

Families upset by sudden removal of memorials from veterans cemetery in Maryland

<https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/families-upset-removal-memorials-maryland-veterans-cemetery/3894946/>

Anyone who has someone buried at Veterans Cemetery - Cheltenham

It was requested we inform our members:

Sunday, we went to my grandparent's grave to find that a memorial bench the family purchased was missing. It is always 4 rows in front of the grave near the pathway. I noticed many other benches in the same area were missing.

Monday, I called Cheltenham to find out the VA-Federal level came in to complete an inspection and notified Cheltenham that all memorial benches and vases needed to be removed. The cemetery is only allowed to have ONE memorial for the veteran/family, which is the headstone.

Because our bench was considered a second memorial they removed it. They removed the Bench with our placard that was specifically made for It.

So, when I said removed it, Cheltenham brought in a roll back, loaded benches and took them to a dump somewhere.

No family was notified, no signs were placed to let people know what was happening.

Our section (A) was the first section to go for benches.

Supervisor Ward at Cheltenham apologized many times and wanted to make it very clear this was NOT the state level it was the Federal level making these decisions.

I questioned them about my FIL's vase and he noted he didn't have a timeline, but they were going to be removed as well. The family made arrangements with Cheltenham to have the vase removed and it was handed over to family today.

Mind you, these benches and vases are not free, family paid for these to be placed.

I'm spreading the word, as I do not want anyone to drive to their family members site to find their bench or vase missing like I did.

Because It hurt!!

So, if you or know someone that has a bench or vase at Cheltenham, please let them know, they can call Cheltenham to obtain the bench and/or vase IF it has not already been removed and thrown out.

Mr. Ward can be reached at 301-372-6398

If anyone has additional information or updates, please let me know.