

# SOUTHWEST REGION TRIBAL SUMMIT

OFFICE OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENT  
RELATIONS

APRIL 24-26, 2012



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# NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

- ▣ Department of Veterans Affairs
  - Veterans Health Administration
  - Veterans Benefits Administration
  - National Cemetery Administration
- ▣ Mission
  - Honor Veterans with a final resting places in national shrines.
  - Provide lasting tributes that commemorate their service to our Nation.

# NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

## ▣ NCA Statistics

- 3.1 million gravesites at 131 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico.
- 340,000 full-casket gravesites, 93,000 in-ground gravesites for cremated remains and 111,000 columbarium niches
- Since 1973, annual interments in VA national cemeteries have increased by more than 200 percent,
- Oldest National Cemetery: 14 established in 1862 (12 are currently maintained by VA).
- Since 1973, NCA has furnished nearly 11 million headstones and markers.
- 14 percent of U.S. Veterans chose to be buried in a national or state Veterans cemetery in FY 2010.

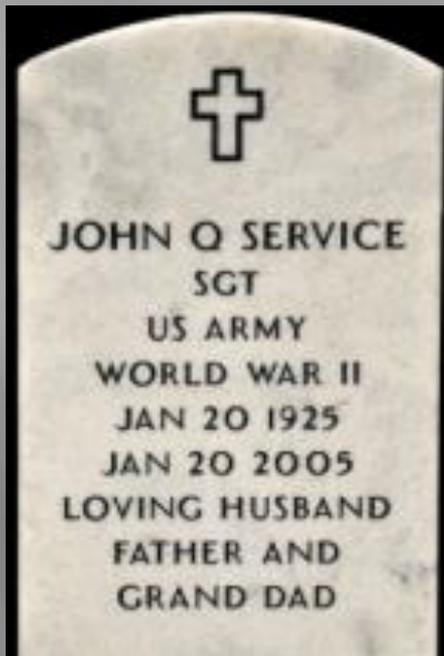
# BURIAL BENEFITS

- ▣ Gravesite in any of our 131 National Cemeteries
- ▣ Opening and closing of the grave
- ▣ Perpetual care
- ▣ Government headstone or marker
- ▣ Presidential Memorial Certificate
- ▣ Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran.
- ▣ National Cemetery Scheduling Office [1-800-535-1117](tel:1-800-535-1117).

# HEADSTONE OR MARKER

- ▣ No charge to the applicant
- ▣ For the unmarked grave of any deceased eligible veteran
- ▣ Graves that are marked with a private headstone or marker.
- ▣ Ordered by the cemetery officials, funeral home or next of kin.
- ▣ Spouses and dependents are not eligible.

# HEADSTONE OR MARKER



- ❑ Application available on line at <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/va/pdf/VA40-1330.pdf>
- ❑ FAX applications to 1-800-455-7143.
- ❑ MAIL applications to:  
Memorial Programs Service (41A1)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
5109 Russell Road Quantico, VA 22134-3903

# BRONZE MEDALLIONS

- ▣ Medallion in lieu of a traditional headstone or marker.
- ▣ Veterans that died on or after November 1, 1990.
- ▣ Available in three sizes, 5 inches, 3 inches, and 1-1/2 inches.
- ▣ "VETERAN" across the top and the Branch of Service at the bottom.
- ▣ Appropriate affixing adhesive, instructions and hardware are provided with the medallion.

# BRONZE MEDALLIONS

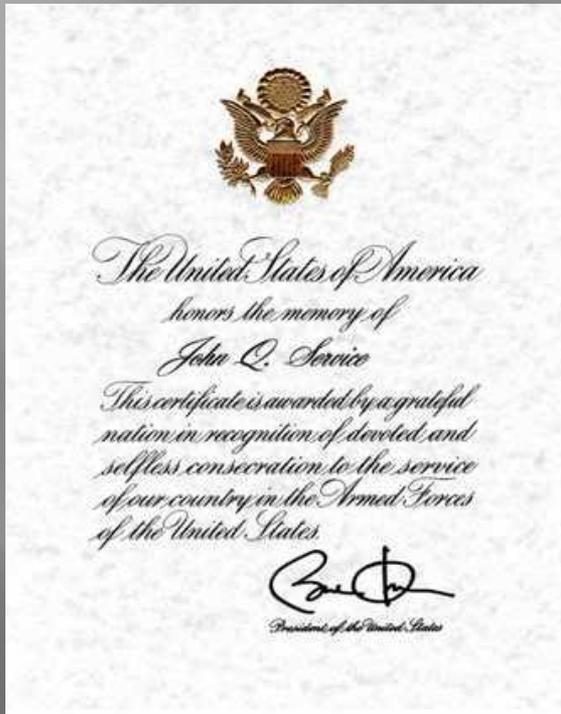
- ▣ Apply on NCA's web site at [www.cem.va.gov/hm\\_hm.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/hm_hm.asp).



# Presidential Memorial Certificates

- ▣ Engraved paper certificate, signed by the current President
- ▣ Initiated in March 1962 by President John F. Kennedy
- ▣ Eligible recipients include the next of kin and loved ones of honorably discharged deceased Veterans.
- ▣ More than one certificate may be provided.

# Presidential Memorial Certificates



- Application available on line at <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/va/pdf/VA40-0247.pdf>
- FAX applications to 1-800-455-7143.
- MAIL applications to:  
Presidential Memorial Certificates (41A1C)  
National Cemetery Administration  
5109 Russell Road Quantico, VA 22134-3903

# First Notice of Death Office

“By entering FNOD information, cancelling compensation payments, and communicating with family members. The FNOD program ensures overpayments of compensation are reduced or eliminated, family members receive timely and accurate information concerning possible entitlement to survivor benefits ,and medical appointments for deceased veterans are cancelled, thereby freeing up time and resources to serve other veterans.”

## FY 2011– 639,765 NODs Processed

362,518 Flag Applications  
85,485 NCA Burial Records  
123,144 Headstone/Marker Records  
68,618 Insurance Records

FY 2011 – \$39.1 million in overpayments avoided through timely processing of Veterans' Notice of Death

# Veterans Cemetery Grant Service (VCGS)

- ▣ Established in 1978 to complement VA's NCA
- ▣ VA seeks to provide Veterans cemetery within 75 miles of 90 % of the country's Veterans.
- ▣ Program helped establish, expand, or improve 86 Veterans cemeteries in 41 states and territories.
- ▣ Provided more than 29,000 burials in 2011.
- ▣ VA has awarded grants totaling more than \$438 million.

# Tribal Government Grants Final Rule

## Public Law 109-461

Sec. 403. Eligibility of Indian tribal organizations for grants for the establishment of veterans cemeteries on trust lands.

# Tribal Government Grants

- ▣ Awarded in the same manner as states
- ▣ 565 Federally-recognized Tribal Governments
- ▣ Opportunity to serve more Veterans
- ▣ Addressing Cultural Difference

# Grant Requirements

- ▣ Granted only to states, federally recognized tribal government, or U.S. territories.
- ▣ 100% of the development cost for an approved project.
- ▣ VA can provide for operating equipment for new cemeteries.
- ▣ VA does not provide for acquisition of land.
- ▣ Tribal governments cemeteries must be on tribal trust land
- ▣ Must conform to NCA standards and guidelines for site selection, planning and construction.

# Grant Requirements

- ▣ Cemetery must conform to NCA standards and guidelines for site selection, planning and construction.
- ▣ The land can only be used for cemetery purposes.
- ▣ The cemetery should consider a 50 year life span at minimum
- ▣ Develops in 10 year increments
- ▣ VA can provide for operating equipment for new cemeteries.

# Operations and Maintenance

- ▣ Cemeteries must be operated solely for the burial of service members who die on active duty, veterans, and their eligible spouses and dependent children
- ▣ Maintained and operated according to the operational standards and measures of NCA
- ▣ Administration, operation, and maintenance is solely the responsibility of the state, territory or tribal government.
- ▣ Plot or interment allowance \$700 administered by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

# Grants Process

- ▣ Submit pre-application through grants.gov by July 1<sup>st</sup> .
- ▣ Upon receipt VCGS will issue a viability letter to the applicant explaining next steps.
- ▣ Grant Opportunity can be searched using (CFDA) Number 64.203, [www.federalgrants.com](http://www.federalgrants.com).
- ▣ To receive the highest consideration the pre-application must include Certification of State or Tribal Matching Funds and State or Tribal Legislation supporting the project.

# Matching Funds and Legislation

## ▣ Matching Funds

- 10% of the estimated grant amount.
- Used to develop plans, drawings, and specifications.
- Reimbursable at the time of grant award.
- VA Form 40-0895-6 located on internet  
<http://www.va.gov/vaforms/va/pdf/VA40-0895-6.pdf>.

## ▣ Legislation

- Commitment to own, operate and maintain a Veterans Cemetery in accordance with NCA Guidelines.

# Project Priority Groups

- ▣ Priority 1 - Projects for gravesite expansion or improvements that are needed to continue service at an existing veterans cemetery.
- ▣ Priority 2 - Projects for the establishment of new cemeteries.
- ▣ Priority 3 - Planned phased gravesite developments prior to need.
- ▣ Priority 4 - Other improvements to cemetery that are not directly related to the development of new gravesites including O&M projects.

# Selection Final Application and Award

- ▣ Funding based on ranking and budget.
- ▣ Opportunity letters sent to highest ranking projects first week of October.
- ▣ Construction documents May 15
- ▣ Final application package July 15
- ▣ Funds obligated by September 30

# FY 2012 Priority List

- ▣ 104 Pre-Applications - value \$277 M
- ▣ 12 New Cemeteries - with Design Development Funding
- ▣ 5 Tribal Government Pre-Applications
- ▣ 4 Nursing Home Cemeteries
- ▣ 35 Operations and Maintenance projects –
  - Yearly Limitation - \$5M

# 2012 Priority List Ranking of Tribal Government Construction Grants

- ▣ #18 SD-09-02 Oglala Sioux Tribe, Pine Ridge, South Dakota estimated grant \$6 M (offered grant opportunity for 2012)
- ▣ #72 AZ-09-07 Navajo Nation, Chinle, Arizona estimated grant \$9.6M
- ▣ #75 OK-08-01 Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, Pawnee, Oklahoma estimated grant \$1.9M
- ▣ #76 NV-09-12 Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Fallon, Nevada estimated grant \$1.2M
- ▣ #77 CA-08-02 Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians, Tuolumne, California estimated grant \$57,000

# First Tribal Grant Awards in 2011

- ▣ Rosebud Sioux Tribe-Awarded 8.15.11 for \$6,948,365
- ▣ Yurok Tribe-Awarded 9.9.11 for \$3,318,990
- ▣ Pascua Yaqui Tribe-Awarded 9.9.11 for \$322,554

# First Operational Tribal Cemetery Monte Calvario Cemetery Tucson, Arizona



**Pascua Yaqui Tribe**

Dedication: November 11, 2011

Opened: November 11, 2011

# Monte Calvario Cemetery

- ▣ Grant awarded in FY 2011 for \$322,554
- ▣ Existing cemetery, funded Veterans Section of cemetery
- ▣ Grant funded the construction of full casketed gravesites, landscaping, and supporting infrastructure.
- ▣ Provides a burial option to approximately 188 unserved Pascua Yaqui Tribe Veterans and their families.

# Maintenance Options

## Small Facilities

- ❑ The State of Texas provides personnel for the administrative duties and contracts the maintenance and operations portion of the work.
- ❑ Hawaii contracts with the Hawaii Department of Transportation for maintenance and the funeral homes perform services and interments.
- ❑ Puerto Rico will contract with the City of Aguadilla for operations and maintenance.
- ❑ Oglala Sioux Tribe plans to utilize staff from the Oglala Lakota College for maintenance.
- ❑ Rosebud Sioux Tribe plans to utilize existing staff from another department to perform maintenance.

# Operations and Maintenance Grants

- ▣ Leg Up not an on going source of funds.
- ▣ NCA Shrine Standards for Appearance
- ▣ Cleanliness of Headstones, Markers & Niche Covers.
- ▣ Height & Alignment of Headstones & Markers.
- ▣ Leveling Gravesites.
- ▣ Turf Conditions.

# Triennial Reviews

- ▣ On site review of condition, practices and procedure.
- ▣ Conducted by NCA staff from MSN or nearest National
- ▣ Third year and every three years after.
- ▣ Evaluation related to NCA Shrine Standards
- ▣ What happens following the triennial review?
  - Letter identifying areas for improvement.
  - Develop and action plan
  - Grant opportunities.
  - Certificate for achieving shrine standard for appearance.

# VCGS Contact list

- ▣ **Joshua de Leon, Director**  
[joshua.deleon@va.gov](mailto:joshua.deleon@va.gov)  
(202) 632-7369
- ▣ **Howard Orr, Project Manager**  
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(202) 632-7203
- ▣ **Tom Paquelet, Project Manager**  
[thomas.paquelet@va.gov](mailto:thomas.paquelet@va.gov)  
(202) 632-7202
- ▣ **LaQuisha Barnes, Program Specialist**  
[laquisha.barnes@va.gov](mailto:laquisha.barnes@va.gov)  
(202) 632-7201

# NCA Emerging Burial Needs Study

Purpose – To ensure NCA continues to meet the burial and memorial needs of Veterans and their families

- ▣ A proactive approach to identify emerging burial practices that are important to Veterans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- ▣ Assess Veteran satisfaction with:
  - Current national cemetery burial and memorial options
  - Desire for new burial and memorial options currently not offered by VA
- ▣ An important focus will be the needs and expectations of minority Veterans, including Native American Veterans.
  - NCA attendance at VA conferences with Native American Veteran groups throughout the year, including the NCAI conference in Lincoln, NE in June 2012
  - For more information, contact Jeff Potts in NCA Central Office at 202-461-4107 or at [jeffrey.potts@va.gov](mailto:jeffrey.potts@va.gov)

*... “to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan” ...*

