

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Honor and Awe: Wisconsin's 12th Annual K9 Veterans Day Invites Public to Meet Four-Legged Heroes

FORT ATKINSON, WI – They serve on our front lines, protect our streets, and offer unparalleled bravery and loyalty. This March, the Kennel Club of Fort Atkinson invites the community to honor these four-legged heroes at the **12th Annual K9 Veterans Day ceremony** on Sunday, **March 8**. This free, family-friendly event offers a unique and inspiring experience, beginning with a solemn tribute and culminating in a celebration of the incredible bond between humans and their K9 partners.

The day of remembrance will commence at **12:30 p.m. at the K9 Veterans Memorial in McCoy Park** with a solemn wreath-laying ceremony. This tribute will **honor the memory of K9 Seato and his handler, Marine Lance Corporal Terry Beck**, who were killed in action in 1967, reminding us of the profound sacrifices made by our service members, both two-legged and four-legged.

Following the outdoor tribute, the celebration moves indoors to the **American Legion Banquet Center for a dynamic program beginning at 1:30 p.m.** Watch in awe during Thrilling K9 Demonstrations as highly trained K9s and their handlers showcase the precision, agility, and powerful connection that makes them an invaluable asset to our communities. The program will also feature distinguished speakers, including **Sergeant Major Viridiana Lavallo**, U.S. Army Military Working Dog Program Manager, **Sergeant Jerry Witt**, U.S. Army, 34th Infantry Platoon Scout Dog (1968-1969), and acclaimed military historian **Ron Werneth**, who will offer a fascinating look at the evolution of military working dogs.

The ceremony will feature a moving tribute to fallen K9s, marked by the ringing of the Honor Bell and a moment of silence. Adding a touch of patriotic grace, **Natalie Popp**, the reigning Miss Teen Wisconsin,

will perform the National Anthem as part of her “Never Forgotten – Remembering Our Heroes” community initiative.

The day's emotional high point will be the **Heartwarming Parade of Heroes**, where every attending service dog is individually introduced and honored for their service. Before and after the program, guests are invited to an **Unforgettable Meet & Greet** to get up close with these incredible K9s and their handlers, a perfect opportunity for photos and to personally thank them for their service.

This annual event is a direct result of the K9 Veterans Day proclamation passed by the Wisconsin Legislature and is made possible by the dedicated volunteers of The Kennel Club of Fort Atkinson.

Help us honor these heroes by following event updates on the Kennel Club of Fort Atkinson website at www.kcfadogs.org. We encourage you to share your photos and experiences from the day using the hashtag #WIK9VeteransDay.

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Media members are welcome and encouraged to attend. To arrange advance interviews with speakers or K9 handlers, please contact Mabel Schumacher.

About the Kennel Club of Fort Atkinson:

The Kennel Club of Fort Atkinson, Inc. is a nonprofit organization of volunteers dedicated to dog training, education, and community service since 1992.