
The New Englander

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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE

NEW ENGLAND CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

President
Dale Fiore
Evergreen Cemetery
New Haven, CT

Honoring the Past Serving the Present Preparing for the Future

www.newenglandcemetery.org

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Welcome fellow Cemeterians and Industry Suppliers!

It shall be my pleasure to serve as President of the New England Cemetery Association for 2008-2009. We all owe Mark Hemmann a pat on the back for his guidance as President for the past year and completing his term with a successful, well orchestrated and informative conference. Congratulations to new Board members, Bray Walsh, Lowell Cemetery, Lowell, MA and Pamela Metzner, West Cemetery Association, Bristol, CT. On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, we look forward to working with you both.

Each committee needs your input and help. If you would like to get involved, please feel free to contact me at 203-624-5505 or djfiore@evergreencem.org. You can count on seeing me at your next state cemetery association meeting as I plan to visit all the New England states supporting you on the state level and encouraging your membership to become more actively involved with both associations.

Plan to attend the cemetery management conference December 2, 3, 4, 2008 at the University of New Hampshire. 1st Vice President Anthony Hollingshead and Director Kevin Cody have been developing a wonderful educational program for you. From January 30th to February 1st, 2009 the Mid Winter gathering will be held at the Mystic Marriott Hotel in Mystic, CT. This meeting will have an agenda and an opportunity for great networking with friends.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!! The 107th Annual Meeting and Conference will be held June 29 to July 2, 2009 at the Radisson in Nashua, New Hampshire.

Pick up your copy of the Membership Directory and Resource guide when selecting a product or service. These supplier members have supported our association by purchasing ad space or by traveling to our management seminar or summer conference.

Let's make the next year a great one for NECA. There is much work to begin and I am confident that we can accomplish the task together.

Respectfully, Dale. J. Fiore, CCE



106TH ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE

The 106th Annual Meeting and Conference was held at the Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center in Sturbridge, MA this past June. Over 100 individuals representing NECA member cemeteries attended, supported by 22 industry vendor companies. President, Mark Hemmann and the Board of Directors presented a program that was informative and educational as well as enjoyable.

The main focus of the conference was on planning for a natural or medical disaster. Chief Bill Austin of the West Hartford, CT Fire Department addressed the gathering about issues related to homeland security regional response issues. He spoke of the need for coordination among the many and diverse groups that will be affected by any significant disaster. Joe Dispenza, President of Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo, NY spoke of his experiences in preparing for a mass casualty event. He stressed that many of us will be overwhelmed by the impact that such an event will have upon our operations. He indicated the need to communicate with local officials and stressed that they will have to be the ones who provide the supplies and even the equipment to meet the immediate needs faced by cemeteries during such an event. Both Joe and Chief Austin were very informative and well received.

The conference kicked off with Dale Fiore presenting a program on current cremation issues. We are all aware of how the rising cremation rate is affecting our cemeteries and through programs like Dale's we can all become better prepared for tomorrow. Joe Swift also spoke to the group on cost and budget analysis. He showed how he breaks down every aspect of his operation so that he is aware of the true cost of each employee and each service provided. Until you know the actual cost of doing business you can not accurately price your products. Both of these subjects are very important for future planning in our industry.

Gregg Benton of the Hartford Insurance Company spoke concerning workers comp and insurance fraud. This is a subject that everyone should be aware of as a portion of every dollar that is spent on insurance goes to cover the cost of fraud. Mr. Warren Leach of Tranquil Lake Nursery presented a program on low maintenance horticulture. He emphasized plants that will grow with little attention and meet specific needs within the cemetery landscape.

Of course there was the usual time to spend with suppliers and conversing with our associates. There was a reception with suppliers on Wednesday and Thursday evenings and the hospitality suite was well attended. Dale Fiore directed a miniature golf tournament and the annual golf tournament was contested on Thursday afternoon.

Much thanks and credit for this successful event must go to the many generous suppliers who have supported our events over the years. As always, the best way for each of us to show our appreciation is by giving them an opportunity to establish a business relationship with our cemeteries.

Congratulations to Mark Hemmann and the Board of Directors for a terrific event. Please be sure to schedule next year's conference in your calendar, June 29th to July 2nd, 2009 in Nashua, NH.



Top left—Bruce Delle Chiaie of Watertown Engineering addressing the conference; bottom left—the Connecticut 2nd Governors Foot Guard Dance Band; right—Joe Swift presenting his program on Cost and Budget Analysis.

STATE NEWS

Vermont: by Joy Fagan

Cemeteries have been very busy in Vermont. This year has not been a drought and grass is growing very quickly.

Montpelier's Green Mount Cemetery continues to develop its newest area. A part of the section was going to be for cremated remains, but the new section is so beautiful that those choosing full burial have been requesting that area. Director Patrick Healy is working to make those requests a reality. Another section of the new area has one of the more spectacular views and once available for sale, will have many vying for it.

The Vermont Cemetery Association's new and improved website has brought many interesting requests. Recently VCA received a request for information about what was described by Bais Chana International as an abandoned Jewish cemetery in Poultney, VT. Bais Chana International is an organization which provides intense, full-immersion Jewish study retreats for women and also for teenage girls throughout the United States and Israel. Some VCA members recalled something about a Jewish cemetery in Poultney, but that was about all. A quick look at the Vermont Old Cemetery Association's book, *Burial Grounds of Vermont*, gave information on a Jewish Cemetery, started in 1874, in Poultney with 49 graves in what the VOCA book called "very good condition".

This turned out to be a Bais Chana retreat for teenage girls for the month of July. They took on the Poultney Jewish Cemetery as their project for their July retreat. After learning about the cemetery and its location from the VOCA book, they contacted the Poultney Town Manager who brought the girls to the cemetery and informed them that the Town of Poultney does maintain the cemetery mainly by mowing the cemetery lawn. After being instructed in proper procedures, the girls have made a number of repairs and improvements to the cemetery and will be discussing plans for the repair of a few memorials that were beyond the abilities of the girls to repair with the Town of Poultney and the Vermont Old Cemetery Association, which has grants for such work. It was a nice surprise for this group to drop into Vermont and help out this little cemetery.

On a sadder note, Vermont is sorry to report that the Probate Court eventually gave permission for the little Aldrich/Hartland Cemetery, which has rested peacefully for centuries on a parcel of 167 acres and which a business man wishes to purchase, to be moved

Continued next column

Massachusetts: by Bray Walsh

The Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Cemetery Association is in the planning stages for the meeting dates and events for 2008-2009.

Our first meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 17th in Medway, MA at the VFW Pavilion. This is our Annual Suppliers Day Exposition and New England Clambake. The Board encourages all cemetery members to attend this great event and also to solicit their suppliers to become supplier members of the Association and to attend this event. Last September we had 200 in attendance between cemetery and supplier members and guests. We also extend an invitation to members of other state associations to attend. For more information and registration forms, please visit our website at www.macemetery.org.

Many members of the MCA attended the Annual Meeting of the New England Cemetery Association in Sturbridge, MA this past June. I would like to congratulate Immediate Past President, Mark Hemmann and the entire BOD of NECA for putting together an outstanding program of events.

I was nominated and elected to serve as a Director for a three year term to the Board of the NECA. I am honored to have been asked to serve in this capacity and I will fulfill my duties and obligations to this wonderful association.

As the events for the Massachusetts Cemetery Association for the upcoming year become finalized, the information will be posted on our website. We look forward to seeing you all at the Suppliers Day Exposition and New England Clambake in September.

Vermont (continued)

at the business man's discretion. He will move it but has not made public his plans on how or where he will move the 40' X 20' cemetery. This issue was reported on in the last *New Englander*.

The Jewish Community of Greater Stowe (JCOGS) has contracted with NECA Supplier Member David Crispin, The BSC Group, to do a site visit in July at the land it has under contract to confirm soil conditions and recommend design applications. VCA members who are also NECA members and who know Dave are hoping this will be the beginning of Vermont cemeteries utilizing Dave's talent and expertise.

FOREST HILL'S LANTERN FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Ten years ago, the Forest Hills Educational Trust organized the first Lantern Festival at Forest Hills Cemetery. The Lantern Festival was inspired by the Japanese Bon Festival, a traditional event held to honor ancestors. No one knew quite what to expect from this memorial event. Would people attend? Would they respond to an Asian ritual? As the evening unfolded, 200 people gathered to participate in this ceremony of remembrance by inscribing simple wooden lanterns with personal messages to friends and family who had passed away. At sunset, they lit candles in the lanterns and let them float across Lake Hibiscus. The ceremony was judged a success, both deeply moving and very beautiful, and the Cemetery decided to make it an annual event. Word spread, and the next year 600 people gathered at the Lake, and the following year, more than 1,000.



This year, the Lantern Festival celebrated its 10th anniversary on July 17, and it has become one of Boston's most-loved events. Forest Hills Cemetery and the Forest Hills Educational Trust (its nonprofit sister organization) welcomed more than 4,000 people to experience this memorable evening in the beautiful setting of Forest Hills' Victorian landscape. Some of them have attended faithfully every year, even traveling great distances. Many families hold reunions and friends meet to picnic and reminisce. The audience enjoyed gospel music, traditional Asian folk dances, and Japanese Taiko drumming. Then they decorated 1200 lanterns with messages, poems and drawings.

The Festival's growth is a testament to its importance as a community celebration and as a personal ritual. A thousand lanterns illuminate the darkness as they cross the water at sunset, each bearing a personal message. Their glimmering lights suggest the hope and love that survives death, and the joining of so many lanterns together suggests the strength and warmth of community that sustains us through difficult times.

Article provided by Cecily Miller, Executive Director, Forest Hills Educational Trust, Boston, MA



Photo by Elizabeth Pell. For additional photos please go to http://www.foresthillstrust.org/press_LF_08.html

MORE STATE NEWS

Rhode Island: by George Boardman

Well, it's summertime in New England and that means lobsters! We held our annual lobster bake in Newport this past July and as usual it was a great success. A lot of work goes into this event and I would like to thank Steven Douglas and Enzly Ramsay. Steven handles all of the details, including food, drinks and all the money. Enzly takes care of our suppliers' needs including setting up tents, making sure we have quality time with each supplier and of course, taking down the tents and making sure everyone has a great day. A hearty thank you to Enzly's crew for their hard work as well.

As always, we can't thank our suppliers enough for all of their support. Without them we could not give our members a break on the cost of the event. Thank you all very much.

While I am thanking people I would like to say it was our pleasure to have so many of the officers and directors of the New England Cemetery Association visit us here in Rhode Island. I hope they all had a great day. This was the largest event we have ever had in Rhode Island and I want to thank everyone for coming.

As President of RICA and one of its founding members I'm extremely proud of our association. Next year will be our 20th anniversary so I look forward to the future and hope to see all of you again.

Our next meeting will be on October 15th. This is our business meeting with election of officers and directors. More info will follow.

New Hampshire: by Jeff Snow

In the last issue of the New Englander it was reported that legislation was being offered before the New Hampshire legislature to permit the "Resomation" of human remains as an alternative to cremation. This bill was amended in a fashion that actually prohibits the process. The amended bill repeals RSA 325-A:30,II and reenacts it to read, in part, that "The disposal of human remains through a reductive process utilizing alkaline hydrolysis is prohibited". The bill also establishes a committee to study this process. The committee must report no later than November 1, 2008 so it is an issue that will continue to be of interest to our industry.

Connecticut: by Dan Krueger

During the nights of August 18th and 19th vandals knocked over 26 memorials at the Center Street Cemetery in Wallingford, CT. Many of these tablet style monuments date back over 200 years. It appeared to be a random act of destruction to the police who are investigating.

Center Street Cemetery is the final resting place of many of the founding fathers of Wallingford, including Lyman Hall, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. This October the cemetery will be celebrating its 325th anniversary. NECA member Bob Devaney is the superintendent of this historic jewel located in the center of Wallingford. He is stunned by the damage. "Why would anyone want to do this to people who have no recourse to fight back?" Devaney said. "They did damage to irreplaceable town art. That's what these headstones are; they're carved by hand". He has plans for a 325th celebration and is determined to have all of the damage repaired for the fall festivities.

Wallingford police arrested a 16 year old late on the 20th and charged him with interfering with cemetery operations, desecration of property, first-degree criminal mischief and third-degree trespassing. The police are also close to making at least one other arrest.

Work has already begun with the restoration. It is estimated that it will cost between \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00 to properly repair the 26 memorials. The last time vandals targeted the cemetery was about 10 years ago. The town-owned Center Street Cemetery is still receiving restitution from that incident.

Bob Devaney is very appreciative of the positive media coverage the cemetery has received. All of the major television stations in Connecticut have covered the story as well as Channel 7 out of New York. But even more appreciated was the outpouring of support he has received from other cemetery professionals.



**39TH ANNUAL FREDERICK R. LAFFOND
CEMETERY MANAGEMENT SEMINAR**

**PRESENTED BY THE
NEW ENGLAND CEMETERY ASSOCIATION**

DECEMBER 2, 3 AND 4, 2008

**New England Center for Continuing Education
University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire**

“Preserving the Past, Preparing for the Future”

Cemetery Insurance, What You Should Know!

A.J. Rockwell, Starkweather & Shepley Insurance
Brokerage, Inc.
Ed Rodriguez, Travelers Companies, Inc.

Handling Employee Conflicts

Douglas F. Seaver, Hinckley Allen and Snyder LLP

Cemetery Planning for the Years Ahead

David Ward, Grever & Ward

Green Cemeteries

Joe Sehee, Executive Director, Green Burial Council

Are Your Archives in Good Order?

Debi Hogan, Archivist, Swan Point Cemetery

**Bloodborne Pathogens - OSHA
Consultation Program**

James Bruckshaw, Rhode Island Department of Health

**How to Create a Public Event
at Your Cemetery**

Cecily Miller, Director, Forest Hills Educational Trust

Preserving Historic Monuments

Jonathan Appell, Gravestone Preservation

Problems to be Solved

(Audience Participation Project)

**Putting Together a 12 Month
Maintenance Schedule**

Kevin Cody, Mount Calvary Cemetery

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Chairman: Anthony Hollingshead, CCE, 401-272-1314

Co-chairman: Kevin C. Cody, 603-622-3215



*Newly elected President, Dale Fiore with
Past Presidents following his installation.
Left to right; George Boardman, Joe Swift,
Dan Krueger, Armand Chevrette, Dale
Fiore, Bill Griswold, Tom Daly and Mark
Hemmann.*

MEET THE NEW DIRECTORS

At the 106th Annual Meeting of the New England Cemetery Association Ms. Pamela Metzner and Mr. R. Braybrook Walsh were elected to serve as directors.

Mr. Walsh, better known as Bray, has been the Superintendent of the Properties of Lowell Cemetery in Lowell, MA for the past 13 years. Lowell Cemetery was established in 1841 as a private, non-profit organization serving the citizens of Lowell. Bray has also been very active in the Massachusetts Cemetery Association serving as a director and as president.

Ms. Metzner is the manager of the West Cemetery Association in Bristol, CT. Pam was hired as the Secretary/Office Manager in 1985, later becoming the Assistant Manager. In 1995 she was appointed the first woman manager of the association. She manages both the West and Peacedale Cemeteries along with the Carlye F. Barnes Memorial Chapel where funeral and memorial services are held along with many weddings each year. She also oversees three small cemeteries for the City of Bristol. Pam has also served the Connecticut Cemetery Association as a director and as President.



Please join the other directors and the officers in congratulating Bray and Pam upon their election to serve our association. They are certainly well qualified and will be a positive addition to the leadership of NECA.



FALL CALENDAR

September 17, 2008: MCA
Suppliers Day Exposition and Clambake
Medway VFW, Medway, MA

October 15, 2008: RICA
Annual Meeting
TBA

October 16, 2008: CCA
Annual Meeting
Traditions Golf Club, Wallingford, CT

December 2, 3 & 4, 2008: NECA
39th Annual Frederick R. Laffond
Cemetery Management Seminar
University of NH, Durham, NH

The following suppliers very generously sponsored this year's Annual Meeting and Conference. It is only through the assistance of our supplier members that NECA is able to keep the cost of the annual conferences reasonable. Please show your appreciation by considering their products when making purchases for your cemetery operations.



ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

During the 106th Annual Meeting of the association recently held in conjunction with the conference the following individuals were elected to serve as officers. President: Dale Fiore, Evergreen Cemetery, New Haven, CT; 1st Vice President: Anthony Hollingshead, Swan Point Cemetery, Providence, RI; 2nd Vice President: John Di Pietro, Knollwood Memorial Park, Canton, MA; Secretary: Raymond Scholl, Milford Cemetery Association, Milford, CT; Treasurer: Barbara Brooks, Riverside Cemetery Association, Charlestown, RI. Elected to serve as Directors were Pamela Metzner, West Cemetery Association, Bristol, CT and R. Brabrook Walsh, Lowell Cemetery, Lowell, MA. Continuing to serve as Directors are Richard Sacca, Holyhood Cemetery, West Roxbury, MA; Kevin Cody, Mount Calvary Cemetery, Manchester, NH; Craig Neal, Catholic Cemetery Association, North Haven, CT and Jack Cobill, Rural Cemetery, Worcester, MA. Completing his commitment as Immediate Vice President is Mark Hemmann of Cedar Hill Cemetery in Hartford, CT.

Please congratulate these individuals and offer them your support as they guide our organization over the next year.



Left to right—B. Brooks, R. Scholl, P. Metzner, C. Neal, K. Cody, D. Fiore, R. Sacca, J. Cobill, B. Walsh, J. Di Pietro, M. Hemmann and A. Hollingshead



Clockwise from above—Bray Walsh, Anthony Hollingshead and Jeff Hardy during the President's Banquet, dancing to the Connecticut 2nd Governor's Foot Guard Dance Band and the suppliers banquet on Wednesday evening.