

Cemetery Donation Algood Cemetery now has room to grow

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ALGOOD -- Thanks to a timely instance of corporate largesse, the Algood Cemetery just got a lot bigger.



Rogers Group, Inc., a crushed-stone producer that owns the Algood Quarry, recently donated just over an acre of land to the city for the cemetery's expansion. The donation will increase the size of the three-acre cemetery grounds by more than a third.

According to City Manager Freddy Maxwell, the gift solves a longstanding problem.

"When I started as city manager three years ago, I saw, and everyone else working with the city saw, that we were rapidly running out of cemetery space," Maxwell said.

There are only 145 burial plots remaining in the old part of the cemetery, which saw its first burial in 1894.

The city had been eyeing two separate one-acre plots of land at opposite ends of the grounds as possible locations for the needed expansion. When officials learned that the plot at the western end would cost them \$60,000, they turned their attention to the plot on the eastern end, which was owned by Rogers Group.

Maxwell contacted Rogers Group regional manager David Rector in Oak Ridge and asked him if the company would be willing to cede the land to the city at no cost.

"I thought 'what do we have to lose?'" Maxwell recalled of the overture.

A few months later, Rector called and told Maxwell that the gift had been approved.

"We really appreciate what Rogers Group did," Maxwell said. "They didn't have to do it. They're just a good corporate citizen."

"We've been in Algood for a long time, and we like to help out the community in any way we can," said Rogers Group sales manager Bill Chesney of the decision to bestow the gift.

Rogers Group has had operations in Algood since the late 1960s.

The only cost incurred by the city was the survey that delineated the land's boundaries. Maxwell said that sometime next year the city will have the lightly forested land bulldozed and landscaped in preparation for the digging of plots.

He said that while they hadn't quite reached a crisis point, it is comforting for city officials to know that there is enough burial space now for the foreseeable future.

"We're not completely out, but it was catching up with us, and we wanted to look ahead," Maxwell said.

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