

Parks and Recreation Commission

Maintenance Report

Date Submitted: March 6, 2017

For the Month of: February 2017

Submitted by: Marcie Robertson, Parks Maintenance Supervisor

Ski Trails: Ongoing grooming takes place Monday through Saturday of each week. This has been the best season yet of user groups following the posted use signs. There have only been two instances of snow machines on ski only trails and one instance of bikes on skyline. Users seem to be very cordial to each other.

RFP re-writes: The three major contracts under Park Maintenance have been re-written and sent out for proposals; (lawn maintenance, Allison Point, and the flower planting & maintenance contracts)

Ski hill: The hill is groomed each Friday and/or Saturday prior to scheduled open weekends and has had plenty of snow for operations. At the beginning of the season, the rope operator shed at the base of the hill was found flipped upside down near the parking area and full of snow from heavy winds. It was brought back to the shop and repaired in January. The new roller packer was adapted to fit the towing attachments on our snow machine and is available for the Ski Hill Supervisor to use following snowfall on the weekends.



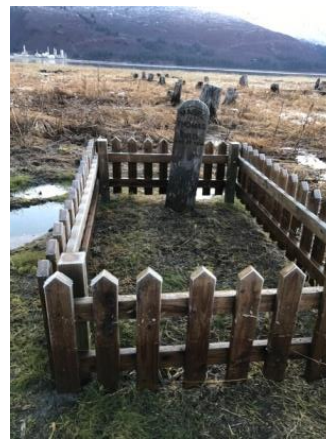
Prep for Mayor's Cup Race: As the winter goes along, the out of town trails are gradually extended to make the Mayor's Cup race route. With great snow this season, most of the trail had been groomed by mid January.

120 race route prep: 120 Race route was set near the dog park again this year and seems to be working as a terrific venue for the event.



Elementary Sledding: Ron Hoffman of the streets department took the bulldozer to the elementary school and had built the sledding hill which gets groomed by park maintenance 1-2 times per week or as needed. The elementary PE teacher has scheduled the annual HH ski program and the "Elementary Loop" was been built for this purpose.

Pioneer Cemetery research and document scanning: These tasks continue and will conclude once all documents are scanned into the City's new electronic documents program. We will also be providing lot pins, mapping the lots, marking them with GPS technology and repairing old headstones and grave surrounds. We have found a plethora of historical information about the pioneer cemetery and those interred there. Additional signs will be made and installed to enhance the walking tour and a similar booklet to the Memorial Cemetery will be made once the research is concluded.



Page 8 The Valdez Vanguard Wednesday, September 17, 1997

Group solving Old Valdez Cemetery puzzle

By Tony Bickert
Valdez Vanguard

Walt and Gloria Day formed a committee in June to restore and preserve the Original Valdez Community Cemetery. But first they had to find it.

They did. And now the work begins, for what they discovered was a 60-piece puzzle with only 15 pieces remaining, the rest claimed by time and devil's club.

Gloria chairs the Valdez Historical and Restoration Committee, whose goal is to not only locate the graveyard, neglected since its abandonment in 1916, but determine who was buried there; clean and grub the area; carve new wooden headstones and protect it from further neglect. What's left of the original wooden markers will be preserved in the Valdez Museum.

The Valdez City Council supports the idea, and Parks & Recreation plans to give the committee \$10,000 to help solve the puzzle.

"Eighty-two years is a long time in this country," said Walt. "The weather has taken its toll. There's not much left out there to go on. And it's hard to find anybody who's still alive who remembers."

Nevertheless, the group is making progress, gathering clues via field work, old records and memory.

The Days, Alaska pioneers

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— Walt Day

Although the Days got here after the old cemetery was abandoned, they remembered the general location: southwest of the current Valdez Memorial Cemetery at the corner of the Richardson Highway at Dayville Road.

Walt said he believes the town decided in 1916 to start a new cemetery because the new site was more accessible and because the old one was creeping too close to the tide.

Committee members Gary Minish, John Ruhl and Bill Conley located the four corner posts in August and re-staked the boundaries. Within the perimeter, the group found 15 wooden grave markers that were still partly legible. The Days estimate about 60 graves exist.

The Committee plans to return to the site later this fall, after the vegetation dies, to comb the area for more clues. Gloria said she's also arranging to have an expert from the University of Alaska

Gloria day, Minnie LaPage and Gail Colby study an old map of Valdez in their search for clues about the Original Valdez Community Cemetery.

funeral records from 1907 to the 1940s. At a committee meeting Thursday at the Civic Center, the group tried to make sense of notes scrawled by the local undertaker. One grave is located "near the fence in line with Waldron," wrote the undertaker. Another is the "first one at rear row commencing at the fence."

She said the first-known grave in the cemetery belongs to Joseph from the 1800s and died in 1907.

New trash cans for parks and downtown: The trash cans we have in the parks and playgrounds are quite old and many of the lids are gone or damaged. We have begun replacing high use area cans with Bear resistant cans which get bolted to the concrete. Many areas we are not able to leave the cans out over winter so we now have ordered some removable bear resistant cans which are light enough to pick up. The ornamental bear resistant cans for Egan Street have arrived and will be installed this summer.



Year end purchases: Items have arrived and time has been spent putting them together, labeling and storing them. Items such as wheel barrows, a ground thawing dome for funerals, a headstone lifter for moving and placing headstones, an ATV cart to be used to haul tools and supplies to areas not reachable with a vehicle etc. Most of these items come unassembled. Much time was spent getting all of these items put together so they may be used as soon as spring arrives.

Construction of Ruth Pond Tower Drop: The tower drop is scheduled to go up at Ruth Pond the week of March 6th. Now that we know the tower drop is a long term event, a new tower has been built made of aluminum which should last for many years to come.

Lending Libraries: Last year, Mollie Good our Head Librarian came to our staff meeting with a desire to place some lending libraries around town. They will be filled with books provided by the library. The program allows people to borrow a book whenever they like and replace it with another or just bring it back when finished. There is no monitoring of the books necessary. Our pilot program will take place first at the harbor, providing three lending libraries along the boardwalk. The hope is to provide fisherman with reading materials they can take out for a couple of weeks and exchange between openers. If it is successful, we will look at expanding the program throughout town. New maintenance employees received some carpentry training and were tasked with building the lending libraries. We will put them up this spring.



Giant Ski Races: Giant skis are not something you can buy, so I sat down with a friend who builds dog sleds and learned how to steam and bend wood to make the giant skis for our frosty fever event. Staff was then trained on how to make the skis and Canyon Rohrer produced some very dramatic skis for the 2017 races. They are 16 feet long and boast room for 5 skiers at a time.

