

**Today we mourn the people who lost their lives on
September 11th along with their families and friends left
behind.**

Michael Berkeley

Donald Greene

Louis Steven Inghilterra

George Morell

Allan Schwartzstein



Order of Service

9:30 am

Color Guard

Placing of the Flowers

Traditional Lament

Welcome

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Town of New Castle First Responders

Lt. James Dumser, Piper, New Castle Police Dept.

Jeremy Saland, Acting Town Supervisor, Town of New Castle

Reverend Dr. Martha R. Jacobs

Boy Scouts of America Troop #1 and 2 and 3
Chappaqua Girl Scouts

9:59 am

End of service Bell

Presentation of the Wreath

National Anthem

Introduction Of Speaker

Keynote Speaker

Presentation of the Wreath

The Collapse of the South Tower

Ex-Chief Ray Lips & Ex-Chief Charles Bergstrom
New Castle First Responders

Jordana Lichtenthal

Jeremy Saland

Thomas Dunne, Retired Deputy Chief, FDNY
New Castle First Responders

10:28 am

End of Service Bell

America The Beautiful

Reading of the Lost

Amazing Grace

Benediction

Taps

The Collapse of the North Tower

Caroline Short, Girl Scout Troop 1079

Michael Wolfensohn, Millwood Fire
Commissioner

Lt. James Dumser, Piper, New Castle Police Dept.

Rabbi Maura Linzer

Frank Huber and Joe Sabia



September 11, 2001

20 years ago today, nineteen men hijacked four commercial jet planes and turned them into weapons by aiming them at U.S. buildings—symbols of our wealth, military strength, and democracy.

Two thousand nine hundred seventy-seven innocent people were killed in the biggest foreign attack on American soil. Today, we honor and remember them.

For most of us—especially those of us in New York—that day started like any other late summer day. It was a beautiful morning. The Manhattan sky was a royal blue without a single cloud in sight.

8:46 am

The first hijacked plane, American Airlines flight #11, struck the North Tower of the WTC between floors 93-99. New York's first responders rushed to the scene within seconds. Rumor had it... there had been a terrible accident.

9:03 am

Flash forward 17 minutes, the streets of lower Manhattan were lined with people. They stared up at the burning North Tower where a second plane, United Airlines flight #175, had crashed into the South Tower between floors 77-85. This was no accident, people realized: it was, in fact, a deliberate attack.

9:37 am

New York was not the only place under attack: a third plane, American Airlines flight #77, crashed into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. That was an important target for the terrorists as it symbolized America's military power.

9:59 am

Twenty-two minutes after the Pentagon was hit, the unimaginable happened in New York. The South Tower of the WTC collapsed only 56 minutes after it was struck. It would only be a matter of time before the North Tower collapsed, too.



10:03 am

There was still a fourth plane in the air: United Airlines flight #93. It was believed to be headed for the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. The plane was late taking off from Newark International due to typical airport delays. With time to spare, passengers and crew received warnings from loved ones and officials on the ground alerting them to what was happening. This gave them the chance to fight back against the terrorists, their aggression forcing the hijackers to crash the plane into an empty field in Shanksville, PA. Everyone on board was killed. Their brave actions likely saved many other lives that day as the plane never reached its intended target.

10:28 am

Back in New York, the North Tower collapsed. The skyscraper that took six years to build crumbled in 12 seconds. The entire event occurred in only 102 minutes.

1/3 of the Earth's population, approximately 2.1 billion people, were aware of the tragic unfolding of events: they watched on T.V., read news reports online, or tuned into updates on the radio.

In all, 2,997 people lost their lives that day and to date over 2,000 lost theirs due to 9/11 related illnesses. Most of those brave souls work tirelessly on the pile 24 hours a day 7 days a week for nine months, six of those months the pile still burned. At first it was a search and rescue and then recovery of those lost.

Today, on the 20th anniversary of that fateful day, may the lives remembered, the deeds recognized, and the spirit reawakened be eternal beacons, affirm respect for life, strengthen our resolve to preserve freedom, and inspire an end to hatred, ignorance, and intolerance.



A Brief History of the Bells

Long before telephones and radios, fire departments used the telegraph to communicate. Pulling the handle of the once-familiar red fire alarm boxes—located on nearly every street corner in America—transmitted a unique code to the nearest fire station.

When a firefighter died in the line of duty, the fire alarm office would tap out a unique signal. That signal was five measured dashes, then a pause, then five measured dashes, then another pause, then five more dashes.

That became universally known as the Tolling of the Bell and was broadcast over all telegraph fire alarm circuits. The signal was a sign of honor and respect for all firefighters who had made the ultimate sacrifice and has become a time-honored tradition.



Community Members Lost on September 11, 2001

Michael Berkeley

When hot-air tension ballooned, Michael J. Berkeley knew just how to prick it. Once, as he and his wife, Lourdes Perez-Berkeley, were driving in a fancy neighborhood, their car sputtered to a halt. Yet again, Mr. Berkeley, a risk taker, hadn't filled up the tank. Her temper ignited. Mr. Berkeley knew she was itching to shout, "I told you so!" But the born charmer grinned and burst out laughing: at himself, their problem, at the lecture he knew she so badly wanted to deliver. His wife couldn't help laughing, too.

Mr. Berkeley, 38, the founder of the Berkeley Group, a securities brokerage-investment firm on the 79th floor of 1 World Trade Center, had superb people skills. He believed in reading people accurately to cultivate business - "Everyone has something for you," he used to say - but he also had a deep-seated belief in treating all people, no matter their station, with respect.

He moved as comfortably among fellow members of prestigious golf clubs like Winged Foot and the Atlantic as he did among caddies. He could get anyone to laugh, not least the couple's two little boys: "Get tough, get tough, show me your game face!" he would shout, just before he flung pillows at them.

-New York Times: "The Reckoning"; A Portrait of Grief



Louis Steven Inghilterra

When Louis Steven Inghilterra's colleagues at Fiduciary Trust first met him, they were impressed, and a bit intimidated. "They said, 'He seemed so buttoned-up!' " recalled Diane, his wife of five years. "His reports were so precise!"

But when they got to know him, they discovered another side -- a man who had been playing guitar and bass with a rock band for 30 years, on stage and, more recently, with friends at his home, and who idolized Frank Zappa.

Mr. Inghilterra himself could not decide which of his personas to devote his heart to -- the loose-and-wild rock musician or the 45-year-old snap-tight organized treasurer of Fiduciary. "He was torn," said Mrs. Inghilterra. "He'd made it -- a kid from Brooklyn and Queens College, up there with boys from Yale and Harvard." His success made him proud and provided security, she said, but sometimes he talked of giving it up, of starting his own business.

Meanwhile, he collected guitars and records and took joy in 2-year-old Sam -- who, Mrs. Inghilterra said, shows every sign, too, of being precisely organized and wild and rocking. "Sam would stand in front of the stage when Louis was playing and working his way around, watching every instrument," she said. "He liked playing the drums. But when he knew it was time for Daddy to come home, he would get out all his blocks and color-code them."

-New York Times: "The Reckoning"; A Portrait of Grief



George Morell

At a Giants playoff game last year, George Morell introduced himself to the legendary halfback Frank Gifford, without knowing who he was. Even when Mr. Gifford said his own name, Mr. Morell still did not know. When his friends ribbed him, Mr. Morell replied, "Well, he didn't know who I was either."

Mr. Morell, 47, a bond broker at Cantor Fitzgerald, was the kind of man who shook hands with strangers and made them his friends. It did not matter if they were celebrities or not. "George made the shoeshine guy feel like a million bucks," said his younger brother, Mark. "He didn't collect cars or postage stamps. He collected friends."

The elder Mr. Morell lived with his wife, Roberta, and their children, Nancy, George Jr., Kelsey and Harrison, in Bedford, N.Y. He liked to hunt and fish, and often took his family along. But his favorite pastime was telling stories about his encounters with life. He always had just one more to tell.

-New York Times: "The Reckoning"; A Portrait of Grief



Allan Schwartzstein

After 15 years on Wall Street, Allan Schwartzstein still wore the watch he had received for his bar mitzvah. He preferred ratty denim shirts and hole-ridden khakis to the cuff links and starched collars more typical of Cantor Fitzgerald equities traders. That is what he wore on his second date with his wife, Amy, and still, she said, she married him. He promptly lost his wedding ring. "It just wasn't him," she said.

"He was somebody that, what you saw was what you got," she added. "This was not the guy that was going to hold the door open or worry about what came out of his mouth, or worry about what I looked like. He was genuine."

Mr. Schwartzstein was the kind of man for whom other people had a hard time buying presents, but who would always remember when it was time to buy them for others. "He would call and say: 'Don't tell him I told you, but it's John's birthday. Call him,' " said Jay Scharf, a best friend.

Even as a child, he seemed older than his years. "When he came home, he did not go straight to the friends to play with them," said his father, Avi. "He would stand first with the parents and have a mature conversation.

Allan, 37 and the father of two, was named after an uncle who was killed in Israel in 1948. The uncle's body has never been found, Avi Schwartzstein said. Neither has Allan's.

-New York Times: "The Reckoning"; A Portrait of Grief



Donald Freeman Greene

Donald Freeman Greene, one of four brothers, was born in White Plains, N.Y. After their father died, their mother married Leonard Greene, who moved the family to Chappaqua. A single father of three children, Greene adopted Donald and his three brothers, who then gained one sister from the union. Leonard Greene took great pride in coaching baseball in Chappaqua and participating in many of his children's other activities. Sadly, Don's mother died approximately 10 years later. Leonard then married Chappaqua resident Joyce Meller, a woman who had four children of her own. The blended family thus grew to twelve children.

This large family resided on North Bedford Road from 1955–1980. Don went through elementary school in Chappaqua and then made a transition to private school, though Chappaqua always remained his "hometown". He is fondly remembered by many of his friends in New Castle.

Donnie, as he is affectionately known, loved flying, sailing, and later spending time with his wife and two children. He prided himself on always being home for dinner unless he was on a business trip. Don lived in Greenwich, Connecticut and was Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Safe Flight Instrument Corporation. Safe Flight is best known in the aviation world for Leonard Greene's patent on the "Aircraft Stall Warning" device, which warns a pilot when an airplane is in a technical stall, allowing them the time to recover control.

On September 11, 2001, the United States was the object of an unparalleled terrorist attack. In all, four planes were hijacked, sending the passengers as well as people on the ground to their deaths. Two planes hit the Twin Towers at the World Trade Center, and one hit the Pentagon. Sadly, the fourth plane was not yet in the air when these events happened, but Newark International Airport was not alerted or shut down before United Airlines Flight 93 was cleared for take off. Donald Freeman Greene was on that flight.

Flight 93 was bound for San Francisco, but it made a sharp turn over Ohio as the terrorists took aim at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC. At this point passengers on the flight were calling home, learning about the attacks that already happened. They fully understood that they were bound for a similar fate.

Don did not call his wife, Claudette, from the plane -- his family is sure he would not have wanted that to be the last memory she had of him. Since he was a highly skilled pilot (first licensed at age fourteen), his family is confident that he was actively planning exactly what maneuvers he would execute as soon as his fellow passengers gained access to the cockpit. However, once the cockpit was breached, the suicide terrorists intentionally crashed the plane in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.



The courage of Don and the other passengers will never be forgotten. In the process of fighting for their lives, they saved countless others, as thankfully the plane went down in a field, injuring no one on the ground. The forty passengers and crew aboard Flight 93 are all heroes in the eyes of the world, and the Flight 93 National Memorial has been created in Shanksville to honor them.

Don's children Charlie and Jody have continued his legacy by promoting support of September 11th commemorations. You can see them talk about their father and their current endeavors on an NBC Dateline special scheduled to air on September 10th, 2021, on the 20th anniversary of the last time they were with their father.

There is not a day that he isn't missed by many. May the memory of his name be a blessing.

-Amy Meller, Donald Greene's Sister



Our Town's Response

John S. Diaconis, Member of New Castle Town Board on 9/11/01

September 11, 2001, started out as a beautiful morning. The sky was clear, the air dry and crisp. I boarded the 8:05 am train at Chappaqua on the way to 7 World Trade. I arrived at Grand Central at about 9 and took the 5 train to Fulton Street. The train was slow and rerouted to Wall Street. The delay made me anxious. I wanted to be home early for the Town Board meeting.

I climbed the subway stairs to Wall Street at about 9:30 am. While standing outside Trinity Church, I saw both buildings on fire. Scores of firemen were running to the towers with heavy equipment. A NYC police officer directed me north on Broadway. I made it to Maiden Lane across from the South Tower at around 9:40 am. I used a phone booth to call my son and Supervisor Marion Sinek, but I couldn't make contact. Suddenly, the top of the South Tower started to shake. Seconds later, the building collapsed and everything went black. It became tough to breathe and even harder to see.

I returned home at about 5 pm, rested for a few minutes and headed to Town Hall. The town board meeting, of course, was cancelled. However, Town Administrator Gennaro "Jerry" Faiella and Town Clerk/Receiver of Taxes Linda Paterson were there. Jerry took quick action with Linda by his side. They were fielding calls from the community, including town employees, police officers and volunteers. Jerry thought to greet and assist commuters as they got off trains as well as employees that had family members who might be affected, and countless other details.

Police Chief Robert Breen was already at the Westchester Command Center, taking a leadership role in rescue efforts. Several of our off-duty police officers were on the way to Ground Zero to help direct traffic and be in the bucket brigade. The Chappaqua Volunteer Ambulance Corps prepared to send ambulances down and make themselves available. The Chappaqua and Millwood Fire Departments collected food and other needed items.

The Rotary Club shifted the goals of Community Day that year to collect items for rescue efforts. Gabby Rosenfeld of Rotary was a positive and helpful influence on all. Residents collected funds for the Red Cross. That Saturday, a concert and candlelight ceremony was held at the Gazebo. About \$50,000 was collected in only a few days.



Paul Eiden, First Assistant Chief, Chappaqua Fire Department

While at his job for the Town of New Castle DPW, the Chappaqua Fire Chief at that time, Charlie Bergstrom, learned of the first plane hitting the World Trade Center from the AM/FM radio in his work truck. He immediately contacted Walter Quast, a fellow town employee—and at the time, the Millwood Fire Company’s Fire Chief. Together, they understood that this was not an accident.

They made their way to Town Hall to meet with the NCPD Chief at the time Robert Breen. While meeting with Chief Breen, the Westchester County Department of Emergency Services Communications Division paged all Westchester County Fire Chiefs. An inquiry was made about what apparatus and staffing would be available to respond to New York City if needed. The Chappaqua Fire Department offered an engine, the Millwood Fire Company offered a rescue vehicle, and the Mount Kisco Fire Department offered a ladder truck. This strategy of each agency supplying a different piece of apparatus ensured that each would assist in NYC. However, more than that, it assured that the three fire districts would still be able to provide protection to our response areas.

The Chappaqua Fire Department’s Engine 144 responded to the Westchester County Fire Training Center in Valhalla. Shortly after arriving, Engine 144 was dispatched to a firehouse at 233 St. and White Plains Road in the Bronx to stand by for that firehouse’s Ladder 39 and Engine 63. After covering that shift in the Bronx, Engine 144 returned to Yonkers Raceway, awaiting further assignment.

At 8:00 am on September 12, Engine 144 was dispatched to Morris Avenue in the Bronx to staff a firehouse for FDNY Engine 92/Ladder 44. After a 12-hour tour and many calls, the crew from Engine 144 returned home after being relieved by a new group of Chappaqua firefighters. The second crew covered parts of the Morrisania section of the Bronx for an additional 12 hours before returning home to Chappaqua. Joan Corwin of Chappaqua Transportation donated a bus for shuttling the incoming and returning firefighters.

In the days, weeks, and months following the attack, Chappaqua firefighters were involved in recovery efforts at Ground Zero. They also collected supplies from our community to bring to first responders working on the pile. Yet, despite the chaos, the Chappaqua firefighters continued to provide fire protection to the community, train, and engage in their routine tasks as firefighters.



Raymond Lips, Ex-Chief, Millwood Fire Company #1

My day started as it always does: watching the local news while drinking my morning coffee. Suddenly it was as if I was watching a sci-fi film like War of the Worlds. I was devastated watching the second plane hit the second tower. It was beyond my wildest worst nightmare to see those towers collapse.

As Chief at the time, I immediately contacted my officers. That day was spent coordinating our response to the requests for equipment and supplies. One of my officers had a brother in Connecticut with access to much-needed tips for the cutting equipment. The equipment was placed in my personal pickup and delivered directly to Ground Zero.

We later found and established a connection to an assistant to the mayor. He had given us a list of tools and equipment, and welding tips were included. We crafted a billboard and hung it in front of the firehouse so that people from the area could help. They would stop by, read the list, and return with what was requested. In addition, our Ladies Auxiliary put together bags of candy and personal hygiene items for those working in a recovery capacity at Ground Zero. We were so grateful for all those donations, which may have seemed small but were so important at the time.

Our company received a piece of the tower steel, which we made into a memorial at the firehouse. Today, it holds a place of honor at our new headquarters. The Town of New Castle also established a memorial, a place for quiet reflection, and a destination for those who lost loved ones that day.



Nan Gollogly, Millwood Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary

It was a beautiful morning. The sky was a clear blue, not a cloud in sight. It was September 11, 2001.

I am a teacher. I was standing in front of my class of 23 third graders when the principal knocked on my classroom door. Many of our students had parents who worked in the city. One little girl would never see her father again.

I am a mom. I was glued to the television, horrified, incredulous, and stunned, just like everyone else that day. My son was driving an ambulance to standby at nearby train stations to bring the injured to local hospitals; however, there was no one to transport. He was then sent to Ground Zero... there was no one to transport there either. The next day, I scraped the gray clay from the soles of his sneakers.

I am a wife. My husband's second family is the Millwood Fire Company, where he has volunteered since 1958. He worked side by side with his brother firefighters to do whatever they could to help. One of the firefighters knew someone working on the pile, so Millwood compiled a list of needed items and created a distribution channel. A sign placed outside the firehouse was updated every few days with a list of donations requested. Each day, the community delivered with unimaginable generosity. My husband and other firefighters drove to an army surplus store in Brooklyn to pick up work boots and shoes for those on the pile. Across the country, everyone wanted to help. Alaska knew to send booties for the dogs doing Search and Rescue operations.

I am a Life Member of the Millwood Ladies Auxiliary. The Millwood Fire Company has always valued the support of the Auxiliary. We bring sandwiches and coffee to a cold winter's night fire scene. We organize special activities for Fire Prevention Week and Open House. We sponsor fund-raisers to refurbish the 1924 Brockway (Millwood's original fire apparatus). We cook meals for meeting nights, and we march in summertime parades. The Ladies Auxiliary is always ready to serve. September 11th was no different.

In the aftermath of 9/11, we collected gloves and socks, packed water bottles, made sandwiches, gathered medical supplies, picked up donations, baked cookies, kept dinner warm at home, networked with other Ladies Auxiliaries to increase contributions. We all did what we could do to support our firefighters in the massive effort to help those working at Ground Zero.

I am a human. September 11th is a day we would like to forget but never will. Perhaps, in time, the painful memories will be balanced by the goodness of so many people. That is the better part of humankind.



Lt. John P. Vize, Ret., Town of New Castle Police Department

I was working in my office when I heard that a plane had crashed into one of the towers on the radio. I joined the growing group of officers and civilian staff at the front desk television listening to an eyewitness account and his concern about how the flames would ever be extinguished. We watched as another plane crashed into the second tower to our horror and knew then that our nation was under attack.

We then learned of the attack on the Pentagon as members of our department's Command Staff met with Town of New Castle officials.

After we received a teletype from the NYPD requesting assistance, many department officers volunteered to respond. Upon receiving Town Board approval, we first reported to the Javits Center staging area on Manhattan's West Side. I distinctly remember the massive plume of smoke rising in the south where the towers had stood just that morning, and everyone nervously looking to the sky as fighter jets flew overhead. Our squad of New Castle officers was deployed to traffic control before being reassigned to Ground Zero. We were overwhelmed by the devastation. At that time, it was still considered a rescue mission, and everyone went to work on the pile.

Very early on the morning of September 12th, we returned to Chappaqua. Typically, the officers would be talking and goofing around on a bus ride. But that day, you could have heard a pin drop. When we arrived back at our headquarters, we found another squad of volunteer officers waiting to make the trip back to Ground Zero.

Many of us from the Town of New Castle Police Department responded to lower Manhattan that terrible week and assisted where needed. We worked as individuals and as a team to get through that horrific time. I am proud that we, as Americans, could come together to support and console one another. I hope that, as a nation, this is something we can do again in the future.



Bob Coulombe. Ex-Officer, Chappaqua Volunteer Ambulance Corps

Like most Americans, I remember where I was when we were attacked on 9/11: at home, doing chores. I was CVAC Captain at the time and on duty. My wife was at NBC, waiting to do an interview, and called me, frantic. She said she'd seen people pouring out of 30 Rock and was told by an NYPD officer that a plane had flown into the World Trade Center. I turned on the television and saw the smoke and fire at the North Tower. I told my wife that we are at war, and I am going down there.

I called Westchester County Control and asked them to issue a call to all CVAC members who could report. I called New Castle Police Department Chief Bob Breen and asked if we could secure a bus to transport our medical team to the World Trade Center. Chief Breen said yes, and we prepared to leave. Dan Blum, Director of Westchester Emergency Services at that time, joined us at CVAC headquarters with two paramedic ambulances and crews. Lange's delivered sandwiches and beverages and made sure we were well fed.

I then spoke to County Control, who determined our readiness to report to the WTC site. They ordered us to a staging area at Yonkers Raceway. Upon arrival, we were directed to an area designated for EMS vehicles and personnel. There was a steady stream of fire and ambulance services, special services equipment, and civilian volunteers from all over the area and ultimately from all over the country offering to help.

By mid-afternoon, over 2,000 personnel and hundreds of pieces of apparatus were staged at Yonkers Raceway. We provided support for the Incident Commander and went to work organizing. Then we waited. The call to send ambulances down to the 9/11 site never came. A mobile surgical unit arrived at the Raceway, and CVAC's critical care nurse Celia Fishman joined their crew. They reported to the WTC site, and after a very long day, treated not a single patient. Anxiety escalated at the Yonkers Raceway as we wondered why we were not being called to help. At 1 am, we were discharged. We departed by the hundreds.

At CVAC, it took some time to understand why we were not called to Ground Zero. Nearly 3,000 people died in the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers, but only a few were injured. You escaped with your life, or you didn't.

That day, the bell rang, and the CVAC volunteers went where they were needed. The members who heeded the call: Carolyn Brennan, Janet Celia, Celia Fishman, Dr. Michael Finklestein, Charlotte Kooyman, Diane Bushwick-Klauber, Erik Nicolaysen, Colin Offenhartz, Ira Ozer, Brooke Semel, Priscilla Sorensen, Gina Varney, Marsha Veit, Christine Yeres, and Bob Coulombe.



Erik Nicolaysen Ex-Officer, Chappaqua Volunteer Ambulance Corps

Supervisor Sinek was steady at the helm with her good judgment, and calm and loving demeanor. Helpfulness and kindness were the operative words in New Castle on 9/11 and months that followed. I am so proud to be a member of this community.

After hearing about the first strike, I immediately turned on the television, just in time to see the second strike. I knew then it was a terrorist attack. I quickly called Bob Coulombe, my colleague at CVAC, and asked what we could do. He said he'd already spoken to the county emergency services headquarters and was told that we should drive it with a crew to Rye Playland if we could spare an ambulance. So we assembled a team and headed to Playland, where, upon our arrival, we were told to go to Yonkers Raceway. Upon arrival, we found numerous ambulances, several Connecticut fire departments, a blood donation collection truck, dozens of police units, an array of other first responder equipment, and personnel totaling more than 50 vehicles worth. At that point, we knew it was a recovery effort rather than a rescue effort. The New York State Police took command of the blood donation effort and told multiple units to return to their quarters.

At first, our team was told to stand by in the boroughs at agencies that had sent ambulances to Ground Zero. Communication problems led to discrepancies in instructions from others in command. That resulted in an inability to provide standby support. We stationed ourselves at Yonkers Raceway until sunrise on 9/12. At that time, we were advised to return to our communities since ambulances were not needed in great numbers. I traveled to Ground Zero to help with food distribution for recovery workers. Given the volume of volunteers and so few survivors, my role was limited to supporting those on the pile.



Community Reflection

Alan Greenbaum, New Castle Resident and Survivor

I survived both the 9/11/0 and the 2/26/93 tragedies. I was in the North Tower Building on the 36th floor on that fateful day 20 years ago. I am thankful for every day I have been given and that I could walk a path to safety and family—one that others were not so fortunate to have had.

For their sake, I remind you to learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. Never forget those who did not survive, and always remember those who went into those buildings because they were doing their jobs.

When we heard the first explosion, I, along with members of my company, went into the stairwell, which was elevator bank 31-40. As we walked down, we paused to wait for the people on the floor below to file in; it was very orderly and calm. I knew that once we got past the 31st floor, we'd move more quickly.

The lights went out on the 18th floor, probably when the second plane hit the South Tower. The lights eventually came back, and while there was no smoke, an acrid smell filled the air. When we reached the 5th floor, we were stopped by water rising up the stairs. When we first entered the stairwell, I thought there had been an earthquake. The floors buckled, and I knew a fault ran up the Hudson River. I believed we would not survive.

We continued to descend. When we reached the second floor, the door opened, and a bright light hit us. I thought maybe I'd died and was heading into the light. I saw that we were at the location leading to the financial center, so I made my way to the stairs. I was told to stay as close as I could to the building because people were jumping. I vividly remember looking back to see the building and the blue flames. It looked like an aircraft carrier from WWII that was attacked by aircraft.

It was not until I arrived at Chambers Street and West Side Drive that I heard the whole truth: two planes had hit the buildings at different times. I understood then that it was a terrorist attack.



With a pit in my stomach, I made my way to the subway station at Chambers Street, got on a local train, and made my way to Grand Central Station. One train was departing at 10:10 to North White Plains. I got on it.

Rumors were rampant: the President was killed, the Sears Towers were down, and so on. I owned no cell phone to call my mom or family, but it was a moot point at that time since nobody could call out. The entire network was on overload.

I arrived back at the Chappaqua station at approximately 12:06 pm. Luckily, there was still a payphone at the station, so I was able to call my mom to let her know that I was safe. She cried with relief. The radio in my car brought to my attention that both towers were down. As I drove home on that beautiful day, it hit me: I was safe, but what about the thousands of others in the buildings? Were they safe?

My neighbors were standing outside on the lawn when I got home. They hugged me tightly and cried. I needed to process the day, so I went on a long run to clear my head. After my run, I walked into my house and turned on the T.V. I saw the ghastly image of that second plane go through the South Tower like a knife through butter.

My life was changed forever that day. My position at my company was a significant one, and I loved what I did. It was a huge part of me, but for the next three years, I had to drive 150 miles a day to continue to work there, only to see the company go under. I remind myself every day of my survival. I married a woman that I had met three months before that terrible day. I have two wonderful children and two wonderful grandsons. I feel so blessed.

We all need to be reminded that tomorrow is a promissory note, and yesterday is a canceled check. We must learn to live for today. I implore you to hold everyone you hold dear close and never take anything for granted. Show compassion for each other and remember that it is easier to love than to hate.



Courtney Gravenese- Williams, New Castle Resident and Survivor

My office was located in 1 World Trade - fortunately for me and many of my colleagues , on the 23 RD floor. Not sure what divine intervention kept me from getting my usual coffee up on the cafeteria floor (many floors above) but I am grateful. I still mourn the loss of many lost lives and things I will never be able to 'unsee'. But, am blessed that some strong willed co- workers helped a handful of us get out of the building. Good thing as my wedding was 4 days later. Not really the joyful week I had planned but so very thankful I was even there.

What strikes me the most till this day is the anguish my parents must have felt watching this horror unfold on TV knowing that their daughter was there in the building yet not knowing if she was alive or not. It was hours before I was able to get to a phone to let them know I was ok. I didn't truly appreciate that pain they must have felt until I became a parent myself. It must have been unbearable. It gives me perspective each and every day. I pray for my kids' health and wellbeing everyday and try to never take it for granted.



Roberta Offenhutter Lasky, New Castle Resident

On the morning of 9/11, I left my apartment on Jane Street, two miles from the WTC in downtown NYC at 8:30 am with my 18-month-old daughter. It was earlier than we would typically leave our home.

While leaving the market with our groceries, I saw a neighbor looking up in the direction of the WTC. I looked up, too, to see what she was seeing: smoke was rising from one of the towers. Shortly after, small particles started to fall all around us.

Unsure of what was happening, we continued walking down Hudson Street, back to our apartment. I heard that a plane had crashed into one of the towers. My husband who was at his office on 48th and Park got in touch around 11 am; he had to walk home since the subway to downtown Manhattan was shut down.

As the day trudged on, I saw two men speed walking into our building's lobby. They were covered in white soot. I later learned that one of the men, Stephen Merkel, lived in our building and the other man with him, Howard Lutnick, was CEO of Cantor Fitzgerald. Mr. Lutnick was not in the office that morning since he was taking one of his children to their first day of school.

The next day, the West Village was eerily silent. For the next several weeks, there was a putrid smell in the air. Scraps of shredded paper flying everywhere. It was a constant reminder of the enormity of the tragedy.



Georgia Frasch, New Castle Resident

On September 11, 2001, I was running the US office of an Italian women's wear designer with offices in Soho. I had a haircut appointment at 10 am on that gorgeous, sunny day and planned on walking through Central Park to reach the salon. Instead of taking the subway to work, I was relishing a crosstown stroll through the park.

As I was getting dressed, I turned on the news. Katie Couric was anchoring, and I was half-listening when something in her tone caught my attention. I headed into the living room where the television was located. Katie kept pausing to listen to her producers on her earpiece. A plane had crashed into one of the towers. How was that possible? I watched as the other plane hit the second tower. It was surreal and I could not even begin to process it.

I frantically called my brother and then my sister, both of whom were working downtown. I felt lucky to have gotten through to them. My brother lived in Brooklyn and my sister commuted from Connecticut, and I knew that neither of them would be able to get home. They both started walking uptown, towards my apartment on 100th Street.

I called my then-fiancé, now husband, who knew vaguely what was happening (in those days, there was only one TV in his office). I begged him to leave, but he refused. He said that until all the employees had left and the store, Bergdorf Goodman, was secured, he was staying put. He reported that hordes of people, covered in white ash, were heading up Fifth Avenue. His driver was parked on 56th Street and he arranged for the driver to transport as many of the employees as possible. He promised to come to my apartment as soon as he could.

My first instinct was to stock up on food. I bought as much as my shopping cart could carry and headed home to start cooking. At one point, I went up to the roof of my building. It was about 25 stories high and from the sightline, I could see down the Hudson to the smoldering towers.

The rest of that day was a blur as we switched from channel to channel, trying to get ahold of the latest news. We weren't sure if there would be more planes or bombs. We just wanted to be together if that was what lay ahead.

I will never forget when my dad, a few weeks later, told my brother Joe to keep a low profile, wear a hat and don't return to Brooklyn—we are of Middle East descent and my brother has very dark skin, and dark curly hair with Semitic features. My father feared my brother might be targeted in some way, given the suspected identities of the terrorists.

This is my story of the first 24 hours of 9/11. I was not able to return to my office for months as debris was falling for weeks thereafter. We moved our office to Lexington Ave and 26th Street, next door to the 69th Regiment Armory. The exterior walls of the Armory became one of the biggest spaces for families to post photos or descriptions of their loved ones who were still not found. I passed that building every day on my way to work. My heart broke every single time.



Joan Le Var, a relative of one of the lost

My uncle's name is Donald Freeman Greene. He was on United Airlines Flight #93, the flight that crashed into a field in Pennsylvania after the passengers thwarted the terrorists' original plan.

September 11th was the second day of my field placement, which is essentially an internship. I had also just started a graduate program at Columbia University's School of Social Work. On top of this, I was working in a nursing home and rehabilitation hospital in upper Manhattan. When we heard about the attacks on the World Trade Center, my fellow interns and I decided we wanted to donate blood at a nearby hospital. That was before any of us knew that, sadly, there would be no need for blood donations following the attacks.

While coordinating a plan with the other interns, I finally got through to my mom on the phone—a challenging task as the phone lines were so tied up that morning throughout the metropolitan area. During that phone call, she told me that my uncle, Donny, was on Flight #93.

I was lucky enough to get on a Metro-North train out of the city where family friends picked me up and drove me straight to my uncle's house in Greenwich, CT. There, I reunited with my family and spent the better part of the next few weeks.

That day, and that loss, changed the trajectory of my life in too many ways to recount here. I think about my uncle all the time, and we keep his memory alive in so many ways.



Jeremy Saland, Acting Supervisor, Town of New Castle

I was a prosecutor in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office drafting complaints in the early morning hours of September 11, 2001. When the first plane hit, I heard a loud boom but assumed a garbage truck was emptying the dumpsters on the street one floor below. A colleague told me a plane had struck the World Trade Center, about twelve blocks away, and I assumed it was an accidental Cessna collision. Minutes later, a second boom reverberated through the building.

I walked outside and saw hundreds of people staring upward as debris floated down. Some guy was screaming "they" just hit the Pentagon and were coming for the federal buildings and courthouse. Sirens wailed. Firefighters, along with police, correction, and court officers, jumped into action. I don't recall how long I stood there, who I was with, or if I said a single word.

I went back inside, found a colleague, and together we started to walk downtown to see if we could help. As we navigated the sea of people, the ground below me vibrated. Why were they running the subways, I asked myself? It was not the subways, however, that shook the concrete. One of the towers was cascading down upon itself. Time plays tricks on our minds and memory, but I recollect that in the mere minute it took me to walk around a building, one of the towers that was previously standing, had vanished.

As we walked past the fountain at Foley Square, gray and white frosted "zombies" shuffled up to clean themselves. My colleague received calls from his terrified girlfriend who was stuck in a nearby building as the dust cloud filled her office. He tried to calm her down, to no avail, before losing reception. Continuing toward the Twin Towers, about two blocks south of us the cloud billowed and began creeping through the streets. It became readily apparent that we were not equipped to enter the smog and could become a liability to others. Begrudgingly, we turned back, and along with more people than I could count, meandered uptown in a dazed and shocked state not able to fully grasp what occurred.



In the days that followed, access to lower Manhattan was blocked but I volunteered to process arrestees, so I was able to get downtown. Other than NYPD officers, firefighters, military personnel, and workers hoping to find survivors or recover those who passed, eerily silent darkness consumed the area. I vividly recall the acrid stench that hung in the air. The city seemed vacant and devoid of life. Except, it wasn't. Leaving the office after 1 or maybe 2 am, I would see hundreds of rats, displaced by the turmoil, overwhelming the sidewalks, undulating like one serpentine being before disappearing into the grates due to my presence. As odd a comparison as it seems, with all the turmoil and violence of that day and those that followed, all I could think was that the will to survive and to find a path forward was alive and churning in every corner of New York City and in every breathing one of us.

I was not at Ground Zero on 9/11. I cannot pretend to understand the terror of those who were or agony of those who waited for loved ones they never heard from again. However, my memory of the fear, sadness, and horror will never be forgotten just as I will always remember the unity, courage, and compassion. I am reminded of life's joys, even on 9/11, as I wish my boy a Happy Birthday every September 11th and as I think of the man I met in the elevator after Lucas' birth. He had welcomed twins into the world six years to the day he escaped the attack on the Twin Towers.



Michael Wolfensohn, New Castle Resident

I'd like to start my reflection on my way back from NYC September 11, 2001, I had just gotten off the train at 125th where we could see the towers burning. We had a choice to get downtown by subway or take a train across the platform and go home. I went home. On the way home we heard stories about the other plane and where they were headed and what they had hit. Then there was a collective gasp as news reached us that the South Tower had collapsed.

It was to be an exciting day on Ludlow Drive that day as our neighbor Louis, his wife Diane, and their son Sam were moving back to their house after months of renovation. Louis, who worked in the South Tower, only going in for a half day as his company was undergoing management changes and he wanted some facetime with the new bosses that morning before going back home to help with the move.

When Diane hadn't heard from Louis, the neighbors of Ludlow banded together to form a plan of action to support Diane and Sam. I was tasked with going to NYC to try to find him as we couldn't believe he was gone. Over the next few weeks, I was all over NYC looking through lists and going to hospitals. I would then report back to our neighbors who were manning phones, trying to figure out where Louis might have been taken if he was injured. The neighbors were so effective in their calling that I got to the New York Armory around 1am on the 13th and found Police and Red Cross setting up. They looked at me and said "What are you doing here?" I had told them that a neighbor had made calls and they said this was the place to go to get information. They were amazed that we had that information as that location hadn't been made public yet.

The city was empty and all you heard were sirens. That first week I went down to Ground Zero with Louis' sister and don't think I will ever forget the smells of the fires. One night I was close to the Empire State Building making my way to yet another place where there was supposed to be a list when I saw people running out of the building saying a plane was on its way to crash into it.

Ultimately, we never found Louis and the neighbors of Ludlow would be bonded and changed forever. I find it hard to see the beauty in a deep blue cloudless sky but fortunate that it also reminds me of my Ludlow gang and that spirit of unity and community we formed to help our friend. It is that spirit that served as the inspiration for the memorial at Gedney Park and I was proud to play a part in getting it built.



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The Star-Spangled Banner

Say, can you see
By the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed
At the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars
Through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watched,
Were so gallantly, yeah, streaming?
And the rockets' red glare
The bombs bursting in air
Gave proof through the night
That our flag was still there
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave

America the Beautiful

O beautiful for spacious skies, For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties Above the fruited plain! America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood From sea to shining sea!



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September 11, 2001, 20th Anniversary Memorial Committee

Michael Wolfensohn, Chairman

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Paul Eiden, 1st Assistant Chief, Chappaqua Fire Dept

Ike Kuzio, Superintendent, Recreation & Parks, New Castle

Chris Raguso, Chief, Millwood Fire Department

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