

Local

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LITTLE FALLS

Effort to clean up Rural Grove Cemetery under way

LITTLE FALLS — Through the efforts of a local nonprofit group, improvements have been made to the abandoned Rural Grove Cemetery, off of East Monroe Street in the city of Little Falls.

“People came to me and asked if I knew anything about the cemetery (Rural Grove) at the top of the hill on Monroe Street,” said Robin Prinzhorn, president of the New York Historic Cemetery Preservation Society, in a news release. She noted how many mentioned the Civil War soldiers buried there, particularly David L. Bass, a Congressional Medal of Honor soldier.

Prinzhorn said, “This is a cemetery we are planning to clean up. What I also tried to get across to people is that while we need to honor our soldiers, we also need to remember that every person buried in a cemetery has a story.”

A month ago Prinzhorn



Volunteers help clean up Rural Grove Cemetery in Little Falls. Photo submitted

said she was not sure how she was going to obtain volunteers or funds to even begin such a project. “All of a sudden it came together. I received phone calls from people from an article in *The Times*,” she said.

One of those phone calls was from Michael Sportello, of Compeer of Mohawk Valley. Sportello is the Vet2Vet coordinator for Compeer and became interested in Rural Grove Cemetery when he learned of Bass being buried there. He applied for a grant and received funding for Bass’ headstone and the ceme-

tery. In addition, Sportello has 20 volunteers ready to help with cleanup.

“That was only part of the good news,” said Prinzhorn. “I spoke with Mayor (Robert) Peters about the cemetery project. He offered to have the city supply a truck load of dirt to fill in the sunken graves and depressions and a truck load of gravel for the path within the cemetery. The mayor has also offered to have the DPW remove the existing piles of tree limbs.”

NYHCPS is still in need of funding as there are

obelisks and headstones that need to be reset with special equipment.

“NYHCPS wants to thank everyone who has helped so far and those I’ve talked to for future assistance. It’s amazing what has been accomplished so far in such little time. I see great things for preserving this cemetery,” said Prinzhorn.

Those interested in volunteering or helping to fund this project are asked to contact NYHCPS at 663-8962 or info@nyhcps.org.

— Staff Reports