

NEWS

Cemetery work nearly done, but fundraising remains

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Resetting the monuments that were scattered during the June 17 tornado is nearly complete, but the fundraising is only beginning.

On Saturday, Sept. 11, the Wadena Elks Lodge will raise money to be used to cover the monument expense and hopefully any excess funds will be used to place new trees in the cemeteries. A hog roast will be served from 4-8 p.m. at the lodge with a free will offering. The Versatiles band has donated their time and will play from 8 p.m. until midnight.

"The monument work at the cemetery is nearing completion," Jon Johnson of Johnson Memorial Home said. "I would guess there is probably one more full day of work to be done and all 551 monuments will be back in place."

Johnson said neither insurance money nor FEMA funding are available for the cemetery restoration project.

Fergus Falls Monument Company donated a full day each to Calvary and to Wadena Cemetery, Johnson said. They have provided the rest of their services at a actual cost basis. Even with the donated services and doing the remainder at cost, the total bill for both

cemeteries will come to around \$11,000.

Those who cannot attend this event can still make a donation to the monument project, especially those whose monuments were disturbed and have been reset. If you had to contact a monument company to reset a disturbed monument, the cost for this service is usually \$150, Johnson said. A donation in that amount, or whatever you can afford, can be made to either Calvary Cemetery or Wadena Cemetery. If you write a check, make the check payable to either St. Ann's Catholic Church, 519 2nd St. SE or Wadena City Cemetery, 1212 8th St. SW. In the memo line area of the check please write "monument fund" so each organization will know what the donated check is for. Additional information can be obtained by calling the Johnson Memorial Home at 631-3632.

If your monument was damaged during the storm you need to contact your insurance carrier, Johnson said.

Monuments are considered personal property and are the responsibility of the lot owner, not the cemetery.

Johnson also gave an update on two stone tablets that were missing after the EF-4 tornado: one has been returned, but the other is still missing.

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