

## *Two Tickets to Paradise: A Talk With Eddie Money*

*By Allen Kiger*

*[Danville resident Allen Kiger shared this phone interview with a Rock idol.]*

It's noon on Thursday, January 10, when Eddie Money answers the phone and the first words out of his mouth are, "What's up buddy?" I knew this was going to be a good interview.

I had the privilege to talk with the rocker in advance of his concert at French Lick Resort and Casino on January 19. Eddie says he is excited to be coming to Indiana where he has a lot of friends in the area as well as an aunt and uncle. He's never performed a concert at historic French Lick and was fascinated to learn gangsters such as Al Capone once stayed at the hotel back in the 1920's.

Eddie describes his concert as a family show, with three of his five children tour with him as part of his band. Son Dez plays the guitar, daughter Jesse on percussion and vocals, and son Julian on the drums. His other two sons are doing great with other careers.

According to Eddie, at the end of each show a big portion of T-shirt sales goes to Pets for Vets, a non-profit organization that matches shelter dogs with American veterans who need a companion pet. He is very passionate about this organization and I could tell right away that he is big into charity and giving back.

I asked about his time as a New York City cop before he became the rocker we know the Money man. He told me he comes from a family of police officers: his grandfather and father were both NYC cops, his brother is a retired NYC deputy inspector, and two nephews are also on the police force. Eddie says cops are like a brotherhood to him and he will always be one. Being a police officer gave him the opportunity to help people.

Asked about being a police officer in today's environment, he replied his heart goes out to the police, firefighters and EMT's who work very hard. To show his support he wears a Back the Blue armband. He feels the police get a bad rap but, like any profession, there are good cops and bad cops. He went on to comment that he did not vote for Trump but that he thinks the relationship between the police and the public is getting better since Trump took office.

Eddie said when he was a kid seeing this person with black hair, long sideburns, singing, playing guitar, and shaking his butt all over the stage, he knew he wanted to do what Elvis did for a living. Citing another influence, He also said one of his early bands often performed Chuck Berry songs.

After leaving the police force to pursue a singing career, he met a man by the name of Bill Graham and eventually got hooked up with Columbia records. In his career as a singer, songwriter, and musician he made 11 studio albums, two live albums, seven compilation albums, and 27 singles. Many of the singles charting in the top 40 and many in the top ten with over 30 million albums sold.

When I asked Eddie what is his favorite part of being on the road he said it is nice not having picking up his socks, he enjoys room service, and he enjoys his fans. He made a point to say he always leaves the maid a nice tip because they don't make a lot of money and they always have the room looking so nice.

At 67, soon to be 68 years old, I asked what keeps him doing what he does. Again he says it's a family show and "I do it because I love it. It's great to be Eddie Money, it's just a lot of fun."

Back in the day he said he was getting paid \$75,000 for a 75-minute show. He admitted he screwed up by getting a DUI and had a drug overdose and his money went up in smoke. He says he doesn't keep performing for the money and he's not the richest rock and roller in the world like his good friend Sammy Hagar. He started talking about Sammy Hagar's show on AXS TV and said he has his own show coming out on AXS TV called Real Money. As we were talking on the phone he was getting ready to film an episode of the show.

After talking with Eddie Money I felt like I was talking with a funny yet very serious person who has had a great life and loves to give back. He is a passionate about continuing to tour and provide entertainment to his fans.

I'll be attending the concert at French Lick on January 19 and look forward to meeting him in person and writing about the show afterwards.



**EDDIE MONEY**

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