



## Forest Lawn Docent Training 2012 Syllabus

**Objective:** At the end of this training, all docent trainees will have gained knowledge of the basic history of Forest Lawn and, through that knowledge, a better understanding of Buffalo's place in history. Participants will be trained in both the Basic History Walking Tour and the Saturday Walking Tour. The Basic History Tour is offered to school groups and other groups as requested and is given on an as-needed basis; it consists of approximately 40 stops and takes approximately 1.5 - 2 hours. The Saturday Tour, which is approximately 1.5 hours in length, is given every Saturday, June – October, and consists of approximately 20 stops.

**Course Overview:** Classes will be held for six (6) consecutive weeks starting April 14, 2012 and ending May 19, 2012. Classes start promptly at 9:30 a.m. and end by 12:30 pm. All classes will be held in the Chapel at Forest Lawn and on the grounds. Tours will be held regardless of weather; please dress appropriately.

### Weekly Assignments:

- Each class will begin with a brief discussion of the previous week's lecture. Following the discussion, each trainee will give a brief mini presentation. Each trainee will be assigned a topic for the mini presentation during the prior class.
- All trainees are expected to have a basic understanding of the history of Buffalo. It is highly recommended all trainees read one of Mark Goldman's books: *High Hopes: The Rise and Decline of Buffalo, New York* or *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York*

### Booklist:

All trainees will receive a copy of the following books, to be used as resources for mini presentations. Trainees are not limited to these resources, but they provide a good basis from which to start researching stops on the tours.

- *A Field Guide to Forest Lawn* by Richard O. Reisman
- *A Visit to Forest Lawn Educator's Handbook* by Donna S. Percy

**Missed Class Policy:** Trainees are required to attend all classes; however, if for some unforeseen reason a trainee cannot attend one class, the trainee is required to contact Sandy Starks as soon as possible to arrange a make-up class and receive homework assignments. If more than one class is missed, the trainee will not be eligible to become a docent this year, but will be encouraged to sign up for duties that pertain to event assistance and other volunteer opportunities.

Sandy can be contacted at 885-1606 ext. 302 or [sstarks@forest-lawn.com](mailto:ssstarks@forest-lawn.com)

**NOTE REGARDING TABLING:** New docents are strongly encouraged to volunteer for tabling opportunities as they arise. A separate training session will be scheduled for docents and other volunteers interested in tabling.



## **Basic History Tour – All meetings will be at the Forest Lawn Chapel**

Note: Schedule is subject to change

### **April 14 - Welcome to Class!**

Program:

9:30 – Introductions, Syllabus Review, Tip of the Week

10:00– Lecture: The History of Forest Lawn – Pat Kavanagh

-Review of Interpretive Program and Community Connections – Sandy Starks

11:30 – Approximately 10 stops of Basic History Tour, starting at Delaware/  
Delavan Gate

Think about the following question:

*Why did you choose to become a docent at Forest Lawn?*

### **April 21**

Homework Due Today: Mini Presentations – To be assigned at previous class

Program:

9:30 – Mini Presentations, Tip of the Week

10:30 – Rural Cemetery Movement Overview – Peter Filim

Docent Dos and Don'ts – Sandy Starks

11:30 – Approximately 10 stops of Basic History Tour, starting at Firemen's  
Memorial

Think about the following question:

*How does Buffalo's history tie in to the history of Forest Lawn?*

### **April 28**

Homework Due Today: Mini Presentations – To be assigned at previous class

Program:

9:30 – Mini Presentations, Tip of the Week

10:30 –11:30 - Epitaphs and Symbolism –Peter Filim

11:30 – Approximately 10 stops of Basic History Tour, starting at Mirror Lake

Think about the following question:

*Why is understanding symbolism important for giving a good tour at Forest Lawn*



## May 5

Homework Due Today: Mini Presentations – To be assigned at previous class

Program:

9:30 – Mini Presentations, Tip of the Week

10:30 - Emergency Procedures & Volunteer policies, Lesa Whitlow  
- Wearing the Green Shirt, Nancy Cardillo

11:30 – Last 10 stops of Basic History Tour, starting at Verdi Cenotaph

Think about the following question:

*What will be my role as an ambassador to Forest Lawn?*

## May 12

Homework Due Today: Mini Presentations – To be assigned at previous class

9:30 – Full Basic History Tour - **NOTE: Class will begin at Delaware Gate**

11am – Mini Presentations, Graduation Tour Discussion, Tip of the Week

11:30 – Main Street Gatehouses – Peter Filim 1<sup>st</sup> half of Saturday Tour

Think about the following question:

*What skills do I need to develop to become a good docent?*

## May 19

Homework Due Today: Mini Presentations – To be assigned at previous class

Program:

9:30 – Mini Presentations, Introduction to Advanced Tours

11am – Lecture – 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Saturday Tour

11:30 – 2nd half of Saturday Tour starting at Main Street Gate

12:30 – End of class; lunch courtesy of Forest Lawn

Think about the following question:

*How can Forest Lawn be used in education today?*