



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 9, 2020

WDVA Honors Wisconsin Veterans with Virtual Celebration ***www.WisVetsVeteransDay.com***

MADISON – Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Secretary Mary Kolar today invited the people of Wisconsin to join Governor Tony Evers and WDVA in honoring our state’s veterans by participating in Wisconsin’s virtual Veterans Day celebration. The website and many resources are available now at www.WisVetsVeteransDay.com, with a ceremonial video to be released on Wednesday, Nov. 11.

“Each and every one of our heroes who donned the uniform of a Soldier, Marine, Sailor, Airman or Coast Guardsman – whether they served on the beaches of Europe, in the jungles of Asia, in the deserts of the Middle East, or here at home – deserve our gratitude on Veterans Day and every day,” said Sec. Kolar. “While we cannot gather in person this year, Wisconsin’s virtual Veterans Day celebration will allow us to honor the 350,000 veterans in Wisconsin who have courageously served our country.”

WDVA’s virtual Veterans Day celebration includes a ceremonial video, opportunities to learn about those who have served, an invitation for veterans to share their military story, resources to help families and individuals engage at home, and tools to encourage public participation and social media interaction.

Wisconsin’s virtual Veterans Day celebration includes the following:

Greeting and Tribute Wall

On Wednesday, Nov. 11, WDVA’s virtual Veterans Day celebration greeting video will feature messages from Gov. Evers and Sec. Kolar. As a nod toward our traditional public ceremonies, WDVA has invited leaders of Wisconsin veteran organizations and elected officials to participate in the online event. Their messages can be found as part of the Tribute Wall, available on www.WisvetsVeteransDay.com.

Opportunities to Learn About and Share Veteran Stories

This year, given that we are unable to gather and we are observing this important day from home, we are asking our community to go beyond a “thank you for your service” and discover the stories of Wisconsin’s veterans throughout history. The website will provide opportunities to explore recordings available through the Wisconsin Veteran Museum *Oral Histories program* or watch a slideshow of the veterans or veteran family members of those who serve you at WDVA. Veterans are also invited to create their own oral history, with resources available on how to do so.

Calendar of Statewide Events

In addition to our statewide observance, WDVA is supporting other local and specialized celebrations throughout Wisconsin by sharing a *statewide calendar of events*. As many of these Veterans Day celebrations are virtual this year, we encourage you to participate in events you would otherwise not have been able to attend in person.

Bell Ringing

The WDVA is calling on people across Wisconsin to join us as we sound the “Bells of Peace” on Veterans Day at 11:00 a.m. Download the national Bells of Peace App (search for “Bells of Peace” in your phone’s app store) and join us in remembering the moment when the guns fell silent and bells tolled on the Western Front. When you pledge to participate through the app or *Bells of Peace website*, you will be receive an invitation to also join the group tolling on Zoom.

At-Home Activity

To assist families in observing Veterans Day from home, WDVA is providing a *printable poppy coloring page*. Poppies have been a symbol of Nov. 11 since the end of World War I on Armistice Day in 1918. While the poppy is most often associated with remembering those that were lost in conflict, the poppy has become a symbol of honoring all kinds of military service. This Veterans Day join us in honoring all our veterans by coloring and displaying this poppy in your window.

Social Media

Even while spending time apart this year, our online community can join together to honor Wisconsin’s veterans and their families. We encourage veterans to post their #WisVetsStory military stories and photos to a *community post on Facebook*. We also encourage the use of #WisVetsVeteransDay to tag any Veterans Day related posts.