

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs****News Release**Office of Public Affairs
Media RelationsWashington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.govFOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 16, 2015

VA Opens Tallahassee National Cemetery

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced the opening of the 133rd national cemetery with ceremonial first burials taking place Oct. 16, 2015 at the Tallahassee National Cemetery.

“With the opening of this new national shrine, thousands of Florida Veterans, their spouses and dependents will have interment options available nearby, in a setting that is worthy of their service,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. “Providing lasting tributes to their sacrifices is one of VA’s most honorable missions, and one we are proud to fulfill.”

The new 250-acre VA national cemetery in Leon County will serve the burial needs of more than 83,000 Veterans for the next 100 years. The property, located at 5015 Apalachee Parkway, with frontage along U.S. Highway 27 near March Road, was purchased for \$6.8 million in August 2012.

VA awarded a construction contract Sept. 25, 2014 to C&C Contractors and issued a notice to begin construction Oct. 15, 2014. The initial phase of construction is planned to provide burial options for 10 years. VA has completed a 20-acre early burial area, including 3,000 gravesites for casket and cremain interments, with temporary administrative and maintenance facilities.

This will be followed by a second, larger construction stage of the project and when complete will provide 7,720 full-casket gravesites, including 3,600 pre-placed crypts, 2,200 in-ground cremation sites and 1,920 columbarium niches.

The new cemetery will also include an administration and public information center complex, public restrooms, a maintenance facility, a cemetery entrance area, a flag assembly area and committal shelters for funeral services. Other infrastructure design elements include roadways, landscaping, utilities and irrigation.

- More -

Tallahassee National Cemetery Opens

The state's other VA national cemeteries in Florida are: Barrancas (Pensacola), Bay Pines, Florida National (Bushnell), Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Sarasota, South Florida (Lake Worth) and the soon to open Cape Canaveral (Mims) national cemetery.

Burial in a national cemetery is open to all members of the armed forces, and Veterans who have met minimum active duty service requirements, and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. Their spouse, widow, or widower, minor children, and, under certain conditions, unmarried adult children with disabilities, may also be eligible for burial. Eligible spouses and children may be buried even if they predecease the Veteran. Members of the reserve components of the armed forces who die while on active duty or who die while on training duty, or were eligible for retired pay, may also be eligible for burial.

In the midst of the largest expansion since the Civil War, VA operates 133 national cemeteries, one national Veterans burial ground and 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites in 40 states and Puerto Rico. More than 4 million Americans, including Veterans of every U.S. war and conflict, are buried in VA's national cemeteries. VA also provides funding to establish, expand, improve, and maintain 95 Veterans cemeteries in 47 states and territories including tribal trust lands, Guam, and Saipan. For Veterans not buried in a VA national cemetery, VA provides headstones, markers or medallions for placement in private cemeteries. In 2014, VA honored more than 356,000 Veterans and their loved ones with memorial benefits in national, state, tribal and private cemeteries.

Information on VA burial benefits can be obtained from national cemetery offices, from the Internet at www.cem.va.gov or by calling VA district offices toll-free at (800) 827-1000.

For information on Tallahassee National Cemetery, call the cemetery office directly at (850) 402-8941. To make burial arrangements at the time of need, call the national cemetery scheduling office at (800) 535-1117.

#