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Bayside Cemetery cleanup event held

by [Lisa Fogarty](#) , Editor

Lawsuit or no lawsuit, Bayside Cemetery is on its way to returning to its splendid state of yesteryear, thanks to several dozen volunteers, civic groups, Councilman Eric Ulrich (R-Ozone Park) and the mayor's Community Affairs Unit.

Federal Judge Raymond Dearie's decision last week to throw out a two-year class-action suit filed by John Lucker, who says his grandparents' graves have not been cared for and maintained by the cemetery's owner, Congregation Shaare Zedek, didn't discourage concerned residents and officials from gathering around the perimeter of the 19th century burial ground Sunday morning, rakes, brooms and shovels in hand. The volunteers took the first steps to ensuring that, at the very least, the outside of the cemetery, which is overrun with weeds and litter, looked spotless.

As part of the clean-up, the city's Community Affairs Unit and the Department of Economic Development provided three graffiti removal trucks and crews to remove the graffiti vandalism on the exterior stone wall along Liberty Avenue.

"I want to thank the mayor's Community Affairs Unit, especially Commissioner Nazli Parvizi and Queens Director Jennifer Manley, for providing city resources to help restore and beautify this important site. I also want to thank all of the volunteers from Our Neighbors Civic of Ozone Park, CAJAC, and the community that donated their time and energy on a Sunday morning for this very worthy endeavor," Ulrich said.

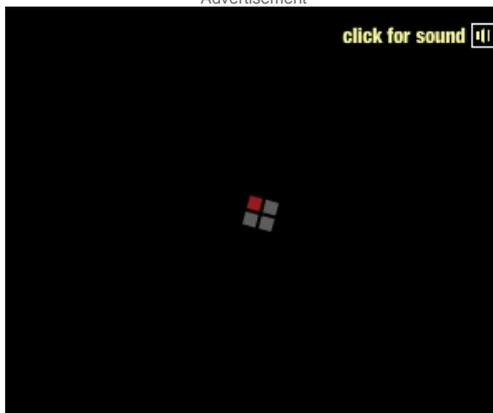
Parvizi added, "This is a perfect example of the power of civic engagement. I applaud the council member, the community groups and all of the volunteers for their work in helping to ensure the best quality of life for the residents of Ozone Park."

Bayside Cemetery is the final resting place for more than 35,000 Jewish veterans of the Civil War.



Councilman Eric Ulrich (R-Ozone Park), center, initiated the Bayside Cemetery clean-up because he believes the ground "should receive the respect it deserves." PHOTO COURTESY MATTHEW HICKEY

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