

Douglas County Cemetery Association Newsletter

FALL/WINTER 2017 Volume 7, Issue 2



Greetings From Our President

I can always tell when summer is beginning to wind down, as my oaks drop leaves enough to cover the lawn between mowings. Time to put the mulching blades on the mower. So as we expect the temps to start dropping, we can expect frost at any time.

The work this year, after our annual meeting, began with involving the four new members on our board and setting our sights on the 5th annual Essay Contest. In June the board met and it was a time to introduce each other and get acquainted. We welcomed the new members and look forward to working with them this year

Applications for further funding of the Essay Contest have been submitted or are being submitted. At our August committee meeting we began to put 2017 Essay in motion. Our hope is to increase participation in the contest and involve more **schools and those who are home schooled than last year.** **As in previous years, our essay contest information will be available to view** on our website, www.dccamn.com.

A reminder, we are a member of the MN Association of Cemeteries (www.mncemeteries.org), which provides cemetery operators and governing boards with both information and answers on a range of topics and concerns that come up from time to time.

Our website also offers quick access links to both, Findagrave (www.findagrave.com) and the Douglas County Historical Society (www.dchsmn.org).

Feel free to contact me or any board member with questions or concerns. I can be reached at - joel.blank01@gmail.com, or 320-270-4011.

Our agenda is set, and in closing I thank you all who take care of our cemeteries and keep them proper. Wishing you all the best in the holidays ahead.

Joel B. Blank
President

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:	PAGE
President's Greeting	1
5 th Annual Essay Contest Submission information	2
Veterans Day In Flanders Fields	3
SPOTLIGHT: The Cemetery Sexton	4
Cremation Options Scattering Gardens Mission Stmt./Meetings	5
Mission Stmt./Meetings Board of Directors Our Member Cemeteries Contact Us	6

Announcing the 5th Annual Essay Contest: What Stories Can The Stones Tell?

What Stories Can the Stones Tell?

5th Annual Essay Contest
For all Douglas County 5th Grade Students
Entry deadline: **October 12, 2017**



Write about:

- A Douglas County cemetery and its history
- An unusual grave marker/stone
- A person buried at a local cemetery
- Your own idea!

Cash prizes of \$75, \$50 or \$25
will be awarded and
official certificates presented!

Learn about the local history that can be
found in the area's cemeteries!

Sponsored by the Douglas County Cemetery Association

More information visit www.dccamn.com
or call Joel Blank, 320-270-4011

Once again area 5th graders have been invited to take part in our annual essay contest.

Students are encouraged to choose a topic and then research it. There are many places to find information about local cemeteries and those who are buried there, including the following:

- DCCA website www.dccamn.com. All county cemeteries are listed here.
- Most county cemeteries and thousands of Douglas County burials are also listed on the website www.find-a-grave.com.
- Douglas County Historical Society, 1219 S Nokomis St., Alexandria (call ahead – 320-762-0382)
- Douglas County Courthouse records
- Church records
- Family members, friends, neighbors
- Visit a local cemetery; talk with a cemetery caretaker
- Talk to a local veteran or veterans organization

As in the past, *selected students will be asked to read their essay for local Veteran's Day Programs in November!* Entries are due October 12, 2017 and may be written on the attached essay form, or submitted on a word or pdf computer program.

Entries may be emailed to kewussow@gmail.com. If email is not available, mail to **Kristi Wussow, 3982 Co. Rd. 5 NW, Alexandria, MN 56308**. Entries must be postmarked by October 12. Any phone or text inquiries can also be directed to Kristi at 320-808-6216.



VETERANS DAY...observe it – preserve it!

President Woodrow Wilson turned the nation's thoughts toward those who had sacrificed on America's behalf. On November 11, 1919, the first anniversary of the end of the Great War, he proclaimed the first Armistice Day to both honor the services of the troops and to celebrate the opportunity that victory provided for the United States to advance the cause of peace and justice in the world. A two minute suspension of all business activity took place at 11:00 a.m., parades and meetings were held. ON June 1, 1954, the name was changed to Veterans Day to honor all U. S. Veterans.



In Flanders Fields

by John McCrea 1915

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields

Spotlight: CEMETERY SEXTON



Sextons are often the heart and soul of a cemetery. Just what does a Cemetery Sexton do? A lot! The hours are long and the responsibilities are many. What follows is a compiled list taken from a variety of job postings for Cemetery Sextons.

General Job Description:

To maintain the cemetery in a condition of excellent appearance at all times. Detailed record keeping, and dealing with the public are also required.

- Maintains the aesthetics of the cemetery and grounds.
- Safely operates and maintains mowing, trimming, leaf vacuuming and other tools and equipment required in performing his/her job duties.
- Works with the public and funeral directors to convey services and costs of burials.
- Marks, opens and closes graves, and sows grass.
- Removes dead and artificial flowers, containers, plastic keepsakes and the like from graves.
- Is familiar with state laws pertaining to cemeteries, and both state and federal laws on safe working conditions and working with hazardous chemicals and materials.
- Maintains and secures the cemetery ledger, burial records and map of the occupied plots.
- Maintains the records and does the perpetual care grounds-keeping on the enrolled plots.
- Provides needed updates to the cemetery board or other authority.
- Normal working hours 7:00 am-3:30 pm M-F from approximately May 1st to November 1st of each year, depending on weather. On-call evenings and weekends.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Requirements for the Position:

- High school diploma or GED.
- Valid driver's license.
- At least six months' experience in grounds maintenance or experience in a related field is a plus.
- Knows grave digging and proper vault placement as outlined by State Law.
- Ability to operate the power and hand tools needed for this work.
- Able to lift and carry moderate weights and perform all physical duties of the position.
- Must be able to stand for prolonged periods of time, bend, stoop and stretch; work in confined spaces, during all seasons and weather conditions.

Whew! The next time you visit a cemetery; take a moment to thank those who are dedicated to its preservation as a place of beauty, peace and restfulness.

CREMATION MEMORIAL OPTIONS

Avoid Regret: Don't Do Nothing

EXCERPT FROM THE CREMATION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA - [HTTP://WWW.CREMATIONASSOCIATION.ORG/PAGE/CREMATIONOPTIONS](http://www.cremationassociation.org/page/cremationoptions)

Cremation provides opportunity for creativity and a memorial as unique as the life lived. The only recommendation CANA makes is *don't do nothing*. Urns can be removed from niches or disinterred from plots to make keepsakes. Remains that were scattered remotely can be memorialized at the cemetery or other location for future visits. Understand your options so you won't make the wrong choice for your loved ones.

Estimates are that over two million sets of cremated remains are abandoned at the crematory, in limbo on the closet shelf at home, or tucked away in a storage locker, only to show up for sale at a flea market or a resale shop. While a funeral home or crematory will have policies in place about storing cremated remains—the remains in their care definitely won't show up at a secondhand store—too often a family won't make a decision about the cremated remains of a loved one and the container will be handed down until it is unrecognizable and forgotten. This is how they end up at a garage sale—or even the landfill.

But cremation means that a decision can be made at any time, even if the person died years or decades ago. It's never too late to find a place to memorialize family. If you come across unidentified cremated remains, contact a local funeral home or crematory. They can help you find the unique identification number and you may be able to discover who it is.

Lastly, for truly unique choices, talk to your funeral director or crematory manager about the feasibility or safety of what you are considering.

Green Burials - What is a Scattering Garden?



Cemeteries might consider setting aside land for the scattering of human or pet cremains. Along with the Scattering Garden, there are many sorts of memorialization options: a plaque, wall, tree, or piece of art with inscriptions. A Book of Remembrance to record those whose ashes have been scattered in the garden could be simply maintained in much the same way as a Burial Register, or be very elaborate. Fees for scattering and the memorialization options available are determined by the individual cemetery.

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.

Annual meetings:

Annual membership meetings are held the fourth Thursday of April at: First Congregational UCC, Alexandria, MN.

2017 Directors and Officers

Joel Blank, **President**, Carlos Prairie
 Gary Adamson, **Vice President** *Finnish Apostolic*
 Tara Bitzan, **Secretary**, *Outside Director*
 Sue Tvrdik, **Treasurer/Membership**,
Bohemian Ind. Cemetery

Ralph Gunderson, *First Lutheran Church
 Cemetery*
 Kristi Wussow, *Ebenezer Cemetery*
 Clifford Patrick, *Hudson Cemetery*
 Darrel Holverson, *St. Petri Cemetery*
 Jerry Buse, *East Moe Cemetery*

Douglas County Cemetery Association—2017 Membership

Bohemian Independent Cemetery, Brandon Cemetery, **Calvary Catholic Cemetery**, Carlos Prairie Cemetery, **Christian Union Cemetery**, East Moe Lutheran Church Cemetery, **Ebenezer Cemetery**, English Grove Cemetery, **Evergreen Cemetery**, Fahlun Cemetery, **Finnish Independent Apostolic Lutheran Cemetery**, First Lutheran Church Cemetery, Kensington, **Fryksande Cemetery**, Gordon Pleasant Hill Cemetery, **Hudson Cemetery**, Kinkead Cemetery, **Lake Charley Cemetery**, Lake Ida Cemetery, **Lake Mary Cemetery**, Moe Heights Cemetery, **Mound Grove Cemetery**, Nelson Cemetery, **Oscar Lake Lutheran Cemetery**, Our Lady of Seven Dolours Catholic Cemetery, **Rose City Evangelical Free Church Cemetery**, Rose Hill-Trinity Cemetery, **Sauk Valley Lutheran Cemetery**, Solem Lutheran Church Cemetery, **Spruce Hill Lutheran Cemetery**, St. Ann's Catholic Church Cemetery, **St. John's Lutheran Cemetery**, St. Luke's Church Cemetery, **St. Mary's Catholic Church Cemetery**, St. Paul's Cemetery, Moe Township, **St. Petri Cemetery**, Trinity Lutheran Church Carlos and Zunker Cemetery, **Trysil Bethesda Lutheran Cemetery**, Van Loon Cemetery, **Wennessborg Cemetery**, Zionsborg Cemetery

From our Membership Secretary, Sue Tvrdik: Thank you to all who have renewed membership or become a member in our organization. We value your continued support and look forward to hearing from you anytime. Please contact me with any membership questions you may have, my email: hippymobile1021@gmail.com.



DOUGLAS COUNTY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION
 C/O DOUGLAS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 1219 SOUTH NOKOMIS STREET
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Please contact us with any newsletter suggestions