

NEWS

## Wadena Cemetery receives facelift before Memorial Day

The Wadena Cemetery Association is making several improvements this spring in anticipation of Memorial Day and the summer season. Monday morning, 30 autumn blaze red maple trees were planted at the Wadena Cemetery by Swedberg Nursery of Battle Lake.



Brett Bowman, foreground, and Chris Rylander of Swedberg Nursery in Battle Lake planted autumn blaze maples Monday morning in the Wadena Cemetery.

By Anna Erickson

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"We've been working hard to make improvements," said Wadena Cemetery Association President Sam Goddard. "A lot of work has been done to get the cemetery back to what it was since the tornado went through in 2010."

When the tornado blew through Wadena during the summer of 2010, the cemetery was hit hard. Many trees were gone and headstones were overturned.

Monuments were cleaned up and trees were replanted but the cemetery has needed ongoing maintenance.

In addition to newly-planted maple trees, the roads have been fixed up in the cemetery and a new water system was installed this year.

The association has been working hard to improve the cemetery in 2016 after complaints from residents and out-of-town visitors last summer.

Last year, the cemetery became overgrown with weeds and tall grass. Some out-of-town residents wrote to the Pioneer Journal to express their disappointment with the condition of the cemetery.

The Wadena Cemetery Association, which has seven board members, met to take action on maintenance issues and plan improvements.

The association has limited funds to make improvements and provide maintenance and lawn care for the cemetery. Funding comes from donations and plot fees.

"They've done a great job and accomplished a lot this year," Goddard said.

Maintenance will be key.

"The work is just beginning," Goddard said. "These new trees need about 10 gallons of water a day to start with."

The association will keep a better eye on the length of the grass this year as well, he said, to make sure it doesn't get too long and weeds stay under control.