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News Release

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VA dedicates new columbarium at Los Angeles National Cemetery

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) dedicated a new [columbarium](#) Oct. 5 that will double the capacity of [Los Angeles National Cemetery](#) in California.

The remains-only annex will be able to accommodate more than 90,000 Veterans and eligible family members, joining the 90,000 already interred.

“This columbarium will allow a new generation of service members to take their place among our heroes from the past,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “It will allow this historic landmark to tell new stories about how American men and women stood up, answered the call and defended this nation.”

Wilkie provided the keynote address and was joined by Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves, Congressman Ted Lieu, actor Gary Sinise and cemetery director Tom Ruck as the dedication plaque was unveiled. In keeping with the cemetery’s proximity to Hollywood, guests entered the columbarium grounds on a red carpet over which a huge American flag was suspended.

The new columbarium will cover 13 acres of ground on the west side of I-405 directly across from the existing cemetery, which occupies 114 acres on the east side of I-405 in West Los Angeles. It is the first of those to be completed as part of the VA’s Urban Initiative program, which will bring increased burial options to Veterans and their families living in major cities. Urban Initiative columbaria are also planned or under construction in New York, Chicago, Indianapolis and the San Francisco Bay area.

“Veterans who live in this area now have a choice they didn’t have before – a choice to be interred close to home, alongside their fellow soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, in a place that will be cared for by a grateful nation in perpetuity,” added Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves.

Construction on the first phase of the columbarium, covering 4.4 acres of ground, began in September 2017 totaling \$17.38M. The first phase, now completed, provides more than 10,000 columbarium niches for inurnments. Subsequent phases will be completed in coming decades as these spaces fill up, until the final planned capacity of 90,854 niches is reached.

For information on VA burial benefits visit www.cem.va.gov or call 800- 535-1117.

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