

QUARTERLY ASCERTAINMENTS / COMMUNITY ISSUES

STATION: WAJR—June, 2021

SUBJECT: Celebration of Gene Vance Jr. and Armed Forces Day.

DISCUSSION:

The annual tribute of a Morgantown hero once again took place during Armed Forces Week.

Gene Vance Jr. Day was celebrated in West Virginia as local bands as well as state officials played a part in a virtual celebration paying tribute to not only an American and West Virginia hero, but military personnel as well. The virtual ceremony also commemorated the 10th Anniversary of the official declaration of Gene Vance Jr. Day as part of Military Appreciation Week.

"Essentially to honor and pay tribute to all of our American soldiers and their allies presently serving, veterans who have fallen and those severely wounded, having sacrifice much protecting American values and our way of life," explained Gene Vance Jr. Foundation Chairman Michael Minc, who started the tradition ten years ago in honor of his late brother-in-law.

Gene Arden Vance Jr. was a Morgantown, West Virginia resident who graduated from WVU about a year before serving in the War in Afghanistan as a members of the West Virginia National Guard. On May 18, 2002, not long after being deployed, he was shot and killed while trying to save fellow servicemen who were on the frontlines. Vance's memory and courage, is commemorated through the annual event that started as subtle tribute to a Morgantown native into something much more.

"We're very honored to have leaders from military bases that carry the Vance Day Memorials across the country," said Minc describing how far away Vance's memory is recognized. "States like California, Texas and from Afghanistan, that's essentially how this day has evolved," he said.

The celebration of Gene Vance Jr. Day, has grown since it's inception ten years ago. What originally started as a small ceremony that would include a few words of Minc, Morgantown officials, and other members of the military, has turned into a full day event with local live music and several other tributes to military and first responders. Saturday, several live local musical acts such as The Davisson Brothers Band, Ona and Cody Clayton Eagle performed.

"Senator Manchin, Senator Capito, Governor Justice, General Austin Scott Miller, who is the Commander of the United States Army and Nato Forces in Afghanistan, Major General James A. Hoyer, who is the director of the COVID-19 Joint-Interagency Taskforce," said Minc listing those who spoke to those watching on-line.

"It was just a phenomenal event and we ask everybody to please go to the Gene Vance Jr. channel on YouTube or our website genevancejr.org to relive the events" said Minc.

DATE: Sunday, June 6th, 2021

TIME / DURATION: 2:35

GUESTS: Gene Vance Jr. Foundation Chairman Michael Minc

MEDIA INTEREST: Talk of the Town – WAJR, Dominion Post, WVAQ, WKKW, WBOY, WDTV, facebook, twitter

YEAR: 2021

QUARTER: 2nd