



Above: A lotus flower floats in the lake surrounding the Meditation Center Island.



Right: The First Sermon of the Buddha statues are shown in the Holy Garden of the Vietnamese American Buddhist Association Mahasatipatthana Meditation Center in Leesburg.



Statues of the Buddha, at right, with 80 Arahant disciples in the Holy Garden. RICARDO RAMIREZ BUXEDA/ORLANDO SENTINEL PHOTOS

SUNDAY SNAPSHOT VIETNAMESE AMERICAN BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION MEDITATION CENTER

Photos and story by Ricardo Ramirez Buxeda | Orlando Sentinel

The Vietnamese American Buddhist Association Mahasatipatthana Meditation Center is located in Leesburg, along U.S. Highway 27. As you approach the 22-acre campus, two large United States and Buddhist flags wave from the top of twin 100-foot-tall flagpoles. Inside you will find the Holy Garden, where statues and sculptures of the life of Buddha and his Arahant disciples lay among trees and flowers. The majority of the statues were made in Vietnam; others come from Burma and Myanmar. A pond with lotus flowers separates the Garden from Meditation Center Island, where there is a dining hall, cabins, residential quarters and a meditation hall under construction. The center was founded in 2014 (2558 in the Buddhist Calendar) by the Most Venerable Khippapañño Kim Trieu as a nonprofit to provide Vipassana meditation. The Holy Garden is open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and admission is free. Daily service is at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. They also offer a meditation class on Sundays from 9-10 a.m. The grand opening of the meditation hall is scheduled for Oct. 27. For more information, visit their website at dainiemxutv.org.



Bhikkhu Punna - Thien Vien, from left, Bhikkhu Carudhammo - Minh Phap and Samanera Pahnanda - Tue Lac walk to the dining hall for lunch.



An American flag and a Buddhist flag fly from 100-foot tall flagpoles at the Vietnamese American Buddhist Association Mahasatipatthana Meditation Center.



The Buddha Entered Parinibbana statue in the Holy Garden of the Vietnamese American Buddhist Association Mahasatipatthana Meditation Center.



A wax sculpture of the Most Venerable Khippapañño Kim Trieu, director and senior spiritual advisor monk who founded the Mahasatipatthana Meditation Center, is located in the temporary meditation hall. The grand opening of the new meditation hall is scheduled for Oct. 27.