, or any governmental institution. Our full-time superintendent, three summer employees, and part-time executive director maintain the grounds and keep and update the records of over 20,000 people buried in our two cemeteries.

We ask for your on-going financial support of one of Brainerd's premier historical institutions. Thank you for your past donations. If you haven't donated prior to this, please consider adding the cemeteries to your charitable contribution recipients. You may also want to consider leaving a legacy gift by including the cemeteries in your will or estate planning.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors  
Evergreen Cemetery Association

P.S. Checks can be made out to Evergreen Cemetery Association, a 501(c)13 non-profit organization, and mailed to the address above. *Donations to the Association are tax deductible.*

=====CUT HERE and RETURN IN ENVELOPE PROVIDED=====

Name(s) _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____
Email (Office Use Only) _____
I am interested in volunteering for: <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds Maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> General Office Work
Areas of interest _____
I could volunteer: <input type="checkbox"/> weekly <input type="checkbox"/> monthly <input type="checkbox"/> occasionally when called
<input type="checkbox"/> I may have interest in serving on the Board of Trustees
<input type="checkbox"/> I am currently available <input type="checkbox"/> My availability is in the future - _____
Comments _____