

Fairfield Cemetery Association – Annual Meeting

Friday, May 24, 2013, Fairfield Community Center

Read and approved by a committee of Guy Williams, Cheryl Loeffler, and Barb Ostheller

Welcome: Guy Williams, President opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Fairfield Cemetery Association Annual Meeting at 12:50pm. In attendance were Barb Ostheller, Coralee and John Johnson, Barbara Davis, Gary Ostheller, Vincent Voelker, Cheryl Loeffler, Herb and Cheryl Fischer, and Guy and Cindy Williams.

Approval of Minutes: Cheryl Fulton Fischer, Secretary, indicated that the minutes from the last Annual Meeting, held on May 25, 2012, had been previously read, corrected, and approved by a committee of Cindy Williams, Cheryl Loeffler and Barb Ostheller right after the meeting when it was current in everyone's memory. Copies of the minutes were on the tables for those who wanted them. Cheryl Fischer also made available copies of the Annual Cemetery Newsletter that was mailed out to 190 Association Members and Friends of the Fairfield Cemetery in April 2013.

Old Business

1. Progress report: updating plot maps, replacing cemetery markers, and defining boundaries: Guy Williams, President indicated that he is updating the Cemetery maps on an excel spreadsheet and that it is still a work in progress. He has rectified the records with the sexton, Gary Ostheller and the Town of Fairfield records including plot maps and boundaries that they have worked on over the past several years. He and Cindy spent time at the courthouse trying to locate records of owners that were deeded lots long ago. Cindy Williams, Cheryl Loeffler, and Guy will do a physical check this summer to validate all the existing occupied lots with his new spreadsheet and Guy will continue to work on a solution to help keep plot monument markers visible but not obtrusive to the cemetery.

2. Progress report: Electronic communications: Cheryl Fischer, Secretary reported that the Fairfield Cemetery portion of the Town of Fairfield website is almost completed and will be posted soon thanks to the work of Brian Kauffman, Town of Fairfield, Councilman. The content of the following topics that will be included on the Cemetery website were prepared by Cheryl Fischer:

The Fairfield Cemetery: Activities and Events; Historical Overview; Names of those Interred (a link to Interment.net, a website that publishes Cemetery Records online); Veterans Interred; How to Make a Donation; Cemetery Rules and Regulations; Pictures of the Cemetery; and Contact us

The Fairfield Cemetery Association; Board of Directors; Goals 2010-2015; and Board Meeting Minutes of Annual Meeting 2012, Special Meeting 2011, and Annual Meeting 2011.

During the discussion it was noted that Interment.net was out of date. Cheryl Fischer mentioned there are instructions on the site as to how to update or correct the information and Coralee Johnson indicated she had found some errors in the posted information. *Cheryl Loeffler volunteered to update the site.*

3. Report on Grounds Contract for summer, fall, spring 2012 -13: Cheryl Loeffler, Treasurer and Town Clerk reported that the town of Fairfield had contracted with John Jesseph, as a private citizen, to do the cemetery grounds for the 2013 season. John will be paid \$150 to mow ½ the cemetery and \$250 to mow the entire cemetery, not to exceed a total of \$2,600 for the season. The grounds contract includes: mowing is desired right before Memorial Day and Flag Day; picking up branches; knocking down gopher holes; weed trimming around headstones and wherever needed, mowing at intervals not more than once a week during wet months and every other week during dry months on the East side and mowing at intervals not more than every other week and not manicured all season on the west side, and removal of garbage as necessary including the garbage can located near the storage shed.

4. Status report on reclaiming unclaimed Lots: Guy Williams, President shared that the first step in reclaiming lots, as outlined in the correspondence we received from attorney James Hayner and summarized in a handout distributed at the meeting, would be to identify the lot owners of empty plots using the records at the

court house and our records. The second step was to identify from this list of unused graves/lots that had been purchased the ones where more than 20 years has elapsed since the last internment of any immediate family member of the owner of record. *After discussion it was moved by Cheryl Fischer and seconded by Barb Neal that the board begin working on steps 1 & 2 during the summer 2013 and report back at the October Special Board Meeting on how many lots meet this legal requirement. The motion was passed. Guy Williams volunteered to identify the unused lots that had been purchased and with help from Gary Ostheller; Cheryl Loeffler and Cheryl Fischer will use their records and minutes to help Guy and Gary identify from this list those where no immediate family member has been interred in another lot in the last 20 years. Cheryl Fischer and Cheryl Loeffler will identify names and address of those who have made donations or had communication in the past 20 years and determine if any of them are related to those who are on the “unclaimed lots” list from Step 1. This information will be presented at our October meeting and the Board will determine at that time if the number of lots that qualify as “unclaimed” would be worth continuing through the 5 year process required by law and outlined by attorney James Hayner to possibly reclaim these unclaimed lots.*

5. Update, Fundraising Programs 2012: Barb Ostheller, Vice President reported that in the spring of 2013 she conducted a fund raiser to offer the families the opportunity to install flower containers for the graves that did not have them at a cost of \$100 each. To date we have not had any orders. She indicated that to date the 2013 Donations included: cash donations for tree trimming of \$1845; grave cleaning donations at \$200; and donations for replacement vases at \$170. To date, the net donation for 2013 total \$2,215 to be applied to the completion of our tree pruning project. She summarized that the 2012 Donations included: Cash donations at \$1750; 3 Tree Donations at \$270 (\$900 minus \$630 to purchase trees); and Grave Cleaning Donations at \$350. The net donation for 2012 was \$2,370 that was applied to our tree pruning project. Further, she indicated Les Gerhauser’s Memorial fund totaled \$885 and was used to purchase two trees, clean and prune two overgrown areas inside the cemetery of dead shrubs and plants and start a “lilac garden”. Including the Memorial fund, the total donations in 2012 for Cemetery Grounds improvements was \$3,255.

6. Update: Memorial Day Event, Saturday, May 26, 2012: Cheryl Fischer, Secretary distributed copies of the 2013 Memorial Day Observance Program and briefly reviewed it with those in attendance. She indicated she very pleased that we had the Mayor, the Camp Fire Group, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Daughters of the American Revolution, and a number of local residents volunteer to participate. The event was advertised in the Fairfield Newsletter, the Cemetery Annual Newsletter, and by the distribution of fliers to Fairfield Care, the Lutheran and Presbyterian Church, and around town. It was also advertised in the surrounding communities, along with the other Memorial Day events at area Cemeteries through the town halls in Latah, Tekoa, Waverly, Rockford, and Spangle. Cheryl Loeffler noted that there are two new Veterans that were interred recently, Al Weyen and Les Gerhauser. *Barb Ostheller offered to add them to her presentation at the Memorial Day Observance and Cheryl Fischer will get all the details for them and add them to the list.*

7. Report of Progress on Goals – 2015: Guy Williams, President, indicated that our completed goals from 2010 – 2012 included the following:

2010: A complete renovation of the cemetery storage building including a new roof & siding

2010-2011-2012 The removal of three huge piles of dead branches

2010-2011: Restoration, re-dedication, and re-setting of the antique gate originally built in 1895

2011: Grading and re-graveling the cemetery roads,

2011-2012: Removal of dead trees and re-planting 7 new trees

2011-2012: Trimming the majority of the Norway Maple trees that surround the cemetery and some of the trees on the interior

He reviewed the status of Short Term Goals the board had approved for 2012-2015

1. Create a “Procedures Book” for each Association officer to include an updated description of duties of each office and established cemetery procedures. (Completed)

2. Replace, as needed, cemetery survey markers and clarify boundaries. (In progress)

3. Review, update and coordinate, as needed, all cemetery plot maps and computer records. (In progress)

4. Require signed contracts outlining specific duties and total costs for all vendors prior to service that are scheduled to be paid by cemetery funds and request that they submit "warrants" to the town only when vendors have been authorized by the board to be paid. (Goal complete, the grounds maintenance and tree pruning personnel are now hired with a written contract with the Town of Fairfield and the contracts outline the services expected and fees agreed upon).

Guy went on to summarize the status of Long Term Goals the board had previously approved for 2012-2015.

1. Over the next two years conduct fundraisers to generate \$2,000 in 2011, 2012, and again in 2013 for total of \$6,000 toward the goal of trimming all of the Cemetery trees by the end of 2014. (Currently on target for completion in the winter of 2013-14.)

2. Conduct fund-raising efforts to increase the corpus in the INWCF Endowment Fund by \$1,000 each year over the next 10 years so the interest generated from this account will cover anticipated expenses to cover all ongoing maintenance. (On hold until tree maintenance project completed)

3. Create a website and/or other form of electronic communication to facilitate prompt and free communication with Association members or others interested in the Fairfield Cemetery. (In Progress)

4. Prepare a marketing brochure for plot sales for local use. (After discussion at the Board Meeting in May 2012, it was agreed that this will be on hold until some of the other higher priority goals are completed.)

D. New Business

8. Treasurers Report 2012 and Draft of Proposed Budget for 2013: Cheryl Loeffler reported that our income from the Community Foundation Endowed fund for the 2014 budget will be \$1708 and as of April 30 the amount in this account is \$46,671.66. However, the Cemetery account at the Bank of Fairfield has rolled over and is now reinvested in an account earning much less interest so our estimated income for the 2014 from the CD will be about \$100. Combined the interest income for 2014 will be \$1808. which will not cover our basic expenses of \$2600 for mowing and an estimated need of \$50. for sexton fees. This would mean we are short about \$800. After much discussion it was agreed that we will hold a fundraiser in the fall chaired by Barb Ostheller, Vice President of Fund Raising to make up this shortage of income. Many ideas were shared and everyone offered to help. It was agreed the Board will not adopt the budget for 2014 at this time but will schedule a special Board meeting within a few days following the fund-raiser that is tentatively set for October so we can make a final decision on how to handle any possible shortage in the income for 2014 and budget. A copy of budget for 2013 was not presented for review and approval.

9. Grounds Maintenance Report and Proposed Projects: Although John Jesseph was unable to attend the meeting he had met with Gary Ostheller and Cheryl Fulton Fischer at the Cemetery the day before and walked the cemetery and reviewed this report with them who presented the information at the meeting. John reported that he had purchased and planted two new trees, a Scotch Pine and a Honey Locus, with funds from the Les Gerhauser Memorial Fund as agreed upon with the family. In addition, he wanted to know where the board wanted the lilac garden planted that was also purchased with these funds. He suggested a location at the lower end of the cemetery north of the lower entrance as an extension of the current lilac grove, a site at the front of the Cemetery along the bank visible Truax, and one at the upper road parallel with the gates on the property line north of where Jim Ostheller enters his field from our property. After discussion, the board agreed that they wanted the lilac garden planted parallel with the gates by the west boundary at the upper road because there are no lilacs currently in that area.

John indicated his concern that the west side is still being farmed on our property and is endangering our trees on that side and suggested we consider taking action to protect the branches and roots of the trees and the graves on the east side of the cemetery from damage by farm equipment by marking the line, grading and seeding grass to the line after harvest this year, and mowing the grass beginning next spring out to our line to prevent the farm equipment from coming so close to the trees and graves. He stressed that we have had to replace far more trees on the west boundary of our property than in all other locations combined and he believes it is due to damage caused by the farm equipment. He indicated the mature trees on this boundary are worth

about \$18,000 if we were to request that they be replaced with full grown trees. Guy Williams reported that he had met with Jim Ostheller, who farmed on three sides of the Cemetery in 2012, to unofficially identify the Cemetery boundaries and mark them. At that time, Jim did not agree on the unofficial boundary as it was marked. But Jim Ostheller had agreed at that time to stop trimming our trees and depositing the branches on our property and to leave the trimming of all trees in the Cemetery to John Jesseph or whomever was contracted to do the grounds and tree trimming of the Cemetery by the Town of Fairfield. Cheryl Fischer indicated that she had obtained a bid in 2012 to have the Cemetery officially surveyed and the estimate was \$5,500 that may be needed if they had no problems finding the markers- which was doubtful since the Cemetery was probably last surveyed in 1895 when it was established. After discussion it was moved by Guy Williams and seconded by Coralee Johnson that ***Guy Williams will write a letter to Jim Ostheller this summer reminding him of their discussion in 2012 and notifying him that after the field to the east has been harvested this summer, we will again mark the unofficial property line, have the area on our side of the line graded and seeded to grass and request that in the spring of 2014 he discontinue seeding and farming on our side of the property line and further indicated that we will begin mowing our grass to our property line on that boarder at that time.*** It was agreed that Gary Tellison, who had met with John Jesseph at the Cemetery in 2012 and had given him a bid for the grading, will be asked to do the grading this fall. Cheryl Loeffler believed that because donations will be used to pay for this work it need not be sent out to bid.

John Jesseph offered to donate and install a 40' flagpole at the Cemetery at no cost. During discussion, it was noted that the current flag pole is handy in that it comes out of the "stand" for painting or installing in a new cord which is convenient since we don't need large equipment and two people can handle the pole. It was also indicated that we really don't need a flag pole as the one we have is fine nor do we need two flagpoles. However, it was suggested that we could fly the Washington flag on the lower pole or create a Cemetery flag to fly from the second pole. There were concerns expressed about the large size of the flagpole he was offering, so the board agreed to table any motions until the next meeting so ***Guy Williams could take a look at the flag pole and determine if it is in our best interest in terms of appearance and the ease of ongoing maintenance and use to accept John's generous offer.***

Vincent Voelker offered to donate a Sugar Maple to the Cemetery at no charge in memory of Charlie Waterman, a WWII veteran who lived in Rockford. The board expressed appreciation for his offer and will check with John to see if it is viable to dig it up and transplant it in the one remaining spot we have for a tree replacement. Cheryl Fischer, will notify John Jesseph and get back to Vincent Voelker.

10. Sexton Report (# burials and lots sold in 2010 to date): Gary Ostheller, Sexton reported the following information on burials:

2010

Tiffani Lewis, (Sept. 20, 2010) Sept. 25, 2010, Block 19 #23 (lot sold, included in funeral payment)

Levi Garratt Larrison, (Sept 18, 2010) Nov. 13, 2010, Block 19 # 23

1 Lot sold

2011

Derald Denny Bozarth, (Feb. 11, 2011) Feb. 19, 2011, Block 83, #14 - Veteran

Brant Ames Thieren, (August 4, 2010) April 16, 2011, Block 3, #6 – Veteran * (Lot sold)

Marc Richard Roecks, (Nov. 14, 2011) Nov. 19, 2011, Block 68, #7

1 Lot sold

2012

Claire "Marty" Boleck, (Jan. 13, 2012) Jan. 21, 2012, Lot 2 Gravesite #3

George Boleck, (Jan. 13, 2000) March 4, 2000, Lot 2 Gravesite #4

Frances Lorraine Montange, (August 1, 2012) August 1, 2012, Lot 40 Gravesite #1

0 Lots sold

2013

Jackie Huber Fuller, (May 18, 1995) 2013, Lot 2 Gravesite #9 (purchased in 2012)

Alfred Weyen (April 8, 2013) March 20, 2013, USN, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Lot 43 Gravesite #3

1 Lots sold

The question was raised about what the cemeteries in the surround area were currently charging for lots and if we needed to consider raising our rates. Cindy Williams noted that when the rates were set it was with the understanding that families would care for their own plots but now that families often move out of the area the Association is maintaining the entire cemetery. ***Cheryl Fischer agreed to contact cemeteries in towns in the surrounding area and Cindy Williams offered to contact the cemeteries in Garfield and the Palouse as well as Spokane Valley to get a comparison list of costs. They will report back at our next meeting.***

11. Legacy Award: Cheryl Fischer suggested that the board begin presenting a “Legacy Award” as a way of expressing our appreciation to those who have provided extraordinary support helping the Cemetery Board accomplish their goals and enhance the maintenance and beauty of the Cemetery. She shared a sample of a plaque she had made and suggested several people who she thought might be considered for the award, after discussion one of the three were selected for 2013 and a second for 2014. The recipients will be announced and will receive a plaque at Fairfield Cemetery events scheduled during the designated years.

12. Arrange place and time of Cemetery Clean-up, Annual Meeting, Memorial Day Event and next meeting: Guy Williams asked for suggestions for dates for the Cemetery Clean-up, Annual Meeting, Memorial Day event, and the next meeting. After discussion, ***Cheryl Fischer moved that we have clean- up day on Friday, May 23, 2014 from 9-12 noon, our Annual Meeting on Friday at 1:00 following a pot luck at the Community Center, and our Memorial Day event on Saturday, May 24, 2014 at 1pm. The motion was seconded by Corlee Johnson and was passed. Our next meeting will be held in October during the week of our fundraiser at a date to be announced.***

13. Election of Officers for 2014: Guy Williams called for nominations. Gary Ostheller moved that the same board be elected again for 2014. Guy Williams, President; Barb Ostheller, Vice President; Cheryl Loeffler, Treasure; Gary Ostheller, Sexton; Cheryl Fischer, Secretary. Cindy Williams seconded the motion. It was approved.

Close Meeting: The meeting was officially closed at 3:30pm by Guy Williams, President.