

For 12th year in a row, city remembers 9/11

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GENEVA — For the 12th consecutive year, Geneva paused Wednesday to remember the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States.

The ceremony was at the entrance to the Long Pier in the city's Lakefront Park.

Members of the city's three fire companies, C.J. Folger Hook & Ladder, Hydrant Hose and Nester Hose, were out in force, decked out in full dress uniforms with fire apparatus gleaming. Several members of the city Police Department and Finger Lakes Ambulance, representing first responders, were also there.

"We are here to reflect on the tragedy, but also to reflect on the human spirit and bravery of people that

helped make America what it is today," said state Sen. Michael Nozzolio, R-54 of Fayette. "We remember the heroic acts of first responders on that day and the many volunteers who went to New York City to help."

Nozzolio said that same spirit was exemplified last Christmas Eve in nearby Webster when first responders went to the scene of a house fire, only to be shot at. Two firefighters were killed.

Assemblyman Brian Kolb, R-131 of Canandaigua, said it's difficult coming up with the right words to say for 12 years.

"Waking up this morning, I decided to focus on an attitude of gratitude as my theme," Kolb said. "It reflects the sacrifices made

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Geneva City Fire Chief Michael Combs (right) and firefighter Jason Hague laid a wreath at Lakefront Park Wednesday in remembrance of those who died in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

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by first responders 12 years ago. We have gratitude for what they did and will never forget. We honor their sacrifices and the memory of the victims."

Kolb said the best way to honor those memories is for people to do the best they can every day.

"You don't know what the next day will bring, so do good deeds, smile at a stranger, hug your family, give your best each day and enjoy life to the fullest," he suggested.

Assistant Fire Chief Kevin Powers, the master of ceremonies, introduced Joanne Galvin of North Rose, co-designer of the 9/11 National Remembrance Flag that was flying on a flagpole near long pier.

"The black in the center represents the sorrow we feel for the innocent lives lost in this tragedy, those on the planes, those working in the Twin Towers, the Pentagon and rescue workers that died ..." Galvin said.

The flag's four stars represent the four planes that crashed and the victims onboard and in the buildings.

The blue star represents the Pentagon crash and American Airlines Flight 77. The two white stars represent the Twin Towers in New York, American Airlines Flight 11 and United Flight 175. The red star represents United Flight 93, which crashed in a field near Shanksville, Pa.

Galvin said the flags are now flying in all 50 states and in seven foreign countries.

Wednesday's program also included:

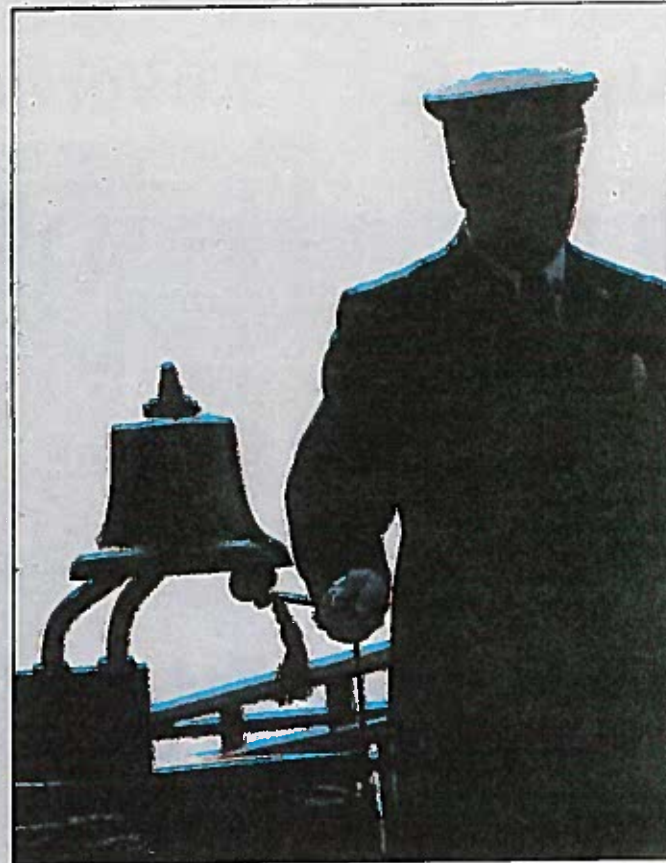
- The "striking of the four fives" by Assistant Fire Chief Don Wright. Wright rang a special bell five times in four separate sequences, signifying the death of a firefighter or firefighters or an important person. It's a firehouse tradition dating back to the 1880s, used to announce the assassination of President Lincoln.

- The colors were posted by the Geneva Fire Department Color Guard and the American Legion Color Guard.

- Lucile Mallard of Geneva gave a rousing rendition of the "Star-Spangled Banner."

- Fire Department chaplain William Hastings recited a prayer.

- Fire Chief Michael Combs and firefighter Jason Hague laid a wreath at the



Spencer Tullis / Finger Lakes Times

Assistant Fire Chief Don Wright conducts the "striking of the four fives" at Wednesday's Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony in Geneva.

flagpole.

- Terry Scherer, dressed in full Scottish kilt, played "Amazing Grace" and "Taps" on the bagpipes.

- Deputy City Mayor and 8th Ward Councilor John Greco presented a proclamation honoring the memory of those who died.

- The American Legion Color Guard, the World War I "Doughboys," performed a rifle volley.

- Representatives of several other fire departments, including White Springs, West Lake Road, North Side, Oaks Corners and Border City, also attended.