Hillcrest Cemetery Memorial Association INC.

If this newsletter has reached you at a time of loss, please accept our apologies and condolences.

December 2023 Newsletter

Dear Hillcrest families and friends,

First I want to apologize for the time between newsletters and other delays. About the time I was involved with setting up this organization in 2001, I had just become self-employed as a graphic designer. The work arrangement allowed me to be very active with Hillcrest in person, online and by phone—even after moving from East Point to Athens a decade later. Eventually, one client grew to be 85% of my work. Due to internal changes at the company, one national agency now does all that work for them, and I lost the work I loved and that gave me the freedom to be involved so deeply with this project that I loved. I tried rebuilding the business, but eventually had to make changes. I am now working full-time as a pharmacy technician and studying to become certified, and my time is much more limited.

If I may take a moment of personal privilege here, I am still seeking graphic design contract work, or the right full-time employment. My personal portfolio can be viewed at www.CastleberryCommunications.com/portfolio

Our **paid mowing crew** worked with us on a monthly schedule this year, as we could not afford more frequent cuts. (Their initial cut included extensive cleanup for an additional fee.) This meant the grass was sometimes a little tall between cuttings, but we did get an excellent cut from them in October to be sure the cemetery looked as good as possible for the long winter months. (We will be re-bidding the mowing contract this winter for next year, and are seeking bidders now.) We also had several dead and dying trees removed and others pruned back to extend their lives. The **tree service** hauled off all their cuttings as well as the brush cut by volunteers over the spring and summer.

These two main paid projects totaled roughly **$27,000**. We now have just over $20,000 in funds. I do not expect the extra paid cleanups or tree services next season, so I am confident we can continue mowing for another year, during which we can try to build up our reserves for future years or emergencies. The only big expenditure I currently hope to be able to fund is **driveway** repairs. The hill going up to the Circle Section at the hilltop is washed out badly. The Bronze Section across the street and other areas need gravel throughout. The asphalt driveways around sections 7, 8 and 9 on the northern end need rehabbing as well.

One other project we completed this season was refurbishing the rusty old **Hillcrest metal sign** on the southern hillside. This sign dates back at least to 1935. Thank you to Hillcrest supporters Debora and Allen Burger, along with other family members, for this project! The letters were removed, flattened, re-coated and reinstalled on the original posts, which were also refinished. The sign had become less noticeable due to tree limbs, so we moved it a short distance to improve visibility.

Contact us

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Hillcrest Cemetery Memorial Association

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2250 Stanton Rd, East Point, GA 30605

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Hillcrest Cemetery M.A.
140 Birch Valley Dr, Athens, GA 30605

The biggest bright spot we have had this year is our volunteer, **David**. He has been doing a LOT on-site at Hillcrest all year. He has cleared the woods and fences and other property borders, cut back overgrown shrubs along the roadways (a huge visual improvement), uncovered sidewalks and stairs and much more. He has also been documenting nearly every marked grave in Hillcrest on **findagrave.com**. If anyone would like to work with him on future projects, let me know and I will help coordinate it.

David has been good at choosing projects he is able to take on just using hand tools. He could use some **help** from someone with a chainsaw and the requisite skills to use it to cut 3-4" stumps out of the shrubs he cut back, to move cut brush, clear more brush, move dirt from piles to be used to fill settled graves, and clearing flat markers that are getting overgrown from grass as they settle.

I also want to thank **Marcia** for her years of volunteering on a regular basis, which is ongoing. She takes care of lots of litter, handles the trash when the cans get full, cuts small limbs, shows up for group volunteer days, and most importantly has been my eyes at Hillcrest for many years.

No volunteer days or other events are currently scheduled. The best way to find out about them is on our **Facebook** page (and also our website). Much of what is in this newsletter has already been posted on Facebook, and I have been doing more photos and video stories at Hillcrest, which are posted there. Please like and follow us there. Not everything we post is shared by their site to every follower, so please check out our page manually now and then. Liking each post makes it more likely you will see our future posts there.

I know most of you are older than I and/or live far away and can't volunteer. I also know not everyone is able to support our efforts financially. Other ways to help include sharing our story with your extended family or old East Point friends.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Kevin L. Hudson
President and Volunteer

How to make a tax-deductible donation:

Checks — Make payable and mail to: Hillcrest Cemetery M.A., 140 Birch Valley Dr, Athens, GA 30605-4246

Credit • Debit • GooglePay • ApplePay • PayPal — HillcrestEastPoint.org/donate

Hillcrest Cemetery Memorial Association, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(13) tax-exempt corporation. As such, donations may be tax deductible, depending on your tax circumstances—the same as with a 501(c)(3).

< Pruning dead limbs from the grand red oak in Section 4

Cutting down a dying hickory tree we were worried could fall in Section 1 >

< Rodside view of the Circle Section after over a mon th of clearing brush. The sign was later moved and the stairs here have since been reclaimed.