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Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs to host Veterans Day Ceremony at King

(MADISON) -- Welcoming home Wisconsin's veterans from their service in Iraq and Afghanistan will be the special focus of this year's Veterans Day on Nov. 11 at the **Wisconsin Veterans Home in King**, announced Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary John Scocos.

Veterans Day this year coincides with the WDVA's new program called "Mission: Welcome Home," which will help Wisconsin soldiers return to society after many months serving in foreign conflicts.

"Veterans Day is our time to pay special tribute to all veterans, who have honorably worn the uniform of service with dedication to their country," Scocos said. "This Veterans Day will be especially important because it is our chance as a state to focus on those who are currently sacrificing so much to serve our country."

Locally, there will be a **10:30 a.m. ceremony on Thursday, November 11**, on Veterans Day, in the **Marden Center** Multi-Purpose Room of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King. The ceremony is located at N2665 County Road QQ, just off of State Highway 22 and one mile west. Veterans and the public are invited to attend.

Walter Stenavich, Chair of the Wisconsin Board of Veterans Affairs, will be the keynote speaker. He will speak about the importance of remembering Veterans Day and continuing the mission of serving veterans. Stenavich is a World War II veteran who served in the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946 on submarines in the Pacific. He was appointed to the Wisconsin Board of Veterans Affairs in 2001, for a six-year term until 2007. His background is in education, having most recently served as Directing Principal at William Horlick High School in Racine from 1971-86 and as an Instructor and Practicum Advisor at Marian College, Milwaukee, from 1992 to 1994.

Master of Ceremonies for the event will be **Bill Crowley**, Commandant of the Home. A military salute will be presented by the Wisconsin Veterans Home Honor Guard. Taps will be sounded by members of the Waupaca High School Band, and the National Anthem will be performed by the Waupaca High School Girls Choir. Chaplain Tracy Hamelink of the WVH-King will deliver the invocation and benediction. At 11:00 a.m., a siren will sound for one minute to honor those who served.

In addition, speaking will be **Dean Christensen**, a Major in the U.S. Army Reserve with the 452nd Combat Support Hospital headquartered in Milwaukee. He recently returned from Operation Enduring Freedom and currently serves as a pharmacist at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King. Major Christensen will talk about his experiences while serving in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. We are encouraging service members from Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom to also be on hand at the event.

Currently operated by the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King was established in 1887 by the Grand Army of the Republic to serve Wisconsin veterans of the Civil War and their families.

In addition to the Armistice/Veterans Day ceremony at King, the WDVA will also host Veterans Day ceremonies in **Madison, Spooner, and Union Grove**.

Ceremonies in Madison will begin at 11:00 a.m. with **WDVA Secretary John A. Scocos** speaking at an event hosted by the Madison Veterans Council at the State Capitol Rotunda.

The WDVA will also be hosting Veterans Day ceremonies at: the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in **Spooner, at 1:00 p.m.** and at the Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery near **Union Grove, at 3:00 p.m. -- Secretary Scocos will be the keynote speaker.**

The public is invited to attend these events. For further information, call 1-800-WIS-VETS (947-8387).