

# Selectmen get demonstration of new cemetery software

## Records now stored in one central database

By Charles F. Bennett  
Turley Publications Staff Writer

WILBRAHAM – The Wilbraham cemetery commissioners, Donald Bourcier, Philip Hamer and Wilfred Renaud Jr. showed off their new software and computer system to the Wilbraham Board of Selectmen prior to the start of their Sept. 26 meeting.

Renaud, who oversees the East Wilbraham Cemetery, sat down at the small Town Hall office computer that houses the computer and records and took Selectmen David Barry, James Thompson and Patrick Brady on a virtual tour of the East Wilbraham, Adams and Glendale cemeteries, pointing out the mapping of burial plots.

Renaud gave the selectmen a demonstration in which he keyed in the name of a person he knew was buried in East Wilbraham. It popped up on his computer monitor and showed the names of each family member and where they were precisely buried on a map.

The mapping system is color-coded, yellow for veterans, for instance, light blue for reserved and red for a restricted area where an unknown body is buried.

Cemetery records used to be on paper and were scattered among the commissioners in their homes. In 1950 one of the commissioners had a fire and those records in his care were lost. But most of the other records, going back to the 1740s, have been converted from paper into the software program and now stored in their office at the Town Hall. The new system cost \$13,000 according to Hamer, who oversees Adams Cemetery, and said it was worth every cent.

### Beyond the 21st Century

In showing the selectmen a multicolored map of gravesites of the various cemeteries one can quickly see from the computer graphics that there is lots of room still left in them. The records will be posted on the town Web site said Renaud. The town has gone from 1740s thinking



TIMES staff photo by Charles F. Bennett



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**Computer screen shows multicolored map of plots in E. Wilbraham Cemetery.**

**Cemetery Commissioner Wilfred Renaud Jr. (seated) gives Wilbraham Selectmen (from left) David Barry, Patrick Brady and James Thompson a demonstration of a computerized cemetery system.**

to what Renaud describes as, "We've gone beyond the 21st century."

The new system, Cemetery Information

Management System, was purchased from Ramaker & Associates of Sauk City, Wis. who have 414 clients in 47 states and Canada, according to their Web site.

Renaud began training and working with Ramaker last March and said they were thorough in helping to set up the system, which is up and running now. He is currently developing a manual so that the other commissioners and staffers can use it.

In a narrative on the Ramaker Web site, Renaud said the goal was to have a central database in one location.

The cemetery commissioners have a display in the lobby of Town Hall that gives an overview of the system.

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