



CEMETERY COMPLAINTS: The volunteer Rockwood Cemetery Committee is unhappy with Woodlawn Memorial Parks, which manages the grounds and chapel. A new roof was put on the chapel, but still leaks. - Rebecca Ring Photo

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and socialize. Doors open at 7 p.m. For more information or tickets, please call Brenda at 519-833-9696. It is an evening you will not want to miss!

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REBA Tree Lighting to Benefit EWAG – The second annual TREE LIGHTING ceremony at the LIONS Park in Rockwood will be held on December 2, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. sponsored by the Rockwood Eramosa Business Association. The event will include treats and drinks for all as well as entertainment provided by the Rockwood Centennial Public School Choir. Food donations will be accepted for EWAG. For more information, contact Cathy Kelly at 519-856-0969.

Rockwood Cemetery Committee unhappy with management

By Rebecca Ring

A group of volunteers that make up the informal Rockwood Cemetery Committee is unhappy with caretaker Paul Taylor of Woodlawn Memorial Park. They met in September under the direction of council to discuss how volunteers could help with maintenance.

According to volunteer Marie Milne, the residents would like to see the list of burials kept up to date. She said there have been about 100 burials since Taylor took over whose names are not on the board in the cemetery. The purpose of the posted list is to help family and others locate where individuals are buried. The committee volunteered to do this, and submitted a first draft list to Taylor.

Taylor submitted a report on the meeting to council in October. He said that the “volunteers were insistent that the new list they created be posted on the board.... After reviewing, I found 33 errors in the first nine pages [of 24].... There were also over 100 names, which require further research. As most of the burials were before the Guelph Cemetery Commission began managing the Rockwood Cemetery [in 2001], this research will take time.” He proposed doing this over the winter, stressing the importance of accuracy. He also plans to submit a budget to council.

Milne said, “We could keep up the board, but



SAD STATE: The volunteer Rockwood Cemetery Committee asked council to address their complaints regarding the management and grounds keeping under Woodlawn Memorial Parks. This photo was taken at the back of the cemetery, where debris was piled beside a shed, near some gravesites. - Rebecca Ring Photo

Taylor won't give us the information.” He said that under his management, records are easier to access.

No memorial service

Milne said there is usually a memorial service at the cemetery every June or July, but there was not one this year. She attributed the cancellation to speaking out against Taylor, “The louder we spoke out, the more he pushed the service back until it was cancelled.” He said it was cancelled because of “finances and timing,” saying, “There was no good time to fit it in this year. We couldn't put it together for September.” When asked about a service for next year, he said he did not know. He added that there was no service prior to Woodlawn taking over.

The committee also had complaints regarding the

upkeep of the grounds and monuments. Volunteer Fran Wilson pulled out weeds herself. She and Milne agreed that weeds and foliage need to be “cleaned up.”

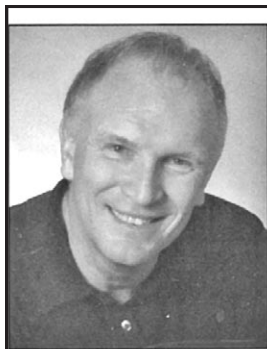
Milne pointed out that there are moisture issues in the chapel. She would also like to see a more detailed budget and expense report from Taylor. She said, “People should hold council accountable for the cemetery grounds, as Taylor was hired by the township.”

Regarding the Chapel Fund, donated by Gladys Hanna, Taylor said he is “not 100 per cent sure what the money is for.” Since taking over, Woodlawn has replaced the roof on the chapel, which Taylor says still leaks. He hired a roofer to assess it and found that not all steps were completed, such as sealing. They also replaced water taps, removed a row of cedars and a tree. The township donated gravel to improve the roads. There are several projects listed for the future, including replacing the water system.

Taylor said the problem is that the Care and Maintenance Fund, which comes from plot sales, is too low in Rockwood, adding they reported a \$1500 loss last year. The price of plots has increased since 2001, and is currently \$1100 for a four by ten grave. Of that, \$440 is for care and maintenance.

Taylor said that ideally, this fund should equal \$20,000 per acre and estimated that Rockwood Cemetery's fund is at \$65,000 [for five acres]. His goal is to “make it healthy for the future, and strive to build up the fund to take care of maintenance.”

He says, “We want to do what is right for Rockwood. I hope the majority understands the goal and how we're achieving it and help us to achieve it.”



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