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## **WDVA's Veterans Home at King to Celebrate Grand Opening of Wisconsin Veterans Museum's James Megellas Gallery**

KING – Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Secretary Daniel J. Zimmerman and Wisconsin Veterans Museum Director Michael Telzrow are pleased to announce the grand re-opening of the James Megellas Gallery at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum at King. A ribbon-cutting ceremony to re-open the Gallery, following a year-long improvement project, will be held on Friday, April 20, 2018 at 10:30 a.m. at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King's Marden Activity Center. The public and media are invited to attend.

“Strong support from Wisconsin’s Veteran community makes King truly special,” Secretary Zimmerman said. “This museum, right in the heart of our campus, honors the service of the men and women of that community. It also gives our members an opportunity to see and hear the stories of those who served, just as they did. Sharing those experiences with their families and friends in conversations about service above self are therapeutic to all involved. We are excited to provide this new museum in honor of all those who have served.”

“We are proud to open the new James Megellas Gallery at our museum at the King Veterans Home,” said Telzrow. “This completely redeveloped space will provide Home members and the surrounding public with an opportunity to learn about, and remember, the sacrifices of our Wisconsin Veterans. The incorporation of our oral history recordings within the individual exhibits is certain to provide an authentic experience for all of our visitors.”

The James Megellas Gallery at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum at King traces the history of Wisconsin’s involvement in our nation’s conflicts through the eyes of individual Veterans. Supported by original artifacts and oral histories, this exhibit features stories from Veterans who served in every conflict.

The James Megellas Gallery is named in honor of U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel James “Maggie” Megellas, of Fond du Lac, the most-decorated officer in the history of the 82nd Airborne Division. Megellas received the Distinguished Service Cross, two Silver Stars, two Bronze Stars and other military honors for his World War II European service. The campaign continues to upgrade one of Megellas’ Silver Stars to the Medal of Honor for his service and leadership during the Battle of the Bulge.

In addition to featuring Lt. Colonel Megellas, the Gallery includes:

- Melvin Jacob, of Manitowoc, served with the Marine Corps during World War II. Aboard the USS Indianapolis when it was sunk by a torpedo, he waited for rescue at sea for five days;
- John Peters, of Merrill, served in 2nd Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division during the Gulf War. He was awarded the Bronze Star;
- Michelle Rasmusson, who grew up in the Fox Valley, served in the Army Reserve with the 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion from 1999 to 2007. She was involved in the Kosovo Force, K4, and Operation Iraqi Freedom; and,
- Many more Wisconsin Veterans.

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The Museum improvement project is just one aspect of an overall transformation of the Marden Center. The Veterans Café, located on Marden's lower level, celebrated its grand re-opening in February following months of gathering input, planning and construction. Additionally, the King Exchange was moved into the Center to improve access, the Alley 5 bar got a facelift, and other upgrades around the building were made, such as new flooring and furniture.

More changes are planned, including a major landscape project on the waterfront side of Marden that will improve member access and safety.

For its astounding effort and future construction plans, the Veterans Home was presented with a 2017 Facelift Award from the Waupaca Area Chamber of Commerce in January. The award is presented to area businesses which make changes that aesthetically improve the environment of the city or area.

The WDVA's Veterans Home at King has more than 130 years of providing around-the-clock care and amenities for America's heroes. All branches of the armed forces are represented at the home, which is one of three across the state operated by the WDVA. King is ranked in the top 15 percent of all skilled-nursing facilities in the nation.