

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Alvin Gee, Legendary VI Newsman, Found Dead At Home

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ST. CROIX -- Alvin Southwell , better known as "Alvin Gee", the legendary Virgin Islands newsman and news director at 107.9 FM, DA Vybe, was found dead in his Christiansted apartment today, sources with firsthand knowledge have confirmed to *The Consortium*. He was diabetic.

Alvin Gee was the news for all these years. - Glenn Dratte.

While details of Alvin Gee's death remain sketchy, the longtime reporter, respected by many for his ardent work ethic, collapsed [back in September](#), 2014 while reading his 6:00 a.m. newscast. His followers became concerned when he failed to come on air today for

his regular evening reporting. Moments later, sources confirmed to *The Consortium* that he had passed.

Alvin Gee became synonymous with news in the territory, recognized widely by his unique voice.

Glenn Dratte, longtime friend of Alvin Gee and local media icon, who currently hosts The Big, Fat, Morning Show on WJKC, Isle (95.1 FM), and marketing director for The Virgin Islands Consortium, shared his thoughts on Alvin Gee's untimely passing.

"Alvin has been doing this thing almost forty years, man, I started along with him. He started at WRRR 1290 AM, The Reef. He had a huge Afro," Dratte reminisced, happily remembering the old days before being quickly overtaken by sorrow. "We all worked together. We all used to hang out together -- doing radio together. I must have been about 14-years-old when it all started."

Dratte said Alvin Gee moved to the territory from Antigua and quickly became recognized because of his standout voice and passion for the news business.

"I am speechless. Alvin Gee was the news for all these years. His voice was unique and he was the most dependable news person. He didn't have kids and wife, and he was devoted 100 percent to his job. What he did, he did for the community; you couldn't afford to pay him," Dratte continued. "That's why when he skipped a beat, you know something was wrong -- that's his life."

Dratte said Alvin Gee was one of the most disciplined professionals that he knew. "You heard him 5 days a week, but he worked seven days a week. If he didn't die in his sleep, he would have died working," Dratte, with passion in his voice, stated.

Alvin Gee went through four decades of broadcasting, Dratte added, "from reel-to-reel, to carts, to records, to CDs and now in this era of digital audio -- Alvin Gee was there."

Former Deputy Virgin Islands Fire Service Chief of Operations, Marcellino Ventura Sr., a longtime friend of Alvin Gee, said he and the iconic Virgin Islander shared a lot of personal moments together, and revealed that Alvin enjoyed talking about current events, particularly politics.

"He loved to discuss politics a lot and we shared some personal moments in terms of his issues, and I had an opportunity to pray with him," Ventura, an Elder at Speak the Word Ministries, said.

"Alvin was the barometer of news in the Virgin Islands," he added. "He was heard all over the Virgin Islands -- even those who are off-island -- through internet streaming."

The September 2014 incident occurred live on air when suddenly strange noises started coming through the airwaves. The noises could be described as the sounds of someone who had just experienced a seizure, or someone who had fallen into a deep sleep with loud snoring.

A nurse familiar with diabetic symptoms told *VI Consortium* that when a diabetic person is low in blood sugar, a diabetic coma could result and the person's survival depends on

how fast he or she is tended to. When Alvin Gee left his morning newscast today, he went home to rest, sources say. It was ultimately his last session on air.

VI Consortium will continue to update this story with more information once it becomes available.

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