



The new national cemetery will feature 11,000 crypt sites for casket burials.

# Veteran Efforts

KEVCON'S STAFF OF VETERANS IS AN IDEAL MATCH FOR A NATIONAL CEMETERY PROJECT. BY JIM HARRIS

**S**outhern California soon will have a much-needed new final resting place for U.S. veterans. San Diego-based contractor Kevcon Inc. started work in August 2010 on developing a 50-acre site near Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego into a national cemetery. The project is a joint venture between Kevcon and Tel Tech Plus, Inc., a San Marcos, Calif.-based firm. The project is on track for completion in July 2011.

The site is 19 miles away from Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, which is at full capacity and has been unable to accommodate casket burials since the late 1960s, says James Storer, a senior project engineer with Kevcon.

## Site Specifics

Kevcon and its team of qualified subcontractors are developing roughly 11,000 crypt sites for casket burials in addition to 11,000 cremain burial sites and two columbariums, or sites where funeral urns are placed on shelves as opposed to being buried, Storer says.

The columbariums will be constructed of cement, manufactured masonry and marble. One of the structures will be 32,400 square feet with a capacity for 6,028 urns. The other will be 18,000 square feet and will hold 4,160 urns, he adds.

The casket and cremain burial sites are made of precast concrete, with

pea gravel separating each burial site. Sod and topsoil are placed on top of each site until burials take place.

Other site features include two committal shelters used during funerals, a 3,725-square-foot vehicle maintenance building, a 3,180-square-foot maintenance staff building, and a 4,340-square-foot administration building, project engineer Roy Tongue says.

Materials being used on the committal shelters include concrete masonry units (CMUs), colored concrete and marble. CMUs, plaster, stucco and other materials are being used on the administration and maintenance buildings. "The shelters are very architecturally appealing and will blend in with the rest of the buildings and the columbariums," Storer adds.

## Extensive Teamwork

Putting the crypt and cremain burial sites in place requires precision on the part of the surveyors and earthwork contractors responsible for measuring and digging out each site. Parts of the cemetery site are sloped, presenting a challenge for this part of the scope, Storer says.

"Site measurements have to be on point, and the surveyors and installers have to be sure they're even," Storer continues. "When there are slopes involved in the crypt field themselves, the earthwork guys have to adjust and make sure elevation-wise they're right where they're



supposed to be. Coordination is very big between the earthwork contractor and the crypt installer."

Other challenges have included drainage and soil issues, which the project team has overcome through excavation and maintaining a silt fence on site.

Storer credits Project Superintendent Matt Rocha's leadership and Kevcon-TTP's planning for the project's success thus far. "We had a good plan before we started, and a lot of time and effort went into preplanning," Storer says. "As a result, even if we ran into problems, we were able to find solutions to those problems rather quickly."

Rocha oversees the efforts of a number of subcontractors. These include framers, painters, plumbing and electrical contractors, crypt installers, and concrete personnel.

"Subcontractors cover every scope of work you can imagine," Storer says. "There's not really a trade that is missed."

"The level of communication we've had with the subcontractors has

### *Kevcon-TTP joint venture - Miramar National Cemetery*

*www.ttp-us.com*

- *Project cost: \$24 million*
- *Location: San Diego*
- *Employees on site at peak: 120*
- *Scope of work: Cemetery development*

*"The level of communication we've had has created a very good working environment."*

*-James Storer, senior project engineer*

created a very good working environment," he adds. "Everyone has a level of trust with each other. This isn't an 'us vs. them' situation; it's a very cooperative environment."

Kevcon-TTP JV and the subcontractors are working to keep the construction site safe. Kevcon-TTP JV requires all subcontractors to review and sign off on a safety plan that in part requires both daily and weekly inspections and weekly tailgate meetings, Storer says.

#### **Broad Experience**

The project is an ideal fit for Kevcon-TTP JV because of both of its experience as well as the makeup of its staff. Kevcon and Tel Tech Plus (TTP) are service disabled Veteran-owned small businesses with Kevcon's staff being approximately 75 percent of its disabled Armed Forces veterans, Storer says. The company's services include construction management, facilities and property management, interior renovation, design/build, design/bid/build and specialty subcontracting.

"We bring a broad range of experience to the table," Storer says. ♦

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