



insideNewberry

To honor the past...inform the present...envision the future, *insideNewberry* is published quarterly by Newberry Community Partnership (NCP) as a service to the neighborhood to promote community pride and facilitate communication between residents, schools, civic organizations and businesses. NCP is a non-profit community-based organization established in 2006. Please support our sponsors who made this issue possible!

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insideNewberry

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Lycos SPCA Seeks Kitty Foster Families

The cat population increases this time of the year, and many of these kittens are dropped off at the Society for the Prevention of the Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) located on Reach Road. I sat down with Bethany Reed, the SPCA's foster coordinator and adoption counselor, to ask a few questions about the needs for foster families. Overall, she is asking families in Newberry to consider fostering kittens until forever homes can be found.

InsideNewberry: Thanks so much for talking to us this week! First, you have said we are in the middle of "kitty season." When is it kitty season and why exactly is it called that?

Reed: Kitten season is the months typically between March and October, when feline breeding and reproduction are at an all-time high.

InsideNewberry: Why exactly is there a need for kitty fosters?

Reed: We are always in need of foster families for numerous reasons - lack of space in the shelter to house them all being a major one. Having foster homes helps us take in and help more animals. Also, kittens have weaker immune systems, and shelters are full of viruses and sickness, so being in a foster home keeps them healthy.

Neonatal kittens, or "bottle babies," require round-the-clock care, including overnights, which most shelters don't have staff for. Also, kittens are more socialized and receive more individualized playtime and care in foster homes. We have seen them all-around thrive better when growing up in a home.

InsideNewberry: How does one become a kitty foster parent?

Reed: They can start by filling out the Cat/Kitten Foster Application located on our website [<https://lycomingspca.org/volunteer/>].

InsideNewberry: How important is this program for the SPCA?

Reed: This program is EXTREMELY important for the SPCA. Last year, we had 850 foster kittens and mom cats go through our foster system.

(Continued on page 2)



Two cats named Xena and Sparky also found their home in Newberry.

Lyco SPCA Seeks Kitty Foster Families (Continued from page 1)

InsideNewberry: Is there a limit to how many cats a family can foster?

Reed: We don't have a "set" limit, but we always advise our foster parents to take on only what they can handle, and not overwhelm themselves.

InsideNewberry: Obviously, a cat will benefit from having a family to meet its basic needs, but does it help with its socialization?

Reed: It helps immensely with socialization. Growing up in foster homes introduces [the cats] to more people, children, other cats, dogs, and situations they will face when adopted.

InsideNewberry: Has there been an increase in kitty needs this year as opposed to last year?

Reed: It is hard to say because each year brings new challenges and new numbers. We can say for sure that every summer we are swamped with hundreds of kittens needing our help with not enough resources and foster homes to help them all.

InsideNewberry: If someone is not able to foster, what can they do?

Reed: If someone can't foster, donations are always a huge help. Food, litter, formula, etc. Spreading the word about our program with friends and family helps as well.

InsideNewberry: Finally, what are the biggest needs currently of the SPCA?

Reed: Our biggest needs are always volunteers and foster families. We can always use monetary donations for our TNR program so we can continue trying to get the outdoor cat population more under control. Also, any kitten supplies such as heating pads that don't automatically turn off, KMR formula, dry and canned kitten food, and clumping litter that gets sent with our foster homes is always in high demand.

InsideNewberry: What is the best way to get in touch with the SPCA?

Reed: The best way to reach us is directly at 570-322-4646. For specific foster information, they can email me at breed@lycomingspca.org.

InsideNewberry: Thanks so much for your time!
Bethany Reed: Thank you so much for helping us get the word out! We really appreciate it.

~ By Don Everett Smith Jr.

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Newberry Youth, SmartPhones, and Depression

If you have influence in the life of a Newberry youth – or if you are a Newberry youth – you may want to look into the claims of Jonathan Haidt in *The Anxious Generation* and consider joining the movement with other people in our local community. Haidt's basic argument is that unlimited access to smartphones and social media is now proven to rewire kids' brains in damaging ways. He says that parents and youth should live with more boundaries in the online world while being given more freedom to play and interact in the real world.

By the numbers, letting kids have the freedom to go out in the neighborhood and play is safer

now than it was in the 1970s and 1980s, but parents are now *less* willing to let their children roam freely because they perceive the world as a more dangerous place.

This part of Haidt's research hits home to me as a parent. Like many of my generation, I roamed the neighborhoods freely after school and all summer, but now, I keep my own kids closer to home. Unfortunately, when kids are not allowed to explore the world on their own, they develop more fear and anxiety as they grow up. Many of our fears have no substance to them, like the bogeyman in the closet, but if we don't let our children run into the closet on their own and flip on the light, they tend to live the rest of their lives as if that bogeyman is real.

Haidt reports that as parents began to shelter their children more and keep them home in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the internet started to provide parents with an alternate space to let their children explore, a space that seemed "safer." It wasn't safer, but the online world didn't become measurably toxic to youth until two new technologies emerged: the smartphone and social media.

Social Media. Haidt points out that social media was designed to be addictive by using the dopamine hits people get whenever anyone

interacts with them online. For youth, this social conditioning is more harmful because the impulse-control centers of their brains are still developing and are incredibly sensitive to social approval and disapproval. Most youth don't have the ability to figure out which "likes" or critiques are valid and which they should ignore – that part of their brain isn't fully formed till age 25, on average.



So every interaction on social media affects them more, and it affects how they view themselves. Teens tend to feel (even if they "know better") that what people are saying about them is reality.

Haidt says that many young people can feel the danger

of this social media trap, and they want out. The movement to resist social media and get back into the real world is led partly by some of these young people themselves.

Smartphones. Smartphone technology allowed the dangers of social media and other internet issues to follow youth everywhere, all the time. A school bully can be escaped once school is out, but a social media bully can follow you everywhere on your smartphone apps. Not only that, but social media amplifies teens' tendency to compare themselves to other people: to compare weight, looks, skin health, musculature, skill levels, success, wealth, and so forth. Youth tend to be on their smartphones so much that those twisted comparisons and bullying happen constantly. The online environment is exhausting, and now the results on their mental health are becoming clear.

Since smartphones and social media together became widely used in young teenagers in 2010, their mental health has been on a steep decline. Haidt's data says that major depression has increased 145% in girls and 161% in boys since 2010, and now about 1 in every 3 girls has significant issues with depression. Clinical anxiety has seen a similar rise since 2010. Emergency

Newberry Youth, SmartPhones... (Continued from page 3)

room visits because of self-harm have increased 188% in girls and 48% in boys since 2010. Other even more harmful mental issues have increased significantly as well. In his book and his Substack *After Babel*, Haidt breaks down those numbers and many more to show that social media /smartphone use is most likely the cause for youth mental issues (rather than COVID or financial hardships, for example).

Haidt want to get the word out so that we can set healthy boundaries for our kids and get them playing and exploring again out in the real world. Haidt's *After Babel* Substack can be found at afterbabel.com, and he provides a lot more resources at <https://www.anxiousgeneration.com/resources>. These resources are organized by family resources, educator resources, newsletters, videos, podcasts, and technology resources.

But what does Haidt think we should do?

Though we have to work many solutions out as people, families, and communities, Haidt does give four steps that he calls "foundational."

1. *Avoid giving youth smartphones before high school* (roughly, age 14). Continual internet access is proven to be just too harmful for children younger than that.
2. *Keep kids off social media until after age 16.* Let their brains develop the capacity to socialize with people in the real world (the 12-16 year-old development stage) before allowing them into the dangerous world of social media.
3. *Make K-12 schools phone-free.* This helps students focus their attention on their education and cuts out a large time bloc from the harmful effects of daily smartphone usage.
4. *Promote unsupervised, independent play in the real world.* Create settings like parks, rec centers, and wilderness exploration areas where youth can develop initiative and social skills.

If people in our Newberry community investigate Haidt's information and want to apply it to our own community, I can think of at least a few direct actions that Newberrians could take. We could contact the school board (<https://www.wasd.org/our-district/board-of-directors>) to petition them for phone-free Williamsport schools. We could make our voices heard to encourage the city to

add the amenities to Preziosi Park that have been planned. We could encourage our own kids to join some youth sports league or other social group such as Original League, Little League, AYSO, Williamsport School of Self Defense, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H, Future Farmers of America, or our own Loniqua Howell's local program Boy Mom Marathon, which serves youth education, art, and exploration out of its headquarters at the WECCC.

Haidt believes that this issue is the most pressing social health question before us today. Do you think this issue is important? What should we do about it in Newberry for our youth? Send responses to insidenewberry@yahoo.com or Newberry Community Partnership, 913 Diamond Street, Williamsport, PA 17701.

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Newberry's Missing Cemetery

It was a random entry in John Meginness's *History of Lycoming County* that sent me on this unique journey in search of a cemetery. On page 632, Meginness states that an engineer named Robert Allen died on April 12, 1849, and "was buried in the old cemetery in Newberry."

I have only lived in the Newberry area for about five years now and I dig all things dark, creepy, and historical. I asked myself, "Newberry does not have a cemetery? *Does it?*"

The cemetery had lain next to the Lycoming Presbyterian Church on Arch Street, which was the first church in Lycoming County (see the October 2023 issue). But where exactly were the graves? Were they where the beloved Dunkin' Donuts currently is? Was I trespassing, every time I went through the drive-thru to get a green tea with honey, over the remains of family members from way back when?

The quest was on!

Let me go back further to Newberry's past, putting together information from Meginness's history and C. Lee Berry's article "Historic Presbyterian Cemetery." A man named John Sutton inherited land from his uncle Amariah Sutton, who had obtained the property west of Lycoming creek after a series of land deals. However, the west side of Lycoming creek was at that time a dangerous place to settle. It was known as "Indian land," and it was not under the protection of the colonial government.

John Sutton had settled on his claim in 1772, but during one of the many Iroquois attacks on settlers during the late 1770s, he fled the area. In the loose legal environment of the time, the land was taken over by a squatter, John Boak, then sold to a Robert Arthur on July 10, 1776, for 35 pounds (the currency of the day). When Sutton returned and found his territory taken, he appealed to the group of men who had set themselves up as arbiters of affairs on the west bank of Lycoming Creek, the Fair Play Committee. They eventually awarded the land back to Sutton Sept. 2nd, 1786.

According to Berry, the cemetery had been in use before Sutton claimed his land, with reports of burials in the early 1700s, and it predates the Lycoming Presbyterian Church. Presbyterian missionaries were in the area from 1746 to 1814, including the famous David Brainerd. Berry sets the date that the first log meeting house rose

up alongside the cemetery at 1792, though Meginness says that the "exact date of its origin cannot be stated." See the Lou Hunsinger Jr. "Hands on Heritage" (handsonheritage.com) for more of the church's history.

Though I was following the story of the cemetery, I also found that Sutton was formally responsible for Newberry. In 1794, Meginness tells us, Sutton employed a surveyor to "lay out a town on his tract, which he called Newberry," or "New Garden" (though we know which name stuck). The two main streets that were laid out were "Market and Diamond."

With a church in the early 1790s and a new town, the cemetery started to receive more customers. The large stones from the early 1800s stone church building were set up around the graveyard, which by that time "housed the remains of about 125 Revolutionary War-era patriot soldiers and residents of the area." However, as a 1939 Grit newspaper article pointed out, that count of 125 probably only captures the ones whose headstones survived till 1890. Many more people were likely interred.

I was finally able to sit down with the pastor of the Lycoming Presbyterian Church, Gwen Bernstine. "The church and cemetery are different things," Reverend Bernstine said. The community cemetery was next to the church. However, over time, the church became a "caretaker" of sorts. "We are glad to be a part of the legacy of the cemetery," Bernstine said.

Though the cemetery is still there under the name Colonial Park, the 1939 Grit article reports that the cemetery "closed" in 1885. What happens to a cemetery when it is no longer a place of memory for the community? In an entry on the "Arch Street Cemetery" at findagrave.com, we read that "all of the headstones were removed probably in the 1930s or 40s and none remain. The cemetery fell into an advanced state of disrepair, the stones were removed, and the deceased are still interred there in unmarked graves."

To scour the local community for information on the cemetery, I turned to FaceBook, posting a call for information in the Lycoming Joy & Memories group. One of Lycoming County's great keepers of history, Cindy Frey, pointed me to the partial list of

Newberry's Missing Cemetery (Continued from page 6)

buried (about 80) and a scrapbook of article clippings in the history room at the James V. Brown library, a scrapbook belonging to Berry, a Newberry historian who wrote for a 1920s and 30s era Newberry newspaper.

Berry did his newspaper research the hard way. He "dug through a pile of stones piled at the back of the cemetery and copied the legible information." She mentioned that her "sixth great-grandfather, John Dunlap," was buried there. A 1936 Grit article sent to me by Joanne Long explains that "all of the old tombstones that still remained on the site in 1936 were used to erect the fourteen-foot monument in the shape of a cross that was placed in the center of the park." This was a project undertaken by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) crews. For the cemetery itself, "it was hopeless to attempt to restore [it] to its original condition." However, because it held the remains of Lycoming County pioneers and Revolutionary War soldiers, it was important to keep the heritage alive.

However, as the 1939 article explains, "since the care of the burial ground involved too great an expense for the church to bear, the number of graves gradually disappeared." It might seem odd, but cemeteries require regular maintenance to stay alive.

Though I found I don't have to worry about any haunting in the Dunkin' drive thru, the records do indicate that the original graveyard extended to the east as well as the south of the church, which means that some of the church parking lot is probably covering some old graves.

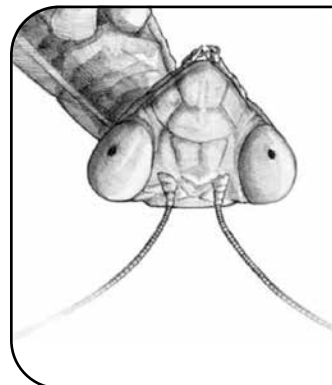
My questions about Newberry's missing cemetery came to an end, but I want to give a big

thanks to everyone in the Lycoming Joy and Memories group on FaceBook. For more information, go to www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2282361 and click the orange "Search this Cemetery" button. You can also do a Google search for "Historic Presbyterian Cemetery by C. Lee Berry." Finally, may all there and all here rest well and rest in peace.

~ By Don Everett Smith Jr.

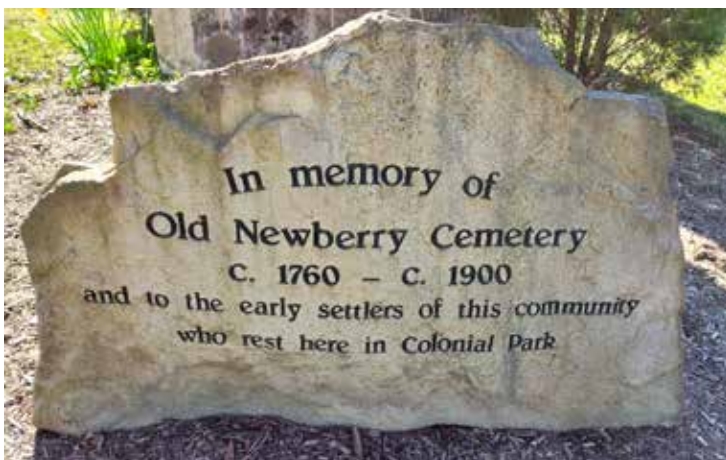
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WEDNESDAY, 9/11 – Patriot Day (Observance)
SUNDAY, 9/22 – September Equinox

Newberry Community Partnership would like to thank the Polish Club for their continued support of our organization and all the good things they do for the residents of Newberry, Jaysburg, and the City of Williamsport.



Polish Club

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