

Cemetery Board Report to Langley City Council:

Past 12-Month Activities

Green Burial Section:

The Green Burial section, launched in 2010, has been an important focus of the Cemetery Board. There are 80 graves available in this section and 21 graves have been sold to date. The first burial was this spring. A community group is considering purchasing 9 green burial plots together in another section of the cemetery. Because of the newness of green burials and home funerals, the Cemetery Board requests that families work with a designated Green Burial Consultant in the community. The Langley Cemetery has received local, regional and national attention for its' Green Burial section.

Budget Crisis:

The cemetery contribution to the proposed 2011 city budget was significantly increased to reflect increased costs and amount of work performed by the City. Although 42 graves were sold in 2010, the annual average is 8 -10. To secure the long-term financial stability of the cemetery, a number of changes were made. The cost of a grave was increased from \$600 to \$750. Mowing and garbage disposal are now contracted out, instead of being done by Public Works. In addition to their seasonal work parties, volunteers from the Friends of the Langley Woodmen Cemetery now help with debris hauling, setting out the trashcans for pickup, and filling the potholes. Public Works continues to mark the graves. Debbie Mahler handles administration related to selling graves, coordinates with Challis on the marking of graves, and pays the water bill.

New Mower Bought:

The Cemetery's 16 year-old lawn mower finally bit the dust this spring, and the Friends of the Langley Woodmen Cemetery stepped in to purchase a new Zero Turning Radius mower, after much research was done. The Friends are donating the mower to the City with an agreement that the use of the mower will be restricted to the cemetery. The Friends will continue to play a supporting role by covering the costs of maintenance and arranging the storage.

The Ash Garden:

Last fall a new planting area, with installed irrigation, was donated by Lynn Hays around the metal trellis at the entrance to the Ash Garden (also donated by Lynn). The plantings are growing well and looking good. The Friends of the Langley Woodmen Cemetery care for the Ash Garden through work parties, and also hire a gardener to weed and maintain the area.

In March the first plaque was installed on the large granite rock in the Ash Garden. The rock has been plotted out with a grid so that it will be easy to place the next plaques evenly, getting the best use of the space.

Board Membership:

A year ago we lost two board members and gained one new member. The second spot has not yet been filled.

Proposed Next Directions/Priorities:

~To draw in at least one and possibly two more members onto the Board from our community.

~To continue to care for the cemetery and make sure it is maintained and kept up to the standards that our community expects.

~To continue to be responsive to requests/needs from the community in relation to the cemetery.

~To create a Green Burial storage area for the biomulch and soil for the green burials.

~To complete the editing process on the updated Cemetery Brochure, which will include the Green Burial policies and procedures and have them printed by this fall.

~To create a berm that will provide more definition to the Ash Garden, an aesthetic buffer to the soil/biomulch area, and create a new bed for plantings.

~To continue to explore the idea of creating a columbarium.