

Press Release: Veteran's Section at Newton Union Cemetery

The Newton Union Cemetery has a veteran's section reserved for those who have served our country. Veteran graves at the cemetery, regardless of whether in the veteran's section, are identified with a flat gray granite veteran's marker. The veteran's section has restrictions on what can be placed next to graves per City Ordinance [Ord. No. 1810 Eff. Date 04-03-95]. The ordinance states that only small vases for temporary display of cut flowers shall be permitted at any time in the veteran's section. All cut flowers and containers, if any, shall be removed as soon as such flowers wither or fade.

During the past few years there has been items placed in the veteran's section that are not allowed. An example of some of these non-allowed items include benches, statues, shepherd hooks, wishing wells, solar lights, plaques, rocks/pebbles, signs, beer cans, and liquor bottles. While these items may have importance to loved ones and fellow combatants, the abundance of these items in the veteran's section has diminished the respectful image of those who have served our country. There is a strong desire among veterans in the Jasper County Veteran's Council to return the veteran's section of the cemetery to an appearance more in line with the way it was originally intended. The purpose of the veteran's section was to show respect to those who have served our country.

The end of March and the week after the 4th of July are designated clean-up times at the Union Cemetery. Cemetery staff have recently completed cleaning the veteran's section and will be enforcing the City code by removing items not allowed in the veteran's section.

Keith Laube, P.E.
City of Newton Public Works Director