



FRIENDS OF THE CEMETERY

Issue 47

Medina, Ohio

December 2022

Canfields Added to Spring Grove NTF

*I*n October, Friends received notification from the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program (NTF) that our addendum application to add Lt. Col. Herman Canfield (1817-1862) & Sarah Ann (Martha) (Treat) Canfield (1826-1889) to Spring Grove's NTF listing was approved. The Canfields are buried in Section 5 of Spring Grove, not far from H.G. and Elizabeth Blake, who were nominated in our successful initial NTF application earlier this year.



Lt. Col. Herman Canfield was a staunch abolitionist and played a leadership role in the Underground Railroad in northeast Ohio. As a Medina lawyer, he represented defendants who had been prosecuted for taking part in the 1858 Oberlin-Wellington Rescue in which citizens from Oberlin joined with Wellington citizens to rescue escaped slave, John Price, from Federal authorities. Besides practicing law, Herman was said to have "held in succession all of the town and county offices." While serving as mayor of Medina, he was elected Ohio state representative and later, state senator. Herman served during the Civil War, reaching the rank of Lt. Colonel in the 72nd OH, but was killed at the Battle of Shiloh. His wife, Martha, like many other wives at that time, followed her husband to war, with at least one of her two young sons in tow, to help care for the needs of her husband's unit. After her husband's death, she brought his body back to Medina for burial at Old Town Graveyard and then returned to the south to continue to care for the soldiers. After the war, Martha, concerned for the welfare of the orphaned children of African-American soldiers, started the Canfield Colored Orphan Asylum in Memphis, TN. President Grant appointed Martha to oversee the Division of Orphan Asylums, Industrial Schools and Charities in the Education Bureau. Martha died in 1889 in Bristol, Rhode Island where her sons, both medical doctors, had settled. Her body was returned to Medina for burial at Old Town, beside her husband, but eventually was disinterred and moved, along with her husband's remains, to Spring Grove Cemetery.



Thank you to Friends Trustee Karen Thorn for the extensive work involved in researching, writing and submitting the Canfield application to the NTF. We want to continue to add others buried in our cemeteries to our NTF designation and ask that if you know of persons buried at Spring Grove or Old Town that aided freedom seekers or were active in the Underground Railroad, please reach out to us.

Friends of the Cemetery

775 East Washington Street
Medina, Ohio 44256

To reach us:
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330.591.4870

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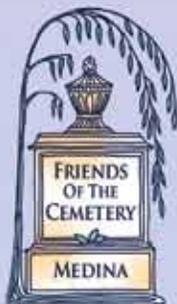
Ron Bell

Debra Hallock

Lauren Merkle

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Designed by
Ron Bell/Advison Design



Friends of the Cemetery Celebrate 25th Anniversary:

On June 11, the Friends hosted their 25th anniversary celebration at Spring Grove Cemetery for our members, business partners and City of Medina officials. We had beautiful weather and a great crowd from near and far, including folks from California, Massachusetts and Florida. Everyone enjoyed decadent desserts, fruits and refreshments, while listening to the mellow guitar and vocals provided by John Husbands. Friends Trustees were presented Mayoral and City Council Proclamations recognizing our 25 years of service to the community. Teresa Merkle and Cynthia Szunyog were each presented a bronze tree plaque by their fellow Trustees, honoring their founding of Friends of the Cemetery and their 25 years of service to the organization and community. The family of the late John Gill, former Friends of the Cemetery Trustee, presented a gift of \$25,000 in memory of John and in honor of our 25th anniversary. It was a lovely day to celebrate Friends of the Cemetery and to enjoy the comradery of friends and neighbors in such a peaceful, serene setting - as one attendee put it, "this was a day reminiscent of days gone by in Medina."

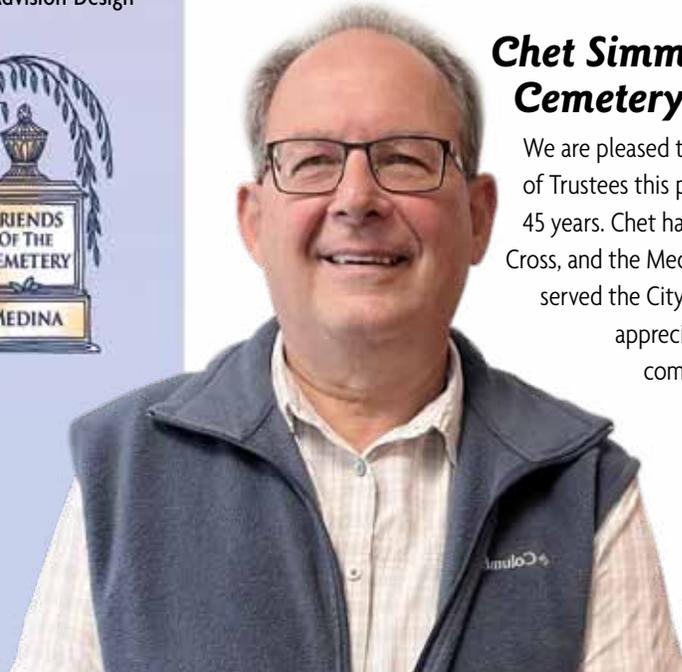
To view pictures from our 25th Anniversary celebration, head over to our website at www.friendsofmedinacemetery.org and click on "Events" page.



Harold Waite Resigns as Trustee: Harold Waite resigned as Friends of the Cemetery Trustee in August, having served the organization since 2016. Hank has given much back over the years through service to the community and his tenure on the Friends Board was no exception. We appreciate Hank and will miss his unique perspective and knowledge of Medina's cemeteries gained from his life-long family affiliation with Waite & Son Funeral Home. The Friends Trustees are happy that Hank will continue his affiliation with the Friends organization by serving on the Friends of the Cemetery Emeritus Board.

Chet Simmons Elected to the Friends of the Cemetery Board of Trustees

We are pleased to announce the election of Chet Simmons to the Friends Board of Trustees this past September. Chet and his wife, Jan, have lived in Medina for 45 years. Chet has been active in the community with scouting, Kiwanis, the Red Cross, and the Medina County Historical Society, to name a few. Chet also served the City of Medina as the Ward One Councilman for 8 years. We appreciate Chet's years of civic involvement and service to the Medina community. He brings a vast amount of experience and knowledge to the Friends Board as we look forward to the future!



Old Town Graveyard Update: The Friends purchased four new park benches for Old Town Graveyard. One new bench was placed alongside the East Liberty Street sign and another next to the East Friendship Street sign. The other two new benches were placed adjacent to one another on the walkway in the middle of the graveyard.

It has been a challenge to grow grass in some areas at Old Town due to the shade canopy of the lovely old trees. This summer, however, City crews prepped the soil and planted grass seed in those hard to grow areas and we are happy to report we now have a nice stand of grass growing there! To finish off the lawn improvements at Old Town, the Friends hired Chidsey Lawn Maintenance to spread cypress mulch under some of the larger trees that let no sunlight in at all and we are pleased with the results!

Spring Grove Chapel: The Friends contracted with Litman Electric of Seville for \$9,407 to upgrade electrical service at Spring Grove this summer. Litman removed an old, unsightly electrical service pedestal located across from the mausoleum and installed new electrical lines underground to the chapel where a residential-style meter was placed on the chapel's south exterior wall. Several interior electrical issues at the chapel were also addressed at this time.

Also at the chapel, Litchfield Heating installed an industrial dehumidifier and air circulation unit that attaches to the chapel furnace to produce air flow inside the chapel at a cost to the Friends of \$4,875. This will greatly reduce the humidity which has caused dampness and mold inside the 138 year-old structure through the years. The Friends have plans in the near future to remove the existing carpet and replace it with a non-porous flooring material.

Spring Grove Benches,

Trash Receptacles & Spigots: The Friends purchased two new park benches and two new trash receptacles for placement in Section 19 and for Section 20 when it is developed in the future.

A number of years ago, the Friends purchased new spigots for all the water outlets throughout Spring Grove, plus a few extras as spares. Over the years, several of the spigots have malfunctioned or been damaged and have been replaced by the spares, so this summer the Friends purchased an additional six new spigots for cemetery staff to have on hand.

Spring Grove Arboretum News:

In August, Bartlett Tree Experts provided Dutch elm disease treatment and oak wilt treatment to Spring Grove's elm and oak tree collection at a cost to Friends of \$15,401. This fall Friends hired Bartlett to perform one-half of the Spring Grove Tree Inventory's Phase 2 tree pruning plan. Ninety-one trees were pruned in this half at a cost of \$28,818. The second part of Phase 2 tree pruning is planned for the spring of 2023.

PlotBox Cemetery Database: The City of Medina recently contracted with PlotBox Cemetery Solutions for software management of cemetery records and digital mapping. The City received funding for this project through the American Rescue Plan Act. Plotbox software will keep records and maps in one place and provide a means to manage cemetery operations more efficiently versus traditional paper-based recording and mapping. PlotBox software also provides a public interface with its Everafter website which allows public access to cemetery records for research and grave location. Everafter even provides walking directions to grave locations. Data migration takes approximately twelve months and the project is targeted for completion by August 2023.

VFW Donates Speaker System: VFW Post 202 donated a speaker system to the Friends of the Cemetery this past summer. The Post has used the speaker system for Memorial Day services at the Spring Grove Soldiers Mound for many years. The Friends will continue to use the speaker system for Spring Grove Memorial Day services. We thank Post 202 for their generous donation.

Full-Time Cemetery Position:

Janna Litman was hired in July as full-time assistant to the Sexton. Janna is not new to the job as she previously held this position as part-time. The Friends are pleased that the City recognized the need to have a second full-time employee at Spring Grove. We are happy to have Janna at the cemetery full-time!





Christmas Lighting and Greenery:

The Friends enjoy decorating for the holidays at Old Town Graveyard and Spring Grove Cemetery. We hope it brings as much joy to others as it does to us. Last Christmas we decided to light the Spring Grove entry gate and a few trees near the gate and were so pleased with the result that we have decorated that area again this Christmas season. We also decorate the fence along East Liberty Street at Old Town Graveyard with greenery and red bows.

Another place we enjoy decorating is our Baby Section at Spring Grove. For years we've decorated the fence along Rt. 3 with fresh greenery and bows, but this year we purchased artificial pine roping to use instead. With the assistance of Julie McNabb of JK Gifts/Interior Design Studio, we were able to locate and purchase some very nice artificial pine roping. Julie and the folks at JK Gifts/Interior Design were kind enough to donate \$250 toward the \$750 purchase! We thank them for their kindness and generosity!



Spring Grove Photo Contest:

"Medina's Crown Jewel – Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum" was the theme for the first Friends sponsored amateur photo contest this fall. We received a total of 43 entries in three age categories. Our distinguished judges, Mayor Dennis Hanwell, Matt Platz and Becky Shotwell, were quite impressed with the quality of the photo entries and had a difficult decision choosing just one winner per category. The winning photos were taken by: Jim P. - 12 and under category, Jessica W. - 13-17 year category, and Betsy B. - adult category. Jim and Jessica each won a \$50 Sweets & Geeks gift card and Betsy won a \$50 Foundry Social gift card. Thank you to all who participated! To view the winning photographs, visit www.friendsofmedinacemetery.org and click on "Events."



Spring Grove Arboretum Walk

October 8 was just a glorious fall day for the arboretum walk. Twelve new tree species were featured on this year's walk, bringing the total featured arboretum trees to 59. The 12 trees added to the walk this year were the American Elm, Kousa Dogwood, Flowering Dogwood, Canadian Hemlock, Chinese Fringetree, Emperor Oak Cut-Leaf, Persian Ironwood (Parrotia), Weeping Norway Spruce, American Larch (Tamarack), Osage Orange, Yellow Buckeye and Golden Raintree.

An addition to the walk this year was a group tour of the arboretum led by Arborist Chad Clink of Bartlett Tree Experts. A large group enjoyed an hour's walk with Chad who shared in-depth information on many of the tree species found in our arboretum, along with tips on tree care and advice on the selection of tree species. One of the highlights of the group tour walk was when 8-year old Eli Merkle gave a talk about his favorite tree at the arboretum, the Paperbark

Maple. We thank Chad Clink for sharing his love and knowledge of trees and for making himself available to answer questions and give tree and plant advice to attendees. We also thank Chad's assistant, Andrea Richley, for her support of the event. Thanks to Bartlett Tree Experts for providing Black Gum saplings for one and all.

We appreciate everyone who attended the walk and thank those who planned and prepared for it and those who worked to make it run so smoothly. They include Pat Feron, Vickie Fleming, Jerry Gunner, Debra Hallock, Chuck, Eli & Teresa Merkle, Mike Short, Chet Simmons, Greg, Karen & Lauren Thorn, Greg Walter and Paul Wood. We also want to thank Beth Girman who drew the beautiful Arboretum Walk map and Jake Chidsey and his crew who weed and mulch our arboretum trees and maintain our arboretum signs. Jake's crew also did a gorgeous job trimming our Baby Section Boxwood hedges.

Spring Grove Historical Walk

Our annual Historical Walk was held August 6 at Spring Grove Cemetery. Even though the temperatures hovered around 90 degrees, we had a large, enthusiastic group of attendees. Teresa Merkle, President of the Friends of the Cemetery, welcomed the crowd that had gathered at the Spring Grove chapel and gave a brief history of Spring Grove Cemetery and introduced the day's presenters who included Brad Root, Pat Morgan, Karen Thorn, Cynthia Szunyog, and Paul Wood. The first stop of the afternoon was at the grave of Samuel C. Bates (1840-1859). Friends member Brad Root shared the story of Samuel C. Bates, a friend and associate of Brad's great, great, great grandfather, A.I. Root. A.I., at just 19-years old, was traveling around giving lectures on natural philosophy and chemistry, and Samuel Bates, age 18, was traveling with A.I. as his assistant. Samuel was very bright and intelligent with a strong determination to succeed as A.I. wrote about him, "He was always very resolute and determined when he undertook anything. I never knew him to give up what he undertook to do if it was within the bounds of possibility, and having a great deal of courage he seldom failed in what he commenced. Perhaps it was this that gave him such success in mathematics. Only the evening before he worked



nearly four hours steadily in solving a single problem in algebra." The evening before A.I. was referring to, unfortunately, was the night before Samuel met with a tragic end. On November 14, 1859, while traveling to one of their lectures, Samuel and A.I., along with their horse and buggy, were swept away into the Scioto River. A.I. was barely able to swim to shore, but Samuel, not knowing how to swim, and the horse, still hitched to the buggy, could not make it to land and were

drowned. When Samuel's body was later recovered from the river, a pamphlet called "The Science of Swimming" was found inside his coat pocket. No one is sure where Samuel was originally buried in 1859, but we do know that at some point in time his body was moved to Spring Grove after the cemetery's opening in 1883 and was buried just 37 feet from the grave of his friend and associate, A.I. Root.

Just a stone's throw from Samuel Bates' gravesite is the grave of Mary Richmond Pickard (1861- 1933). Mary's marker is notable because it is a bird bath inscribed with the words, "Lover of nature and the birds." Genealogist and Friends member, Pat Morgan, presented Mary's story. Mary was born in 1861 in Genoa, NY. She had two sisters, one of which moved to Medina when her husband, Jarius Kennan, became Medina County Probate judge and school superintendent.

Mary visited her sister and family quite often in Medina, with some of her visits being extended stays. While in Medina, Mary's comings and goings were sometimes reported in local newspapers, including an article in the Medina Sentinel in 1914 that reported she would be accompanying Mrs. R.M. McDowell, Mrs. O.H. McDowell and Miss Helen McDowell on a 10-week Mediterranean cruise. Pat's research of census records for Mary found that during her lifetime she resided in Kalamazoo, MI and Glens Falls, NY. Mary never married, so we assume she was interred at Spring Grove to be near the family plot of her sister and brother-in-law and their extended family.

Our next stop on the walk was at the Lowe obelisk, the tallest structure at Spring Grove. Genealogist Pat Morgan said the height and size of the Lowe monument was what sparked her interest in researching who was buried under it. William and Jane Beaton Lowe came to America in 1854 from Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Upon arriving in Medina County, they first settled in Homer Township. The Lowes had 13 children, 12 of which reached adulthood. Pat related that the obituaries for William and Jane were very brief and that "it was not until their children and grandchildren passed away that the story of the family began to emerge." Pat went on to share interesting stories and anecdotes of several of the Lowe family descendants, some of whom are buried elsewhere in Spring Grove and some of whom are buried in other cemeteries. Attendees enjoyed hearing Pat's extensive research on the Lowe clan buried around the massive tombstone in Section 8.

From the Lowe monument, we headed through the Pat Mears Garden and past the Letha House Lake to the graves of H.G. and Elizabeth Blake. Karen Thorn, Friends of the Cemetery Trustee, spoke to the crowd about Spring Grove's recent designation as an official site for the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (NTF). H.G. Blake and his wife, Elizabeth, were station masters on the Underground Railroad and were included on the Friends' initial application to the National Park Service for this designation. Upon becoming an NTF site, an official National Park Service passport stamp was issued to Spring Grove and Karen passed out stamps to all walk participants who participate in the "Passport to Your National Parks" program.

Moving on to Section 4, Cynthia Szunyog, Friends of the Cemetery Trustee, talked about the Fairfax Smith monument. The towering tombstone sculpture depicts a pioneer with axe in hand and tree stump at his foot. Fairfax Smith and wife, Abigail, moved their seven children from Madison County, NY to Montville Township, OH in 1834. Fairfax was a true pioneer of the Western Reserve, clearing 350 acres of wilderness in Montville Township. Fairfax Smith died in 1847 and was buried at the Smith Crofoot Cemetery in River Styx.

His son, Linus, had the Cararra marble monument made in Italy at a cost of \$2,000 to honor his late father. Fairfax' body may have been moved to his son's, Linus, farm before being later moved, along with the huge monument, to Spring Grove Cemetery sometime in 1894. Fairfax' wife, Abigail, and a young son were also moved to Spring Grove at the same time.

Following the Fairfax Smith presentation, we walked to the grave of Pvt. Neil L. Conkling (1890-1918). Pvt. Conkling was killed in action in the battle of the Argonne Forest on November 11, 1918, the very day WWI ended. Paul Wood, Friends of the Cemetery Trustee, shared that Neil was born in Portage County, Ohio, and moved with his family to Medina as a child. His father died in 1905 and his only sibling, a sister named Pearl, passed in 1913 of tuberculosis. His mother succumbed to tuberculosis, as well, in 1917. After his mother's death, Neil went to live with his mother's friend and schoolteacher, Mrs. Eldora Frederick, at 221 North Huntington Street in Medina. Neil worked at the A.I. Root Company, then Medina Bending Works, but when he registered for the army in 1918, his occupation was listed as a weaver at Medina Carpet and Rug Warehouse. He was sent to Camp Sherman on April 1, 1918 and was quickly deployed to France. For some time Mrs. Frederick did not receive any word from Neil or about Neil until, finally, in April 1919 she was informed by the War Department that Neil had been killed in action on November 11 of the previous year and buried in the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in Romagne, France. Sometime later Neil's body was removed from the military cemetery in France and brought to Spring Grove and laid to rest alongside his family members on the north side of the cemetery.

For the last stop of the walk, we walked to the grave of John Gill (1934-2020) who was a Friends of the Cemetery Trustee from 2002 – 2017. Teresa Merkle told the crowd what a great advocate John was of cemetery history and preservation and that John probably knew more than anyone about Spring Grove Cemetery and Old Town Graveyard. One day while at Spring Grove Cemetery, John had a chance encounter with Edward C. Mears, a former resident of Medina, turned Texas cattle rancher. John told Mr. Mears about the Friends of the Cemetery mission of historic preservation, beautification and maintenance of Medina's historic cemeteries. Mr. Mears was quite interested in what John had to say and, upon returning to Texas, became a member of the Friends of the Cemetery. In 2003 when Mr. Mears was diagnosed with terminal cancer, he made the decision to leave his estate to the Friends of the Cemetery. Thanks to John's chance encounter and Ed Mears' generous bequest to the Friends, many significant capital improvements and beautification projects at Medina's cemeteries have been realized.

Please note our office phone number has changed to (330) 591-4870.

Friends Membership Donation Updated: As of January 1, 2023, Friends "Lifetime" membership will change to include the following tiers: Silver - \$500 • Gold - \$1,000 • Platinum - \$2,000 • President's Circle - \$5,000 and above

Other membership categories will remain the same; however, the "Corporate" membership category will be eliminated.

We thank each of our members for the generous support we receive!

Each and every membership is important to our mission of the beautification, historic preservation and maintenance of Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum and the Old Town Graveyard.

Friends of the Cemetery

MEMBERSHIP LISTING - DECEMBER 2022

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
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 Cynthia Allman
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 Steve & Jane Anderson
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 Dr. and Mrs. David Bagley ◊
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 Janice Rusak
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 Rod & Sandy Sampsel
 Hugh & Gale Schuckman
 Lucy Sekerka
 Sally Shemkunas *
 Jim Shields †
 Michael Short</p> | <p>Frank & Becky Shotwell †
 Chet & Jan Simmons †
 Ralph & Stephanie Hobb Simmons
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 David Smead
 George E. & Dolores J. Smiley *
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 Darlene Suitor
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 Jay & Janis Zachman †
 Betty Zarney †
 Donna Zatezalo
 Grace Zay
 Steve Zetts †</p> |
|---|--|--|---|

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

New Members since May 2022

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Shirley Grubbs | Joel Hoffmaster | George E. & Dolores J. Smiley |
| Mary Gwyther | Melanie Kasten-Krause | Sally Shemkunas |
| Dennis & Christine Hanwell | Russ & Anna Leach | Randy & Rosie Williams |
| | Warren & Vivian Rose | |

New Lifetime Members since May 2022

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Shirley Grubbs | Frank & Becky Shotwell |
| Dennis Leach | Chet & Jan Simmons |
| Warren & Vivian Rose | |

New Corporate Members since May 2022

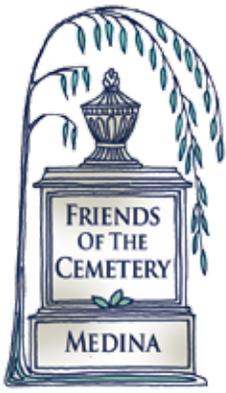
- | |
|-------------------------|
| Dr. & Mrs. David Bagley |
| David Gill |
| Una Mae Gill |

In Memory of Hope Wilder

Darrell & Carolyn Waite

In Memory of Robert Dennington

Jerry & Sally Gunner	Paul Wood
Dennis & Christine Hanwell	Grace Zay
Darrell & Carolyn Waite	



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

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Membership enclosed _____

Please return to:

Friends of the Cemetery • 775 East Washington Street • Medina, OH 44256