



## DeKalb's Historic Oakwood Cemetery to Expand, Offering New Park and Alternative Burial Options, Thanks to \$100,000 Donation

The DeKalb Township is excited to announce plans to expand the grounds of its historic Oakwood Cemetery, thanks to a generous donation from long-time DeKalb resident, Gretchen Moore. This transformative gift will support the development of a peaceful, park-like setting and the introduction of innovative, environmentally conscious burial options, providing families with more choices for honoring their loved ones.

At Moore's request, the expanded section of Oakwood Cemetery will be named "Peace Park" in recognition of the serenity it is intended to offer to all who visit. This section will feature lush green spaces, a walking path, benches, and attractive landscaping, creating a tranquil atmosphere for reflection and remembrance. The park will include a variety of trees and flowers, designed to blend seamlessly with nature, making it a truly peaceful location for honoring the deceased.

"Gretchen has long been a passionate advocate for numerous causes in DeKalb. Her profound love for the arts and nature mirrors the shared values she and her late husband, Charles, held," said DeKalb Township Supervisor Mary Hess. "We are deeply thankful that Gretchen has chosen to support DeKalb's second oldest cemetery, assisting us in seamlessly integrating a new feature into this sacred part of our community's history."

In addition to traditional burial options offered at Oakwood Cemetery, this expansion will offer families alternative, cost-effective burial methods focused on environmental stewardship. These eco-conscious alternatives allow families to return their loved ones to the earth in a way that minimizes environmental impact, while still respecting personal and cultural preferences.

The Township is deeply grateful for Moore's generous donation, which will ensure Oakwood Cemetery remains a place of peace and beauty for generations to come. This expansion will provide additional space for those who wish to honor their loved ones, while also offering meaningful, sustainable burial options.

The new park setting and burial options are expected to be available late 2025. Please contact Supervisor Mary Hess at (815) 758-8282 or [supervisor@dekalbtownship.org](mailto:supervisor@dekalbtownship.org) with questions.