



The official newsletter of the

# Douglas County Cemetery Association

SUMMER 2019

## President's Message

### *Planning for DCCA's future*

As I begin writing, it is raining, nature is refreshing the earth and starting new growth, two things occurring at DCCA as a newly constructed board assumes the reins and leads the organization into the future.

At the Annual Meeting three Board of Director (BOD) positions were open and two replacement members elected. The main thrust of the meeting program was a moderated discussion seeking member input for the BOD facing the challenge of providing needed and valued service to member cemeteries.

Board discussions prior to the annual meeting struggled, not so much with our mission statement of "being a resource for member cemeteries" and "promoting our cemeteries as the guardians of our county's heritage" as with what programming/efforts do we as a board undertake to be that resource to member cemeteries.

The board is concerned that the current level and content of DCCA initiatives lack substance and do not, in large measure, provide services vital to local cemetery associations. The question facing DCCA is "Can we develop service offerings that have sufficient value to assure a successful future for the organization?"

By and large, member cemeteries are not carrying large maintenance funds, which also limits DCCA funding from dues. The point is that DCCA is not flush with funds, so we are taking a couple of steps, which are helpful, but do not provide a doorway to easy street:

- Members are being asked to receive newsletters by email to save printing and postage costs. This will still require printed materials for those without email access. These savings are in the range of a few hundred dollars.
- All DCCA programs are being evaluated to assess their impact and fit with the mission statement to be certain we get the most bang for the dollars and efforts.
- Initially we see opportunity to strengthen newsletter and website content and timelines.

There are trends in funeral practice and memorialization that are changing income streams for cemeteries and demand that we change with them. Your BOD approach the opportunities and challenges facing DCCA very seriously and welcome input and volunteer involvement as we move forward.

It is only appropriate to acknowledge the contributions and efforts of those who have served DCCA, particularly retiring BOD members Ralph Gunderson, Cliff Patrick and Joel Blank, who served as President and who carried a deep passion for DCCA. Thank you to all who serve and especially for these three.

**John Loken, DCCA President**

## Important!

*Send burial information  
to the historical society*

All cemeteries in Douglas County are reminded to send burial information to the Douglas County Historical Society (DCHS) at the time of the burial.

The DCHS maintains cemetery records and maps and has a database of all Douglas County burials searchable by cemetery or by a person's last name.

This is an incredible resource, but in order for it to be accurate and up-to-date, the individual cemeteries must help! Information can be sent to:

**Douglas County Historical Society**  
1219 Nokomis Street  
Alexandria, MN 56308  
Email: [historic@dchsmn.org](mailto:historic@dchsmn.org)  
Phone: 320-762-0382

## Headstone cleaning tip

One issue that surfaced at the annual meeting regarded cleaning of stones that are dirty and covered with lichens.

A product some cemeteries have used is Wet And Forget Moss Mold Mildew & Algae Stain Remover. It comes as a 2-quart concentrate that makes 3 gallons. It is simply sprayed on and forgotten. Users report it works great cleaning stones over the course of a summer. It retails for \$25 - \$35 per 2-quarts. For cemeteries with water, vinegar has been successful. See article on page 3.

**DOUGLAS COUNTY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION**

C/O Douglas County Historical Society

1219 Nokomis Street, Alexandria, MN 56308

PHONE: 320-762-0382 EMAIL: [dccamn@gmail.com](mailto:dccamn@gmail.com)

[www.dccamn.com](http://www.dccamn.com)

# Things - they are a changin'!

By John Loken

We seem to be in the midst of a period of fairly significant changes occurring in practices following death.

Cremation has become common place and there is no common standard for the disposition of the remains, from burial and memorialization in a conventional cemetery plot, to spreading over a land plot, or at sea or over a lake, all the way to the mantle or a shelf.

All have an impact for those responsible for cemetery management and planning.

Doing a bit of reading brings up a number of terms that are not so familiar in language or practice.

One term encountered is Green Burial, probably the result of the heightened awareness of the environment in our world today, and refers to in-ground burial, preferably in a compostable casket (or not)

and without a vault - or if a vault is required, installing the vault upside down after the body is interred.

This is also ometimes referred to as Natural Burial.

There are also some alternative cremation methods, sought by those concerned with reducing energy consumption.

Conventional cremation is done in a furnace at 1600 to 1800 degrees F.

One alternative is Resomation, a method just emerging from the development stage in which the body is reduced to a clear liquid that can be poured on a garden. The process involves heat, pressure and chemicals.

Another alternative to cremation is Freeze Drying, which involves immersion in liquid nitrogen, followed by a process to remove all water, leaving compostable powder.

And then there is Cryonics, for those who believe they can be fro-

zen now, put into cold storage, and at some future time be revived in an age of evolved science.

Some of these things seem pretty far-fetched for small community (church) cemeteries in the middle of Minnesota.

They do, however likely point toward more choices and decisions at the time of death and to changing practices and policies for cemetery boards.

## Cremation

### Green Burial

## NATURAL BURIAL

## Resomation

### Freeze Drying

### Cryonics

## WHAT?!

## DCCA member cemeteries *as of May 23, 2019*

Bohemian Independent Cemetery - Lake Mary Township  
Brandon Cemetery - Brandon Township  
Calvary Catholic Cemetery - Osakis Township  
Carlos Prairie Cemetery - Carlos Township  
Christian Union Cemetery - Holmes City Township  
Christina Lake Lutheran Church Cemetery - Lund Township  
Ebenezer Cemetery - Leaf Valley Township  
East Moe Lutheran Church Cemetery - Moe Twp.  
English Grove Cemetery - Orange Township  
Evergreen Cemetery - La Grand Township  
Fahlun Lutheran Church Cemetery - Osakis Township  
Finnish Apostolic Lutheran Church Cemetery - Moe Township  
First Lutheran Church Cemetery - Solem Township  
Kinkead Cemetery/Sunset Memorial - La Grand Township  
Lake Charley Cemetery - Ida Township  
Lake Ida Cemetery - Ida Township  
Lake Mary Cemetery - Lake Mary Township  
Moe Heights Cemetery - Moe Township  
Mound Grove Cemetery - Evansville Township  
Nelson Cemetery - Osakis Township  
Oscar Lake Lutheran Church Cemetery - Holmes City Twp.  
Our Lady of Seven Dolors - Millerville Township  
Rose City Evangelical Free Cemetery - Spruce Hill Twp.  
Rose Hill Trinity Cemetery - Holmes City Township  
St. Ann's Catholic Church Cemetery - Brandon Township

St. John's Cemetery - Ida Township  
St. Paul's Lutheran Church Cemetery - Moe Township  
St. Petri Lutheran Church Cemetery - Urness Township  
Solem Cemetery - Solem Township  
\*Sunset Memorial (Kinkead) - La Grand Township  
Trinity Lutheran Church Cemetery/Zunker - Carlos Twp.  
Trysil Bethesda Lutheran Cemetery - Holmes City Twp.  
Van Loon Cemetery - Holmes City Township  
Wennersborg Cemetery - Solem Township  
West Moe Church Cemetery - Moe Township  
Zionsborg Cemetery - Evansville Township  
\*Zunker (Trinity Lutheran) - Carlos Township

#### TODD COUNTY CEMETERIES:

Gordon Pleasant Hill Cemetery - Gordon Township  
Sauk Valley Lutheran Cemetery - West Union Township

#### ASSOCIATE MEMBER:

Lind Funeral Home and Cremation Services

**Dues are \$30 per year. Contact Renae Hills at 320-760-0693 or hills.renae@gmail.com for information.**

# Mound Grove Cemetery tombstone cleaning project a success

One of the interesting things about visiting any cemetery is exploring the variety of stones and reading the things inscribed on those stones.

Sadly, what often happens, is that nature takes over, and the elements as well as lichen, moss and other fungi overtake the natural beauty of the stones and make them difficult to read.

Like many area cemetery caretakers, the board of Mound Grove Cemetery in Evansville wanted to do something about this problem in the hopes that it would not only make the stones more legible, but also more beautiful.

In 2016, cemetery board members and local volunteers gathered at the cemetery with pressure washers and gallons of vinegar to try to tackle this project.

Much to their surprise, their efforts were successful. They did the project in stages over the summer of 2016, completing the entire cemetery, which at that time included 1,841 graves.

The stones still look clean and beautiful three years later, with no moss or lichen regrowth.

Fortunately, unlike some cemeteries, Mound Grove has water to which to hook up the pressure washers. Spray bottles were filled with a vinegar water mixture that was sprayed on the stones. Pressure washers were then used to wash away the years of growth and grime.

As you can see from these before and after photos, the process worked very well!



Pictured are before and after photos from three different tombstones at the Mound Grove Cemetery in Evansville showing the impact of a pressure washing project conducted at the cemetery in 2016.

Above top is the Sethney family stone, with family member Corporal Jens J. Setheny's stone pictured below it. Jens died in 1833.

To the left is the stone of Corporal Harvey E. Johnson, who died in 1916.

2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**John Loken  
PRESIDENT**

Trysil Bethesda Lutheran Cemetery  
320-834-2947  
jcloken59@gmail.com  
Elected: 2018 (1st term)  
Board eligibility expires: 2024

**Darrel Holverson,  
VICE PRESIDENT**

St. Petri Cemetery  
320-766-9977  
holvco@hotmail.com  
Elected: 2017 (1st term)  
Board eligibility expires: 2023

**Tara Bitzan  
SECRETARY**

Non Cemetery Member  
320-815-3184  
tbitzan10@gctel.net  
Elected: 2017 (1st term)  
Board eligibility expires: 2023

**Rena Hills  
TREASURER**

Lake Mary Cemetery  
320-760-0693  
hills.renae@gmail.com  
Elected: 2018 (1st term)  
Board eligibility expires: 2024

**Jerry Buse**

East Moe Cemetery  
320-219-3929  
jerbuse@wisper-wireless.com  
Elected: 2017 (1st term)  
Board eligibility expires: 2023

**Gary Halstead**

Hudson Cemetery  
605-321-3516  
halsteadmn@gmail.com  
Elected: 2019 (1st term)  
Board eligibility expires: 2025

**Julie Smith**

First Lutheran Cemetery, Kensington  
PO Box 116  
Kensington, MN 56343  
Cell: 320-815-3498  
Email: mn\_petite@yahoo.com  
Elected: 2019 (1st term)  
Board eligibility expires: 2025

**Douglas County Historical Society  
Ex-officio (Ann Skoglund)**

320-762-0382  
historic@dchsmn.org  
Non-expiring

*Help us save money!*

We are encouraging our member cemeteries and all who receive this newsletter to sign up for the electronic version.

The printing, envelopes and postage for this newsletter add up to a significant expense. If we are able to cut this expense, we may even consider putting newsletters out more than two times a year.

**If you are willing to  
move to an electronic  
version of this newsletter,  
please email  
dccamn@gmail.com.**

**Thank you for your help!**

**Contribute to  
the newsletter!**

If you have information, tips, advice, or other items you would like to see included in a future newsletter of the Douglas County Cemetery Association, please email them to dccamn@gmail.com.

We also invite you to spotlight your cemetery in a future newsletter! Email a brief write up that includes history, current projects, challenges, successes, best practices, interesting facts, or whatever you wish to share - along with a photo to dccamn@gmail.com.

The next meeting of the DCCA board of directors is tentatively set for

**Thursday, July 25 at 6:30 pm** at the Garfield City Hall.

If you have anything you would like the board to address,  
please contact any board member prior to that date!

**OUR MISSION:**

*The Douglas County Cemetery Association will work hard to fulfill its purpose of being a resource for member cemeteries in dealing with the operational problems that arise, creating mutually beneficial relationships between our members, promoting our cemeteries as the guardians of our county's heritage and as a place of lasting tribute to the memory of those who have gone before us.*