

# NEWS AND NOTES FOR FLORIDA VETERANS

Veterans Service Center, VA Regional Office  
St. Petersburg, FL



May 2011

The "News and Notes for Florida Veterans" is published monthly by the Veterans Service Center, VA Regional Office, St. Petersburg, Florida, to provide information on VA benefit programs to veterans and dependents in Florida. The material presented does not have the effect of laws or regulations. Please send questions or comments on this newsletter to Veterans Service Center, ATTN: "News and Notes," PO Box 1437, St. Petersburg, FL 33731. We do not have the resources to maintain a mailing list for distribution to individuals; however this newsletter is available on the St. Petersburg VA Regional Office web site at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/stpetersburg/>.

**MEMORIAL DAY**, which is observed on the last Monday of May, commemorates the men and women who died while in the military service. In observance of the holiday, many people visit cemeteries and memorials, and volunteers often place American flags on each grave site at national cemeteries. A national moment of remembrance takes place at 3:00 p.m. local time.

## MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONIES IN FLORIDA

**Barrancas National Cemetery** (Naval Air Station, 80 Hovey Road, Pensacola). On Saturday, May 28, the Boy Scouts will place American flags on the gravesites. The Memorial Day service is on Monday, May 30, at 9:00 AM (Central Time) in the Main Post Chapel. The Guest Speaker will be Captain Christopher Plummer, Commanding Officer, Pensacola Naval Air Station. For information call 850-453-4108.

**Bay Pines National Cemetery** (10,000 Bay Pines Boulevard, St Petersburg) The Memorial Day Service is on Monday, May 30, at 10:00 AM. Shuttle service will be provided from the parking lot to the cemetery. For information call the Bay Pines VA Medical Center Voluntary Service at 727-398-9394.

**Florida National Cemetery** (6502 SW 102nd Avenue Bushnell) The Memorial Day Ceremony begins at 11:00 AM on Monday, May 30, rain or shine. The Guest Speaker will be Brigadier General James S Hartsell, Deputy Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force. Mr. Steve Jerve of WFLA TV News Channel 8 will be the Master of Ceremonies. The Hernando High School Band will play patriotic music prior to the ceremony and music will be performed during the ceremony. Seating is limited, those attending are encouraged to arrive early, wear comfortable clothing, and bring a lawn chair or blanket to sit on. Organizations with colors are invited to participate in the massing of colors at the beginning of the program and should plan to arrive by 9:30 AM. The Florida National Cemetery Visitor's Center will be open to the public on Memorial Day from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM. For more information call 352-793-7740.

**Jacksonville National Cemetery** (4083 Lannie Rd, Jacksonville FL) The ceremony begins on Memorial Day, May 30, at 1:30 PM with prelude music by the Windward Brass Quintet of the Navy Band Southeast. At 2:00 PM the ceremony continues with a welcome, the Pledge of Allegiance, and a prayer. The Keynote Speaker will be Brigadier General Joseph Balskus, Asst. Adjutant General for Air, Florida National Guard and Commander Florida Air National Guard. He will be followed by remarks from Congresswoman Corrine Brown and Congressman Andrew Crenshaw. There will be a laying of a wreath, firing of volleys by the Joint Service Firing Detail, and the playing of "Taps." For more information call the cemetery at 904-766-5222

**Sarasota National Cemetery** (9810 State Highway 72, Sarasota FL) The ceremony will be on Sunday, May 29, at 1:30 PM. For information call the cemetery at 941-922-7200

**South Florida National Cemetery** (6501 S. State Road 7 Lake Worth) The Memorial Day ceremony begins at 10:00 AM Monday, May 30. Parking will be open from 8:15 AM, and a shuttle will run from 8:30 AM. For more information call 561-649-6489.

**St Augustine National Cemetery** (104 Marine St, St. Augustine) The service begins at 10:00 AM on Monday, May 30. The ceremony is a joint effort of the Ancient City Chapter of Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and the Florida National Guard. The event begins with opening remarks, welcome and introduction of guests followed by massing of the colors. The massing of the colors is unique in that the color guards participating are not only from military and veterans organizations but civic organizations as well. Music is presented by a bagpipe and drum unit. Following the keynote address a roll call of veterans lost since Veterans Day will be announced. The roll call is in order of branch of service. The event is closed by the firing of three volleys and taps presented by soldiers of the Florida National Guard. For more information call MOAA Ancient City Chapter President COL (Ret) Howard McGillen at 904-687-1140.

**VA TO TAKE APPLICATIONS FOR NEW FAMILY CAREGIVER PROGRAM** (VA News Release)

WASHINGTON –The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published the interim final rule for implementing the Family Caregiver Program of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act 2010. This new rule will provide additional support to eligible post-9/11 veterans who elect to receive their care in a home setting from a primary Family Caregiver. On May 9, staff in VA's Office of Care Management and Social Work will open the application process for eligible post-9/11 veterans and service members to designate their family caregivers.

Additional services for primary family caregivers of eligible post-9/11 veterans and service members include a stipend, mental health services, and access to health care insurance, if they are not already entitled to care or services under a health care plan. Comprehensive caregiver training and medical support are other key components of this program. The program builds on the foundation of caregiver support now provided at VA and reflects what families and clinicians have long known; that family caregivers in a home environment can enhance the health and well-being of veterans under VA care.

Starting May 9, veterans may download a copy of the family caregiver program application (VA CG 10-10) at [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov). The application enables the veteran to designate a primary family caregiver and secondary family caregivers if needed. Caregiver Support Coordinators are stationed at every VA medical center and via phone at 1-877-222 VETS (8387) to assist veterans and their family caregivers with the application process.

Caregivers for veterans of all eras are eligible for respite care, education and training on what it means to be a caregiver, how to best meet the veteran's care needs, and the importance of self-care when in a care giving role. The full range of VA services already provided to caregivers will continue, and local Caregiver Support Coordinators at each VA medical center are available to assist family caregivers in identifying benefits and services they may be eligible for. The Caregiver Support Coordinators are well versed in VA programs and also have information about other local public, private and non-profit agency support services that are available to support veterans and their family caregivers at home.

**VA SEEKS PUBLIC'S VIEWS ON HOW TO IMPROVE REGULATIONS** (from [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov))

VA is taking steps to implement Executive Order 13563, which directs federal agencies to review existing regulations and determine whether they "should be modified, expanded, streamlined, or repealed so as to make the agency's regulatory program more effective or less burdensome in achieving the regulatory objectives." VA has created an online means at [http://www.va.gov/ORPM/Regulations\\_To\\_Modify\\_Streamline\\_Expand\\_Repeal.asp](http://www.va.gov/ORPM/Regulations_To_Modify_Streamline_Expand_Repeal.asp) for anyone wishing to submit their suggestions concerning VA regulations that need to be amended, updated, or repealed.

**VA FACILITIES ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS:**

**SUICIDE PREVENTION 1-800-273-8255**

**VA Regional Office, St. Petersburg** - PO Box 1437, St. Petersburg, FL 33731 1-800-827-1000

**Regional Processing Office, Atlanta, GA** (education claims) - PO Box 100022, Decatur, GA 30031-7022 1-888-GIBILL1 (442-4551)  
Telephone number for Chapter 30 self-verifications 1-877-823-2378

**VA EFT Information Hotline** (electronic funds transfer - direct deposit) 1-877-838-2778

**Veterans Health Administration Toll-Free Hotline** (medical care) - 1-877-222-8387

**VA Health Revenue Service** (information on amounts owed to VA Medical Centers) 1-866-793-4591

**VA Insurance Center, Philadelphia** (VA Insurance) - PO Box 42954, Philadelphia, PA 19101 1-800-669-8477

**VA Health Administration Center** (CHAMPVA and Spina Bifida health care) -  
CHAMPVA inquiries: PO Box 65023, Denver, CO 80206-5023  
CHAMPVA claims: PO Box 65024, Denver, CO 80206-5024  
Spina Bifida inquiries and claims: PO Box 65025, Denver, CO 80206-5025 1-800-733-8387

**National Cemeteries**

10,000 Bay Pines Blvd N, Bay Pines FL 727-398-9426  
6502 SW 102nd Ave, Bushnell FL 352-793-7740  
6501 S State Rd 7, Lake Worth, FL 561-649-6489  
4083 Lannie Rd, Jacksonville FL 904-766-5222  
Naval Air Station, Pensacola FL 850-453-4108/4846  
9810 State Hwy 72, Sarasota FL 877-861-9840  
104 Marine St, St Augustine FL 352-793-7740

**National Cemetery Administration Office of Memorial Programs** (headstones and markers) - 5109 Russell Rd Quantico VA 22134-3903 1-800-697-6947

**Loan Guaranty Eligibility Center** (certificates of eligibility) PO Box 20729, Winston-Salem, NC 27120 1-888-244-6711

**Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) Unit** - Chicago VA Regional Office 1-800-829-4833

**INTERNET SITES OF INTEREST:**

**VA Web Site:** [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

**VA Web Automated Reference Materials System (WARMS)** [www.warms.vba.va.gov](http://www.warms.vba.va.gov)

**St. Petersburg VA Regional Office:**

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/stpetersburg/>

**Property Management (sale of VA-repossessed homes):** <http://va.reotrans.com/>

**Federal employment:** [www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov)

**Florida Dept of Veterans' Affairs:** [www.FloridaVets.org](http://www.FloridaVets.org)

**Library of Congress (information on pending legislation)** [thomas.loc.gov](http://thomas.loc.gov)