



Cornerstones

A Newsletter From Oak Grove Cemetery

Spring ♦ 2004 ♦ Vol. 2 ♦ No. 1



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Shopping for a cemetery

If you were in the market for a new car, you would probably shop the various dealers before making a final decision. You would ask a number of questions to make sure that you received all the options you wanted in that vehicle. Smart shoppers apply the same strategy when they search for a final resting place.



If you're shopping for a cemetery or mausoleum, you may want to consider:

- ♦ **Location.** Do you have family members buried in the cemetery that you are considering? Is it important to you to be buried close to family? Are there burial sites available in the area where your family is buried?
- ♦ **Aesthetics.** Is it visually appealing? Do you feel a sense of peace and tranquility while walking the grounds?

Talk to the people that manage these facilities and don't be afraid to ask questions, including:

1. How does the cemetery handle perpetual care? Do they have seasonal décor programs to encourage beautifying the gravesite?
2. Does the cemetery conduct any type of events to help the family remember or memorialize their loved ones?

3. What are the cemetery's rules regarding full body burials, either in-ground or in a mausoleum crypt?
4. Does the cemetery have special rules for the interment of cremated remains, either in-ground or above ground in a mausoleum niche or columbarium?
5. What are the cemetery's rules regarding monuments and markers to memorialize the deceased?
6. What is the history of the cemetery? How is it owned? Is there growth potential?
7. Who is responsible for the maintenance of the cemetery and how are the monies procured to pay for that maintenance?

By making these important decisions ahead of time, not only do you reduce your family's stress, but you can also relieve them of unexpected financial burdens and emotional overspending. All of this can be accomplished by making decisions now, and then discussing those decisions with your loved ones to ensure that your wishes are carried out. Wouldn't it be nice if you were able to make some of those decisions while you are still able to do so, instead of having your family try to imagine what you would have wanted? What a loving way to give peace of mind to those you leave behind.

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Val Reinke

Message from Val Executive Director

Have you heard our good news? We have just opened 600 additional burial sites. This area, which we're calling The Meadow, is the first new section we have introduced in decades.

Why do we need more space, when there is still plenty of room in Oak Grove Cemetery? The problem we were facing was that we were running out of large spaces for families. The Meadow has ample space for large families who wish to be buried together. There is also room for large, upright monuments.

If you are looking for a final resting place, you'll want to read our feature story, offering shopping tips and questions to ask. As always, we want to be your resource for any difficult-to-face, but always inevitable, end-of-life issue.

Val Reinke
Executive Director

Meet Your Local Funeral Director

Editor's note: Oak Grove Cemetery works closely with area funeral directors to assist families in making final plans. We thought it would be helpful to introduce our readers to some of our colleagues, and will feature area funeral directors in the next several issues of this newsletter.

This issue features Dennis H. Jandt of Jandt Funeral Homes, Inc. - which includes: Jostad-Jandt Funeral Home in West Salem, Jandt Funeral Home in Bangor, Woodruff-Jandt Funeral Home in La Crosse, and Haugen-Roble-Jandt Funeral Home in Caledonia. Dennis has been a funeral director for 30 years.

What are some of the biggest changes you have seen in your field since you started?

Some of the biggest changes I have seen are the various trends. I would say the most prevalent trend would be personalization. Many families are making alternative choices to "fit" their deceased loved ones' personalities. For instance, families bring in more photos and memorabilia to the visitations and funerals in order to reminisce with their relatives and friends. It is becoming more common for families to take pictures of the flowers and of the deceased to have as a keepsake. Casket companies are catering to this trend by offering custom caskets with themes such as hunting, farming, gardening or even in sports team colors!

Another trend in the past few years would have to be cremation becoming more popular. People tend to opt for cremation for various reasons, some of which include flexibility with timeframes for funerals, the family's ability to retain ashes, scatter the ashes, or bury the ashes at a later date, and also cost.

A third trend would be the fact that more and more women are becoming funeral directors. I, personally, welcome the women into funeral service because there are some grieving families that will relate better to a woman than a man. I have heard nothing but positive feedback regarding women in this industry.

What's your philosophy about how to help families get through the death of a loved one?

My philosophy is to listen to and meet each and every one of the family's feelings and requests. I treat them and serve them even better than I expect to be treated by people with kindness and compassion. I let families make their own personalized decisions regarding the type of service they would like, as well as any merchandise they select. I guide them through the funeral process and do not dictate their decisions. Paying attention to the details and being extremely professional are the most important things I can do to help the family.

We take pride in what we do, with the utmost reverence. We constantly strive in doing the best for the families we

serve and our communities. We make ourselves available at any time, for anything, for any family, and that is what sets us apart from the rest.

What's one thing you wish everyone would know about planning a funeral?

My recommendation is for people to think about their individual final wishes, as well as those of their aging loved ones. Many people feel uneasy about the thought of pre-planning their own funeral, but once they do, they find that it's not as difficult as they anticipated.

I believe that people are hesitant to pre-arrange funerals with a particular funeral home because they feel "locked in," but that's not the case at all. If you preplan with a particular funeral home, the law says you can change funeral homes if, for instance, you decide to move to Arizona.

Pre-planning doesn't have to be an ordeal. Even if you describe your wishes to family members or jot down them on a piece of scratch paper; this is a form of planning that can help your family.

The feedback we receive from survivors of loved ones who preplan is that such a burden is lifted when they know the wishes of the deceased were met. It is hard enough to go through the grieving process without having to make endless decisions regarding what to serve at the funeral luncheon, what songs to sing or what flowers to order.

Most people think a wedding is one of the most important events in a person's life and they are willing to spend up to a year planning it, then why shouldn't people plan ahead for a person's most important final event in their life?

Most importantly, people need to remember the grieving families "when the casseroles run out," as my employee refers to it. That is, the grieving family tends to have more strength during the visitation time and the funeral because friends constantly surround them, which helps to keep their mind occupied. People send sympathy cards and stop by the house to visit and bring food (including the traditional casseroles).

But once things start to get back to normal and friends and family members go back to work, the phone calls and visits stop. That's when the real grief begins to set in and the family has to learn to adapt without their loved one. The most important thing a friend can do for someone who is grieving is to be there down the road awhile — after the funeral is over.

Spring Flowers Oak Grove Cemetery

It's time to think spring at Oak Grove Cemetery! This year's grave side spring flower vase includes dracaena, geraniums, petunias and vinca vines, planted in premium soil that includes a slow release fertilizer and water crystals. We take care of everything. The flowers receive adequate watering and we carefully remove spent flowers to encourage additional blossoms. If there's a problem

with insects, we'll spray and monitor the plants. At the end of the season, we'll clean, disinfect and store the vase for you for next year.

Flower order forms were mailed earlier this month. Please send you order today.

Goosetown Trivia

Oak Grove Cemetery

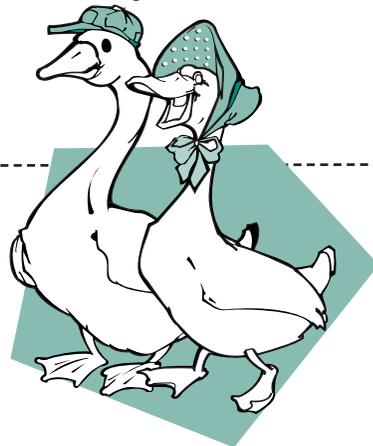
Oak Grove Cemetery is located in one of La Crosse's most colorful and historic neighborhoods - Goosetown! The marsh, Vine Street, and West and East Avenues originally bordered this area.

How much do you know about Goosetown? Check your knowledge by answering these questions and use the form below to mail your answers to us. If you've answered all of the questions correctly, you will be entered in a drawing for a \$10 Downtown Mainstreet gift certificate. Answers will appear in the next issue of Cornerstones.

One piece of trivia you probably don't know...the first lot owners in our new area, The Meadow, are Goosetowners Howie and Bernadine Voss.

1. It's most likely that the name "Goosetown" comes from:
 - a. Many people in the neighborhood raised domestic geese
 - b. The number of geese in the nearby La Crosse River marsh
 - c. The area was first settled by Jacob "Goose" Henry
2. Most of the people who settled in Goosetown in the early 1900s were of what origin:
 - a. Greek
 - b. German
 - c. French
 - d. Italian
3. Some of the Goosetown residents were slaves who escaped the South via the Underground Railroad.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. Many of the residences in Goosetown have been replaced, due to building projects and expansion of:
 - a. UW-La Crosse
 - b. WWTC
 - c. City of La Crosse Housing Authority
 - d. All of the above

Information gathered from the late Donald J. "Chick" Meinert's history of the area published for a 1992 reunion of the neighborhood that he organized.



Goosetown Trivia Answers

1.
2.
3.
4.

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

e-mail: _____ Phone number: _____

Send to: Oak Grove Cemetery, 1407 La Crosse Street, La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601

Please Send Me:

- General information about Oak Grove Cemetery
- A 2004 price list for Oak Grove Cemetery
- Oak Grove Planning Guide

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

e-mail: _____

- Please have someone at Oak Grove Cemetery call me regarding pre-arrangement counseling or other questions related to the cemetery.

Telephone number: _____

Send to: Oak Grove Cemetery, 1407 La Crosse Street, La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601





Oak Grove Cemetery Mark Your Calendar

Educational seminar March 23

Want to learn about preplanning and end of life issues from a team of experts? Then you're invited to attend a free educational program featuring:

- ◆ Val Reinke and Glenda Lee, Oak Grove Cemetery, "End of Life Issues Made Easy"
- ◆ James Noble, Attorney, "Legally Binding Advance Directives"
- ◆ Jamie Eklov, Raymond James Financial Services, "Beneficiary and Account Titling Checkup"

The seminar will take place Tuesday, March 23 from 9-10:30 a.m. The presentations will take place at the State Bank of La Crosse. This presentation is free of charge, call us to reserve your spot. Bring a friend!

Senior Wellness Expo April 30 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Plan to attend this year's Senior Wellness Expo at the First Evangelical Free Church in Onalaska, 1950 Highway 35. Oak Grove will have a booth and present information on one of our favorite topics - planning ahead.

Memorial Day Weekend Special Office Hours

Memorial Day weekend is always very active at Oak Grove Cemetery. We will be in the office:

- ◆ Saturday, May 29, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ◆ Sunday, May 30, noon to 4 p.m.
- ◆ Monday, May 31, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Monday's Memorial Day parade ends at Oak Grove Cemetery, and a special service is held in the veteran's area. Everyone is welcome.

A Light to Remember is December 12

The 2003 Light to Remember event was very well attended, in spite of a competing Packers game! Bob Lantz from Gundersen Lutheran Pastoral Care and Scott Skogen from North Presbyterian Church shared messages of holiday hope. Participants enjoyed fellowship, hot cider and holiday cookies around the tree of remembrance after the service. This year's event will be December 12.

Many Thanks!

Thanks to Rick Brown and his family for donating the historic books *La Crosse Illustrated, 1887*; *Phillipi Art Souvenir of La Crosse Wisconsin, 1904*; and *La Crosse in Light and Shadow, a Pictorial Recollection of La Crosse, Wisconsin* to Oak Grove Cemetery Association.

Bouquets available for mausoleums and columbarium

Oak Grove Cemetery can provide seasonal bouquets of artificial flowers and greens for the garden mausoleum, columbarium and historic mausoleum. All bouquets are handmade by Oak Grove Cemetery personnel and are changed with each of the four seasons. We'll take care of everything, including the placement and removal of the bouquets. You can order flowers for just one season, two, three or all four! Detailed information and an order form have been mailed out, if you did not receive the letter and would like more information, please call us today!

**Annual Lot Owners Meeting April 28, 9 a.m.
Radisson Hotel, 200 Harborview Plaza, La Crosse, WI**



Our Mission:

Oak Grove Cemetery exists to provide a beautiful and serene final resting place. We will provide comprehensive services for clients in an environment of trust, compassion and respect. The cemetery recognizes its importance as a historical resource, and is committed to enhancing public knowledge of that history.

1407 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601



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