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Veterans Coming Home event, Oct. 30, to illustrate how some local veterans use art to express and heal from war experiences

Video stories to be told alongside 1947 mural at Milano Inn painted by veteran Donald Peters

In 1947, Sergeant Donald Peters painted a lasting mural of the Allied liberation of World War II on the wall of the Milano Inn in Indianapolis. Now, 67 years later, local veterans are still using art not only to illustrate their war experiences, but to heal from them as well.

Andrew Schneiders is one such local veteran. On active duty with the Indiana National Guard, Schneiders served in Iraq for just over a year, and slid into depression after his deployment. He participated in art therapy through the Veterans' Administration and felt it helped him. "I was spiraling down and went into a dark hole, something I never thought I was ever capable of," he says of that time. "I got that expression out in my art piece, and now, looking back on it, I remember those feelings. But I know how I am now. I got out of that place."

Schneiders' story of hope -- as well as that of other Indiana veterans -- is told in a series of new WFYI videos that will be shown publically for the first time at a special event on Thursday, October 30, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Milano Inn (231 S. College Avenue, Indianapolis). The event, sponsored by WFYI Public Media, in conjunction with the Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library and the Herron School of Art and Design, will illustrate and celebrate the ways veterans use art to express their experiences.

Additionally, Jim Brown, director, Indiana Veterans Affairs, will keynote the event, speaking about the crucial work of helping veterans find new missions for their skills and added meaning to their lives back home after deployment. Lt. Governor of Indiana Sue Ellspermann will also speak that evening.

"A highlight of the event will be watching the videos alongside the backdrop of the mural painted so many years ago by another veteran," says Clayton Taylor, vice president, WFYI Productions. "Like his mural illustrating a significant turning point in World War II, these inspiring video stories capture how art served as a turning point in the lives of several local servicemen and women. I think viewers will come away from watching them feeling hopeful and uplifted."

The event is free and includes heavy hors d'oeuvres; registration is required at wfyi.org/events. Donations will be accepted, and will go to continue WFYI's work with the *Veterans Coming Home project*, a partnership with Herron School of Art and Design and Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library, and funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

About Veterans Coming Home Project: Funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and in partnership locally with WFYI Public Media, Herron School of Art and Design's Art Therapy Program and Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library, *Veterans Coming Home* is a public media project to build awareness for veterans using therapeutic arts interventions as a means to address mental health issues like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Learn more at wfyi.veteranscominghome.org.

About WFYI Public Media: With an emphasis on community engagement, WFYI Public Media serves the public through six 24/7 digital broadcast services. WFYI Public Radio operates on two distinct stations – 90.1 FM and 90.1 HD2 *The Point*, while WFYI Public Television operates three DTV services (20.1, 20.2 and 20.3). Additionally, WFYI runs the Indiana Reading and Information Service (IRIS), a reading service for visually and literacy-impaired people. Learn more at www.wfyi.org.

About Herron School of Art and Design's Art Therapy Program: Herron School of Art and Design's Art Therapy Program responds to Indiana's need to education master's-level art therapists, positioning them to obtain nationally recognized professional credentials. The program's director Juliet King, MA, ATR-BC, LPC, is conducting groundbreaking work with returning veterans through the Roudebush VA Medical Center. The collaboration is providing an opportunity for the veterans to benefit from art therapy for the first time in Indiana. Learn more at <http://www.herron.iupui.edu/graduate/art-therapy>.

About the Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library: In honor of Kurt Vonnegut's timeless wit and wisdom, the Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library champions the literary, artistic and cultural contributions of the late writer, artist, teacher and Indianapolis native. Learn more at <http://www.vonnegutlibrary.org/>.

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