

Happy Historic 25th Birthday, EMCA

In 1995, ownership of the Masonic Cemetery transferred from Eugene Lodge #11 AF & AM to the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association (EMCA). The newly-formed nonprofit realized it needed to get acquainted with the site's permanent residents, so it contracted with Sally Donovan and Associates to carry out a comprehensive inventory of every plot in the cemetery, including photographs of each monument and its inscription, plus a description of its size, condition, and landscape features. This exercise provided clear evidence that a tremendous amount of Eugene's history lay in those ten acres. It was important for EMCA to document this history.

However, to communicate this history to cemetery visitors, the grounds and Hope Abbey needed to be accessible and attractive. They weren't. The grounds were covered with blackberries, other noxious weeds, and, according to rumor, a large marijuana patch. The mausoleum was pitch black and sitting in a sea of water and mud. Neighbors were warned to stay away due to the presence of drug dealers, vandals, and drunks. EMCA had a huge amount of work to do.

After 25 years, much work has been completed. Taking to heart its avowed mission, "to restore, rehabilitate, maintain, interpret, and operate the historic Eugene Masonic Cemetery and Hope Abbey Mausoleum as a cultural and natural resource for the community," EMCA has succeeded in creating and maintaining a beautiful, but privately owned, memorial park in the middle of the city.

Past newsletters have documented the multitude of projects that have reclaimed the grounds and Hope Abbey. However, these projects, critical to the cemetery's restoration, did not directly inform visitors and the Eugene community at large about its place in local history. So other efforts have focused on research and outreach.

Full of Life, The History and Character of Eugene's Masonic Cemetery was published in 1999. Historical plaques were placed on the graves of important Eugene pioneers. Free brochures described topics such as Civil War veterans' biographies and Hope Abbey's history. Veterans buried in the cemetery were identified and flags placed on their graves on Memorial Day



weekend. Board members led cemetery walking tours. *Monumental News* as well as the Lane County Historical Society's magazine and *The Register Guard* featured stories about notable Eugeneans buried in the cemetery. Memorial Day weekend events, monthly Hope Abbey open houses, and the Music To Die For concert series attracted large numbers of visitors.

For greater outreach and communication EMCA also developed an online presence. Its website provides comprehensive information about the cemetery's history, including past newsletters and a list of all persons buried there. (eugenemasoniccemetery.org) Monthly eNewsletters and a Facebook page inform readers of work parties and other upcoming events.

All these projects continue in 2020, EMCA's 25th year. Historical plaques and other signage will be renovated to make them permanent and attractive. Plaques will also be prepared to commemorate important Eugene settlers interred in Hope Abbey. More research is being done, particularly on notable women buried in the cemetery. In honor of the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment, we will call attention to these women in cemetery walking tours and eNewsletter articles.

Karen Seidel, Board Member and Secretary

From the President

In early spring I took a day trip to the Oregon Coast to walk a nearly empty beach. While looking for heart-shaped stones to place on my mother's grave, I happened upon a large map of the world sketched in the sand. Above the map were the words: "We Are All In This Together." In this time of pandemic those words hit home.

Both the Oregon beaches and the Eugene Masonic Cemetery are full of natural beauty that resonates with many. Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association (EMCA) board members and employees continue to think of ways to better share our sacred space with all who seek the comfort it provides. We are therefore asking you to **"Respect The Space."** We have embraced this phrase as a way to communicate that we welcome strolling, visiting departed loved ones, learning about our local history, communing with nature, meditating, and other respectful activities.

The vast majority of cemetery visitors respect the space. Sadly, however, certain inappropriate behaviors persist, such as letting dogs off-leash and camping. Too often our employees have to pick up trash

and both dog and human waste. Desecration of monuments has also occurred; the upending of the Hawthorne gravestone and the melting of candle wax on Eugene Skinner's marker are two recent examples. We encourage you to spend time at the cemetery to help discourage inappropriate activities; however, do not interact with problematic people. Instead, report what you observe to the police at the non-emergency number (541) 682-5111.



Caroline Forell

There is lots of good news from the cemetery. First, we have several improvement projects underway. From new signage to improved drainage to restoring toppled monuments, there is much going on that keeps the cemetery looking great. Second, although the Memorial Day weekend events have been canceled, *continued on page 8*

EMCA Long Range Planning

The Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association (EMCA) board is beginning a much-needed program to develop a master plan for our historic cemetery. In preparation, the EMCA Site Committee met with Emeritus Professor Robert Melnick, a landscape architect and former dean at the University of Oregon. He is a nationally and internationally recognized expert in cultural landscape evaluation and historic landscape preservation planning. He shared his expertise, offered his insights about our cemetery, and suggested an overview of the next steps to be taken by the EMCA board and staff for the master planning of the cemetery.

The Eugene Masonic Cemetery is a working cemetery (grave sites are still available) and a recognized historical site with a culturally significant landscape, resting in a natural setting of mature trees and

planted open spaces. The task is to determine how to combine and interpret these dissimilar elements with mutual respect and appropriate regard.

The first phase is to inventory the site from its very beginnings to the present, using maps and photographs. It is important to identify its periods of growth, evaluate its spatial organization in all its changes over time, and identify the most important spaces. An inventory of the whole site, including both cultural elements and landscape features, will be undertaken. It is hoped that providing good documentation of vegetation, both past and present, while not forgetting the small-scale features—elements that add to the landscape but are not easily categorized—would be valuable to the inventory. We will determine the most important spaces and places, as well as how people

moved around, both past and present. According to Professor Melnick, capturing baseline data is important before making good planning decisions. If possible, we will create a topographical map.

We were urged to set priorities after the inventory is complete to determine what we can afford to do, or what grants may be available for this work. While we do *continued on page 7*

Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association —
(541) 684-0949

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The IRS Form 990 is available for inspection upon request.

www.eugenemasoniccemetery.org

Confessions of a Taphophile

I have always been drawn to cemeteries, the older the better. There is so much to offer in the midst of an old cemetery: a tangible reminder of what has gone before us, a glimpse into the lives and choices of our ancestors; history at its most accessible.

I have been known to slip away from planned activities to visit a new (to me) cemetery, whether on the slopes of Mt. Adams while picking huckleberries, on a trip to Boston for a college graduation, or during a trip to Sri Lanka. I have discovered that cemetery travel is a thing — trips planned around visits to cemeteries — whether it is to visit the grand and solemn, such as Arlington during a trip to Washington DC, the American Cemetery in Normandy, France, or slightly more irreverent travels to the St. Louis Cemetery in New Orleans, a la *Easy Rider*, or on a pilgrimage to Marilyn Monroe's

grave site in Westwood Village, Los Angeles.

I personally love the accidental discovery of an unusual or unique cemetery. One such cemetery is the British World War II cemetery in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka, which commemorates military men and women who died during a bombing raid by the Japanese. It was totally unexpected and very moving. Another was a serene and beautifully tended cemetery in the midst of the busy city of Kandy, where Hindu, Buddhist and Christian families are interred side by side. Both are examples of what I like best about cemeteries: a chance encounter with pieces of history that I could not have imagined.

I have taken out of town guests on walking tours of the Eugene Masonic Cemetery and have encountered other travelers in our cemetery. There is so much to dis-

cover, admire and ponder. The monument to Wiley Griffon, an African American street car driver and home owner who lived in Eugene during a time when racism was codified in the Oregon Constitution, is not far from the family crypt of John Whiteaker, supporter of the South during the Civil War and the first governor of the state of Oregon when the hateful wording was enacted. Stop to admire the history of the earliest pioneer families while being shaded by Douglas-fir trees that were not yet present when the cemetery was founded. Listen to the wild life while wondering at the amazing artwork found on the grave markers. It is all so very wonderful and easily available to our community.

The Eugene Masonic Cemetery is a true treasure.

*Elizabeth Southworth,
Board Member and Vice President*

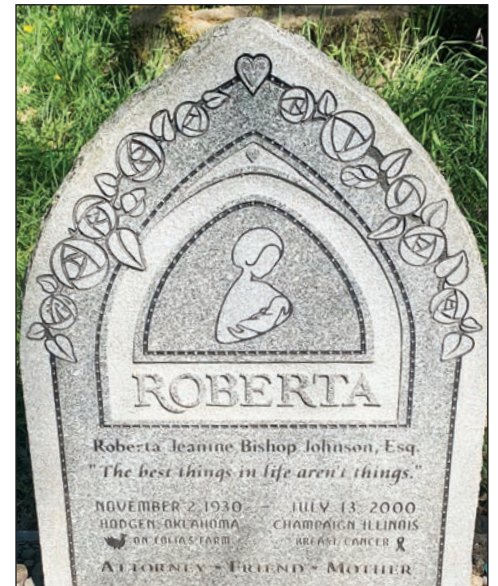
Roberta Bishop Johnson (1930-2000)

As 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment, it is appropriate to feature this tribute to a notable woman buried in the Eugene Masonic Cemetery (EMC).

As a child born during the Depression in rural Oklahoma, Roberta saw women's lives affected by unjust property laws, which limited women's economic powers and life options. She saw unequal gender laws limit her mother's efforts to determine her own life. As a young wife and mother in Chicago, Roberta helped develop La Leche League (LLL), which supported mothers wanting rights for natural childbirth, breastfeeding, and natural foods for their families. While maintaining duties as a

faculty wife and caring for her grade school children, Roberta attended college, earning a BA in classics, ancient Greek, and ancient history. At the same time, she created the first of her two best-selling LLL cookbooks to further nursing mothers' goals. She worked with LLL in multiple positions all her life.

Roberta also worked with local groups of the National Organization for Women and lobbied for women's rights, abortion rights, and changes in property and credit laws for women. She marched on Washington for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and was a delegate to the US-funded 1977 International Women's Convention in Houston. She was



Monument carved by Lisa Ponder, Roberta's daughter

active and vocal in all areas where women were limited by unequal and discriminatory gender laws

continued on page 4

Impact of Death on the Environment

In general, the environmental impact of death is a growing concern for managers of cemeteries. Cemeteries which preserve the natural beauty of the land as well as the ecological history are becoming valuable land conservation tools.

If you personally have a strong green agenda, effects on the environment may factor into your burial decisions. Deciding on cremation versus green burial is difficult as there are arguments for both sides.

In a green burial, the body is buried in a shroud of natural materials or in a decomposable container. Green burials are a way of caring for the dead with minimal environmental impact, aiding in the conservation of natural resources, a reduction of carbon emissions, protection of worker health and the restoration and/or preservation of habitat. Most of the information about the advantages of green burials deals with the process, and the workers at the funeral home.

What is not acknowledged is that the process for the cemetery

to perform a green burial is the same as that done for a non-green burial; the impact is not less on the cemetery. A green burial requires digging a grave and excavating a cleared space around the gravesite. Site preparation is by large machinery. Hand digging a grave is not usually done for a variety of reasons.

Cremation burial causes very little impact to the cemetery ground. The burial can be easily integrated into the mature landscape. Site preparation is by hand, and the surrounding area is left undisturbed. Cremation burial also requires less land to

accommodate the remains.

Although the fuels used for cremation are burned in a controlled and regulated environment, the process does produce pollutants. Similarly, the machinery needed to excavate a site for a green burial also burns fuel. In addition, during the natural decomposition of the body in a green burial, chemicals are released into the environment.

Choosing between a green burial or cremation is difficult. If you seek to minimize your impact on the natural environment after you die, then your best choice is to research your options ahead of time in order to plan the burial that means the most to you.

Environmental impact information provided by Sally Dietrich, Cemetery Administrator.



Camas

Johnson, from page 3

including insurance, employment, credit, property, names, abuse, and rape laws. She held office in the national organization Housewives for the Equal Rights Amendment. This organization lobbied legislators to recognize the gender inequality that their own mothers, sisters, and daughters were suffering. This was during the time when a woman was thought unable to be both a mother and an equal with men.

It was in Champaign, Illinois, that a big change began in her life. One day, a young male legislator knocked on her door to campaign for her vote. She asked about his support for the ERA, and he said it wasn't a good thing. He said: "You wouldn't understand because you're not a lawyer." So she went to law school, and-at age 55-became a family law and estate planning attorney. Her work focused on family mediation, including a ceremony for same

sex clients who were signing powers of attorney for each other. At the time, this was the most that same sex couples could do to protect the property, financial, and health care aspects of their relationships. She wanted to live long enough to see the millennium, convinced we would finally have a century dawn in which women would gain full equal rights.

When her daughter moved to Eugene, Roberta visited often. Though she never lived here, she developed friendships in Eugene. After her daughter bought plots in the EMC, Roberta also purchased spaces to establish a family grave site in the cemetery, and was buried there after her death.

Roberta's gravestone was designed and carved by her daughter, Lisa Ponder. On the front of her gravestone, the ERA symbol is inscribed inside one of her beloved Charles Rennie Mackintosh roses.

Lisa Ponder, daughter of Roberta

Music to Die For

Music to Die For is a series of 5 concerts a year, held on the last Sunday of the months of June through October.

However, with the uncertainty caused by COVID-19, we may not be able to hold to this schedule. We'll get the word out about the schedule as soon as we know for sure.

— John Bredesen, Board Member

EMCA’S Financial Picture for 2019

As with all businesses and non-profits, the funds available to run the organization are from the revenue stream. As shown on the Revenue chart (below at left), Sales provide the largest portion of money coming in to the cemetery. Operations, as shown in the Expenses chart, is the largest expenditure of funds.

The Board thought there were several more years of full-body burial rights for sale – our largest revenue generator – but now finds that the increase in current sales of those lots brings us closer to a time when revenues will diminish. That is a challenge that the Board is currently addressing, and we’ll keep you informed as planning continues.

Clearing, cleaning up and maintaining the 10 acres of our cemetery take many hours of labor, but it is so worth it. Just look at the before and after photos on the right of one of the repaired monuments.

You can see the increase in our labor costs over the last three years in the bar chart. With the entire acreage now cleared, we will have rising labor costs to maintain what we have reclaimed, as well as cost of living raises. One of the Board’s main goals is planning for EMCA’s financial future.

I hope this information has given you a better idea of where EMCA stands financially.

*Hallis, Board Member
and Treasurer*

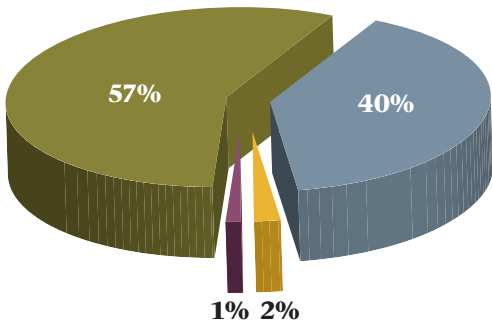


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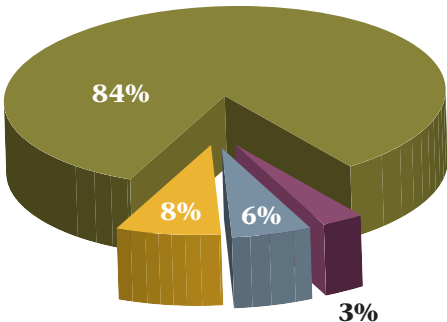
After

2019



Revenue

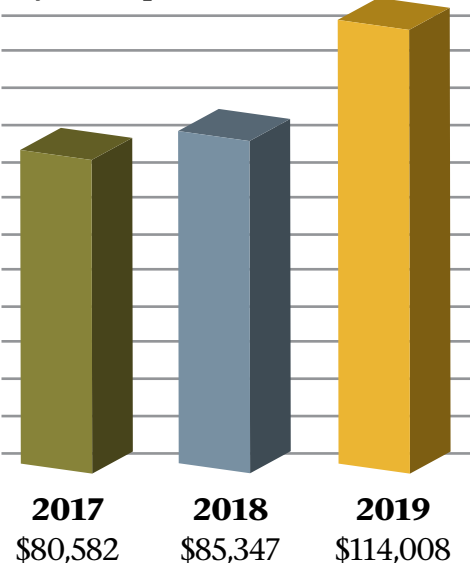
Sales	\$159,282
Donations	\$110,849
OCF distributions ..	\$6,099
Other.....	\$3,856
\$280,086	



Expenses

Operations.....	\$187,352
Administration	\$12,849
Statutory reserves..	\$17,333
Fundraising	\$6,637
\$224,171	

Labor Operations Expense Detail Payroll Expense



Signage Plan in Development

For the twenty-five years that the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association (EMCA) has owned and operated the cemetery, our goals have mainly been preservation and restoration. We carefully planned each improvement. Staff and volunteers have refined the look of the cemetery with improved paths, more open vistas and views of the grave markers, and an improved sense of the layout of the system of burial plots. This is what has gotten us to where we are today, a 160-year-old cemetery that is accessible to the public as a historic, cultural resource.

Currently we are developing a plan for signage to better direct our visitors to the various areas and to interpret our history. The existing signs will be improved in four phases. The current signs describe where and what things are. However, they are simple wooden and paper structures that do not survive well in our climate. New permanent signage will be coordinated for style and format and will greatly enhance the experience of traveling through the cemetery.

Phase One will be a system of "Way Finding" signs that will

direct people to Memorial areas and the Mausoleum. We recently received a grant from the Lane County Historical Society to partially fund this phase. Six new permanent "Pedestrian Entrance" signs with cemetery maps and our rules/regulations displayed are also included in this phase. Our hope is to have this phase complete before Memorial Day 2020.

Phase Two will renew and expand our "Walking Tour" signs. Forty-six of them are placed at the graves of notable Eugene citizens from the past. These new plaques will be printed with photos of individuals and have historic information originally written by Karen Seidel, our board secretary. In addition, there will be thirty similar signs for placement inside Hope Abbey Mausoleum, which can be viewed during our monthly open house events.

Phase Three is an update of the three large information panels at the main entrance that contain information on the history of Eugene and the cemetery, the structures and the landscape. These are 15 years old, and much of the information is out of date or needs refinement.

Phase Four will replace an exist-



Walking Tour sign

ing set of "Landscape ID" signs. The current ones have been around for many years and are hard to maintain because of weather, especially with their color photos of plant blossoms. The signs will be mounted at particular native plant sites.

In addition, we are developing a system of inexpensive temporary signs. These will be used to advertise events, give temporary directions, and advise of seasonal issues such as fire season warnings, yellow jacket threats, trail closures, etc. We hope this new signage system and its information enhance your experience at the cemetery for years to come.

Denny Hellesvig, former Board Member and Volunteer



Way finding signs

A Developer's Dream

What if all 2451 residents in the cemetery required 1250 square foot apartments? No parking would be needed since no occupants currently have cars. Following city planning guidelines, 25% of the site would be left open as green space. The net result would be apartment buildings 8-9 stories tall over the remaining 7.5 acres of the cemetery. A developer's dream, but a visual nightmare!

The Eugene Masonic Cemetery is an amazingly efficient housing facility.

Statistics and idea by Denny Hellesvig, former Board Member.

Recent Contributions

The following individuals and organizations contributed gifts between October 1, 2019 and April 1, 2020. We thank you all.

Monumental Giver (\$2,500+)

Richard Larson and Barbara Cowan
Catherine Kordesch
Ruth Nill
Charles and Leslie Wright

Monument Rebuilder (\$500-\$2,499)

Maram Epstein
Caroline Forell
Betsy Halpern
Jody Miller and Kip Leonard
James Northrop
Don Peting
Hugh and Sue Prichard
Rowell Brokaw
Architects
Karen Seidel

Preserver (\$250-\$499)

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Melanie Konradi and Daniel Gavin
Joyce Griffith

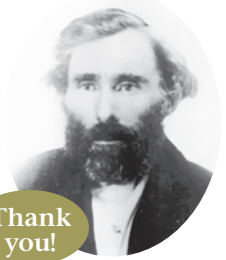
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Allan Kluber
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Howard Newman and Mary Beth Llorens
Susan and Laurence Lowenkron
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Edward Teague
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Marsha McCloskey
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Robert Melnick
Pamela Miller
Vicki Morgan and Michael Duran
Nimbus Enterprises



Thank you!

BJ Novitski
Jennifer Peterson
Gary Rayer
Richard Romm
Peter Saraceno
Alice Davenport and Ernst Schwintzer
Paul and Roslyn Slovic
Peter Steelquist
Esther Jacobson
Tepfer and Gary Tepfer
Shelley Turner
Cathy Verret
Honey Vizer
Rush Wayne
Maggie Yokum
Mark Zorn

Gifts in Honor and in Memory

Between October 1, 2019 and April 1, 2020 the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association received gifts from the following. We wish to thank all who contributed and regret any errors or omissions.

Monument Giver (\$2,500+)

A-J Roslyn Gaines
Foundation in memory of Carolyn Spector

Monument Rebuilder (\$500-\$2,499)

Bob and Sandra Brokaw in memory of Barbara and Harold Butler and Olivia Helene Brokaw
Martha and William Hall in memory of the Benner family
Carol and Samuel Williams in memory of the Luckeys and the Leasures

Preserver (\$250-\$499)

Kathleen Doty in memory of Robert and Margaret Leonetti
Lexa Most and Martin Mieger in honor of Alex and Robert Brokaw

Sponsor (\$100-\$249)

Alice Adams in memory of Murray Adams
Ann and Ray Adams in memory of Murray Adams
Sandra Austin in honor of Sally Dietrich
Sandra and Steve Burrowes in memory of Fran Ross and Carolyn Spector
Kathleen Wiley and Bob Carolan in memory of Don Wiley
Joan Rudd and Joe Felsenstein in memory of Jacob Felsenstein
Carol Garringer in memory of Jerry Garringer
Ronald Lovinger in memory of the Lovinger family
Tamara L. and Guy Lutz in memory of Carl and Dolly Plant
Margot McDonnell in memory of Gerald McDonnell
Lucile McKenzie in memory of A. Dean McKenzie
Irwin Noparstak in honor of Libby Bottero
David and Kitty Piercy in memory of Kaje Walker
Paul Sakamoto in memory of the Eastland family
Michael Sonduck in memory of Allan Cole Sonduck
Jacqueline Manley and Dale Taylor in memory of John and Lorraine Taylor
Barbara Truax in memory of Donald Truax and Mary Truax Johnson

Dan and Maureen Williams in memory of Patrick Williams

Supporter (less than \$100)

Shirley Bolles in memory of the Addisons
Libby Bottero in memory of Alice Haya Lotate Kinberg
Jerry and Vikki Chrostek in memory of Buddy, Guy, Jack and Tucker
Vicki Cunningham in memory of Kate McNutt
Don Dumond in memory of Carol Steichen Dumond
Kevin and Donna Enbysk in honor of Alice Adams
Pam Fields in honor of George Newton, Sr. and Ella Frazer
Patricia Gwartney in memory of Elizabeth Todis
Gay Morgan in memory of Frieda Prichard
Stephen Ramey in memory of Paul Ramey
Ginny Reich in memory of Robert and Opal Clark and Laurie Guttormsen
Grace Swanson in honor of Irene Pabco
Jeremy Swartz in memory of Eleanor Anne Hein
Cornelia Taggart in memory of Bob Dritzt

Planning, from page 2

have a professional staff, we should determine what tasks volunteers could do.

The cemetery is a historically protected, significant site because it is a cemetery within a 1800's landscape. We wish to determine how past actions enhanced or diminished the cemetery and determine how we can blend the present with the past. We wish to maintain the site so people can enjoy it and understand what a remarkable experience it is when they walk around the grounds. In essence, the Eugene Masonic Cemetery is an outdoor museum where much of Eugene's history can be told.

Donald Peting,
Board Member and Historical Architect

If you wish to donate, please use the enclosed remittance envelope or PayPal.

Donate with
 PayPal

PayPal waives its standard monthly fee because EMCA is a nonprofit organization.

Burial Space
for Sale

For more information, phone the cemetery administrator, Sally Dietrich, at 541-684-0949.

Recent In-kind Contributions

We happily acknowledge the in-kind services and discounts afforded to us by the following.
Lane Forest Products

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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*Newsletter by Betsy Halpern
and Beneda Design*

Memorial Day Events Canceled

Memorial Day weekend events have been canceled due to the virus crisis. However, flags will still fly on the graves of veterans on Memorial Day weekend. Please check the EMCA website **eugenemasoniccemetery.org** or EMCA Facebook page for further information as Memorial Day approaches. If you visit the cemetery, please maintain appropriate social distancing and "Respect The Space." You can also email questions concerning Memorial Day weekend to emca1859@gmail.com.

President's Column, *from page 2*

Music To Die For concerts (last Sundays, June through October at 2pm) will still take place unless the virus crisis continues. Third, our volunteer work parties and cemetery tours will return when this crisis ends. Fourth, thanks to many of you, our financial picture is solid as the charts in this issue illustrate. Finally, we continue to offer burial lots and half lots, sites for ashes only, crypts in the abbey, and memorial plaques. For information on sales and burials, contact our Administrator, Sally Dietrich, at (541) 515-0536.

We are grateful to our community for your support and hope you will soon visit our beautiful cemetery and abbey. We really are all in this together. Wishing you and your loved ones good health and renewal as we move through and beyond this traumatic time.

Caroline Forell, EMCA Board President



To Our Readers

If you would like to receive EMCA's monthly eNewsletter, contact John Bredesen, board member and publisher, at jarthurbredesen@gmail.com