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Attention Newsroom—News Release

May 19, 2004

For Immediate Release

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Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs to host Memorial Day Ceremony at the Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery - Union Grove

(MADISON) – The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) announces a Memorial Day ceremony to be held at the **Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery (SWVMC) at Union Grove, Wisconsin**, as part of various commemorative ceremonies statewide during the Memorial Day weekend. This year's theme is "*World War II Salute.*"

"This year's Memorial Day theme is a very special one to honor the World War II Generation," said WDVA **Secretary John A. Scocos**. "We must ensure that the achievements and sacrifices of those who served during World War II are never forgotten."

The SWVMC's **Memorial Day Program** will be held on **Sunday, May 30, 2004, at 11:00 a.m.** The cemetery is located at 21731 Spring Street, Union Grove. Veterans and the public are invited to attend. Seating is available, however families are welcome to bring their own lawn chairs. Parking is available on the cemetery grounds.

John Klingenberg, of Racine, Wisconsin will speak about his experiences during World War II.

Mr. Klingenberg enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps earning the American Theater Service medal, European-African and Middle Eastern Theater service medals. He served as Commander of the Combat Support Squadron of the 440th Tactical Airlift Wing. He retired from United States Air Force Reserves as a Lt. Colonel after 33 years of service. He earned a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree with a Major in Accounting. He has previously served as Post Commander of the American Legion, Harvey R. Hansen Post 310 in Racine. He is Chef de Gare of Racine County Voiture 497 of 40 and 8.

The keynote speaker will be **Walter M. Stenavich**, Chairman of the Wisconsin Board of Veterans Affairs.

Bob Bach with WUWM-FM Milwaukee Public Radio will be Master of Ceremonies. He has produced numerous reports and feature stories regarding veterans issues. He has won dozens of local, state, and regional awards for his work. He was a combat veteran who served with the 1st Marine Division in Vietnam. Cemetery Director of the SWVMC, **Marian Lewandowski, Jr.**, will provide the welcome and make brief announcements.

Also featured will be musical selections by the **Milwaukee American Legion Band** and the **Celtic Nations Pipes and Drums**, and posting of the colors by the **Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 7924**, Kansasville, WI. **Deacon DeSales Wisniewski** of St. Sebastian's Parish, Sturtevant, will offer the invocation and benediction. **Cyle O'Brien** of Shoreland High School, Somers, will lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Wisconsin Coordinator for Bugles Across America, **Dan Erikson**, will sound taps, and a rifle salute will be presented by **American Legion Post #171**, Union Grove. Members with the **Commemorative Air Force** will conduct a flyover during the ceremony, weather permitting. There will be a display of World War II artifacts in the administration foyer and display of military vehicles on cemetery grounds. Starting Memorial Day and throughout 2004 the cemetery will have a remembrance registry available for veterans of World War II and families who lost loved ones in the war and since.

Dedicated in May 1998, the Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery is operated by the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs. Construction of the cemetery was financed with assistance through the federal VA Cemetery Grants Program.

In addition to the ceremony at Union Grove, the WDVA will also host other Memorial Day ceremonies.

There will be a ceremony at the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery near **Spooner**, at **1:00 p.m.** on **May 30th**. There will also be an observance on Memorial Day, **May 31st**, at the Central Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in **King**, at **9:30 a.m. lakeside** on the grounds of the Wisconsin Veterans Home and then at the **cemetery at 10:15 a.m.** The Madison Veterans Council will also hold an observance at Forest Hill Cemetery, **Madison, at 8:00 a.m.** and present a Memorial Day ceremony on the **Capitol steps, at 10:00 a.m. on May 31st**. At the Capitol ceremony, Governor Jim Doyle and WDVA Secretary Scocos will lay a special wreath for Wisconsin soldiers killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan. Surviving family members of the soldiers have been invited to attend.

Also of note, Secretary Scocos will appear as Grand Marshall of the Milwaukee Memorial Day Parade, which begins at **2:00 p.m. on May 31st in Milwaukee**.

For those who cannot attend any Memorial Day ceremonies in person, the White House Commission on Remembrance asks Americans to pause during a **National Moment of Remembrance on May 31st, at 3:00 p.m.**, to remember America's fallen, wherever you are.

For further information about these and other WDVA events, go to <http://dva.state.wi.us> or call 1-800-947-8387 (WIS-VETS).