IPhysicist, Isaac Newton told us for every action and opposite reaction. That observation certainly applies to the inspirational response to last week’s horrible desecration of the Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery in University City.

As the shock and revulsion over the vandalism spread, the Jewish community and St. Louisians in general mobilized. Hundreds of volunteers flocked to the cemetery to do everything possible to repair and restore the historic resting place for thousands of loved ones of present and former members of our local Jewish community.

Within this army of volunteers, including Jews, Christians, Muslims, pitched in to set aright nearly all of the scores gravestones that had been toppled. The stones still need to be secured, and the broken ones will need to be replaced, but for the most part order was restored.

Philip Weiss, owner of the Weiss and Rosenbloom monument companies, generously donated time, staff and expertise to ensure the stones were replaced properly. Vice President Mike Pence, who was in the St. Louis for another event, joined Gov. Eric Greitens and hundreds of others last Wednesday in the cleanup efforts, with Jews and non-Jews working side by side to scrub headstones, rake leaves and help the revered cemetery recover.

Financially, the response was overwhelming as well. The Jewish Federation of St. Louis, the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish Community Relations Council, and other groups mobilized a response that included a substantial sum pledged by a Muslim-American group, many times the amount that was expected.

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Another sad after-effect of the U. City desecration was similar comments from non-Jews. Fortunately, Newton’s laws could not foresee the kind of negative reactions that actions like the cemetery vandalism can bring as well.