

RED: Supervisor Ferris' notes to herself to help when composing an answer.

Dear Amy,

June 29, 2022

I needed to take a couple of weeks to cool down and evaluate the overall situation of burying my brother in the Nelson plot. As you can understand, if you have had to bury someone close to you, this is a very important part of the life/death cycle. We need to have him laid to rest with his mother, father, and sister and future deceased family members. He deserves to have this happen with grace and dignity.

It appears your most important consideration is saving a few dollars on the mowing contract each year. We both know the only reason you have the ability to dictate some changes on this plot is because we are trying to bury my brother.

There are three important points that need to be made regarding the Nelson plot:

1. All persons currently buried in the plot are dead and all future persons will be dead at the time they are put in the plot and all of them will not care if their head stones exactly line up.
2. Two of the three head stones currently in place were set under the direction of prior township supervisors with the **third one being set with you in charge. (INCORRECT)**
3. Two more head stones need to be set on this plot - me and my wife's and by younger brother Joe and his wife's. The exact locations are to be determined.

Amy, I am proposing the following solution to this situation:

1. **My parent's head stone be left in place. (NO)** My brother James and wife Janice's be moved to the North side of this plot and lined up east and west with my parent's head stone. When setting the head stone for Jerold and Janice's, (currently not available) it will be south of his parent's head stone and lined up east and west. **(DIRECTIONS NOT UNDERSTOOD.)**
2. **My sister Julie and her husband Robert's will be left in its current location (NO)** and my brother Joseph and his wife Mary Jane's head stone (not currently available) would be placed to the west of brother James' head stone and lined up east and west with my sister Julie's and her husband Robert's.

I feel this proposal addresses all of the parties' concerns in this matter.

First, it answers your concern that all of **the head stones line up in the east/west orientation for the mowers to reduce the mowing costs. Headstones line up north-south.** Please point this out, too, at the next contract renewal, so they can give you a proper credit.

Second, my brother James' widow, Janice, and I want to have my brother properly laid to rest in the plot my parents bought over 55 years ago with this thought in mind. James' widow, Janice, is willing to have his cremated remains and her future **cremated remains buried in the plot to the side of their head stone without moving it.?(NO)** So, it is understood the township and township supervisor take full responsibility for any damage done to the head stone up to total replacement, if they choose to move it.

Third, we totally resolve any future questions as to the placement of the two remaining head stones which may come up under a new township supervisor regarding a future burial.

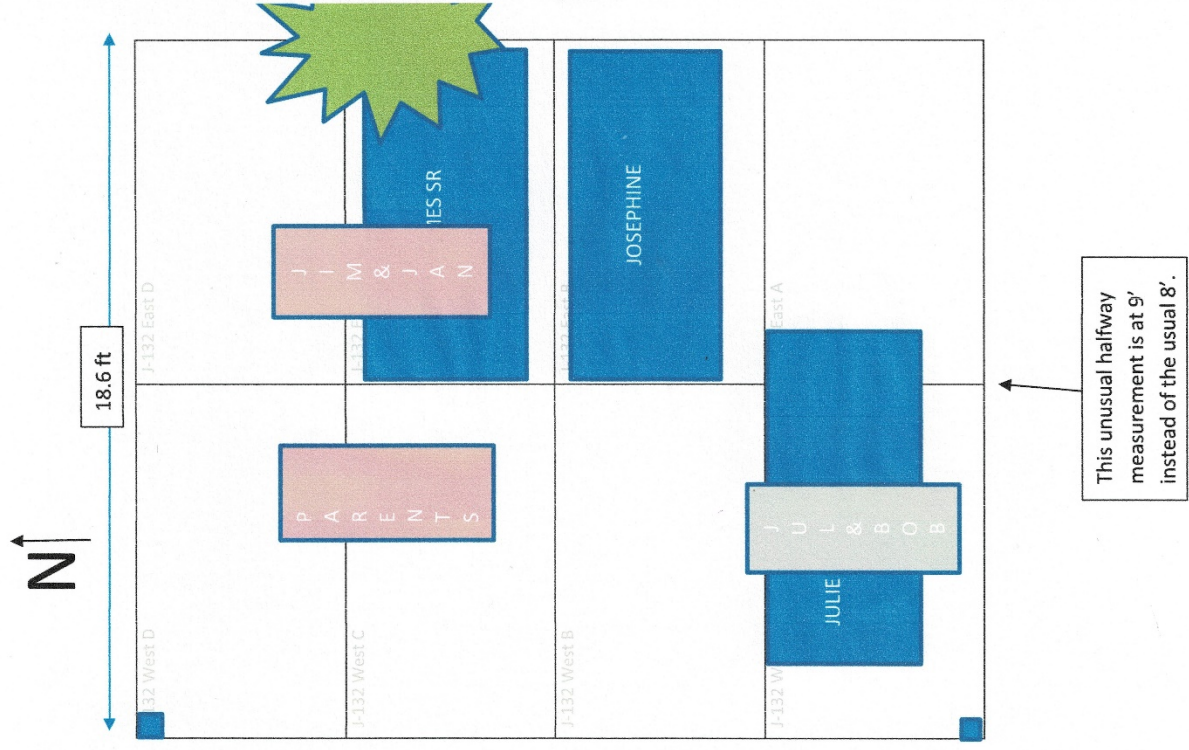
I think this can work out well for both of us and allows me to move forward in getting my brother laid to rest, which he justly deserves.

CURRENT & PROPOSED

Diagram of Gravesite for
James H. & Josephine Nelson
and heirs

J-132 (all 8 plots)
Updated June 14, 2022

This turns out to be unusual plot layout, as this morning the sexton and supervisor meticulously marked corners of land and probed for exact location of three existing burials. Land actually measures 18.8 feet east to west, instead of the proscribed 16'. North to south, it is the expected 16 feet.





1651 Frankfort Highway/PO Box 2129
Frankfort MI 49635

July 18, 2022

Mr. Jerald Nelson
1012 Court Circle
Winona Lake, IN 46590

Dear Jerry:

It is with great regret that the current situation at the North Cemetery involving your parents' gravesite has caused so much confusion, angst and argument. The Township and all its representatives are trying hard to resolve the problems which we not only noticed ourselves but which you, yourself, brought to our attention. We apologize for any upset this resolution process is causing. We believe that getting the misplaced headstones set correctly, and getting that accomplished expeditiously, is to everyone's advantage.

Because resolving the problems with you at a previous date proved unsuccessful, we did consult our township attorney and have paid for a legal opinion on which we are basing all the future arrangements. The attorney researched the law in general and our legal documents in particular; the township owns and operates its cemeteries with certain rules, as it should to maintain order and continue through the ages to operate smoothly. It has the legal right to correct errors. It says so forthrightly in our ordinance.

Both the supervisor and the sexton have, to the very best of our abilities, ascertained the current situation and mapped the gravesite as it currently exists (attached.) Following that attachment, we have summarized for quick reference what is and what needs to be changed/arranged for the future.

Please reference these documents, and consider working with the township to make right the previous mistakes, an obligation the township has to both the living and the deceased. We feel this most importantly so that the above ground markers accurately indicate who rests below them. One of these errors was the lack of a foundation under the Sattler headstone, for which there is a necessity so to stabilize it through the ages. It was overlooked by both the client the township personnel at the time, but one needs to be purchased and installed forthwith.

Telephone: 231-352-9791 Fax: 231-352-6689 Email: supervisor.clt@gmail.com

If the decisions on your family's collective shoulders cannot be arrived at in a timely way, we suggest that we refund your \$625, previously paid in expectation that Jim's ashes would be buried back in June. If, on the other hand, all issues can be resolved post haste, we can proceed immediately with getting Jim laid to rest.

It is in that spirit of cooperation and obligation that we will be proceeding to correct what CLT-incurred errors are evident. We thank you in advance for your part in this process and look forward to hearing from you and the rest of the siblings the consensus on future burial guidance.

Sincerely,

Amy Ferris, CLT Supervisor

CC:

Jerold T. Nelson nelsonjv@comcast.net

Janice (Jerold) Nelson nelsonjv@comcast.net

Janene Hudson (Daughter of Jerold) cdhudson@engineer.com

Jay Nelson (Son of Jerold) Jbird Nelson <jbirdis@hotmail.com

Robert Sattler Robert.sattler@aol.com

Janice (James) Nelson -(Copy sent by mail)

Attachments:

Plot Diagram

Summary



ATTACHMENT #1

Nelson Plot Diagram J-132 North Cemetery, Crystal Lake Township July 18th, 2020

Blue= current burials Pink and gray= where currently misplaced headstones will be moved

Red=Suggested placement for Bob; Jim and Janice



Attachment #2

SUMMARY OF FUTURE CHANGES AND ARRANGEMENTS

July 18, 2022

Burials: The township will not be moving any coffins. Representatives of the townships have now meticulously measured and probed for correct locations of existing burials on the superimposed grid and have included the current plot diagram here.

- Parents James Sr. and Josephine are buried correctly in East B & C, but their stone is wildly out of place.
- Julie is resting in West A and her/Bob's stone is also misplaced.
- Jim Jr is deceased and cremated but currently unburied. Where his location will be is yet undecided. We suggest that his ashes (and ultimately his spouse's) rest either East A, directly behind Julie & Bob, or on East D.
- Jerry and Jan eventually want to have "full" burials. They have a choice 2 of 3 available plots: West B, West C, West D. Neither East A nor East D is suitable for coffin because of tree roots, but could easily accommodate cremains. Also, being buried in the available eastern plots, they would not adjoining each other and the assumption is that Jerry and Jan would like to rest next to each other.
- Whatever is decided for Jerry & Jan and for Jim & Jan, after those decisions are finalized, there will still be space available for at least one other sibling and spouse who it was mentioned had a desire to be interred in the family gravesite.

Monuments: All three existing stones are out of place and must be moved, not only to more accurately reflect who is underneath them but for maintenance purposes. Township will be moving stones, as it is its legal right to do as owner and operator of the cemetery.

- The parents' shall be moved and centered between East B & C's western line.
- Julie and Bob's grey stone must be moved to and centered on West A's western line. It does not currently have a foundation supporting it although one is required, so one must be installed at owners' expense.
- Jim and Jan's will be cremains and their stone may be moved to East D OR choice of East A, West B, West C, West D.

How to proceed in chronological order:

- Decide where Jim and Jan shall be buried (presumably either in East A or East D.)
- Township (i.e. the taxpayers of Crystal Lake Township) will need customer debt (namely, Julie and Bob's foundation) paid for. An invoice is being sent to Bob with a copy to Jerry. Foundations to monuments are required, both currently and since before the Sattler stone was set.
- Decide where Jerry and Jan want to ultimately be buried (presumably either West B & C OR West C & D.)
- Decide/document for future guidance who else in the future is planning to be buried in K-132

We need a Cemetery Committee Meeting

township supervisor <supervisor.clt@gmail.com>

Tue, Jul 19,
2022,
4:20 PM

to Carol, Dean, Brad, Barbara

First and foremost, are all addressed here still on board with serving on the Cemetery Committee? Some of you might want to traveling on down the road and quit the committee. Let me know asap if you are still with us or would like us to find a new person to take your spot.

We have a couple of issues, and I will be sending all relevant materials in the next day or so. The most urgent one is the understanding of the Nelson family gravesite at North.

I look forward to hearing from you about your position on the committee.

--

Amy Ferris, Crystal Lake Township Supervisor

James, Jr.'s grave site

township supervisor <supervisor.clt@gmail.com>

Thu, Jul 28,
2022,
11:28 AM

to nelsonjv, cdhudson, Jbird, Robert.Sattler

Dear Mr. Nelson,

I am checking because I haven't heard from you directly since my last email dated July 20, 2022 asking for your desired location for James, Jr. and his wife's, Jan's final resting place. Have you and your sister-in-law decided and sent us anything in writing so we can proceed to the next step? We have not seen anything in our township mailbox yet.

As a re-cap, they may be in any of the eight plots that are not yet occupied. That is, they may be in (North Cemetery) J-132: East A or D, West B, C or D. I made suggestions, with what experience I have as the administrator for the cemetery and with knowing somewhat your extended family needs for the future, that I thought was optimal. AS was mentioned before, no future full coffin burial will be allowed in East A because of misplacement of Julie's coffin, but cremains in that gravesite would be allowed.

As for physical obstacles, the tree is not your family's to cut down, but we will cut through any roots if necessary.

If a letter with instructions from you and Mrs. James Nelson, Jr. has been mailed and is due here in time for the weekend, we might still be able to schedule something. If it doesn't arrive in a timely way, scheduling will be difficult.

I look forward to your reply,

Amy Ferris

I and others are in receipt of your response to my emails dated 7.28.22 at 11:40 AM. In that correspondence by me, I outlined in chronological order things that need to be decided, the first being:

- Decide where Jim and Jan shall be buried (presumably either in East A or East D.)

Until you tell me this, there is no second step. It is the immediate task at hand, as you keep agreeing it is. Either Plots East A or East D West are my experienced suggestions based on the very information you gave me and the sexton (i.e. which persons want to be cremated, which buried, who are the couples who will want to be side-by-side.) But it is your decision. From the attached plot diagram, you can see plainly that no one can be buried in the spots where Julie, James or Josephine already are. Nor can a future full body coffin go in East D because Julie's coffin encroaches into East D and another coffin cannot fit into East D.

So you tell us where you want Jim and Jan's cremains to go, have yourself and Jan sign the statement, and mail it to us. (This last part is important since we need everything in writing now, so there is a paper/cyber trail, and Jan does not have email.) If we get this document before you visit in 10 ten days, maybe we can have everything worked out to the satisfaction of all and Jim can finally be put to rest.

I am trying to advise you to have everyone in the family involved so that the overall plan is agreed upon by all. But if you want to take it piecemeal (not having an overall plan ahead of time but instead dealing with each sibling's family as there are the inevitable deaths) by all means that is your prerogative.

But Jim cannot be buried no matter what if you have not indicated which plot.

I would appreciate your prompt reply. Where do you want Jim and, eventually, Jan, to be buried?

Thu, Jul 28,
2022,
3:15 PM

Jan Nelson <nelsonjv@comcast.net>

to me

Amy Ferris:

Have not responded because we are in the process of working with Gaylord to try to determine decisions that will satisfy you and everyone concerned so our family does not have to go through this in the future. We are going to spend the time required to resolve this properly. Thank you for caring.

Jerry Nelson

Sent from my iPhone

Wed, Aug 3,
2022,
12:08 AM

nelsonjv@comcast.net

to beidler, bradford.heywood, hilltroll61, clerk.clt, gaylordhowett, me

Dear Cemetery Committee: Amy Ferris, Supervisor, and Carol Beidler, Brad Heywood, and Barbara Johnson:

This weekend, on Friday, July 29, 2022, my wife Janice and I Jerold T. Nelson were able to review, in person, once more, the 8 Nelson cemetery plots with my first cousin Bobby Long using all the information Amy has given us and having time to think about what we would like to do in a leisurely thoughtful manner we were able to work through things.

Gaylord was out of town so Bobby Long will take what we worked out to him and he, in turn, will discuss it further with the appropriate and necessary people. Our plan should solve issues in a manner that will satisfy the cemetery's needs and those of all our family. James R. Nelson's widow will then write a letter to the Town Supervisor confirming and authorizing the choice of plot is agreeable to her.

Thank you for your patience. I am sure this is not any easier on Amy than it has been on us.

JA
MI
E
Bei
dle
r

Aug 3, 2022,
12:48 AM



Aug 3,
2022,
8:09 AM

nelsonjv@comcast.net

to beidler, gaylordjowett, me, bradford.heywood, hilltoptroll61, clerk.clt

Good Morning!

Re-sending this this morning. as I realized we were sending to Gaylord's incorrect address. By the way, of the open available plots Amy suggested we and James, Jr.'s wife, Jan, chose for the burial of his cremated remains, and her future cremated remains, J-132: East D. The signed letter from me and Mrs. James R. Nelson, etc. will be arranged through Gaylord to Amy Ferris. Contact with him has still not occurred since the weekend. Thank you.

Jerry Nelson



1651 Frankfort Highway/PO Box 2129
Frankfort MI 49635

August 8, 2022

Mrs. Janice Nelson
426 W Washington St
Ionia MI 48846

Dear Mrs. Nelson:

Thank you for your handwritten note that I received on August 5. However, it does not give me your instructions. I need your instructions. It simply says that you are happy your husband will be at rest soon and asks if your headstone is now in the correct place. *I cannot bury your husband's ashes nor move the headstone until you tell me your choice of location.*

I'm sorry to bother you about this, in light of your loss and the troublesome gravesite where headstones are set in the wrong places, but I must have instructions in writing about the final resting place within the existing gravesite. Please write back as soon as possible and do one of two things: either 1) give me permission to listen to your brother-in-law's, Jerry's, instructions in lieu of your own, OR 2) tell me specifically which number grave (J-132, choice of one of the following: East A, East D, West B, West C, or West D) in which to bury Jim's ashes and move the double headstone.

I have informed Jerry of this need for you to write again and give me specific instructions. Hopefully, all this will be resolved sooner than later. As always, my condolences in this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Amy Ferris

Telephone: 231-352-9791 Fax: 231-352-6689 Email: supervisor.clt@gmail.com



1651 Frankfort Highway/PO Box 2129
Frankfort MI 49635

October 4, 2022

Mrs. Janice Nelson
426 W Washington St
Ionia MI 48846

Dear Mrs. Nelson:

Thank you for your second handwritten note which instructed me to bury your late husband's, Jim Nelson, Jr.'s, ashes in the family gravesite, specifically Crystal Lake Township Cemetery North, Plot J-132 East D. I am writing to say that this has been successfully accomplished.

His remains were buried on Wednesday, September 28 just before Noon. It was our honor to be entrusted with this task. First, the sexton with his notable skills moved your double headstone that was previously misplaced on your in-laws' grave. We shifted it just to the north, to the next plot that is labeled East D. Then Jim's ashes were placed behind his name as it appears on the monument. We gave him a dedicated and respectful moment of silence.

We at the township apologize that this took as long as it did. Thank you for your patience and understanding. We truly hope this puts both Jim, and any worries you might have had about the gravesite, to rest. It is a very pretty setting.

Hopefully, you'll be able to visit the site and know firsthand how things are settled now. In case you don't visit soon, I am enclosing a photo printed on a computer, so you can visualize it. Also, I will enclose a computer-generated plot diagram so you can see the relationship of all the plots.

Sincerely,

Amy Ferris, CLT Supervisor

2 enclosures

cc: Jerold T. Nelson via nelsonjv@comcast.net

Telephone: 231-352-9791 Fax: 231-352-6689 Email: supervisor.clt@gmail.com

Update summary

township supervisor <supervisor.clt@gmail.com>

Mon, Sep 7,
2020,
10:52 PM

to MaryAnn

Thanks again for your cooperation in fixing this problem. At this point, we are waiting for monument companies to get back with pricing for two new headstones. Also waiting for more herbicide to take effect, and sexton to level up the area. You guys are going to work towards getting the old planter out of there (although, putting in my two cents, I LIKED the old one!) and plus you would going to start researching trees. Crystal Gardens had a good sale over this last weekend. Was wondering if you had a chance to, with your sister, choose anything over there? I picture just a nice maple. Let me know what you're thinking or looking at.

Best,

Amy

Kathryn Coffey <coffeykathrynn@me.com>

Tue, Sep 15,
2020,
8:49 PM

to M, me

Hi Amy,
I'm responding to your email to MaryAnn on Sept 7.

I took the old planter with me on Sept 4th after we met—it wasn't as heavy as it appeared. It cleaned up nicely and I'll bring it back—probably in the spring.

I did go to Crystal Gardens and they had a good sale/good prices but they didn't have much choice, what they did have was not in the best condition and/or wasn't what we were looking for.

I do have some concern that a maple tree root system will eventually cause havoc with the surrounding headstones—on our plot and neighboring plots.

I'll continue to research a lilac tree isn't invasive and that retains a tree form and I'll let you know as soon as possible.

Thanks
Kathy

Kathryn N. Coffey, PhD
231-740-0275 mobile
<http://literacygurl.blogspot.com>
@literacygurl
Sent from my iPhone

tree for the East Cemetery

township supervisor <supervisor.clt@gmail.com>

Mon, May 16,
2022, 4:06 PM

to MaryAnn, Kathryn

Wondering if this is the optimal time to get a tree planted. Are you up to meeting at Crystal Gardens --or the garden nursery of your choice-- one of these days soon?

Crystal Gardens chrg

township supervisor <supervisor.clt@gmail.com>

Mon, Jun 20,
2022,
7:57 AM

to township

Did you receive invoice from Crystal Gardens for a small tree going into East Cemetery? \$300+. Didrickson plot, descendant name is Maryann Short.



township clerk <clerk.clt@gmail.com>

Mon, Jun 20,
2022,
11:49 AM

to me

Sorry, no.

Sue