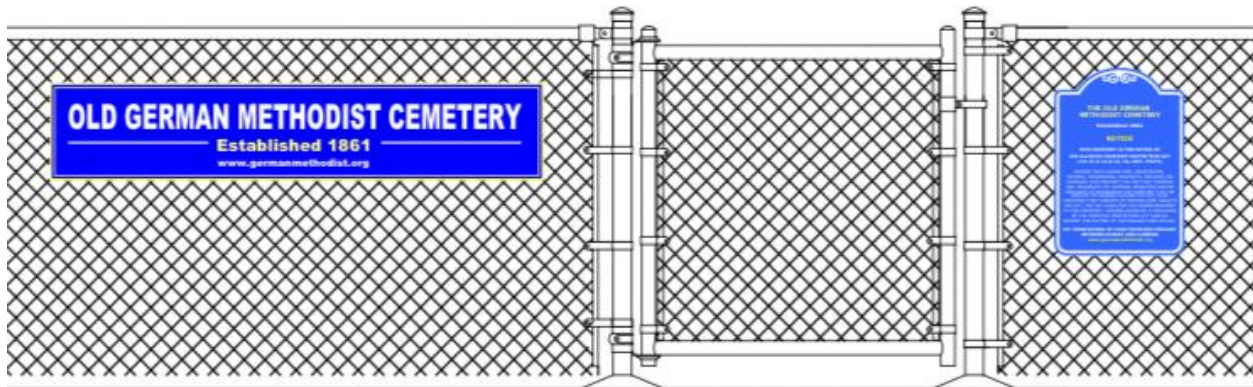
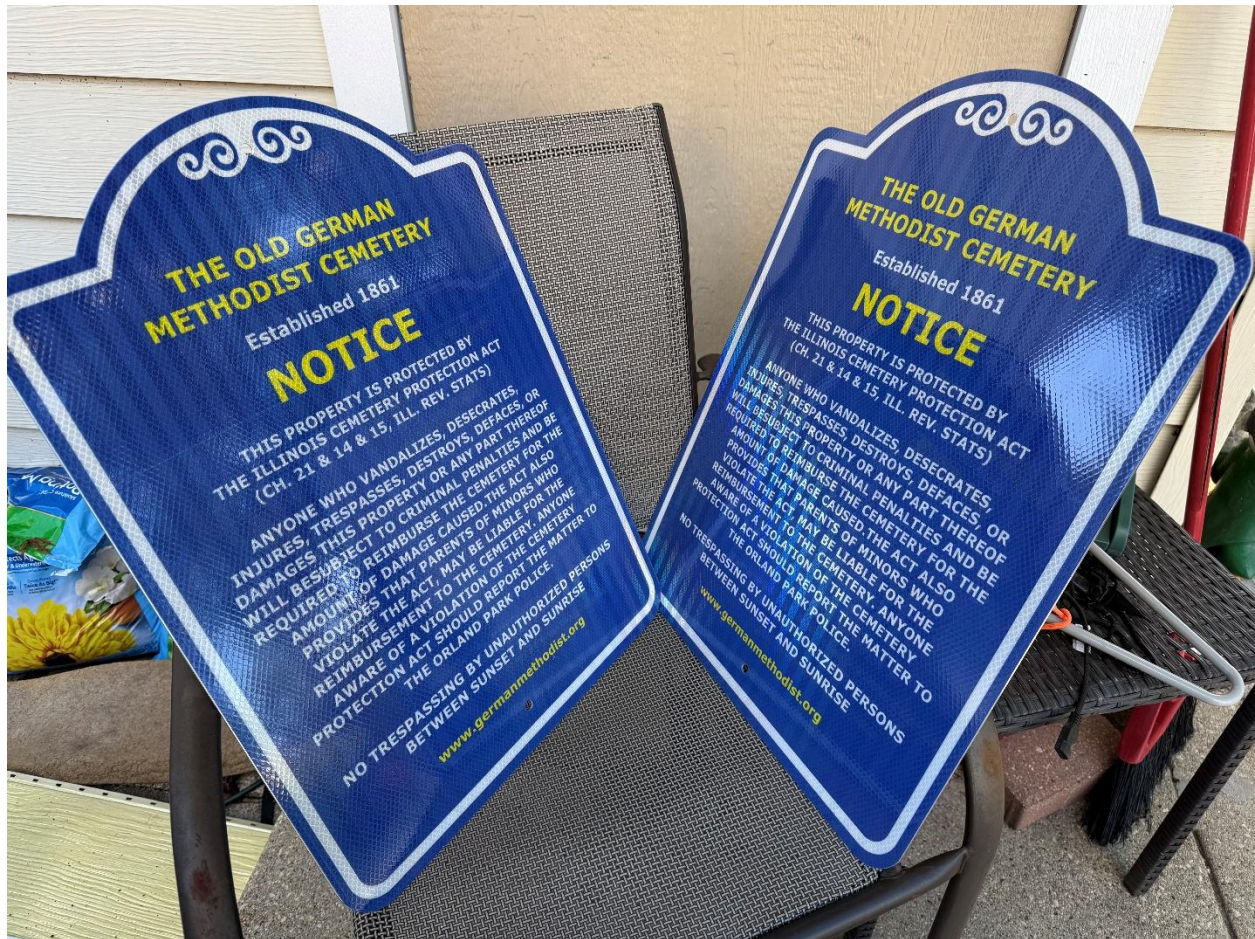


Old German Methodist Cemetery Eagle Scout Project







Scouts, Builders Join in Cemetery Restoration

BY WILLIAM GAINES

Home builders and Boy Scouts have joined with the village of Orland Park to help restore a neglected cemetery.

The cemetery, containing about 100 grave sites, was brought within view of motorists two years ago when Harlem Avenue was rerouted and paved on the east edge of Orland Park.

Markers in the cemetery showed it was at least 90 years old. Vandals had pushed over grave markers, and beer cans and other refuse was spread thruout the cemetery. Some of the graves had sunk. The lot had grown with weeds and shrubs.

Developing Area

The area, at 155th Street and Harlem Avenue, is rapidly developing with homes and businesses in the southward expansion of the Chicago metropolitan area.

The cemetery is almost restored because of the community effort. It will remain as a monument to early settlers in the area and to the new people who decided to save it.

Mrs. George Brown of Orland Park was appointed by Mayor Melvin Doogan to be a committee of one to restore the cemetery. Altho Mrs. Brown had no connection with the cemetery, her interest in getting something done had caused the appointment.

"I thought it was terrible that people could turn their

backs on the condition of the cemetery," she said. "There was no one who showed any interest."

Last Burial in 1920

It was learned that the cemetery has been adjacent to a German Methodist church which had since disbanded. The last burial there was in 1920.

The church was in an area of farms settled by German immigrants north of Tinley Park. A settlers cemetery fund was established by Mrs. Brown and administered by the Orland State Bank. Only \$48 in cash contributions were received.

Volunteers then were recruited and Boy Scouts from Orland Park responded by pulling weeds and picking up trash that has been strewn over the cemetery.

Time, equipment, and materials were donated by builders in the area to whom Mrs. Brown took her story.

Holes Filled In

A paving company filled in holes in the cemetery with gravel, and a bulldozer was used to smooth the surface. Five hundred yards of new sod was donated.

Catalina Construction Corp., a company which is building 500 homes adjacent to the old cemetery, agreed to construct a fence around the graveyard.

The entire cemetery is just 127 by 267 feet, but as the fence was being put up, it was

learned that bodies were interred outside the boundaries.

Donates Land

The problem was solved when Catalina Construction Corp. donated 5½ feet of land along the length of the cemetery on its west side.

Another 1,000 yards of sod is needed, and funds for resetting the stones by skilled masons are being sought.

Those stones which cannot be set over the original grave sites because they are not known will be set in a row so that there will still remain a monument to those buried there.

When the cemetery is restored, it will be turned over to the village for maintenance, Mrs. Brown said.

Bridgeview Extends Deadline for Queen

The deadline for the Bridgeview Queen Contest has been extended. Applications will be accepted at the Bridgeview Anniversary headquarters, 7530 S. Harlem Av. until 5 p. m. next Sunday. Judging will be held at 7:30 p. m. June 26 at Marlene's Landmark Restaurant, Archer Avenue and Roberts Road. Contestants will be judged on poise, beauty, charm, and personality.

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