

CLEANING UP IN HISTORY



Kendra Leigh Miller • Daily Times

As part of a cleanup at Knotty Oak Cemetery yesterday in Coventry, students from the Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School showed how civic-minded they are, as did teacher Dawn Pullano (left photo, center) with students James Bennett and Liam Cohen

FEINSTEIN STUDENTS CLEAN UP KNOTTY OAK CEMETERY

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COVENTRY — Team Safari, led by Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School history teacher Charlie Blanchette, got a lesson in history as well as the significance of taking pride in respecting others, even those who have gone before them.

Seventh-grade classes took a brief tour of the Knotty Oak Cemetery Friday morning as Blanchette showed them different types of

headstones and tombs and how it is significant in the way they were constructed depending on where they are located on the grounds and how weather conditions take a toll.

He pointed out war heroes and how some of the dates on the stones reflected signs of the times where people passed away as youngsters from such diseases as tuberculosis and yellow and scarlet fever.

“I’m trying to teach them to be civil-minded people but also respectful of those who came before them and laid the foundation for what

they have today,” said the teacher. “Some epitaphs are really very touching and they can learn a lot from them.”

Seventh-grade science teacher Maria Boulmetis said she wanted to be a part of the cleanup and lesson because with Veterans’ Day coming up, it’s important to remember and pay respects.

“They’re going to pick up the old flags and bring them to the VFW for a proper burning,”

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Cemetery cleanup teaches students about past, future



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Feinstein student Leah Andre carries a pile of American flags to be placed around headstones at Knotty Oak Cemetery yesterday morning.

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she said. "It's so nice to see these kids so into a community service project."

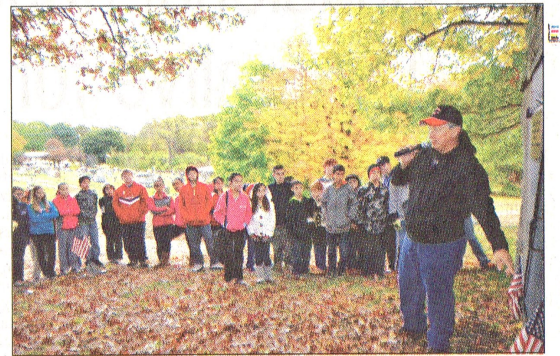
Michelle Banar enjoyed what Blanchette explained about the stained glass windows built into some of the tombs.

"I like what he said about the light reflecting at different times of the day," she said. "He's a walking history book."

"What I love," said Catherine Mailloux, ELA teacher, "is, this is something these kids would never do normally and it reinforces our three R's, be respectful, be reliable, be responsible. It's not all about the academics and kids get inspired by certain things, even this."

"I liked learning about people from the Civil War," Andre said.

"This is awesome," said teacher Dawn Pullano. "And, to see these kids doing this, willingly, is great and Charlie is such a wealth of knowledge."



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Social studies teacher Charlie Blanchette informs students about one of the plots at Knotty Oak Cemetery and its history.