

Steven D. Reece

From: Steven D. Reece <sdreece@matzevah.org>
Sent: Monday, September 17, 2018 15:50
To: 'Jeff'
Subject: RE: Cemetery restoration

Dear Mr. Miller,

Thank you for contacting me about the Nowogród Jewish cemetery. I assume that you are referring to Nowogród in Poland and not Belarus? Correct?

In order to provide you with assistance, we will provide some basic information about our work and the process of project selection. We also need to gather some information from you so our board of directors can determine if we can assist you in the restoration project.

Basic Information from TMF about its restoration projects:

Due to limited resources, we cannot take on every project request which we receive. We carefully consider which projects that we take on each year. The Matzevah Foundation (TMF) developed a process by which we consider each Jewish cemetery restoration project as a means to determine our potential Jewish restoration projects each year.

Next month, we will begin developing a project budget and determine how we can partner financially with descendants and others to do each project. We do not generally have funds to what we do in our project implementation, which means that we depend on raising funds through descendant's groups, project fees, and donations to do what we do.

We assess each volunteer, who participates in a cemetery restoration project, a fee of 300\$, which covers a basic project budget. The basic project budget includes vehicle rental for tool transport, fuel, tool maintenance, and housing and meals for the project coordinator. Generally, the budget for a basic Jewish cemetery restoration project is between 1,500\$ and 2,500\$. We cannot commit to a project unless these costs are covered either by raising the funds, assessing a project fee, or someone donating and designating funds for the specific project.

Our work depends on volunteers: Jewish, Christian and others. These volunteers may originate from the Jewish diaspora, the US, or the local Polish community. Volunteers gather in _____ for a week-long project to clean and clear a Jewish cemetery.

TMF uses three primary criteria by which we assess each potential project. In our work, we would like to undertake:

1. Projects that involve the community in and around the Jewish cemetery 2. Projects that allow us to partner with Jewish individuals and/or organizations 3. Projects that involve education

We will consider 2019 projects as I said previously next month at our bi-annual board meeting. I cannot guarantee you that we will adopt the Nowogród Jewish cemetery restoration project as one of our projects for 2019. However, to consider it, we will need some basic information from you.

Below please find a series of questions that will assist us in considering the Nowogród Jewish Cemetery as a potential project for 2019.

1. Please share with us your story. We would like to know more about you and why this cemetery is important to you. Could you tell us about yourself and more about the Nowogród Jewish Cemetery?

2. We would like to know if you would be willing to organize a group of descendants or a group of people who would volunteer and work with us to do the work.
3. We would like to know if you can assist us in raising funds for your project.
4. How large is the cemetery? How many hectares is it?
5. We need to know who the owner of the cemetery is. Is the cemetery owned by a private owner? Is it the government, or the Jewish community? This is important in gaining permission to clean and clear the cemetery of debris.
6. Are there any local people, who may be interested in participating in the project? This could be school teachers, activists, or community organizations.
7. Do you know what types of hotels or places to stay are available for the group of volunteers to stay and have their meals?
8. What are your goals long-term for the cemetery?
9. Do you wish to commemorate it in some way?
10. What we are interested in more than anything is working with a group of people to change the dynamic of the community and its relationship to the Jewish community and specifically the Jewish cemetery. If you could answer these questions it would be helpful for us in making a decision about partnering with you in this project.

Thank you for contacting me once more. I look forward to hearing from you and learning what we might be able to do together in the Nowogród Jewish Cemetery.

Sincerely,

Steven

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeff <singingtm@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, September 16, 2018 15:35
To: sdreece@matzevah.org
Subject: Cemetery restoration

Dear Mr. Reece,

I attended the IAJGS 2018 in Warsaw.

I am seeking assistance with restoration for the Jewish cemetery in Nowogród.

I visited the cemetery prior to the Conference. There are a total of 18 matzevot in this cemetery. It is not marked by any sign and many of the matzevot in need of cleaning in order to read them.

To reach the cemetery my guide needed to ask local residents for the location. We needed to scale a hill featuring no path, an uneven terrain and much vegetation.

I would love any assistance you can provide.

Best regards,

Jeff Miller
Maryland, U.S.

Sent from my iPhone