

Firefighters Pay Emotional Tribute To Other Fallen First Responders At Edwardsville American Legion Post 199

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EDWARDSVILLE - An emotional memorial tribute was paid at the Edwardsville American Legion Post 199 this past Saturday, September 11, 2021, to honor those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks of the World Trade Center in

New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and the hijacking and crash of Flight 93 in Pennsylvania.

Edwardsville Fire Chief James Whiteside was one of the featured speakers and he said this day is a time to recognize the 2,977 who died on that fateful day September 11, 2021. He pointed out that 412 first responders from firefighters, police officers, and EMTs. Edwardsville first responders were the primary participants at the memorial ceremony at the American Legion Post.

"We are here today to remember those who lost their lives on September 11, 2021," Whiteside said with emotion in his voice, remembering his fellow first responders who gave the ultimate sacrifice to preserve the lives of others before them.

Whiteside introduces an emotional bellringing to signify the sacrifice the men and women made that day, some who lost their lives saving others.

More from other speakers is in the above video. The ceremony featured beautiful music and singers, again those are shown in the taped video.

A total of 2,977 people were killed in New York City, Washington, D.C., and outside of Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Pat of BackStoppers, BackStoppers, gave an impressive presentation of the importance of the organization's fund-raising each year. Pat said her grandfather, father, husband, and son have served in her local volunteer fire department. Pat has a great passion for the work of the organization.

Pat told the story of how BackStoppers was founded in 1959 and provides ongoing needed financial assistance and support to the spouses and dependent children of all police officers, firefighters, and volunteer firefighters, and publicly-funded paramedics who have lost their lives in the line of duty in 18 counties in Illinois and Missouri. Nicholas Blassie, president of the Meatcutters Union Local #8, had heard of a similar organization in Detroit. He and Richard H. Amberg publisher of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat formed a partnership to form BackStoppers. In five months from its foundation, three St. Louis firefighters battling a blaze in a run-down salvage firm were killed when the entire second story collapsed above them.

Today, Pat said BackStoppers supports 80 families with a \$2 Million payout a year for school needs, assistance with mortgages, daycare, after-school activities, and out-of-pocket medical expenses. The help continues through graduate school for dependent

children. The organization is funded through business, corporate and private contributions, and fundraisers and has made an extraordinary difference in the recipient's lives.

The entrance of the first responders to the ceremony and close was quite moving, especially the bell ringing in memory of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

September 11, 2021 Facts:

- At the World Trade Center (WTC) site in Lower Manhattan, 2,753 people were killed when hijacked American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175 were intentionally crashed into the North and South Towers, or as a result of the crashes.
- Of those who perished during the initial attacks and the subsequent collapses of the Towers, 343 were New York City firefighters, 23 were New York City police officers and 37 were officers at the Port Authority.
- The victims ranged in age from two to 85 years. Approximately 75-80% of the victims were men.
- At the Pentagon in Washington, 184 people were killed when hijacked American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the building.
- Near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, 40 passengers and crew members aboard United Airlines Flight 93 died when the plane crashed into a field.



