

## THE IOWA PHOTO

## Time for one more



"I was making my way along Ivanhoe Road near Ely on Oct. 12 after driving the length of the road to Highway 1 and back west," Gazette photojournalist Jim Slosiarek says. "I felt pretty good with the photos of pipeline signs, which were the reason for my drive, and the double rainbow that appeared as a light rain dissipated. I had also photographed cloud formations that were on fire, lit by the setting sun. I initially drove past the scene of the tractor pulling the grain cart, thinking how many fiery photos do I need? But the drive to not let a good photo pass me by got the best of me, and I pulled my car to the side of the gravel and climbed outside."

## Couple hopes sculpture helps families grieving after loss

By Mary Loden,  
Mason City Globe Gazette

MASON CITY — A new Lullaby Lane sculpture at Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery in Mason City was dedicated recently by Kyle and Kristi Easley.

The sculpture was a way to honor their second child, who was stillborn, and a way to bring comfort and peace to other parents experiencing the same loss.

Kyle said he and his wife couldn't have gotten through the pain without the emotional support of other families dealing with infant loss, and he has learned a lot along the way.

"I found the best way to deal with grief is to do things to help people or to honor those that have gone," he said. "The challenge with this is how do you honor someone you never got to know. A life that never had a chance. It was something I struggled with."

While visiting his daughter's grave last year, Easley said he was just looking over the area surrounding Lullaby Lane, a dedicated section for child in-



Karen Byrne (wearing hat) stops at a headstone as she leads the History Walk in Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery in Mason City. A new Lullaby Lane sculpture at Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery in Mason City was dedicated recently by Kyle and Kristi Easley. (Mary Loden/Globe-Gazette via AP)

terment, when inspiration hit.

Having a deep appreciation for art and having worked with Mason City's Sculptures On Parade as a member of the park board, he thought, "What if I bought a sculpture and donated it to the cemetery?"

The process of finding the right sculpture took many months of flipping through an

inventory of pieces and working closely with Robin Anderson, head of the Sculptures On Parade Committee.

"We were trying to figure out a piece that was meaningful and fit the space," Easley told the Mason City Globe Gazette. "We felt we were looking for something fun and child-like."

The Easleys had almost given up and thought they might have to commission an artist when one last look through the book provided them the answer.

"Kristi got this gleam in her eye and we instantly knew this would be perfect," Easley said.

The sculpture, titled "Arc of Peace," is the work of Lorri Acott, a Colorado artist.

The sculpture was on tour in Sioux Falls, S.D., when Anderson inquired about it. The Easleys had hoped to buy it and have it in place by Memorial Day this year. After a few delays the family learned that when the artist found out what the Easleys wanted to do with it, she was so touched she recast the sculpture.

Country Landscapes donated a limestone base, and a bronze plaque was made by Le Doux signs in Mason City.

Then the weather had to cooperate to finish the landscaping.

After talking to Tyler Anderson, Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery manager who's experienced infant loss himself, Easley said they decided to have the sculpture dedication

in October to coincide with National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month.

The story behind "Arc of Peace" held special meaning to the Easleys. The piece was partially inspired by the Japanese story of 1,000 paper cranes. It is the story of a young girl who developed leukemia from the radiation caused by the atomic bombs dropped during World War II.

The girl had been told if she folded these cranes she would be granted one wish. Her wish was to live. The girl made it only to 644 cranes before she died, and her family and friends finished her work for her.

Easley said when he read the story he broke down and cried because his best friend had a very aggressive form of leukemia and died last year.

"He did everything he could. He just wanted to live. That was my sign," Easley said.

"I've always believed loved ones who are gone are still with us," Easley said. "She (his daughter) is in good hands in heaven. She's with my friend."

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