

A Special Tribute to September 11, 2001



92nd Annual Sullivan County Volunteer Firefighters Association

FIREMEN'S PARADE

Hosted by
the Grahamsville
Volunteer Fire Department

**Saturday,
September 18 @ 1 pm**
Route 42 Town Park to
the Grahamsville Fairgrounds

A special section of the Sullivan County Democrat

September 10, 2021 • Callicoon, NY • Section F



Rock Hill Volunteer Fire Department

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& Rock Hill Fire Department

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2006 & 2021

Michael Hoyt
2011 & 2016

Paul Durland
2002

Mark Meddaugh
1990

Paul Walsh
1984

William Bensinger
1969



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75th
Anniversary

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& for hosting the annual SCVFA Firefighters Parade!

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welcomes you in joining your local fire department to become a part of the firefighter family and become a part of history and tradition.

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EDITORIAL

Salute to our first responders as we reflect on Sept. 11, 2001

If ever there was an event that showed just how brave, selfless and heroic our first responders are – it was twenty years ago tomorrow, September 11, 2001. While that terrible day is now two decades past, the scenes, sounds, and horrific images are forever etched in the minds of many who witnessed it firsthand as well as those who watched on television or read about the event in newspapers.

Today, we join a chorus of people who thank those firefighters, EMS personnel, law enforcement and ordinary citizens who performed extraordinary tasks in responding to the greatest attack on American soil in our nation's history.

There were 343 firefighters who died on 9-11, as well as 37 police officers of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, 23 New York City policemen, 8 emergency medical technicians, 3 New York State Court Officers and 1 New York Fire Patrolman – and 2,977 civilians.

But it is estimated that first responders helped save more than 20,000 people from harm or possible death. It was a remarkable and unforgettable feat of heroism.

In this Sullivan County Volunteer Firefighters section, we pay tribute to our Sullivan County firemen and EMS personnel, nearly all volunteer, who protect Sullivan County day in and day out, 365 days a year.

They are always there when called, whether to put out a fire, assist at an accident scene or respond to a weather catastrophe.

The Grahamsville Fire Department, who are celebrating their 75th anniversary, are this year's host of the 92nd Annual Parade.

They are a remarkable department. We also want to commend the work of the SCVFA. While departments and fire companies hail from all over the region, the SCVFA helps to bond these brave local men and women together.

Sullivan County also had its fair share of "9-11 Heroes" – the first responders who immediately began making arrangements to go down to the scene and help.

Many of which are dealing with or have succumbed from health complications from the days that followed.

We have featured a local first responder from Livingston Manor, who along with members of his squad, aided in the search efforts. We also have an article from a local historian/educator on the significance of the event, even 20 years later, and more!

In the days that followed that horrific event, whether it be down in NYC, locally or across the nation, the sense of community around our first responders was strengthened. And still to this day there is not enough we can do to thank them for what they do for our community.

However, it seemed fitting, in a section dedicated to an event that brings our first responders together, to march in a parade with great pride, that we also try and reflect on 9/11, where so many of them played a vital role in our country recovering from that fateful day.

Thank you one and all!

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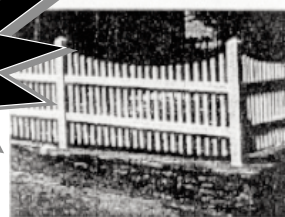
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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Grahamsville Fire Department has proudly served their community for 75 years.

Grahamsville Fire Department - A bit of history

STORIES AND PHOTOS BY CAROL MONTANA

Organized on November 7, 1946, the Grahamsville Fire Department's first Board of Fire Commissioners included Chairman Donald Buswell, Theron Hasbrouck, Charles Kloth, Alton Knight and Earl D. Sheeley. The department's first Fire Chief was Jock Donaldson.

The year 1946 was also the year that construction resumed on both the Rondout Reservoir (to the east of the Town of Neversink) and the Neversink Reservoir (located at the west of the Town) after having been virtually suspended because of World War II. And the Grahamsville Fire Department was formed partially because of the pressures felt from an increasing population during the construction of the reservoirs.

Grahamsville's first piece of equipment was a used Army surplus fire truck, which was housed in a garage donated for the department's use by Earl Sheeley. The garage was also used as a meeting room.

Realizing that larger housing would soon be a necessity, the firemen took advantage of the fact that land near the site of the future Rondout Reservoir needed to be cleared. They became literal lumberjacks, and after the lumber was cured and milled, they became carpenters, resulting in the community's first firehouse in late 1950.

Not too long afterward, an extension was built to house two more bays, plus a second floor. This building served the district for the next 50 years.

A new century brought a completely new Grahamsville Fire House, which included a tribute to a local benefactor – the Leo G. McArthur Community Hall.

Today, the fire department continues to be an active part of the community, not just in fighting fires and responding to emergencies, but also by feeding the visitors to the annual Little World's Fair in August, and the Giant Pumpkin Party in October with their famous sausage and peppers, hamburgers and hot dogs.

Members of the department are as follows
... James Allison Jr., Joseph Barkley, Ryan

Barkley, Charles Barnard, Larry Bracken, William Brenner, Kyle Byrne, Thomas Carroll, Tyler Cassidy, Charles Clark Jr., Martin Conjura, William Conjura, Tony Costa, Colby Costa, Fernando Costa, Darick DeGraw, Curtis Frantz, Andrew Garigliano, Mike Garigliano, Michael Glinski, Casey Grey, Douglas Hamilton, David Hermann, Jeffrey Huggler, Michael Kelly, Dale Koufert, Bernie Lange, Sean Lewis, Chris Mathews, Ed McCarthy,

Jerry McCarthy, Mike Mickelson, Kevin Murphy, Joseph Pond, Scott Raymond, Ken Richardson, Mark Sanok, Ryan Sanok, Joseph Schulte, Michael Schulte, Stephen Semonick, Kenneth Smith Jr., Don Starnier, Craig TerBush, Kenneth TerBush and Dev VanSleet.

Grahamsville – Firefighter spotlights Joe Pond –

Treasurer and Parade Grand Marshal

At 85 years old, and with 52 years of service, attorney Joe Pond is the Grahamsville Fire Department's oldest member. He will be honored as the Grand Marshal in this year's parade.

Pond first joined the Woodbourne Fire Department when he lived there and was working with attorneys Ivan Kalter and Louis B. Scheinman. Moving to the Town of Neversink in 1969, he joined the Grahamsville Fire Department and has been there ever since. He'd had some firefighter training when he was in the Navy, and was happy joining his fellow members like Jim Minarsky, Horace Sheeley, and Don and Bud Hill in serving his community.

According to Pond, there have actually been few changes from when he first joined. "It's been very consistent over the years in my experience, reliable, constant attention to the job at hand.

"It's just a great group of guys to associate with. You can count on them and rely on them, and you know what they're going to do and how they'll react."

Pond's most vivid memory from his years of service is the time a bus came down from

GRAHAMSVILLE F.D. OFFICERS

Line Officers

Chief: Ed McCarthy

1st Assistant Chief:

Tony Costa

2nd Assistant Chief:

Michael Kelly

Captain:

Michael Glinski

Lieutenant:

Andrew Garigliano

1st Engineer:

Mike Garigliano

2nd Engineer:

Mike Mickelson

Civil Officers

Don Starnier: Secretary

Larry Bracken: President

Joe Pond: Treasurer

Andrew Garigliano: Vice President

Commissioners

Mike Garigliano: Chair

Scott Raymond: Secretary

Courtney Ansbro: Treasurer

Don Starnier

Larry Bracken

Jeffrey Huggler

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8F

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6F

Claryville and couldn't stop at the bottom of the hill, winding up in Chestnut Creek. "Buster TerBush was right there and immediately started getting everybody out and taking charge. I was Town Justice at the time and had to go to court that night."

Now serving as Treasurer for the company, Pond previously held the positions of President and Secretary of the fire district, Secretary of the company and, also served as a Fire Commissioner.

Mike Kelly - Second Assistant Chief

Twenty-four-year-old Mike Kelly has been with the Grahamsville Fire Department for seven years.

"I always thought the fire service was a good career to volunteer, and do, and start learning things and seeing different perspectives that most people don't get to see."

Kelly credits current Chief Ed McCarthy for taking him under his wing. "He showed me a lot of things. I took a lot of classes and that eventually led to a career that I just started as a paid fireman in Monticello.

Being there "when people really need somebody" is important to Kelly. "... I like being the person that's there and can help them out and hopefully make it a little better for them."

Kelly knows that the responsibility of being Second Assistant Chief has made him mature more quickly than some people his age. "I think it's harder to be a younger officer, so it's definitely changed my perspective from when I first started, like your responsibilities of coming here and going to calls and just doing what you're told, and now being the guy who tells people what to do - that's a big change



Second Assistant Chief Mike Kelly, Chief Ed McCarthy, Treasurer Joe Pond and Chief Engineer / Commission Chair Mike Garigliano stand proudly in front of Grahamsville Fire Department's newest truck, a 2021 Freightliner 2000-gallon Tanker.

for me."

Making decisions that can affect people's lives makes you look at things differently, said Kelly.

While he recognizes that he's made his family proud, he also knows that his Mom worries about him. "She had a close family friend that she grew up with die in 9/11," said Kelly. And now that he's a paid firefighter with Monticello in addition to being a volunteer, she worries even more. "Hopefully I haven't shaved too many years off her life."

Mike Garigliano - Chief Engineer, Chair of the Board of Fire Commissioners

After 43 years of service with the Grahamsville Fire Department, Mike Garigliano knows a thing or two about the equipment. The 64-year-old said he's always been drawn toward the volunteer aspect and

"it's a way to help the community."

He's been driving and pumping since he joined, and he picked up a lot of mechanical knowledge just being there.

What's changed the most in 43 years? Garigliano says it's the regulations. Because of the mandated training, "we don't get as many people joining. The length of time it takes to get the training - it's a big commitment. The Basic Firefighter Course is close to 60 hours. Interior training is well over 100."

But Garigliano encourages others to make that commitment. "It's a necessity for the community. It's important for the town."

Ed McCarthy - Chief

The Chief of the Grahamsville Fire Department is the person responsible for "firematic" functions - a.k.a. fires and emergencies. This is the person in charge. This is the "person who organizes the chaos," said cur-

rent Chief Ed McCarthy.

At the age of 41, McCarthy has been a member of the department for 23 years. "It was something to do," he said when asked why he joined. Oh, and his father was in the department, so this is the start of a tradition.

McCarthy said the biggest difference between when he first joined and now is the equipment. Previously, the turnout gear was hanging off the side of the truck and you just grabbed the closest one. Now every person has their own protective equipment and clothing, and it hangs at the firehouse ready for use.

And now there are thermal imaging cameras that can help locate a person or pet in a burning building, and the all-important jaws of life, which used to be gas operated, are now portable because they're battery operated.

McCarthy is excited about the parade. "It's good for the community. It's a good time for all the fire departments to take a day to get together. Sometimes it's the only time for the guys to see each other outside of training and fires. Hopefully it will bring a lot of people out after the year we've had."

And the day isn't just about a parade. Afterward, McCarthy said, there will be food from local establishments like the Neversink General Store, entertainment by popular local resident Albi Beluli, and organizations like the Daniel Pierce Library, along with bouncy houses and other things to make it a true family-oriented day.

The parade kicks off at 1 p.m. and the after-parade events will take place at the Grahamsville Fairgrounds.

McCarthy said that as of the beginning September, there were about 30 companies involved in the parade. Andy Garigliano is the Chair of the 8-person parade committee.

Past Deputy Fire Co-ordinator Jim Minarsky "The Man in the Red Snowmobile Suit"

BY EILEEN "SWEETIE" MINARSKY

On June 15, 2020 a beloved Grahamsville fireman and Deputy Fire Coordinator passed away. He was dedicated to his job and the men he served.

Jim didn't like the cold. As a propane mechanic, he worked outside a lot and cold weather was not a favorite. When he came home, he had a warm house, a place for his boots to warm and most of all a heated garage for his truck.

When he was issued the turnout gear for

his job as Deputy Coordinator, it was a helmet, coat, boots and bunker pants. After a few times out in the cold with this gear, he found out that the cold air went up his back and was very uncomfortable.

A solution had to be found. Immediately he wanted to know where was his snowmobile suit (which was bright red. It was in a closet where he also found his red tossie hat.

On the next fire call, on went the red snowmobile suit, boots, coat and helmet. It

worked well and after a while it was just helmet, boots and red snowmobile suit. Sometimes Jim would arrive quietly on the fire scene to size up the situation just in the red snowmobile suit, boots and red tossie hat only to be ordered off by some firemen who thought he was a spectator. They soon were told "No that's our Deputy Fire Coordinator Jim Minarsky." Soon all the firemen knew it was BC-3 (Jim) the man in the red snowmobile suit.



CONTRIBUTED
PHOTOS

**Jim
Minarsky
Deputy Fire
Coordinator
1980 ~
2006**

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**Walter Garigliano
Barbara A. Garigliano**

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The Grahamsville Fire Department are the hosts of the 92nd annual SCVFA Firemen's Parade. For a list of members and more info about the department, see the story on page 6F.

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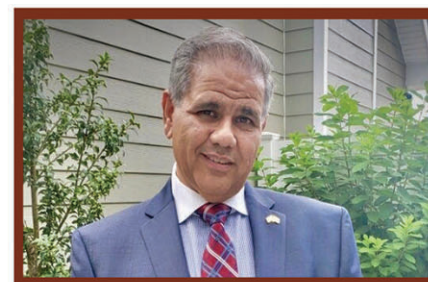


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9/11 Memorial Services

Friday, September 10

Remembrance of September 11th at Liberty Elementary School 8:45 a.m. Liberty Elementary School parking lot.

Saturday, September 11

Smallwood/Mongaup Valley Fire Department 9-11 Memorial Service 8 a.m. at the Smallwood/ Mongaup Valley Firehouse, 181 Ballard Road, service to follow.
9/11 Memorial Service 9:30 a.m. Town of Liberty 9/11 Memorial service at LaPolt Park, Liberty.
Town of Delaware Memorial Service 10

a.m. Guest speaker Aileen Gunther. Short program with Marine Corps League Catskill Detachment 652, and, VFW Post 7276, color guard, rifle salute, TAPS performed by Ross Reynolds and the National Anthem by Shawn Bailey. Callicoon Creek Park, Callicoon.

Roscoe-Rockland Fire Department Memorial Parade and Ceremony. Parade Kick off at 10:30 a.m. traveling down Stewart Ave. Ceremony to follow at RRFD. Commemorative t-shirts for sale. All proceeds donated to the Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

Marine Corps League Catskill Detachment 652 and VFW Post 7276 Memorial Service 12 p.m. Gold Star Mother's Memorial, in the St. Patrick's Cemetery, Long Eddy.
Town of Highland 9-11 Remembrance Cer-

emony 6 p.m. at Heroes Park, Eldred.
Wurtsboro Fire Department & The American Legion Mamakating Post 1266 Annual Patriots Day Memorial Service 6:45 p.m. Meet at the Wurtsboro Firehouse.

Annual 9/11 Memorial Service 7 p.m. sharp. Monticello Fire Department cordially invites Fire Service, EMS Agencies, Law Enforcement, Veterans and the general public to their annual 9/11 Memorial Service held at the Monticello Fire House 23 Richardson Ave., Monticello. Guest Speaker Hon. James Farrell. Fire Apparatus welcome. Please wear a mask and abide by all CDC Safety Guidelines. For info call 794-6330 or visit monticellofd.com.

SCVFA Parade Tab

'Saluting Sullivan County's Emergency Responders'

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92nd SCVFA Parade Route and Lineup

Parade Route: Rte 42 Town Park to the Grahamsville Fairgrounds

All Apparatus Will Utilize Davis Lane to Enter the Fairgrounds

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Truck Judging at the Grahamsville Fairgrounds: 10am – 12pm

Lineup: Noon

Due to Limited space, All Personal Vehicles will need to park at the Grahamsville Fairgrounds

Buses will provide transportation between the Rte 42 Town Park and the Fairgrounds

Parade Starts at 1:00pm

SCVFA Awards & Trophies @ 5:00pm

Escort Division

1. NYC DEP Color Guard
2. Grand Marshall: Joe Pond
3. Grahamsville Fire Department
4. Grahamsville Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
5. Firefighters McPadden

- Pipe & Drums
6. Grahamsville First Aid Squad
7. Jim Richardson – Military Mule
8. Neversink Fire Department
9. Neversink Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
10. Claryville Fire

- Department
11. Woodbourne Fire Department
12. Hurleyville Fire Department
13. Hurleyville Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
14. Loch Sheldrake Fire Department

First Division

1. Fallsburg Police Department Color Guard
2. Division Marshall: Gordon Frost
3. Ellenville Fire Department
4. Saints of Swing
5. Napanoch Fire Department

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8. Woodridge Fire Department
9. Mountaindale Fire Department
10. Narrowsburg Fire Department
11. Lava Fire Department
12. Fallsburg Fire Department

Second Division

1. Sullivan County Sheriff's Department Color Guard
2. Division Marshall: Gene Barkley
3. White Lake Fire Department
4. Rock Hill Fire Department
5. Rock Hill Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary

6. Rock Hill Ambulance Corp.
7. Wurtsboro Fire Department
8. Mechanicstown Fire Department
9. Mechanicstown Mechanical Band
10. Walker Valley Fire Department
11. Bloomingburg Fire Department
12. Summitville Fire Department
13. Monticello Fire Department

Third Division

1. New York State Police Color Guard
2. Division Marshall: Tony Costa
3. Beaverkill Valley Fire Department
4. Roscoe-Rockland Fire

- Department
5. Roscoe-Rockland Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
6. Kerhonkson Fire Department
7. Band – TBA
8. Forestburgh Fire Department
9. Sparrowbush Fire Department
10. Sparrowbush Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
11. Callicoon Fire Department
12. Hortonville Fire Department

Fourth Division

1. Color Guard
2. Division Marshall: Will Conjura
3. Orange County

- Firefighters Pipes and Drums Band
4. White Sulphur Springs Fire Department
5. White Sulphur Springs Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary
6. Liberty Fire Department
7. Kauneonga Lake Fire Department
8. Youngsville Fire Department
9. Jeffersonville Fire Department
10. Kenoza Lake Fire Department
11. Swan Lake Fire Department
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Grahamsville F.D. Ladies Auxiliary History

The Grahamsville Fire Dept. Ladies Auxiliary is celebrating almost 70 years in existence this year. It all started in 1952 when a group of women (mostly wives of the firemen who had just formed the GFD in 1964) came together to be an auxiliary.

They were there to help support the firemen in building their Fire Dept. Money was needed to make things happen so the ladies decided once a month to have a fundraiser. They had card parties and raffles then expanded to penny socials and bazaars. The two organizations even got together and brought the country western show of Doc Williams several times to raise money together.

When the Firemen's funds were low, the auxiliary was there and vice versa. In 1964, the old firehouse needed an addition and the ladies funded 3/4 of it. They also bought the kitchen sink and new stove. Furniture, shades and curtains came later. They also helped the Firemen with the Halloween parade and party and the children's Christmas party.

When there was a bad fire, the

auxiliary was there with food and drinks. One time when a little boy was lost, the auxiliary served food day and night for over a week to all agencies while they searched for him.

Some of the early members were: Alida Allison (Sec.), Marie Michelson (President, many times and years), Fran TerBush, Millie Velie (First Honorary Mother, this is given to honor the longest active member, who is still active), Pauline Martorano, Marge Dubois, Olga Walker, Ina Meyer, and Virginia Tuttle. Others continuing were Marion Robinson, June Smith, Barbara Barkley, Linda Barkley, Sharon Kelly, Mary Lee Haag, Elsie Wynkoop, Lisa Garigliano, Marion McGill and Rosie Marsh. Micki Costa was there in the early years and being the first to have 50 years of service.

The auxiliary had one unique member. When Dick Wynkoop was President of the Fire Company, he came to a meeting to ask for help, and while he was there, he asked if he could be a member. A yes vote and he was the first and only male member.

In the 1970's and 80's the Auxiliary began parading the Firemen at the Sullivan County Firemen's parade and the Ulster County parade and even the Hudson Valley Firemen's Association. Their first parade was quite memorable. In their brand-new Montgomery Ward uniforms, and ready to march in Hurleyville, a sudden rain shower came up and luckily the auxiliary could get back in their cars, but the firemen had to put on their fire gear over their uniforms.

They all marched when the shower ended, but got hit again in the middle of the parade. Later on, the Auxiliary got new robin-egg blue uniforms with white accessories and often the crowd would comment how beautiful they looked. The Auxiliary won many trophies and one time took the top trophy for best and largest Auxiliary in the

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Vice President: Melody Arroy

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Treasurer and Honorary Mother: Eileen Minarsky

Sunshine Committee: Josie Dubas

Trustees: Debbie Huggler, Kathy Denman, Claire Rennison

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Social Members:

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Lisa Raymond

Honorary Members:

Regina Metzner

Marion McGill

Sue Sheeley

Lisa Garigliano

Mary Lee Haag

Marie Raymond

Barbara Barkley

Linda Zanetti

parade at Narrowsburg.

Now the Auxiliary still supports the firemen, but also does many things for the community. They have an Easter Egg Hunt, provide lunch during town clean up, hold a July craft fair, help in the Firemen's booth at the fair, do Trunk or Treat for Halloween and bring Santa to the firehouse at Christmas for the kids. The Auxiliary has two raffles a year, a Holiday Food Basket in November and an Easter Basket. Everyone who wins raves at all the goodies that is in them.

Most important is when there is a bad fire, accident or bad storm, the Auxiliary is still there to help the firemen and the mutual aid companies that respond. Sometimes it may only be bringing water on a hot day or coffee on a cold one. Sometimes it could be a full breakfast or supper. In the fire code this is called a signal 10. It is put together in a few minutes with each Auxiliary member that can help comes and brings something in the food line.

All these years the Auxiliary has endured many changes and hopefully will be here for many years to



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Their Ladies Auxiliary has been a valuable asset to the Grahamsville Fire Department over the years.

come.

Presently, the Auxiliary has been lucky that we have had no major structure fires in the fire district due

to smoke alarms and good fire prevention information. Now we concentrate on doing for the community, especially for the kids.

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Scenes from a past parade



The State Police marching in the 2019 Firemen's Parade in Rock Hill.



The Wurtsboro Fire Department showed off this classic fire truck.



Above: These patriotic musicians brought sweet sounds to the parade.

At right: Thousands lined the streets of Rock Hill to show their support.



Remembering 9-11



IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES WE LOOK BACK 20 YEARS

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A timeline of the morning of September 11, 2001

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Everyone will remember

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President Bush's address to the nation on September 11, 2001

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The Flight 93 National Memorial

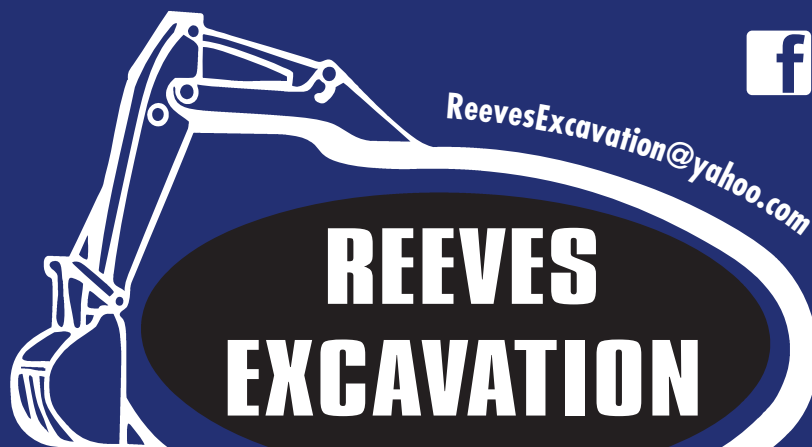
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'It was like an avalanche'

PAGE 38F

Two near misses enough for local WTC worker

SEE PAGE 13F for a complete list of memorial services



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CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS
Ralph Bressler and his son Kurt at the scene.

I Will Never Forget



BY RALPH BRESSLER

Each year on September 11, I reflect, as do many Americans, on the events of September 11, 2001. I remember where I was and what I was doing when I first heard the news. I had a planning period in school and was talking to my wife on the phone.

Like many Americans I could not believe what was happening. I remember that my first reaction was that I wanted to help. I wanted to go to the scene and help rescue victims.

Soon, it became clear that this would be logistically impossible for some time. It took three weeks to coordinate an effort to allow New York State Volunteer Ambulance Corps to help relieve the overworked New York City EMS system. On October 3, Ted Hartling, my son Kurt and myself were stationed at "Ground Zero" as part of this effort. We were there for a 12-hour shift with other corps from Sullivan County. I was clear that the time to recover victims had passed. We were there to support the recovery workers and to show our support.

As September 11 approaches this year it is a little harder for me than in previous years. It may be all the talk about the 20th anniversary. It may be the recent events in Afghanistan. I am sure there will be many new reports issued and TV programs produced for this anniversary. Whatever the cause, I feel a great wave of emo-

tions.

I am sometimes asked to speak about my experience or to read something in remembrance of 9/11 even though my part was small. This is not easy and is always VERY emotional for me. I wrote the following piece in 2006 but it is still as clear today as it was then. I think it is still appropriate and I hope you agree.

I Will Never Forget

I will never forget October 3, 2001.

I was one of three members of my ambulance corps who volunteered to assist the recovery effort at "The Pile".

It was three weeks after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center.

I will never forget how dark it was when we arrived at midnight.

Most of the streetlights were not working and everything was pitch black.

When I opened the ambulance door the smell hit me.

It was the smell of a fire that had burned for three weeks and would not die.

I will never forget how the enormous light towers illuminated "The Pile."

It was as bright as day but with a haze of smoke that never cleared.

Large construction vehicles moved massive pieces of rubble.

They looked like toys and the recovery workers were nearly invisible.

I will never forget the bright points of light where torches were cutting through steel.

Occasionally these bright lights would go out and all activity would cease.

A recovery team had found another victim.

With great respect the body was placed on a stretcher and carried off "The Pile"

A stretcher draped with a flag meant that the victim was a firefighter, police officer or EMS worker.

There were many flags.

I will never forget the scene at dawn as we sat on the corner of West Street 400 meters from "Ground Zero."

We could see what was left of the Marriott Hotel. One side was missing.

We could see into offices with computers and papers on the desks.

I wondered if these workers had escaped. How many were injured? How many died?

I will never forget the Salvation Army van parked next to us.

They were from Jefferson City, Missouri and had come to help.

A sheet was draped over the back of the van.

Elementary school students had covered the sheet with American flags and words of sympathy.

I will never forget going to the Spirit of New York for a meal.

A Red Cross worker handed me a crayon drawing from a student in Phoenix, Arizona.

On it was written, "I am sorry about what happened. I am sending a happy face to you so you feel better."

There were thousands of these letters from around the world.

I will never forget the trucks that rolled in a steady stream carrying debris.

They arrived and were filled. They left and returned empty.

The process repeated itself as it had 24 hours a day, 7 days a week since the attack.

"The Pile" never changed.

I will never forget driving north on the West Side Drive as we were leaving

People lined the street holding signs that said "Thank You."

They clapped and cheered as we turned on our lights and sirens.

One sign read, "We won't forget you."

I will NEVER forget.

The author, Ralph Bressler, is a 35-year member of the Volunteer Ambulance Corps of Livingston Manor.

In remembrance

"When Americans lend a hand to one another, nothing is impossible. We're not about what happened on 9/11. We're about what happened on 9/12."

—Jeff Parness



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A timeline of the morning of September 11, 2001

On the morning of September 11, 2001, 19 terrorists hijacked four commercial airplanes bound for California. The planes departed from airports in Boston; Newark, NJ; and Washington, D.C. September 11 would become an infamous date in American and world history, and the events of that day would forever change the world. As the world commemorates the 20th anniversary of 9/11, the following timeline, courtesy of the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, can help people fully understand how events unfolded on that late-summer morning two decades ago.

- **5:45 a.m.:** Two of the hijackers pass through security at Portland International Airport in Maine. The men will take a short flight to Boston Logan International Airport, where they will join three other hijackers and board American Airlines Flight 11.
- **6:00 a.m.:** Two of the hijacked planes, American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175, will eventually crash into the North and South Towers of the World Trade Center complex in New York City. The day was a significant one on the New York City political calendar, as polling stations opened at 6 a.m. for primary elections.
- **7:59 a.m.:** American Airlines Flight 11 takes off from Boston with 11 crew members, 76 passengers and five hijackers on board. The plane, which will eventually crash into the North tower at the World Trade Center, is filled with more than 76,000 pounds of fuel.
- **8:15 a.m.:** United Airlines Flight 175 takes off from Boston with nine crew members, 51 passengers, and five hijackers on board. This flight also is loaded with 76,000 pounds of fuel.
- **8:19 a.m.:** American Airlines ground personnel are alerted by flight attendant Betty Ann Ong that Flight 11 is being hijacked. This call lasts roughly 25 minutes and Ong reports that the cockpit is unreachable. In the moments before Ong's call, one of the hijackers stabbed Daniel M. Lewin, who was sitting in front of him in first class. Lewin is likely the first person killed in the 9/11 attacks.
- **8:20 a.m.:** American Airlines Flight 77 takes off from Washington Dulles International Airport. The flight has 49,900 pounds of fuel and is carrying six crew members, 53 passengers and five hijackers.
- **8:21 a.m.:** The transponder on Flight 11 is turned off. This device is meant to allow air traffic controllers to identify and monitor the flight path of a plane.
- **8:24 a.m.:** One of the hijackers of Flight 11 unwittingly broadcasts a message to air traffic controllers alerting them to the attacks. The hijacker was attempting to communicate with passengers and crew within the cabin.
- **8:30 a.m.:** Around this time, roughly 80 people have already begun gathering on the 106th floor of the North Tower of the World Trade Center for a financial technology conference. The conference is one of many events on the Trade Center schedule that day.
- **8:37 a.m.:** The Boston Air Traffic Control Center alerts the military that a hijacking is under way.
- **8:42 a.m.:** United Airlines Flight 93 takes off from Newark International Airport. The flight was due to take off at roughly the same time as the other hijacked planes, but was delayed due to routine traffic. Seven crew members, 33 passengers and four hijackers are on board. The flight is filled with 48,700 pounds of fuel.
- **8:46 a.m.:** Five hijackers crash Flight 11 into floors 93 through 99 of the North Tower of the World Trade Center. Hundreds, including everyone on board the flight, are killed instantly. The crash severs all three emergency stairwells, trapping hundreds of people above the 91st floor.
- **8:46 a.m.:** Police, paramedics and firefighters are sent to the North Tower.
- **8:50 a.m.:** While visiting an elementary school in Florida, U.S. President George W. Bush is notified that a small plane has hit the North Tower.
- **8:52 a.m.:** A flight attendant aboard Flight 175 reaches a United Airlines operator in San Francisco and reports the flight is being hijacked. By 9 a.m., various passengers on Flight 175 have called family members.
- **8:55 a.m.:** The Port Authority informs people inside the South Tower via a public address system that the building is secure and there is no need to evacuate.
- **8:59 a.m.:** The Port Authority Police Department orders both towers evacuated. One minute later Captain Anthony Whitaker expands the order to include all civilians in the entire World Trade Center complex.
- **9:02 a.m.:** An evacuation order is broadcast in the South Tower.
- **9:03 a.m.:** Five hijackers crash Flight 175 into floors 77 through 85 of the South Tower. All onboard the flight are killed, as are an unknown number of people inside the building. Two of the three emergency stairwells are impassable and most elevator cables are severed, trapping many people above the impact zone and inside elevator cars.
- **9:03 a.m.:** A second call for mobilization brings the total number of New York City Police Department officers responding to the scene to roughly 2,000. In addition, the FDNY issues a fifth alarm and deploys several hundred additional firefighters to the scene.
- **9:05 a.m.:** President Bush is informed that a second plane has crashed into the World Trade Center.
- **9:12 a.m.:** Flight attendant Renée A. May calls her mother and tells her that hijackers have seized control of Flight 77. When May's call is disconnected, she calls American Airlines.
- **9:30 a.m.:** Amidst reports of additional hijacked planes, the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management at 7 World Trade Center is evacuated.
- **9:37 a.m.:** Hijackers crash Flight 77 into the Pentagon. All 53 passengers and six crew members perish, and 125 military and civilian personnel on the ground are killed in the fire caused by the crash.
- **9:42 a.m.:** The Federal Aviation Administration grounds all flights, ordering all civilian planes in United States airspace to land. Departures also are prohibited.
- **9:45 a.m.:** Evacuations at the White House and the U.S. Capitol begin. Both the House of Representatives and Senate are in session at the time the evacuation begins.
- **9:58 a.m.:** Flight 93 is flying so low to the ground that passenger Edward P. Felt is able to reach an emergency 911 operator in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.
- **9:59 a.m.:** The South Tower collapses after burning for 56 minutes. The tower collapses in just 10 seconds.
- **9:59 a.m.:** Continuity-of-government procedures are implemented for the first known time in American history.
- **10:03 a.m.:** Four hijackers crash Flight 93 into a field near the town of Shanksville, Pennsylvania. All 33 passengers and seven crew members on board perish. Passengers and crew had stormed the cockpit, and the plane ultimately crashes just 20 minutes' flying time from Washington, D.C.
- **10:15 a.m.:** The E Ring of the Pentagon collapses.
- **10:28 a.m.:** The North Tower collapses after burning for 102 minutes. More than 1,600 people are killed as a result of the attack on the North Tower.
- **11:02 a.m.:** New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani urges the evacuation of lower Manhattan.
- **12:16 p.m.:** The last flight still in the air above the continental United States lands. Within two and a half hours, U.S. airspace has been cleared of roughly 4,500 commercial and general aviation planes.

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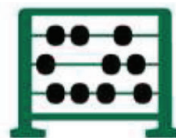
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Looking at 9/11: 20 years later

BY DR. KEITH POMAKOY

Two decades ago America suffered a surprise attack, all the more dastardly because the perpetrators wore no uniforms and made no effort to limit their attacks to legitimate military targets. Lacking any claim to just means the 19 attackers adopted terror as their weapon. The event shocked Americans and, encouraged by the George W. Bush administration, talk of a pre-9/11 and post-9/11 world began to dominate the popular imagination. A byproduct of this mindset, cautioned against by President Bush, was an increase in social and racial tensions in America.

America, I believe, is special not because it has achieved its ideals, but rather because it has ideals worth striving toward. In the words of John Quincy Adams, America was founded with the "language of equal liberty, of equal justice, and of equal rights." These are high ideals indeed, but at its founding the republic included numerous inequalities – slavery, unequal status for women and the poor, devaluing of ethnic and religious differences.

It is important that we recognize that America has never achieved the ideals expressed by Adams. Yet the inspirational value of these words helped each generation to pick up the torch of liberty, fight back against those who were comfortable with a status quo that enshrined their liberty at the cost of others, and, slowly, painfully, advanced the cause of American liberty.

While this great work is unfinished – and our own cultural war rages today – the idea of America's liberty possessed the power to inspire people the world over. That great gift from the people of

France, Liberty Enlightening the World (Americans call it the Statue of Liberty), in part represented the notion that American liberty served as an example to the rest of the world. Americans, despite the blight of slavery and Jim Crow, long believed this, and hoped to serve as an example for other people who might free themselves from tyranny at home.

This notion is the historical basis for modern beliefs of American exceptionalism.

However, Americans, certainly before the Cold War, were quick to endorse John Quincy Adams's ringing phrase, "America goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy."

While many Americans today like to see themselves acting in the tradition of the founding generation, the notion of a post-9/11 world represents a break with this tradition. The post-Cold War era of American unilateral power shaped American 9/11 policy. The Bush administration had adopted a grand and glorious vision to make our children safe, and set out to destroy monsters with unchallenged military might, yet it's not clear that the lives and health of thousands of brave service people and innocent civilians, and countless billions of national treasure, have accomplished that. The asymmetrical nature of terrorism makes it difficult to prevent.

However, wars present powerful catalysts for social change, and the post-9/11 Americans should consider the legacy of 9/11 at home. A post 9/11 mentality is exclusionary, reactive, and fear based, a with us or against us mentality that has increased the divide in America significantly. Fear, lies, and conspiracy theories have proliferated



METRO CREATIVE SERVICES PHOTO

during the last two decades, and especially in the last presidential administration.

People feel less safe than they did twenty years ago, despite the absence of 9/11 style attacks. Instead, we are subjected to domestic violence – mass shootings, the growth of white supremacy, and many fear state violence in the form of unjustified police shootings, traffic stops, and incarceration that targets race. The First Amendment right to freedom of assembly has been challenged. White supremacists, Q-anon conspiracy theorists, and militia groups have been emboldened, and the US Capitol sacked by an angry mob. Hate filled rhetoric has become normalized, and it is possible to hear progressive liberals opine that the freedom of speech should not apply to hate groups. Our understanding of human liberty has undergone a societal assault, and this is perhaps the one victory that terrorists could hope for.

Twenty years after 9/11, Americans need to reconsider the nature of liberty. Is it something that we enjoy ourselves, or is it incumbent upon each of us to ensure that all of us enjoy liberty collectively? The right to own slaves, the insistence of the right to reject a mask, these are examples of American liberty that is insular, negative, and focused on our own desires.

We need to strive for a liberty that is worthy of the tradition of America – let us work toward a country where there is true liberty, based on equality, equity, and economic security. Let us know that we have obligations to each other.

It is in this way that we can connect with history and continue the fight for greater liberty for all. The terrorist can only succeed if we give into our baser instincts, but we should embrace a grand vision for America.

Keith Pomakoy has a Ph.D. in International History from the University at Albany, State University of New York. He lives in Livingston Manor, NY.



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'Everyone will remember Sept. 11, 2001'

RETYPED FROM SEPTEMBER 14, 2001
SULLIVAN COUNTY DEMOCRAT
BY MATT YOUNGFRAU

Tuesday, September 11, 2001 was a day that defied description. Yet some tried. "Surreal."
"Unbelievable."
"Frightening."

They were trying to describe the scene of the most massive, well-orchestrated and devastating terrorist attack ever to take place on American soil.

At 8:45 a.m. that horrific day, a plane hijacked by terrorists crashed into the World Trade Center's Tower One in New York City. Less than 20 minutes later, another hijacked plane crashed into Tower Two, and about an hour later, the Twin Towers both collapsed. Much later in the day, around 5 p.m., Building 7 also collapsed.

Around the same time as the Twin Towers strikes, a third hijacked plane crashed into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., ripping a huge gash in the west side of the five-sided headquarters of the nation's armed forces.

A fourth hijacked plane crashed near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania shortly thereafter. It is speculated that plane was heading for Camp David, the White House of the U.S. Capitol.

In all, 266 people died on board the United and American flights.

While no official tally is even possible at this time, it is feared that the number of injured and dead will rise into the thousands or tens of thousands. At least 200 New York City firefighters likely lost their lives when the Towers came down, along with nearly 80 New York City police officers, but the dangers of fire, collapses and

smoke at the World Trade Center have significantly hampered rescue efforts.

As Tuesday progressed and more news was released, activities slowed down in Sullivan County and around the nation. People were glued to televisions, radios, computers, and phones for any and all news. Shock, fear, and tears were the order of the day, and the very world seemed to stop as all eyes were on the horrors in New York and Washington.

At the Sullivan County Government Center in Monticello, a television was set up in the lobby so all could watch the events as they unfolded. Legislators, county officials, and others stood silent as scene after scene of devastation appeared.

When the second plane crash was replayed, all that could be heard were gasps and "Oh my God!" Most of the crowd were moved to tears.

At first, Legislator Leni Binder was speechless. Quickly, her tears and sorrow turned to rage and anger.

"There is a level of frustration," she said as flames billowed out of the Twin Towers. "We were warned. We knew the targets. Yet we did nothing. Because we were never attacked, we were arrogant. This is the cruelest way to learn a lesson.

"We will get over the shock, shake our heads, and we will get even," she added.

County Clerk George Cooke summed up many observers' feelings.

"Everyone will remember September 11, 2001. People here are going through the motions. The best thing to do now is pray."

New York Governor George Pata-



CONTRIBUTED
PHOTOS BY
FRANK
KONEFAL
Frank Konefal of Mongaup Valley happened to be near the World Trade Center on Tuesday and supplied us with these photos. They show first one, then both towers burning after getting hit by planes.

ki declared a state of emergency, and all the primary elections in the state were suspended. In Sullivan County, primaries were to be held for the Republican and Democratic candidates for District 9 Legislator, Lumberland Republican Town Clerk, Mamakating Conservative Town Justice, Mamakating Republican Town Council, Republican Party Committee people (Districts 1 and 3), and Democratic Party Committee person (District 5). No new date for the primaries was announced, but Election Day is still scheduled for Tuesday, November 6, said officials.

Not many people were worried about the lack of elections, however.

"Today's horrific incident at the World Trade Center - which appears to be part of a coordinated terrorist attack - is a tragedy of unspeakable proportions and a crime against all American and all decent people around the world," Pataki said in a statement released on Tuesday. "We must all pull together and do our part. There will be many people in need of blood in the coming days and

weeks, and I am urging all New Yorkers to contact their local blood donor center to arrange for a blood donation."

"The attacks that took place today on American soil were the vicious and senseless acts of madmen," United States Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-26th) said in a press release. "My greatest concern now is for the tens of thousands of victims. My thoughts and prayers, like those of all Americans today, are with those innocent victims and their families."

As Pataki pointed out, blood is a great need for many involved. The Red Cross has been making a plea for blood and other donations, and those looking to donate should call 1-877-RED-CROSS.

Several blood drives have already been set up. They will be run by the Red Cross and Community General Hospital (CGH). On Tuesday, September 18, from noon to 6 p.m., a blood drive will be held at the Neighborhood Facility Building on Jefferson Street in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30F

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29F

Monticello. On Wednesday, September 19 and Thursday, September 20, there will be a blood drive in Grahamsville. Please call 436-4416 for an appointment.

The next blood drive will be on Saturday, September 22, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Liberty Masonic Lodge. On Monday, September 24, another blood drive will take place at the Youngsville Firehouse from 2 to 8 p.m.

On Thursday, September 27, the last scheduled blood drive will be at CGH in Harris. It will go from 9:30 to 11 a.m. and noon to 4 p.m. Please call 794-3300 ext. 2214 for an appointment.

Of course, the Red Cross is doing more than collecting blood.

"Minutes after the explosion, the Red Cross was called into action," stated Elizabeth Popovich, director of the Sullivan County chapter of the American Red Cross in Greater New York. Popovich was at the Red Cross Headquarters at 150 Amsterdam Avenue in New York City for a meeting when the first



STUNNED NYC PASSERSBY look at what appears to be a smoking piece of an airplane engine that fell near Canal Street not far from where the two airliners smashed into the World Trade Center Tuesday.

plane struck. "Many different people kept showing up throughout the day to volunteer their services and to give blood. It was amazing."

And at least one local resident witnessed the actual tragedies at the World Trade Center.

"The plane was flying real low," Mongaup Valley resident Frank Konefal said. Konefal was in New York to meet his nephew when the first plane crashed in the World Trade Center.

"It was like a sonic boom. As I walked up to take pictures, I saw people jumping out of the building to escape."

Because of the tragedy, many events were canceled or delayed. All area schools canceled after-school activities.

The Hazardous Household Waste Collection Event scheduled for Saturday has been canceled. It was canceled because the company that does the collection is unable to travel on the East Coast due to restrictions because of the tragedy. It will be rescheduled in the future.

Other offerings were affected by the tragedy. In the county, channels 5 (Fox), 7 (ABC), 9 (UPN), 11 (WB), and 13 (PBS) were knocked out. Time Warner Channels (TBS and TNT) carried CNN all day and night. Viacom Networks (TNN, VH1 and MTV) carried CBS news coverage. TLC carried BBC coverage. QVC, the Food Network, and HGTV suspended programming. All eyes were tuned to New York and Washington for any and all

information available.

Dr. Dick Dunn held a religious service at Sullivan County Community College. The students from New York City at SCCC were allowed to call home and find out about loved ones. The college hosted a panel discussion on Thursday about the situation.

The Firemen's Parade in Loch Sheldrake on Saturday will happen as planned. In fact, it will be dedicated to those lost in the tragedy.

Indeed, even those without affected loved ones were nevertheless

stunned.

"Many people were in disbelief," ShortLine bus driver Andy Rubin remarked.

Rubin also stated that passengers and traffic got less as the day wore on.

"I can't believe something like this happened within our lifetime."

On Wednesday, WSUL dedicated their morning show to taking listeners' phone calls. As people called, WSUL gave out American flags to show unity and support.

For morning DJ Josh Sommers, it was more personal.

"My brother works in the World Trade Center," Sommers told the audience. "The hardest thing for me was having to be on the air while I worried about my brother. I was very relieved when I heard he was OK."

Between the talk, WSUL played such patriotic songs as "God Bless The USA" and "Born in the USA." Sommers spent four hours combining "God Bless The USA" and listeners' comments to make a moving tribute. At 4 p.m., Sommers stood outside the Government Center and handed out American flags to all who came by. Within five minutes, Sommers gave away all 50 flags that he brought with him.

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President George W. Bush's address to the nation on September 11, 2001

On the evening of September 11, 2001, United States President George W. Bush addressed a nation that earlier that day witnessed the deadliest terrorist attacks in world history. That morning, hijackers took control of four airplanes, ultimately crashing two into the Twin Towers at the World Trade Center in New York City and another into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. A fourth hijacked plane crashed in a field near the town of Shanksville, Pennsylvania after passengers and crew attempted to regain control of the plane from the hijackers. All passengers and crew on board all four flights died on September 11, and thousands of others on the ground lost their lives that day as well. It was under those conditions that President Bush delivered the following speech to a shaken nation.

“

Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes, or in their offices; secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers; moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror.

The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed; our country is strong.

A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.

America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.

Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature. And we responded with the best of America — with the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington, D.C. to help with local rescue efforts.

Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks.

The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight, and will be open for business tomorrow. Our financial institutions remain strong, and the American economy will be open for business, as well.

The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.

I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance.

America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism. Tonight, I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me."

This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day. Yet, we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

Thank you. Good night, and God bless America.

”





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The Flight 93 National Memorial

At 10:03 a.m. on September 11, 2001, the last of four planes that were hijacked earlier that morning crashed into a field near the town of Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The people behind the 9/11 attacks later claimed the hijackers who commandeered the plane intended to crash it into the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., but passengers and crew stormed the cockpit, prompting the hijackers to crash the plane into the field, which is less than 20 minutes' flying time to Washington, D.C. The efforts of passengers and crew onboard Flight 93 were nothing short of heroic. Though everyone aboard the flight perished in the crash, the attack on the U.S. Capitol was thwarted, saving untold number of lives. All passengers and crew on board Flight 93 were awarded a Congressional Gold Medal on September 11, 2014.

The Flight 93 National Memorial is located in Stonycreek Township in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, roughly two miles north of Shanksville. The memorial was opened to family members of the victims

on September 10, 2015, and is now open to the public seven days a week, 365 days a year from sunrise to sunset, though visitors are urged to contact the Memorial in advance due to potential restrictions or closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In September 2005, the Flight 93 Advisory Commission, which included family members of the victims as well as design and art professionals and community and national leaders, chose a design proposal submitted by Paul Murdoch Architects and Nelson Byrd Woltz Architects from among 1,100 entries.

The Flight 93 National Memorial includes the Tower of Voices, a 93-foot-tall musical instrument that holds 40 wind chimes, one to represent each of the 40 passengers and crew members who perished in the crash. The tower is located on an oval concrete plaza that includes two curved concrete benches facing the opening of the tower. The tower is surrounded by concentric rings of white pines and deciduous plantings. A live webcam of the Tower of Voices can be viewed at



<https://www.flight93friends.org/plan-yourvisit/webcams>.

Visitors to the Flight 93 National Memorial also can visit the Memorial Plaza. The Memorial Plaza features the Wall of

Names, which is made up of 40 white polished marble stones inscribed with the names of the passengers and crew who were aboard Flight 93 on 9/11. The Memorial Plaza extends one-quarter mile alongside the area where Flight 93 crashed. Visitors can walk along the Memorial Plaza and view the impact site, including a grove of eastern hemlock trees that were damaged by the crash. A gap in the tree line is still visible and serves as a lasting "scar" of the crash.

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'It was like an avalanche'

REPRINTED FROM SEPTEMBER 14, 2001
SULLIVAN COUNTY DEMOCRAT
BY DAN HUST

Even at Max Yasgur's farm in Bethel, peace, love and music could not prevail on Tuesday after the Twin Towers came crashing down to the ground.

Owners Roy Howard and Jeryl Abramson were horrified at the carnage, but their main concern was Howard's son and Abramson's longtime friend, both of whom should have been at or near the World Trade Center during the catastrophic events.

Since phone lines were hopelessly jammed, Howard leaped into his car and sped 90 miles an hour down Route 17 to find his 26-year-old son, Josh, who works for American Express in the World Financial Center complex across the street from the World Trade Center.

Meanwhile, Abramson waited by the phone at their Bethel home to hear of any news of Josh or her friend Richard, who served as best man at her first wedding three decades ago.

Phone call after phone call came with no news, until - finally - Josh's mother Lisa called Abramson to tell her that she has heard from her son, and he was alright.

On this one day of all days, Josh Howard, remarkably, had gotten out of bed late.

"It was very scary," said Abramson on Wednesday, "but somehow, in my gut, I knew he had overslept."

Abramson relayed the call to a relieved Roy Howard, who stopped at his friend's house in Bergenfield, NJ near the George Washington Bridge to await being reunited with his son.

"I was going to walk across the bridge" to find him, said Howard, but rumors of explosives kept both father and son off the structure.

Hours later, they did indeed meet on the bridge and went to a local diner to discuss the day's events.

"I didn't get down to the financial district until 9:30 a.m.," said the younger Howard in a telephone interview yesterday. "We were

forced to exit the subway 4-5 blocks away, but as soon as I got out, I could see both towers burning."

He headed east to City Hill Park, where a stunned crowd had gathered to watch the horrific sights.

"For the most part, everyone was in a state of shock, but calm," Howard recalled.

Trying to find a working phone, he began walking again. He turned around in time to see pieces of Tower Two beginning to fall in what would become its final and fatal tumble.

"Then someone screamed, and

and it was pitch black," he said. "I just ran as fast as I could. I couldn't see anyone - just my hands in front of my face - and it was very quiet, like a snowstorm."

The young man continued running through the swirling mix of smoke and debris, dashing past a car with its door open and engine running, somehow managing not to hit or trip over anything or anyone.

"I ducked into the first lobby I found," he said, and somebody gave me a t-shirt. I was covered with ash and soot and dirt."

instead walked more than 100 blocks before finding a working phone and calling his mother.

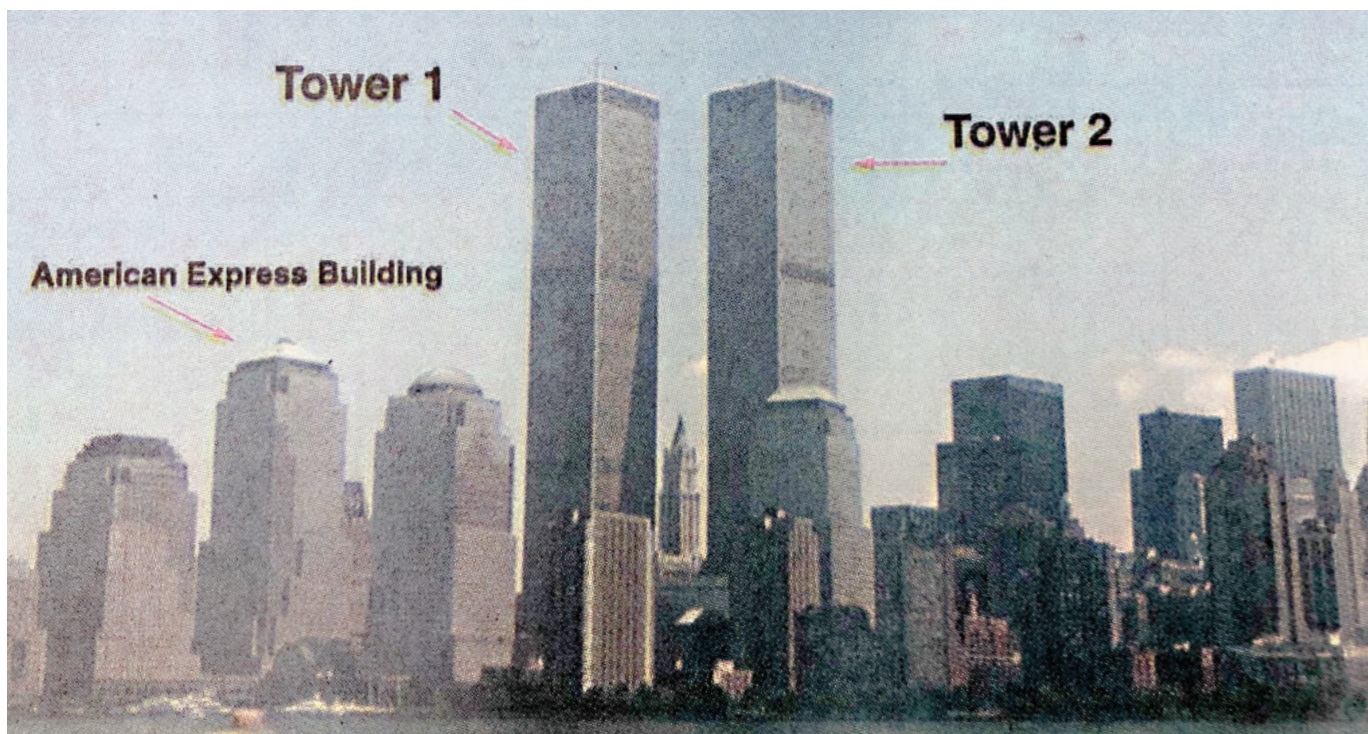
He eventually made it back to his apartment and met his father. His main goal now is to get back and rearrange his life, but currently the entire family's just enjoying knowing he's safe.

In a way, Roy Howard's even proud.

"He told me he overslept," said the elder Howard of his son. "It's a Howard trait!"

* * *

Not all news has been good, how-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The lower Manhattan skyline, as it will never be again.

everyone panicked and began to run east," he said.

Someone dropped their cell phone in the mad dash for whatever safety could be found, but as Howard bent down to pick it up, he saw a billowing cloud of smoke and dust tearing down the narrow canyon-like walls of downtown Manhattan.

"That was the scariest part when it first engulfed me. It was like an avalanche. It just swept over you,

Howard then joined what he called a "caravan of people" walking north, away from the awful destruction. When breathing and seeing became easier, he realized he was OK and not far from the Brooklyn Bridge.

"Then I heard another crash, and somebody said, 'There goes the other tower.'"

With the help of a mission worker and a recently purchased bottle of water, Howard didn't look back but

ever.

Abramson's friend Richard, an accountant for Cantor-Fitzgerald on the 101st floor of Tower One, is still missing.

"They can't find him," said Abramson on Wednesday. "And now they're telling us, 'Don't even hope anymore.'"

The 50-year-old man has a wife and two children, said Abramson - one of whom is terminally ill.

Two near misses enough for local WTC worker

Obernburg resident Stuart Nalven thought he had seen it all when he experienced the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center.

Until Tuesday. Working for the Port Authority on the 71st floor of Tower One, Nalven was in his office suite when he heard a loud noise that just got louder.

The building then "cracked like a whip," and nervous coworkers talked about what sounded like a "giant blowing up a big paper bag and popping it with a huge bag."

Naturally, they went over to the windows - and were stunned when debris fell past them.

They were even more stunned when they saw a plane slam into Tower Two, exploding in a shower of sparks, steel and bodies.

"Some were still in their seats," recounted Nalven.

And that was all the motivation

his coworkers and he needed.

"Since the public address system had failed, we decided to get the hell out of there," said the middle-aged computer programmer.

A hasty dash down the seemingly unending stairwell was complicated by increasing amounts of leaking water and the smell of jet fuel - bringing up memories for Nalven of being trapped in the smelly compartment of one of the Twin Towers' 99 elevators during the '93 bombing.

On the way down, Nalven said he passed firefighters, police officers, even a man in a wheelchair on the 27th floor.

"I assume they all died," he said from his home on Wednesday.

Exiting the stairs at the second floor, Nalven and his coworkers were met by a scene of devastation that stunned them all.

"The huge plate glass windows were blown out. The revolving

glass doors were shattered, and the entire lobby was filled with water," he recalled.

Emergency workers frantically hurried people out of the building as dust and debris began coating the plaza, and Nalven walked up several blocks before turning to see the most horrific sight of all.

Tower Two was collapsing.

"When I saw a big cloud of smoke," he said, "we all knew we had to run."

And so he did, all the way to a ferry on the Hudson River - one of the few ways for thousands of people to get off Manhattan Island.

Nalven stayed with a coworker at his house in Hoboken, NJ, calling his wife Lynn at their Obernberg home Tuesday afternoon to say he and all his coworkers were OK - at least physically.

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SULLIVAN COUNTY DEMOCRAT
BY DAN HUST

"Mentally, I don't know," he remarked Wednesday.

Lynn Nalven, thanks to her husband's coworker's wife, had already heard the good news (which she asked her to repeat at first).

"I never lost hope," she said, adding that friends and neighbors were of invaluable help and support.

"My neighbors prayed...and were calling me all morning. I really want to thank them."

And, of course, she's glad her husband is safe at home.

"He feels so lucky," she explained.

Stuart Nalven agreed but likened these two close calls to a baseball game.

"I figure three strikes - you're out."

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