

EVERGREEN CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

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Dear Lot Owners, Families, and Friends,

Spring Greetings from Karen, Rusty, the three Summer workers Duane, Dale, Shawn, and the Cemetery Board. And, a sincere THANK YOU for the financial support many of you provide the Cemetery Association through your donations.

The publication "An Overview of Happenings in the City of Brainerd for the Years of 1914 and Early 1915" by Ann M. Nelson made reference to a municipal expert from Chicago that was hired to make a diagnosis of Brainerd's assets and liabilities as a city. In his presentation to Brainerd citizens on May 14, 1914 he complimented Evergreen Cemetery saying it "formed a prettier city for the dead". As an aside, the estimated population of the city in 1914 was 8,951. 1914 was also the year the grandstand at Gregory Park was erected and was the year bidding was opened for \$75,000 worth of bonds to finance the building of a new city hall, jail, and fire hall.

These are interesting bits of Brainerd's rich history. It is also interesting that 103 years later, we are still doing those things that keep our cemeteries "prettier". It is important that we seek to do that because a cemetery is a community trust that bridges the past with the present. A cemetery preserves memories and serves as a steward of our community's heritage. As a cemetery staff and Board, we try to always honor that trust and provide an environment that will help people preserve those memories.

Looking back to 2016, we had 112 burials at Evergreen and Memorial Gardens Cemeteries with slightly over half of them being cremation burials. With the increasing number of cremations we want everyone to know that we have several options for cremation burials. We have both in-ground and above-ground options. At Evergreen we have smaller cremation lots available. In addition, at both cemeteries we permit second burials, providing certain criteria are met, where cremated remains can be buried in the same grave as a traditional casket burial. Our columbarium at Memorial Gardens provides the above-ground option some families are now seeking. All of these options for cremations assure future generations that they will have a permanent place to remember their loved ones.

This past year once again provided added challenges for our grounds crew as a result of another wind storm and a devastating heavy snowstorm that damaged many arborvitae. Due to storms and the natural aging of our trees, we are working with the Central Lakes College Natural Resources program in developing a tree management program for Evergreen Cemetery. Most of the cemetery has been mapped as to tree type/specie, condition, and age by students under the direction of instructor Kent Montgomery. It is expected the remaining work will be done in the Fall. This information along with suggestions for replacement and/or additional plantings will serve as a basis for future tree management. To further help preserve the aesthetics of the cemeteries and minimize interference with gravesite maintenance, we have revised the Gravesite Decorations Policy. The revised policy will be posted on the cemetery gates, on our website, and can be obtained in the cemetery office.

A number of maintenance and repair items were completed in the past year and were made possible by donations from many of you. Some of these include installing 2 backflow preventer valves as required by the City to update our irrigation system, replacing the garage door on the storage building, removing a number of dead trees, and installing new signage at Evergreen. The signs identify the cemetery block number and will make it much easier to find gravesites. We also purchased 2 new riding mowers and were able to keep our Summer workers for several extra weeks in the Fall. During this time they performed extra maintenance including cleaning 243 grave markers in the baby sections of Evergreen.

This Spring we will be resurfacing a portion of the asphalt road along the fence and north of the Third Avenue Gate. This is the first phase of a longer term project to repair our roads, many of which are in bad condition. Again, donations from members of the community have made this possible.

On Saturday June 3, at 2:00 PM we will once again have a History Walk through Evergreen Cemetery. It will be a repeat of our very popular 2014 walk highlighting interesting monuments and stories and will last a little over one hour. Questions during and after the tour are encouraged. No pre-registration is required. Park near the First Avenue Gate. Rain or shine, so bring umbrellas if the forecast is for rain.

We continue to ask for your ongoing financial support. We are a self-sustaining non-profit organization and receive no financial support from the city, county or other governmental institution. We want to maintain the history our cemeteries contain and continue to provide a place where memories will be preserved.

THANK YOU for your past donations. If you haven't donated prior to this, please consider adding the cemeteries to your charitable contribution recipients. As some of our community members have already done, you may also want to consider leaving a legacy gift by including the cemeteries in your will or estate planning.

Sincerely,

Board of Trustees
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.*



***COLUMBARIUM
AT
MEMORIAL
GARDENS
CEMETERY***

Information on the columbarium can be found on the cemetery website <http://www.brainerd.net/~evergreencem/> or at the cemetery office.