

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs

Media Release

Director John E. Lee

Heidi Audette
Communications Director
(360) 725-2154 – office
(360) 791-8966 – cell
heidia@dva.wa.gov
<http://www.dva.wa.gov>



For Immediate Release

Date: July 30, 2009
Contact: Heidi Audette
Phone: 360-725-2154

Washington State Receives Final Grant Approval for Veterans Cemetery in Medical Lake, WA.

Spokane County: The Federal VA State Cemetery Grants Program announced final approval of an \$8.8 million grant to build Washington's first State Veterans Cemetery.

The construction project is expected to bring over 100 jobs to the area and the cemetery will employ a team of eight staff once fully operational.

"These brave men and women risked so much for us, and each and every one deserves to be honored in their final resting place," Gov. Chris Gregoire said. "This is wonderful news for Washington's veterans and their families, as well as for Spokane County's economy."

When complete, the cemetery will provide a needed service for Eastern Washington veterans and families who wish to be interred in a veterans cemetery.

A pre-construction meeting is scheduled this week following the grant approval and official notification that Spokane-based Bouten Construction Company has been selected as the general contractor for the project.

"We are fortunate to be working on this project in Spokane County where local leaders are incredibly passionate about serving veterans and their families," said John Lee, director of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. "Our goal of completing construction in time to dedicate the cemetery on Memorial Day is still in sight because of our partners in Spokane, the Department of General Administration, and a committee of veterans in Medical Lake who have dedicated countless hours to making this dream a reality."

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A ceremony is being planned for September 2, 2009, at the Spokane Regional Business Center when officials from the Federal VA State Cemetery Grant Program will be on-site to formally present the check.

The Federal VA State Cemetery Grant Program provides 100% of the funding needed to build and fully equip veterans cemeteries in areas of the country where veteran populations fall below the threshold for constructing National Veterans Cemeteries. (Washington State is home to one National Cemetery, the Tahoma National Veterans Cemetery in Kent, WA.) When construction is complete, the state assumes responsibility for the Cemetery's ongoing operation and maintenance.

Spokane County was selected because it is home to over 50,000 veterans

More information available at:

http://www.dva.wa.gov/eastern_wa_vet_cemetery.html

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