

Ramsey County Commission
Ramsey County Courthouse
Devils Lake, ND 58301

January 9, 2017

RE: Cemetery Maintenance

Dear Commissioners:

Kevin Fieldsend and his crew who provide the summer maintenance on rural cemeteries in Ramsey County deserve a big 'Thanks!' for the great work they do.

Many of these cemeteries would have no one to care for them if Ramsey County did not provide the necessary equipment and manpower. While the North Dakota Century Code requires counties to provide minimal care, Kevin and his crew go the 'extra mile' to treat the cemetery grounds with true respect and reverence.

The Sons of Jacob cemetery located in Sullivan Township was established in 1885 and represents the efforts of over 100 Jewish settlers who homesteaded in the Garske area to honor those buried there. Over the years the cemetery deteriorated due to none of the original families remaining in the area. In the past ten years interested individuals from all over the United States worked together to establish a monument recognizing those settlers. They also have worked together to straighten, clean and maintain the tombstones, both handhewn from field rock and commercial.

In addition to the cemetery proper the site includes several acres of untouched native prairie. One of the last remaining pieces of native prairie in the region it allows visitors to view the land in the same way the original Jewish homesteaders did over one hundred twenty-five years ago!

The support of Kevin and his staff adds the 'finishing touch' to the efforts of these other volunteers. It would be impossible to keep the cemetery looking as good as it does without the assistance of the Ramsey County staff. A descendant of Rachel Calof wrote *"The history of our existence is represented by those buried in this cemetery. Keeping their memory alive with dignity is one of the highest honors of Jewish beliefs."*

On behalf of the Sons of Jacob 'Community' please accept our thanks,

Michael Connor
Starkweather, ND