

Governor Phil Murphy

Press Pool Coverage: Governor Murphy and Brigadier General Jemal J. Beale, Adjutant General Participate in Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Memorial Day Ceremony

05/25/2020

PRINT:

Murphy honors military fallen, COVID-19 deaths at NJ Memorial Day service in North Hanover

NORTH HANOVER – State and military officials gathered Monday to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in a memorial service unlike any in recent memory.

Gov. Phil Murphy, along with leadership from the New Jersey National Guard, held the state's annual Memorial Day Service at Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery.

"This is a solemn day. A day to remember our hallowed and fallen dead. A day to remember those who gave to this nation their full measure," Murphy said. "And today we also remember that many honored veterans who survived wars, only to die at the hands of COVID-19."

The holiday ceremony came as the United States nears 100,000 deaths from coronavirus. New Jersey has been gravely impacted with 11,144 deaths, including 16 announced Monday. The state also saw another 965 confirmed cases Monday, bringing its total cases to 155,092

The governor, along with Brigadier General Jemal J. Beale, addressed a socially distanced crowd gathered Monday on the lawn across from the cemetery's chapel. Thousands upon thousands of American flags were planted across the cemetery's 236 acres. Masks covered everyone's face.

The service, held amid the "painful reality" of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Beale, was as somber as the overcast sky. Officials noted, however, that during these challenging times it was as important as ever to honor those who died serving the United States.

"This Memorial Day is like unlike any other in our lifetime. Although COVID-19 has changed the way we do business and live our daily lives, it has not and will not stop us from taking the pause to remember the brave men and women who died on fields of battle on nearly every continent," Beale said.

In addition to honoring the fallen, special recognition was given to Commander Col. Robert Martinez and Command Sergeant Major John Hicks, of the New Jersey Army National Guard 42nd Regional Support Group.

The unit will be deploying to Middle East in June to support Operation Inherent Resolve. Martinez and Hicks were presented with the New Jersey flag to fly over their base during deployment.

In his closing remarks, Murphy recited a verse from English poet Laurence Binyon's "For the Fallen," written at the outbreak of World War I.

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning .We will remember them," Murphy recited.

"I thank you all for continuing this annual tradition. In spite of the most challenging of times, we need this day," the governor added. Following the governor's remarks, a moment of silence was held.

The moment of silence ended with a "Jersey strong," from Beale, and Taps closed out the service.

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VIDEO (NJTV/Kevin Phalon):


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