



Board of County Commissioners

County of Hunterdon
71 Main Street, Building #1
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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: October 27, 2021

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Hunterdon County Commissioners Host Veteran Headstone Cleaning Event With Non-Profit, 'By Memorial Day'

The Hunterdon County Board of Commissioners hosted a Veteran Headstone Cleaning event this past Saturday with Trae Zipperer, Navy Veteran and founder of the non-profit group, 'By Memorial Day', to appropriately clean Veteran headstones at the Prospect Hill Cemetery in Flemington, Director Susan J. Soloway reported.

Director Soloway, Veteran's liaison for the Board, said, "We had over twenty participants on Saturday, some as young as six, and everyone there wanted to respectfully clean a Veteran's headstone. Trae taught us about the Federal protocol for Veteran headstone cleaning and how this process is a way for all of us to honor those who served the nation at their final resting place."

The 'By Memorial Day' non-profit organization has a goal to clean and care for every Veteran headstone across the county.

Trae Zipperer, the non-profit founder, pointed out in discussing the protocol for proper headstone cleaning, "that if a little less than 2% of the American population agreed to clean one headstone of a Veteran, every Veteran gravestone would have the proper care it deserves. Cleaning headstones is a simple process, and anyone who would like to do this should check with their local cemetery and ask for permission before cleaning Veteran headstones."

Soloway said, "We are honored that Trae traveled all the way up from Florida to show us how to clean the headstones properly. As the first county to contact 'By Memorial Day' and organize a community cleaning event, we hope to be a catalyst for other counties to make headstone cleaning a recurring calendar event as our way of saying 'thank you' to our Veterans."

Commissioner Zachary T. Rich, co-Veteran's liaison for the Board, said, "Watching the headstone cleaning process, where the stone returns to its original color after being covered in algae for many years, was rewarding."



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Listening to Trae tell a story about the Veteran who was buried under the headstone he cleaned, and recognizing that there is a person, with a life story, connected to that headstone, changes the perspective. From that moment on it becomes an obligation as an American to take better care of these headstones.”

To learn more about ‘By Memorial Day,’ click [here](#). To watch ‘By Memorial Day’ videos, click [here](#).

For a printed copy of the headstone cleaning protocol, future event information or supplies needed to clean a Veteran headstone, please email rcass@co.hunterdon.nj.us.