

What Does the Farley Center/Natural Path Sanctuary Mean to Me?

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HONORABLE MENTION

Peace, comfort, respect for the environment, honoring the ancestors, are just some of the ideas that come to me when I think of Natural Path Sanctuary.

My husband, Jim Harvey, is interred at NPS, overlooking the gardens. He would have loved this spot for his resting place, as he was an organic vegetable gardener himself when I met him. And he always said that he wanted me next to him, so, upon his death, I purchased the plot next to his. I can't think of a better place to be. Thinking of it now, a feeling of deep peace comes over me.

On the community level, I love how the gardens are integral to NPS and how one feeds the other. Combine that level of financial integration with environmental sustainability and it jumps right to the top of an idea that we both wanted to support!

When I was ready to write the check for Jim's burial plot, I asked him if he was sure this natural burial was what he wanted. He replied, "Everything I am has come from the earth. It's time to give back." When we lowered his body into the earth that cold day in January 2014, with the drums going and several friends standing around his grave site, his spirit birds flew high in the sky between the trees in the north and the sun broke through a small slit in the clouds. We all felt his blessings.

For the first year following Jim's death I visited NPS every month, made photographs of his burial plot and the beauty surrounding his spot. I wrote some of my reflections and paired them with the photos and was able to share it all in a small book that I gave to his brother who had been unable to visit in person. It brings me comfort now to look at those pictures and remember his place in the earth. One of the last times I visited, I noticed that wild flowers had sprung up on his grave.

Having easy access to such a beautiful, natural site gives me great pleasure even now, seven years later. I plan to make another pilgrimage soon!