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Date: Thursday, November 11, 2021

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News tips/Keywords: Veterans Day, Anthem Veterans Memorial, Veterans, Veteran Service Award

Photos: http://www.onlineatanthem.com/press_center/index.php (go to Veterans Day Press Kit/Visuals/2021 Veterans Day Ceremony Photos)

**ANTHEM COMMUNITY COUNCIL HONORS PHOTOGRAPHER MIKE SPINELLI WITH SERVICE AWARD;
PRESENTS FIRST ANNUAL JIM MARTIN STEM SCHOLARSHIP**

Anthem, Ariz. – The Anthem Community Council (ACC) presented the Anthem Veterans Service Award at the Veterans Day Ceremony, November 11. Veteran photographer Mike Spinelli (USAF) was recognized for his service to the Anthem Veterans Memorial and the community. Additionally, Anthem Veterans Memorial Chief Engineer Jim Martin was recognized with a \$1,000 STEM Scholarship in his name, which will be presented to a 2022 Anthem graduate who will major in a STEM field.

Anthem Veterans Service Award

Retired from the USAF, and as a photographer for the local veteran community and the Anthem Veterans Memorial (AVM), Mike’s work has always been commendable. He has donated his time and resources in service to the build of the AVM, photographed many years of ceremonies, and photographed veterans for the website and pre-ceremony slideshow still in use today. This year, Spinelli volunteered on three separate dates to take photos of veterans for the ceremony, and he accepted the ACC’s request to support the event as a photographer due to short staffing.

In 2019, Mike received a Congressional Service Award from Rep. Debbie Lesko.

A quote from his nomination reads, “His photos remind us that behind each branch are proud men and women who selfishly stand to protect our values and rights...as a photo is worth a thousand words, Mike’s dedication to telling the stories of our veterans and capturing the stories that continue with the AVM, is unprecedented.”

The ACC created the Anthem Veterans Service Award in 2013. The award, presented annually to an individual or group to recognize “extraordinary service and selfless dedication in support of our nation’s veterans,” has become a staple of the Veterans Day Ceremony, held each November 11 at the Anthem Veterans Memorial.

A plaque with the names of all recipients is on display at the Anthem Civic Building. Past winners, selected annually by the ACC Board of Directors based on nominations submitted from the community, include: Youth for Troops (2020); Ron Tucker (2019); Tom Kirk (2018); John Simmons (2017); Bob Hackett (2017); Liz Turner (2016); Ray Norris (2015); Mary Ann Derryberry (2014); and the Daisy Mountain Veterans (2013).

Jim Martin STEM Scholarship

Beginning in 2008, AVM Chief Engineer Jim Martin took a drawing, wrote concept papers, produced technical drawings, worked and reworked cost estimates, and determined the engineering and math concepts to ensure that the sun could cast a perfect solar spotlight onto The Great Seal every year, including leap years. He then interfaced with the county, vendors and Haydon Building Corp. personnel on site to bring the idea to life.

Many are not aware that the math behind the Memorial is used in schools around the country, including textbooks, and was even featured on the popular gameshow, Jeopardy. In that spirit, a \$1,000 Science, Technology, Engineering and Math – or “STEM” scholarship – will be awarded to an Anthem resident and 2022 high school senior or graduate who will attend an accredited university or community college. This student will have demonstrated exceptional mathematical or engineering abilities, determination, integrity and community spirit, just like Jim Martin. Thanks to a generous donor, this scholarship also is funded at the \$500 level for the next five years.

The Anthem Veterans Memorial

Thousands were in attendance for the Veterans Day Ceremony at the Anthem Veterans Memorial, which also celebrated the tenth anniversary of the memorial. Military veterans and those currently serving from all five branches, as well as their families, were honored. Speakers included:

- **Admiral Tom Fargo (USN, Retired)** served as the keynote speaker. Fargo’s distinguished Naval career culminated with his assignment as commander of the U.S. Pacific Command. He served as Commander, Submarine Group SEVEN; Commander, Task Force SEVEN FOUR; and Commander, Task Force ONE FIVE SEVEN in the Western Pacific, Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf; and commanded the United States FIFTH Fleet and Naval Forces of the Central Command during two years of Iraqi contingency operations. He served as the 29th Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet from October 1999 to May 2002.

- **Lt. Col. Mark Clifford (USAF, Retired)** presented the Veteran’s Perspective. Clifford served as a fuel loader for Air Force One; an Executive Officer in the physical education department and assistant boxing coach at the U.S. Air Force Academy; in special operations deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar, Africa and South Korea; and as a Squadron Commander. Clifford is the Assistant Dean and Director of Sports Business for the Colangelo School of Business at Grand Canyon University.
- **Dr. Timothy Swindle**, director of the University of Arizona Space Institute and the Arizona Space Grant Consortium and after whom Asteroid 8690 Swindle is named, provided a brief history about the extensive role Arizona has played in the space program prior to the U.S. Space Force flags being dedicated into the Memorial.
- **Other speakers** included Lt. Col. Amber Cargile (USAF, Retired), who served as the Mistress of Ceremonies; Pastor Mac McElroy delivered the invocation; Musical Theatre of Anthem and ProMusica Arizona performed special music; and Darrin Francom (Lt., USN) who is the ACC Board of Directors Vice Chair, presented the awards. Throughout the tenth anniversary ceremony, others who have participated or contributed to the AVM since its dedication in 2011 were featured or honored in various roles.

At 11:11 a.m., the sun shone through the five ellipses of the AVM and a spotlight was cast on the Great Seal of the United States; the moment was shown live and in real time on an LED screen for attendees to witness. Additionally, four F-16s from Luke Air Force Base, flown by four squadron commanders – an historic first in Arizona – flew over the memorial to end the ceremony in grand fashion.

Visit OnlineAtAnthem.com/AVM to learn more about the Anthem Veterans Memorial.

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