

Miss Rain Day 2020 reflects on unique year of royalty

By Steve Barrett
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Allison Blair, 2020 Miss Rain Day

For Allison Grace Blair, winning the title of 2020 Miss Rain Day is something that she will never forget.

Not just because she was excited to win, but also because her title win and year-long reign were experienced during possibly the strangest year in Rain Day history.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, the 2020 Rain Day festival and pageant were held virtually. So instead of performing in front of large crowds in an auditorium for the pageant and on High Street during the daylong festival, Blair experienced a much more challenging task.

“The virtual pageant was unusual, to say the least,” said Blair, a 2020 graduate of Waynesburg Central High School. “We (the contestants) performed in a nearly empty auditorium at (Carmichaels Area High School). It was very unusual to give it my all in the competition, in front of our parents and a few others.”

When she was announced as the winner, she was ecstatic.

“It definitely was exciting to win,” she said. “I always wanted to be Miss Rain Day, ever since I was a little girl.”

The 19-year-old daughter of Laurie and Mike Blair of Waynesburg, who is currently enrolled at York College said she was thrilled to hear that the 2020 pageant was viewed on social media by many people.

“There have been over 2,000 views of the pageant on Facebook,” she said.

Although she participated in many different virtual activities during her reign, she was pleasantly surprised at how many functions she was able to attend in-person, including the 50s Fest, Lions Club Sounds of Summer, Light Up Night and many others.

Recently, Blair has been busy promoting her service project along with this year’s Miss Rain Day contestants. Her service project is “We are Greene County - Feeding One Family at a Time.” She has been selling t-shirts, decals, collecting monetary and food donations for the Corner Cupboard Food Bank.

“For every dollar that we are able to raise, the food bank is able to turn that into five dollars worth of food for an area family in need,” she said.

Last Christmas, she proudly represented Greene County as the 2021 Health Care Heroes Ambassador, where she has helped her community honor health care heroes and raise money for the Corner Cupboard Food Bank.

Her experiences also included a trip to Harrisburg earlier this summer, where she met with state Rep. Pam Snyder, D-Jefferson, and state Sen. Camera Bartolotta, R-Carroll Township. While visiting, Snyder and Bartolotta presented her with honorary citations.

Looking back, Blair said it has been an unforgettable year for her, following a lifetime of dreams.

“Growing up, I always went to pageants, always dreamt of one day winning a crown,” she said. “I remember looking up at Miss Rain Day for being such a great role model. And I hope that kids have looked up to me the same way.”

Blair said she is happy that Rain Day and the pageant are returning to in-person capacities, and she encourages this year’s contestants to enjoy every minute of their experiences.

“I developed such great, close friendships with the candidates last year,” she said. “It’s a special bond that the contestants share, and I hope they enjoy their experiences like I did.”

She added that although it feels bittersweet to relinquish her crown, she is excited to see who is crowned during the upcoming pageant on July 25.

“It’s so hard to believe that my year is almost over, it went so fast,” she said. “But I’m grateful for my experiences, for the lessons I learned and for the memories I will always have. And, I can’t wait to see who is next to be crowned.”

Blair also thanked her parents for their “never-ending” support, and encourages youths who dream of one day Miss Rain Day to follow their paths.

“Just get out there and try it,” she said. “You never know what will happen. You can gain self-confidence, develop great friendships, attain personal growth. It’s a wonderful opportunity ... one that I will always remember, and always cherish.”