



FRIENDS OF THE CEMETERY

Issue 45

Medina, Ohio

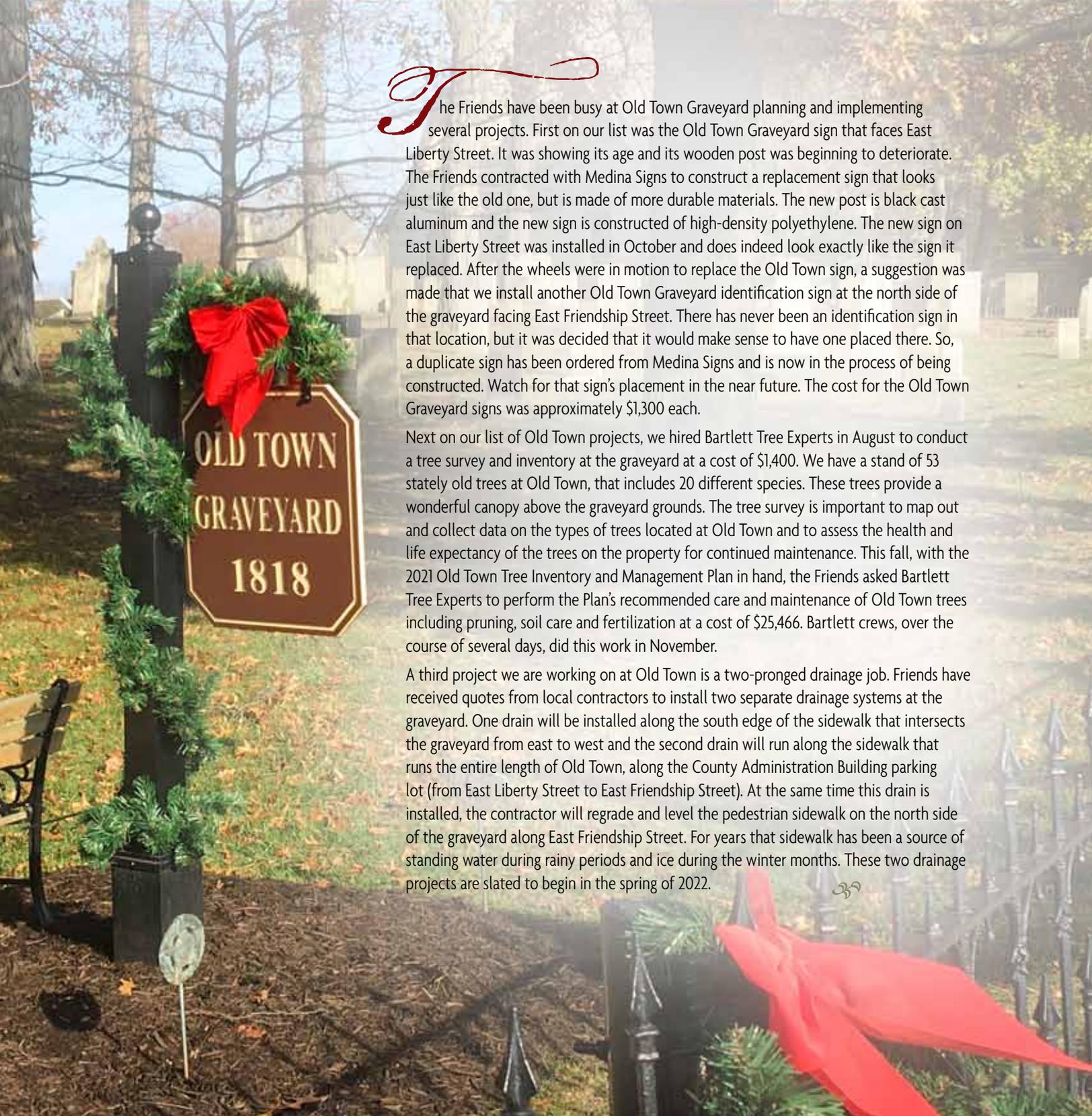
December 2021

The Friends have been busy at Old Town Graveyard planning and implementing several projects. First on our list was the Old Town Graveyard sign that faces East Liberty Street. It was showing its age and its wooden post was beginning to deteriorate. The Friends contracted with Medina Signs to construct a replacement sign that looks just like the old one, but is made of more durable materials. The new post is black cast aluminum and the new sign is constructed of high-density polyethylene. The new sign on East Liberty Street was installed in October and does indeed look exactly like the sign it replaced. After the wheels were in motion to replace the Old Town sign, a suggestion was made that we install another Old Town Graveyard identification sign at the north side of the graveyard facing East Friendship Street. There has never been an identification sign in that location, but it was decided that it would make sense to have one placed there. So, a duplicate sign has been ordered from Medina Signs and is now in the process of being constructed. Watch for that sign's placement in the near future. The cost for the Old Town Graveyard signs was approximately \$1,300 each.

Next on our list of Old Town projects, we hired Bartlett Tree Experts in August to conduct a tree survey and inventory at the graveyard at a cost of \$1,400. We have a stand of 53 stately old trees at Old Town, that includes 20 different species. These trees provide a wonderful canopy above the graveyard grounds. The tree survey is important to map out and collect data on the types of trees located at Old Town and to assess the health and life expectancy of the trees on the property for continued maintenance. This fall, with the 2021 Old Town Tree Inventory and Management Plan in hand, the Friends asked Bartlett Tree Experts to perform the Plan's recommended care and maintenance of Old Town trees including pruning, soil care and fertilization at a cost of \$25,466. Bartlett crews, over the course of several days, did this work in November.

A third project we are working on at Old Town is a two-pronged drainage job. Friends have received quotes from local contractors to install two separate drainage systems at the graveyard. One drain will be installed along the south edge of the sidewalk that intersects the graveyard from east to west and the second drain will run along the sidewalk that runs the entire length of Old Town, along the County Administration Building parking lot (from East Liberty Street to East Friendship Street). At the same time this drain is installed, the contractor will regrade and level the pedestrian sidewalk on the north side of the graveyard along East Friendship Street. For years that sidewalk has been a source of standing water during rainy periods and ice during the winter months. These two drainage projects are slated to begin in the spring of 2022.

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Friends of the Cemetery

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Medina, Ohio 44256

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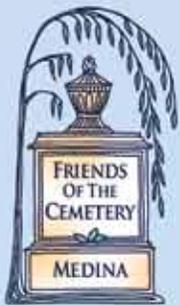
Editors

Teresa Merkle

Cynthia Szunyog

Designed by

Ron Bell/Advision Design



Spring Grove Drainage Project:

We are pleased to report that after several extended rainy periods, the completed drainage project in the area of Sections 11 & 12 has remained flood and standing water free! Belsole Groundworks finished final landscape touches in September. It's great to have this particular drainage issue resolved, but there are a number of other drainage problems at Spring Grove that remain. The Friends plan to continue to work with the City to evaluate and identify the most pressing trouble spots at Spring Grove and address those one by one. 

Chapel Painting:

The Friends entered into a contract with Color Renovation of Valley View, Ohio for \$8,925 to paint the outside trim and doors of the Spring Grove chapel in accordance with Perspectus Architecture's Spring Grove Cemetery Preventative Maintenance Report that addresses the care and preservation of cemetery structures. Color Renovation also painted the basement of the chapel and painted and repaired its exterior basement doors. 

Baby Section:

In July the Friends hired Lamphear Lawn Service to realign the pavers that delineate the borders of gravestones at the Baby Section. Lamphear also installed new sod between the paver sections. The cost to Friends for this work was \$3,500. Many thanks to Friends Trustee Jerry Gunner for watering the new sod twice daily during the hot summer months. The grass looks lush and lovely now due to Jerry's efforts.

On August 28, twelve members of the Oddfellows service organization gathered at the Baby Section to install river rock along the baby gravestones in the newly realigned pavers. The Oddfellows also purchased and planted a blackgum tree to provide shade for the park bench at the Baby Section. We continue to appreciate and be grateful for the Oddfellows' dedication to the Baby Section at Spring Grove. 





Aerator for Spring Grove’s Old Lake:

This past August, the Friends contracted with AquaDoc for \$2,728 to install a second bubbling aerator at the old lake at Spring Grove. The new aerator will enhance the work that the original one has been

doing to improve water quality and reduce algae growth. As we have done for many years, the Friends continue to fund regular monthly maintenance of both lakes at Spring Grove with Pond Control Services.



Mike Short joins Friends Board of Trustees:

Mike Short was elected to the Friends of the Cemetery Board in June 2021. Mike is a Certified Planner with a background in public accounting. He is an active member of Medina Noon Kiwanis and Medina County Estate Planning Council and served the Medina community on the Medina United Way Board and Medina Chamber of Commerce Golf Committee. Mike is also a Master Gardener and says that after attending a presentation on

Spring Grove Cemetery’s designation as an arboretum, he was intrigued with that process and wanted to become involved. Mike looks forward to contributing to the Board’s goals by sharing his financial expertise and his gardening and horticultural skills. We welcome Mike and know he will be a great asset to the Board. We appreciate his willingness to share his talents and abilities.



Friends of the Cemetery Emeritus Board:

The Friends Board of Trustees is pleased to announce that former FOC Trustee Linda Fenn has agreed to join Dennis Leach

on the Friends of the Cemetery Emeritus Board. Thank you, Linda, and welcome to the Friends of the Cemetery Emeritus Board!



National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom:

The application to the National Park Service to nominate Spring Grove Cemetery as a National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom site is underway with planned submission to the Park Service in January 2022. Our application includes two people buried at Spring Grove Cemetery who actively assisted freedom seekers and/or participated in the resistance to slavery:

Harrison Gray Otis (H.G.) Blake (1818-1876) – Lawyer, banker, Ohio House of Representatives & Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, abolitionist and station master who hid Underground Railroad “passengers” in his home on East Washington Street.

Elizabeth A. Bell Blake, (1821-1893) – Wife of H.G. Blake and collaborator with her husband to aid people escaping slavery at their home.

The criteria for eligibility for this prestigious designation is quite stringent and requires verifiable information through citation and/or biography. We are optimistic that our application will succeed in nomination. We know of several others buried at Spring Grove

whom we plan to add as addendums to our application once Spring Grove has received its official designation from the Park Service. Further research and verification of the roles these people played in the movement to abolish slavery is necessary.

The National Park Service’s Underground Railroad Network to Freedom serves to “honor, preserve and promote the history of resistance to enslavement through escape and flight.”





Spring Grove Arboretum walkabout:

Sunshine and mild temperatures brought out a steady stream of tree and nature lovers to the Spring Grove Arboretum Walkabout on October 9! The walkabout was in celebration of Spring Grove’s Level II accreditation, earlier this year, as an arboretum by the ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and the Morton Registry of Arboreta, a database of the world’s arboreta and gardens. A beautiful fall-colored map, created by Friends of the Cemetery member, Beth Girman, was provided for each walker as a guide to the 48 species of trees showcased on this year’s walk. Kids of all ages enjoyed the tree themed scavenger hunt along with the twig pencils and arboretum writing pads give-away. Chad Clink of Bartlett Tree Experts, assisted by Andrea Richley, distributed sawtooth oak, beautyberry, witch hazel and hedge maple tree seedlings along with professional tree advice to participants.

We thank those who planned the walkabout and volunteered their time the day of the event: Chad Clink, Beth Girman, Jerry Gunner,

Mike Gunner, Chuck Merkle, Teresa Merkle, Dottie Nemec, Andrea Richley, Mike Short, Karen Thorn, Lauren Thorn, Greg Walter and Paul Wood. In addition, we thank Jake Chidsey and Chidsey Landscape and Design, Inc. for weeding and mulching our arboretum trees, expertly trimming the Baby Section’s Boxwood hedges and for keeping the tree identification signs clean and maintained. The Friends of the Cemetery are committed to the Spring Grove Arboretum and its continued development and maintenance. Since 2019 when the idea of making Spring Grove an arboretum was proposed, the Friends have funded in excess of \$116,000 toward the inventory and survey of trees, maintenance of trees, planting of new trees, signage and aesthetics of Spring Grove’s collection of trees. ☺



Historical Walk

The 2021 Historical Walk at Spring Grove, the first since 2019, took place on a lovely warm and sunny afternoon in August. Friends member and public relations representative, Dottie Nemec, welcomed the crowd gathered on the Spring Grove chapel grounds and Teresa Merkle, president of the Friends, gave a brief history of Spring Grove Cemetery and its historic structures. Walk presenters included Paul Wood, Pat Morgan, Brian Feron and Cynthia Szunyog.



The walk started with Paul Wood's presentation about Sheldon Funk, a "man about town," who may best be known for building the storybook homes on North Jefferson and Pearl Streets here in Medina. Sheldon was a baseball player and a boxer in WWI and his many occupations included driving instructor, restaurant owner, mattress inspector and, for one week, he served on the Ohio Liquor Commission. He built Medina's Towne Motel, which is still in operation at the corner of North Court and East North Streets, and numerous other structures around town.

Pat Morgan's first presentation was about David and Girdline (Gerry) Rucker who were married in Medina in 1948. David worked at the Chevy plant in Brookpark and Gerry was employed in housekeeping at the American Hotel and then Medina Community Hospital. They were part of a growing African-American community in Medina. While working and raising two daughters, Gerry obtained her LPN and had a long career as a surgical technician at Medina Hospital. David died in 1973 when their young son, also named David, was just two. Gerry continued on and, even after retiring from the hospital, worked part-time at Gowe Printing. She was an active member of the Second Baptist church and a member of American Legion Post 202 Women's Auxiliary. Gerry passed away at the age of 96 in 2019. She is remembered as someone always willing to help and also as an excellent baker and candy maker. One of the attendees at the walk knew Gerry and was very appreciative of our presentation on her life.

Pat's next talk about Wealthy Anna Truxell was the result of research she did due to a Facebook post by a visitor to Spring Grove Cemetery. The visitor posted a photo of Wealthy Anna's gravestone and queried as to whether anyone had information on this lady who had such a beautiful unusual name. Pat went to work combing through U.S. Census records, newspapers and other sources. She found that Wealthy Anna came to Medina later in life as a widow and worked as a housekeeper for Isaac Roshon, a Civil War Veteran. Mr. Roshon was well-known in Medina and got around town by using crutches as a result of being shot in the knee at some point in his life after the war. Wealthy Anna was born sometime around 1822, give or take, and moved throughout her lifetime to several different counties in Ohio, including Erie, Sandusky, Lucas, Ottawa and, finally to Medina, where she died in 1906 and was buried at Spring Grove. Eleven years later in 1917, her employer, Isaac Roshon, passed away and was buried in the same plot. A lovely granite gravestone marker is placed at their shared burial site with Wealthy Anna's name on one side and Isaac's on the other side. The shared plot and marker have led Pat, and others, to conclude that as her employer, Isaac Roshon, who was at least 22 years her junior, provided Wealthy Anna with a place to be buried and a proper marker. Wealthy Anna must have been an exemplary employee and, in turn, Mr. Roshon must have been a kindhearted, compassionate employer.

Next, Brian Feron presented Pat Morgan's research on the Baldwin brothers, Martin and James, whose father, William Baldwin, was owner/editor of the Medina County Gazette from 1915 until his death in 1938. After their father's death, the brothers took over the

reins of the Gazette as owners/editors until 1965, shortly after the Gazette was sold. Both men were civic-minded and served the Medina community in many capacities throughout their lifetimes. Martin died in 1981 and James in 1992. As a side note, the Baldwin brothers grew up in what is now known as the Medina Historical Society's John Smart House on North Elmwood Street in Medina.

Cynthia Szunyog spoke about Deborah Miller Dannley who was born at the Miller family farm at Fenn's Corners in 1865. Her grandparents were among the first settlers to arrive in Medina Township. When she was four, her family moved to the yellow house at the corner of Spring Grove and Weymouth Road. In 1905 Deborah and her husband bought the "Old Brick" across from the Lutheran Church on North Broadway Street.

Deborah was known for her kindness and hospitality. Her house was a gathering place for younger people, a place where they could play games, read good books, sing and play instruments and even have dinner. Her daughter, Christena Kraeft, remembered that the Dannley's "never knew how many people were going to dine until everyone sat down."

One day she settled an argument amongst her young visitors about who was the tallest by telling the young people to mark their heights on a door of her den and sign their names on the line. As, one by one, the boys went away to war, she pasted a star next to their name. All came back safe except for one. They called it their Lucky Door. When they returned, they brought their children to mark their height on the Lucky Door.

Deborah was active in civic affairs and belonged to many organizations. She was a charter member of the Afternoon Club, a founding member of King's Daughters and, a member of the Historical Society, among others. On her death in 1948, her obituary said, "She was one of the grandest and most beloved women Medina has had the good fortune to call her own."

Lastly, Cynthia told about Deborah Dannley's son-in-law, Herman Kraeft, who lived in the Greek Revival across from the administration building on East Friendship Street. In 1915, Herman had come to Medina from New York on a motorcycle to teach physics, German and Manual Training at the high school. In 1917, he returned to Buffalo where he worked designing and building flying boats nicknamed "Nancys" for the Navy. Of the first four seaplanes to race across the Atlantic, his was the first and the only one to reach Europe, even though it had a late start due to some repairs he had to make. They named his plane "The Lame Duck." It is preserved in the National Museum of Aviation at NAS Pensacola, Florida.

All enjoyed the pleasant walk through our cemetery and learning about those buried there. We thank all who attended and those who researched, presented and planned the day. Special thanks to the Virginia Wheeler Martin Family History & Learning Center (Lisa, Kathy & Lauren) at the Medina District Library for help in research & production of posters for the presentations.



Our Volunteers



We so appreciate our volunteers who plant endowment flowers on graves in the spring and place endowment wreaths on graves for the Christmas holidays and the volunteers who respectfully pick up flags from veterans' graves the day after Veterans' Day in November.



ARBORETUM TREES

Members of the Medina High School Class of 1970 pose in front of the Dawn Redwood tree the Reunion Committee purchased at Spring Grove Arboretum in honor of their 50th class reunion.

Arboretum Honorary or Memorial Trees are available for purchase. Call the Sexten at (330) 722-9056



Friends of the Cemetery

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* designates new member
 † designates life-time member
 ◊ designates corporate member

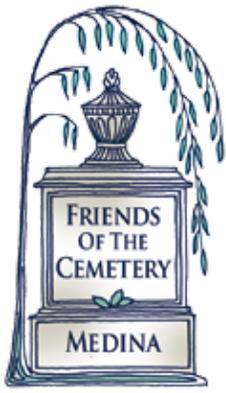
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 Amy Cox
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 Matt & Joshua Wiederhold

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FRIENDS OF THE CEMETERY

775 East Washington Street
Medina, Ohio 44256

Become a Friend of the Cemetery

If you have not yet joined the Friends of the Cemetery, we'd love to have you become a part! For your convenience, we have provided a self-addressed envelope in this newsletter. Our membership schedule is included on the envelope flap. If you have been a member in the past, but do not see your name listed on page 7, please take time today to renew your membership using the envelope.

"Show me the manner in which a nation or community cares for its dead and I will measure with mathematical exactness the tender mercies of its people, their respect for the law of the land, and their loyalty to high ideals."

William Gladstone

Don't forget to check us out on the web at:

www.friendsofmedinacemetery.org



Memberships are available as follows:

Senior _____	\$10.00	Supporting _____	\$100.00
Individual _____	\$15.00	Heritage _____	\$250.00
Family _____	\$25.00	Lifetime _____	\$500.00
Contributing _____	\$50.00	Corporate _____	\$1,000.00

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