

## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 16, 2012

Contact: Anne Atkins  
(804) 371-0441

### ***October 23 ceremony at state veterans cemetery to mark grant award; funding will provide outer burial containers to veterans at no cost.***

To celebrate award of a \$3.3M grant, the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) will hold a check presentation and groundbreaking ceremony at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery on October 23, 2012 at 10 a.m.

David Schettler, Deputy Undersecretary for Management, National Cemetery Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, will present Paul Galanti, DVS Commissioner with a ceremonial check. The grant funds will be used to retrofit the cemetery with pre-installed double depth outer burial containers. Outer burial containers, also known as crypts, house the casket, protecting it from the elements.

“Pre-installation of outer burial containers will bring the benefits offered by Virginia’s state veterans cemeteries in line with those offered by national veterans cemeteries, such as Quantico and Culpeper,” explained Commissioner Galanti. “Federal cemeteries provide outer burial containers to veterans at no cost, and now Virginia will be able to offer veterans the same benefit,” Galanti added.

Currently, veterans may pay between \$400 and \$1200 for an outer burial container. Virginia’s newest state-operated veterans cemetery, the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, opened in 2011 and was constructed with pre-installed outer burial containers. The Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia and the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk, which opened in 1997 and 2004, respectively, were not constructed with pre-installed outer burial containers. To make the three cemeteries as uniform as possible while waiting for a federal grant award to retrofit

the older cemeteries, DVS began providing outer burial containers in the Amelia and Suffolk cemeteries at cost, for \$400. However, once outer burial containers are installed at the Amelia and Suffolk cemeteries, there will be no charge for the pre-installed containers.

Construction to install the outer burial containers is expected to begin in mid November, and DVS expects to begin using the pre-installed containers by late spring or early summer 2013.

DVS operates three veterans cemeteries: the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Cemetery, located in Suffolk; the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia; and the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin. Each cemetery features gardens for in-ground full casketed and cremation burials, columbariums for above-ground cremation burials, memorial gardens, and scatter garden areas.

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, placement of a 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.

###