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Sheriff Kevin J. Joyce's Speech for the Unveiling of the 9-11 Memorial September 11, 2017

Sixteen years ago today, it was a typical work day, bright, sunny and warm, much like today. However, the typical was soon to disappear when at 08:46 American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into one of the towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. I recall walking through the lobby of the jail just after the first plane struck the tower and seeing the news coverage on the television. I remember pausing for a moment to watch the news coverage and thinking WOW, the pilot of that airliner really messed up by hitting one of the tallest buildings in New York City.

At 09:03 while the world was watching the first tower burn, United Airlines Flight 175 struck the other tower of the World Trade Center and our nation became paralyzed as we watched our country be attacked by what we would eventually learn to be 19 Middle Eastern terrorists.

Then, if what we had seen over the past 45 minutes wasn't enough, we learned that at 09:37 hours, America Airlines Flight 77 struck the Pentagon, the command and control center of our military. Again, we stood paralyzed by what was going on. It seemed like a real life replay of Orson Well's War of the World.

At 09:59, we were stunned to see the World Trade Center, South Tower crumble. One of the largest buildings in the world made of steel, concrete, glass and designed to be one of the most state of the art buildings in New York City.

At 10:03, just 4 minutes after one of the World Trade Center towers crumbled to the ground, we learned that another airliner, United Airlines Flight 93 was brought down in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. We all were asking, "what is going on"?

Finally, at 10:28 hours the North Tower of the World Trade Center collapsed. Fortunately, after the North Tower collapsed, this hour and forty-five-minute reign of terror was over. This relatively short period of time, became the "new normal" for the citizens of the United States.

Throughout the rest of the day, I recall our deputies and investigators responding to claims of suspicious Middle Eastern males, reports of suspicious substances thought to probably be ricin or anthrax in mail,



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mailboxes and office buildings. As the Criminal Investigations Captain, I recall deploying investigators to check on reports of potential explosives found in sheds, garages etc. and at least three reports of suspicious privately owned planes possibly operated by Middle Eastern males. Again, our new normal.

As we spent the evening in front of our televisions watching non-stop coverage of this day of terror we saw innocent people running from the North and South Towers, while we watched firefighters, emergency medical personnel and police officers running into these towers not knowing or even imagining that these buildings would soon collapse. We saw heroes, first responders and citizens carrying the injured to safety.

In the next days, weeks and months, we learned that a total of 2,977 lives had been lost. 2,606 lives were lost at the World Trade Center and a total of 246 lives were lost on United Flight # 93, United Flight # 1175, American Airlines Flight # 377 and American Airlines Flight #11.

The ages of the victims ranged from 2 years of age to 85 years old. Mothers, Fathers, Brothers Sisters, Sons and Daughters, the devastation affected numerous families throughout our country and still does today.

We also lost numerous first responders who, while others were rushing from the burning and crumbling towers, were running toward them or running up the stairwells in the towers in hopes of saving as many people as possible. These first responder's selfless response to the call of duty, became their eventual demise.

The New York City Fire Department lost 343 firefighters, the New York City Police Department lost 23 police officers and the New York City Port Authority Police lost 37 police officers on September 11, 2001.

Since September 11, 2001, 1,140 individuals who lived, worked or studied in lower Manhattan at the time of the attacks have been diagnosed with cancer. 1,400 First Responders who responded to the scene in the days, weeks and months after the attack have died, predominantly due to injuries sustained, or to cancer.

We cannot commemorate this horrible day in history without recognizing the efforts of our military who sprang into action immediately and continue to this day fighting to eliminate terrorism. We have seen the loss of an estimated 6,945 military personnel who have been killed in the line of duty defending this great country while another 900,000 soldiers have experienced life altering injuries.

So why are we here tonight?

We are here tonight because we CANNOT forget, minimize or refuse to acknowledge what happened 16 years ago today. Too many individuals and families gave all so that the rest of us here tonight can continue to live free. The memorial behind me that we are about to unveil will be a perpetual remembrance of those who have given their life and those who will continue to put their lives in danger so that we may remain proud Americans.



We will honor individuals who went to work on a beautiful September morning, never expecting that they would not return home to their families.

How did we get here?

About 10 year ago, I was asked to join a pipe and drum corps. Member of this group had heard that I was taking bagpipe lessons with my then 10-year-old granddaughter and asked if I would join. Because of my love for music, my wife and I joined the Maine Public Safety Pipe and Drum Corps. About 6 years ago while at a meeting with the group; which incidentally was formed by several local police officers, firefighters and emergency medical personnel as a result of the events of September 11, 2001; they mentioned that it would be great to get a piece of steel from the World Trade Center to commemorate their formation. Being one that likes a challenge, I took on the idea of writing a letter to the New York City Police Department and the New York City Fire Department. In addition to several letters of requests, I made several telephone calls, trying to find out who was in-charge of distributing pieces of steel from the World Trade Center.

Finally, in November 2015, I reached out to a friend, former co-worker and former boss, Noel March, United States Marshal for the State of Maine and asked him if he knew the United States Marshal from New York. I explained that I was looking for a small piece of steel that could easily be carried, so that the Maine Public Safety Pipe and Drum Corps could have something to commemorate their establishment as an organization. Well, I wasn't surprised when Marshal March emailed me advising that he made contact with the U.S. Marshal for the City of New York and that he knew who to contact. I made contact with US Marshal Michael Greco and he provided me with New York City Fire Commissioner, Daniel Nigro's contact information and advised me to reach out to Commissioner Nigro. So I did.

In April 2016, I received an email from retired FDNY firefighter Carl Scheetz, Mr. Scheetz advised me that the Maine Public Safety had been granted their request for a small piece of steel and while speaking to Mr. Scheetz, he asked if the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office would like a piece of steel. I immediately said, yes.

Creating this monument and putting this event together was no easy task and required the talents of people all across the state. I would like to thank the following:

The Sheriff's Office 9-11 Memorial Committee:

For the past year, my Executive Assistant Kelly Maines and a committee comprised of Sgt. Kieran Sheehan, Civil Deputy Julie Kilbride, Deputy Tyronne Leslie, Deputy David Dunnemann and Reverend Jeff McIllwain have been working to design the memorial that we are about to see tonight.

I would also like to thank:

Cumberland County Facilities Department: Facilities Director Bruce Tarbox
Sheriff's Office Maintenance Supervisor Mark Toothacker and Tom Perry.

They provided the crew and "know-how" to do the behind the scenes structural integrity tasks that will make this a lasting memorial.



Artist: Greg Ondo who donated countless hours of his time and the granite pieces that you will see in the memorial.

Blue Rock Industries that donated black accent rocks and river stones.

Ray Sabba of Cumberland County Facilities Department for spending several weekends laying the granite walkway.

American Concrete for producing, delivering and insuring that the memorial base was level and plum.

Regan's Monuments for standing behind their work and delivering a flawless product.

Community Programs Officer Rachel Welch, Avery Lloyd and Fidel Al Aboosi of Cumberland County Community Corrections for the countless hours of sewing grass seed, sweeping pavement, digging and planting flowers and event set up, just to name a few things and have been at it since June.

Pan Am Railroad for trying to hold the freights trains while we speak!



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