

VFW: Calls for immediate clean-up of our Veterans Museum

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Madison- The Veterans of Foreign Wars-Department of Wisconsin is comprised of a diverse membership inclusive of all races, ethnicities and sexual orientation. As an organization of veterans who fought to protect the freedoms that are being exercised by those seeking to end racial injustice, we were disappointed to see OUR Veterans Museum suffer vandalism, graffiti and damage during last month's protests in downtown Madison. We do recognize the fact that many of those who expressed their frustration with centuries of systemic racism did so peacefully and not through violence.

It has been 52 days since OUR Veterans Museum was vandalized. Since then, a grassroots group of veterans from around the state, known as the "Wisconsin Veterans For A Clean Museum," have come together to address the clean-up of OUR Veterans Museum.

The Wisconsin Veterans for a Clean Museum wishes to shine a light upon this growing movement for racial justice while simultaneously restoring dignity to OUR Veterans Museum.

This would be accomplished by immediately covering the profane graffiti currently disgracing the Museum's façade and replacing it with images honoring the contributions of Black Americans to our country through their service in the United States Military. The group has attained the necessary level of financial commitments to pay for the work. The Board of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation and the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs have expressed their

unwillingness to support this effort due to the fact that the building which houses OUR Veterans Museum is privately owned.

The VFW of Wisconsin supports these efforts by the Wisconsin Veterans for a Clean Museum.

We urge the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation and WDVA Secretary Mary Kolar to join with them to restore honor to OUR Veterans Museum while shining a bright light on the exceptional service & accomplishments of Black American Veterans.

Jason E. Johns
State Commander