

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Omaha National Cemetery
14250 Schram Road
Omaha, NE 68138
402-413-9121

Media Advisory

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jessica Schiefer

202-632-8025 / 202-360-7138

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VA to Dedicate Omaha National Cemetery

What: The Department of Veterans Affairs will formally dedicate the Omaha National Cemetery at 10 a.m. on Friday, August 5, 2016 at the SumTur Amphitheater in Papillion, NE. The ceremony will include remarks by VA and elected officials, the unveiling of the dedication plaque and military honors. **The ceremony is open to the public.**

Who: Speakers will include:

- Keynote speech by Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald
- Interim Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Ronald E. Walters
- Omaha National Cemetery Director Cindy Van Bibber
- Master of Ceremonies, Rob McCartney, KETV Omaha
- Elected Officials from Nebraska and Iowa

Participation will include:

- USAF Heartland of American Band – Musical Prelude
- Offutt Air Force Base Joint Color Guard- Presentation of Colors
- Nebraska Army National Guard –Rifle Salute
- USAF Heartland of America Band—National Anthem & Taps
- Shane Van Dorin, Chaplain Omaha VAMC—Prayer of Dedication
- James Skaja, Veteran – Pledge of Allegiance

When: Friday, August 5, 2016 at 10 a.m.

Where: The SumTur Amphitheater, 11691 S 108th St., Papillion, NE 68046

Parking: Parking for the general public is available at the LaVista-Papillion High School.
*Mobility impaired users with handicap tags will have special parking at SumTur.
**Media parking is available on-site, but pre-registration is required.

VA will offer the media opportunities to:

- Promote the important public event.
- Explain how to arrange burial in a national cemetery.
- Explain eligibility for Veterans, spouses and family members.
- Attend the ceremony rehearsal.
- Interview dedication ceremony participants and attendees.
- Showcase employment opportunities.

Contact: Jessica Schiefer, Jessica.Schiefer@va.gov (202) 632-8025 or (202) 360-7138

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Background:

The new 236-acre cemetery will serve the burial needs of more than 112,000 Veterans in the cemetery's service area for the next 100 years.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) purchased the land for the cemetery in December 2012 for \$6 million. The property is located along South 144th St. (Highway 50), at 14250 Schram Road in Sarpy County. The cemetery will serve Veterans, spouses, and eligible dependents in eastern Nebraska and western Iowa not currently served with an open national, state or tribal Veterans cemetery within 75 miles of their residence. The closest national cemetery is Leavenworth National Cemetery located in Leavenworth, Kan., approximately 180 miles away.

VA awarded the architect and engineering contract to Vireo Planning & Design of Omaha, and the construction contract to Archer Western Construction. Plans for the initial phase of the cemetery will develop approximately 35 acres of land that will include pre-placed crypts, columbarium niches, in-ground niches, a scattering garden, ossuary, administration building and other supporting infrastructure elements. The cemetery's first phase will provide for approximately 10 years of burials.

Burial in a national cemetery is open to all members of the armed forces who have met a minimum active duty service requirement and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. 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. A Veteran's spouse, widow or widower, minor dependent 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.

In the midst of the largest expansion since the Civil War, VA operates 134 national cemeteries and 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites in 40 states and Puerto Rico. More than 4 million Americans, including Veterans of every war and conflict, are buried in VA's national cemeteries. VA also provides funding to establish, expand, improve, and maintain 100 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 to commemorate their service. In 2015, VA honored more than 353,000 Veterans and their loved ones with memorial benefits in national, state, tribal and private cemeteries.

For information on VA burial benefits, visit www.cem.va.gov or call (800) 827-1000.

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