

# Day: Mount Zion vandalized

FROM PAGE B1

A huge bell on a flatbed truck tolled as the service began, friends' leader Lee Anderson explaining it is one of 18 created in the Bells of Remembrance project, founded by the service speaker, Franciscan Brother David Schlatter, a former Wilmington resident who now is a chaplain at the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda Naval Hospital, near Washington, D.C.

"This is the 'Bell of the Unforgotten,'" she said, honoring more than 1,000 victims not identified in World Trade Center ruins.

Schlatter led prayers and spoke of the urgency of honoring those who have "given life and limb that we might remain free."

"What we do here today is not so much an act of patriotism. ... It is something holy," he said.

The crowd sang the national anthem and "God Bless America," and endured steamy heat as friends' board member Tedd Cocker, a Vietnam veteran, told of veterans buried there since 1873.

Laura Grass of Newark played taps, despite a hubbub as the heat overwhelmed one guest, taken by ambulance to St. Francis Hospital. "She'll be OK," one firefighter said.

As the service ended, Scouts guided guests to ring the bell.

"It was a beautiful service," said Adam Taylor, the Scouts' chartered organization representative. His father was buried there in 2001, so he was especially proud to have the Scouts there and see the cemetery in good shape. "It's great," he said. "But a little too hot."

Across town, just west of city limits, Friends of Mount Zion Cemetery held a Memorial Day service on smaller scale.

In the sun, by the grave of jazz great Clifford Brown, Joe "Sly" Smithers played trumpet and the crowd of about three dozen in the shade of a huge maple tree sang "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" to honor all who have given their lives in service to their country.

At Mount Zion, tiny flags were held by four members of Boy Scout Troop 50, who marched to present the colors at the cemetery they had just cleaned, gathering bags full of garbage.

The Scouts and supporter A. Jalal Karim-Bey were presented certificates by friends' President Harmon R. Carey, who said maintenance remains a problem - worsened by vandalism.

"We scraped together enough for a used rider mower," he said, but because the group couldn't afford to secure its arson-damaged shed, the mower was an easy mark recently for vandals. "They cut the wires, pulled out the ignition and sliced the tires."

The friends have tried for more than a decade, but perpetual care is elusive, he said, because the site is so old, small - and black.

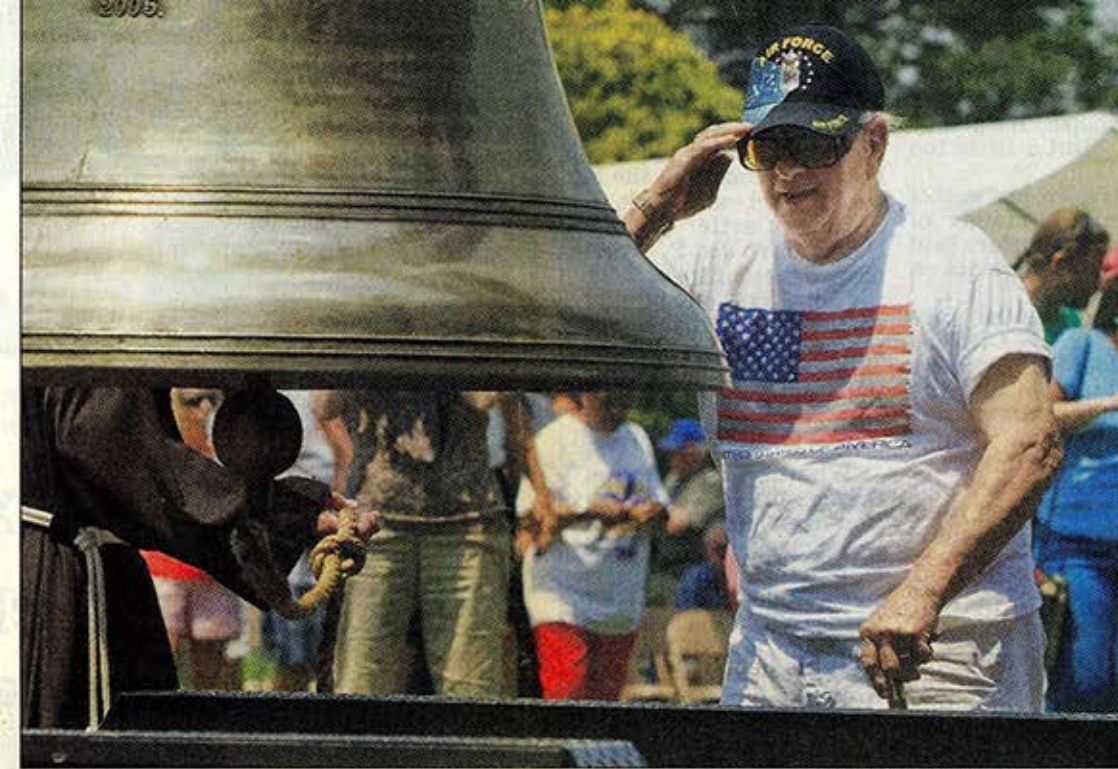
New Castle County Councilman Jea P. Street decried the long struggle for the cemetery, one of only two in the area that buried blacks in the days of segregation. "Even in death, for them to be discriminated against is a shame and a disgrace," he said.

Whether the state, county, city or a combination of governments must be involved, he said, "this nightmare has to end."

Guest Josie Roy of New Castle called Street's words "spot on." She said having a jazz festival honoring Brown, but disrespecting the cemetery, is wrong.

"I have family here," she said, recalling teen visits. "We called it 'the segregated cemetery,' so it brings back a lot of memories," she said. "We can't forget our history."

Contact robin brown at 324-2856 or rbrown@delawareonline.com.



The News Journal/WILLIAM BRETZGER

Burt Blanch of Wilmington, a Korean War veteran, salutes after ringing the "Bell of Remembrance" during a Memorial Day ceremony Monday at Riverview Cemetery in Wilmington.

## Day connects generations

### Two historic cemeteries stand in contrast

By ROBIN BROWN  
The News Journal

WILMINGTON — Seven-year-old Cub Scout Sam Taylor was impressed to near speechlessness Monday as an older man bent down to shake his hand at a Memorial Day service Monday and introduced himself as a World War II veteran.

For just a moment, amid nearly 200 people gathered at Riverview Cemetery, they were like a Norman Rockwell painting, shaking hands across time, lifetimes, generations.

"I think it was pretty awesome," Sam said.

Days earlier, Sam, his brother Jack, 8, and other boys from Hockessin-based Cub Scout Pack 959 had spent hours at Riverview Cemetery, searching for the 806 veterans' graves, to place American flags on them and announce the names and wars of those who served. As they went about the task, 8-year-olds Jimmy Walsh, Michael



Joe "Sly" Smithers plays taps at a Memorial Day ceremony at Mount Zion Cemetery on Monday.

Zunino and Ty Weir, and 9-year-olds Joey Hackman and Thomas Pisklak started singing Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA."

Thomas' father, Steve, said Scout leaders didn't let boys so young put out flags until only a few years ago.

"Crack vials, used condoms, [drug] needles," he said. "The place was a mess."

The Friends of Historic Riverview Cemetery, incorporated in 2008, now owns and keeps up the 41-acre, 36,000-grave cemetery on both sides of North Market Street, where two big, white tents shaded nearly half the guests on Monday.

See DAY — B2

### HELP PRESERVE CEMETERIES

For more information about the Friends of Mount Zion Cemetery, call President Harmon R. Carey at 562-4718. The group seeks memberships, \$10 a year, and donations, to be sent in care of 2018 Silverside Road, Wilmington, DE 19810. Carey also seeks donation of a rider mower, walk-behind mowers and equipment.

To learn more about Friends of Historic Riverview Cemetery, visit [www.Riverview-Cem.com](http://www.Riverview-Cem.com) or call 762-4705. Tax-deductible donations, including \$30 individual and \$50 family memberships, may be sent to Friends of Historic Riverview Cemetery, Box 2173, Wilmington, DE 19899. Volunteers are sought to plant daylilies and remove flags June 19, and volunteers for other gardening July 17 and Aug. 21.



View a photo gallery at [delawareonline.com](http://delawareonline.com).



News Journal

Wilmington, DE

June 1, 2010