

# Harrison trustees restoring local cemeteries

By Ryan Peverly

R-H Staff Writer

[rpeverly@registerherald.com](mailto:rpeverly@registerherald.com)

Harrison Township trustees recently began an \$80,000 cemetery restoration project, which started at Lewisburg's Roselawn Cemetery nearly two weeks ago.

Stonehugger Cemetery Restoration of Nashville, Indiana will be restoring 93 stones at Roselawn, 135 in Verona, and will move to work on an unknown number of stones in lower Lewisburg this fall.

"We looked into this back in 2006, but didn't have the money right away. We've been saving the money, which we acquired through a stone restoration levy back in 1996. We're glad to be doing this," said Rick Prater, president of Harrison Township trustees. "It's just the right thing to do, because the deceased have no one to speak for them."

"This means everything. This a record of family history, and of local and community history. This cemetery is very important to the history of Preble County," said Brenda Mezz, a member of Preble County Genealogical Society.

"It's wonderful, this restoration, because a lot of cemeteries around here are in terrible shape."

Lewisburg was one of the first areas settled in Preble County, and some of the stones in Roselawn date back to the early 1800s, including gravesites of soldiers from the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, and that of Henry Horn, founder of Lewisburg.



**Harrison Township trustees John Hasbrook, Rick Prater, and Dave Norvell watch workers from Stonehugger Cemetery Restoration work on a gravesite at Roselawn Cemetery in Lewisburg on Thursday, May 6. (Ryan Peverly photo)**

"This is their history. If you lose this, you lose the stories, the values these people brought to this area. It's a thread that goes through time, and if you stop caring about this, then you stop caring about your community.

"You would have lost part of history that you

won't get back," said Stonehugger owner Helen Wildermuth.

"When you're younger these things don't mean much to you, but it starts to sink in when you get older. We want to preserve things for these families and for our local history," Prater added.