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Hanover Township marine killed in Iraq honored twice

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CHRIS COSGROVE III



HANOVER TWP. – The 10th anniversary of the death of Lance Cpl. Chris Cosgrove, the one person from Hanover Township to lose his life in the Iraq War, prompted an honor from the Township Committee last Thursday, Sept. 22 and will inspire a second Saturday morning by Cosgrove’s alma mater, Whippany Park High School.

The Township Committee issued a proclamation on Thursday making Cosgrove an honorary patrolman in the Hanover Township Police Department.

Reading the proclamation, Township Administrator Joseph noted Cosgrove was a soldier in G company, 2nd Battalion of the 25th Marine Regiment. He was killed on Oct. 1, 2006 when a suicide bomber detonated a car bomb in Faluja, Iraq.

The proclamation stated it was always Cosgrove’s ambition to become a township police officer.

Township Committeeman George Coppola presented the Cosgrove family with an American flag that flew over the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., from Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, R-Morris.

Police Chief Mark Roddy presented the family with Cosgrove's honorary police badge.

Whippany Park Honor

Whippany Park High School will open a special memorial to the victims of Sept. 11 and Cpl. Cosgrove at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 1, the anniversary of Cosgrove's death, at the plaza at the Whippany Park Football field entrance.

Cosgrove's parents and Hanover Township Police Officer Jim Grawehr, who organized the memorial and serves as the high school's resource officer, will be on hand.

Grawehr began his mission five years ago. After working at the funeral services for Cosgrove in 2006, Grawehr approached Cosgrove's parents and became involved in several memorial efforts including volunteering his time to the Annual L.Cpl. Chris Cosgrove III Golf Outing.

In 2009, Grawehr started a project that would span years and see the donation of funds, time, materials, and expertise from all corners of the community and culminate in Saturday's memorial dedication.

Cosgrove was a 2001 graduate of Whippany Park High School, where he played lacrosse, football and was on the wrestling team. He graduated from Monmouth University in 2005 with a bachelor's degree in history. Prior to graduating college, Cosgrove enlisted in the Marine Reserves with G Company, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marines, based at Picatinny Arsenal.

In October 2006, Cosgrove was killed by a suicide car bomber at an entry control point in Fallujah.

"Honoring Chris has become very important to me; but this story isn't about me, it's about Chris Cosgrove and the many members of the community who have come forward to donate their time and resources to this worthy cause," Grawehr said. "This memorial will help keep Chris' memory, and the memory of those lost on 9/11, alive."

The memorial, which features a sculpture of angel wings with a plaque dedicated to Chris Cosgrove's memory and a steel beam from the World Trade Center with a plaque commemorating those who lost their lives on Sept. 11, is located in the plaza by the main entrance to the football field at Whippany Park High School and serves as a permanent reminder to students and the community of life's fragility and the important sacrifices made by others.

The memorial is to open on Saturday, Oct. 1, the 10-year anniversary of Cosgrove's death.

"It is a privilege to honor the life and memory of Chris Cosgrove as well as the victims of 9/11," Whippany Park High School Principal Christopher Kelly said. "It's my hope that those who visit this monument will take a moment to consider the profound sacrifices of the fallen whom we honor."