

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 10, 2009

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Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia establishes memorial garden

AMELIA, VA—Although most veterans receive in-ground burial or in-ground or above-ground inurnment, the Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia also memorializes veterans who have no remains. Until earlier this month, 12 veterans were memorialized with granite markers in the cemeteries memorial garden section, located at the outskirts of the cemetery; however, in early September, with the permission of the families, the memorials were relocated to a more prominent location.

“The existing memorials garden section was to the right of the administration building, bordering the road to the maintenance compound,” said Dan Kemano, Cemeteries Director for the Virginia Department of Veterans Services. “Visitors rarely went into that area of the cemetery, so no one saw the memorials.”

The new location of the memorial garden is at the main cemetery entrance, to the left of the U.S., State, and POW/MIA flags and at the beginning of the scenic woods walkway. Space for 50 memorials has been allocated for the new memorial garden. “This location provides visitors with a view of the chapel, flags, other gardens, and the woods walkway,” pointed out Kemano.

Future plans for the cemetery call for a scatter garden where families can scatter the cremated remains of their loved ones. The woods walkway will be enhanced with additional trees and granite benches donated by family members. Kemano hopes veterans service organizations will eventually donate service-related memorials for placement within the wooded area along the walkway. “We want the woods walkway to be a peaceful place where families and friends can come for reflection,” said Kemano.

The Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia is one of two state-operated veterans cemeteries. A second cemetery, the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery is located in Suffolk. A third

cemetery, located in Dublin, is in the early phase of construction. The cemeteries are operated by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services.

Service members who were honorably discharged qualify for burial in one of Virginia's veterans cemeteries. A grave site, opening and closing of the grave for the veteran, placement of a government grave marker, and perpetual care of the site are provided to the veteran at no charge. Veterans' spouses and eligible dependent children may be interred for a small fee, currently \$300.

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