

## Your Community

# Keep Martin Beautiful to clean up Gomez Cemetery

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PALM CITY — For Lloyd Jones, the Great American Clean Up Project in the Gomez cemetery on Saturday, March 11, is very personal.

"My father, Isaiah Lewis Jones, was a Korean War veteran. He died when I was only 3 years old," Jones says. "I was devastated. Every Memorial Day I would go with my family to the cemetery on Gomez Street to honor his memory and clean his gravesite. I tell my friends, 'When you go to the Allen Temple A.M.E. Church Gomez Cemetery with me, you may at times be talking to a grieving child.'"

Over the decades, the graveyard at the Allen Temple A.M.E. Church in Hobe Sound has become covered with overgrown brush and weeds. Some of the grave markers have fallen over, and some are almost impossible to read.

"We owe it to the residents of Kingsley Street and to our pioneers to restore respect to this neighborhood and to increase awareness and dignity for the pioneers resting in the Gomez Cemetery. It is our duty to preserve history," Jones says. He and Pastor James Givens of the



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The historic Gomez Cemetery in Hobe Sound is the site of a community cleanup under the auspices of Keep Martin Beautiful on March 11. Volunteers will cut away overgrown brush that currently covers the graves of members of some of the pioneer families of Hobe Sound.

A.M.E. Church are leading the effort to clean up the cemetery as part of Keep Martin Beautiful activities and the Great American Clean Up. They call it "The Moses Project."

Creech Engineering is helping with the project by using sonar technology to

determine the location of burial sites that are not obvious from observation of the grounds. The earliest date noticed in the cemetery is 1869, making this a unique cultural heritage site. With the help of families who are long-time residents of Hobe Sound, Jones and church

officials hope to construct a more accurate record of who is buried in the cemetery.

"Some of the streets in this part of Hobe Sound are named for pioneer families like the Pettways, Williams, Paige, Dennie, Haslom, and Savage families," Jones says. "We want to return their memory to our community and honor them for all they did during their lifetimes."

Many local groups and businesses are pitching in to help with the restoration, including Bowman Consulting, Jenkins Landscaping and Creech Engineering.

"I want my kids to know their grandfather, and I'm sure this is true of many of the families in this area," Jones concludes. "This is a tremendous opportunity to do right by those who came before us, to get to know them as people, and to work together as a community."

The Clean Up activities begins at 10 a.m. on March 11 at the site at the west end of Kingsley Street off of Gomez Avenue in Hobe Sound.

For more information, go to [facebook.com/KeepMartinBeautiful](https://facebook.com/KeepMartinBeautiful), on Twitter at [twitter.com/KMBmartin](https://twitter.com/KMBmartin) or [KeepMartinBeautiful.org](https://KeepMartinBeautiful.org) or call 772-781-1222.