

Impacting Journey

Lakes students and teachers make visits to Ground Zero

By Marcy Beutlich
Managing Editor

Ten years have passed since the daunting event, but still 9/11 brings grief and pride to the faces of many Americans. Ground Zero is a memorial for the many lives lost.

Many people visit to get closure from such an appalling experience.

"It is like the metaphor of the Phoenix rising out of the ashes when seeing Ground Zero," junior Elly Goth said about her visit to the memorial last summer. "Seeing the progress that has been made is inspiring. So, not only does the site have a sadness to it, but also a sense of hope."

Goth visited Ground Zero with a friend that she roomed with at Brown University during a summer camp. Her friend had lost an uncle in the North Tower and she invited Goth to go with her to pay her respects.

"I believe it was incredibly impacting. Not just to me, but to everyone who visits Ground Zero. I literally thought, 'Wow, 16 acres of land and the awful acts of a few people had changed the world forever.' It is hard to imagine the world without the effects Ground Zero has had on it," Goth said.

Goth is not the only Lakes student to make a trip to New York City to acknowledge what so many Americans have gone through.

Senior Samantha Glab visited over the summer as well.

"I have always felt really passionate about 9/11 and when the opportunity came this summer to go on a vacation to NYC, I knew that if we went to New York I had to go see Ground Zero. You can't go visit New York without going to see something that impacted our country so much," Glab said.

A visit to Ground Zero seems to be mandatory. Being at the actual site evokes more than what can be seen on television.

"I really wanted to see all the memorial things and better understand the event because I was so young when it happened,"

Glab said. "

Social studies teacher Matt Rife also visited the memorial.

"I was part of a group of students from my college (Millikin University) who took a bus trip to New York in June of 2002. The major goal of the trip was to help re-stock a food pantry in Hillside, New Jersey. This was the primary food bank used for relief efforts after the attacks, and it was nearly depleted. I was at Ground Zero itself for half an hour," Rife said.

The experience was just as impacting for him.

"Being at Ground Zero was very somber. There were construction vehicles still working to locate missing people. Smoke was still billowing from the foundation of the World Trade Center," Rife said.

"There was a makeshift memorial made of particle board and plywood that had thousands of pictures, fire department uniforms, hand-written letters from the victim's families, etc. attached," he continued. "It was very quiet, it seemed like nobody wanted to break the silence. Most people were crying, but they were not trying to make a scene of it."

Whether you were dead center or even on the outside the affect of the memorial is all the same.

"It was surreal. It was very quiet, which is not normal for lower Manhattan. If anyone spoke at all, it was in hushed tones. It was very difficult to see this open hole in the ground. There were many tears shed by the visitors," Spanish teacher Joanna Kotecki said.

Kotecki was in New York visiting friends and she felt it was very important to go.

"I imagine that now, with a monument covering the gaping hole, the emotions are not as raw as they were before; the hole in your heart has been patched up with that monument. Visitors are probably filled with a sense of hope," said Kotecki.

**Sept. 11, 2011
Decade tribute held in New York**

**May 1, 2011
Osama Bin Laden killed by U.S. Navy Seals**

**Dec. 30, 2006
Saddam Hussein put to death**

**March 9, 2006
Bush signs U.S. Patriot Act**

**Dec. 13, 2003
Saddam Hussein captured**

**April 23, 2003
Baghdad falls to U.S. forces**

**March 19, 2003
Invasion of Iraq**

**May 16, 2002
Journalist Daniel Pearl kidnapped and killed in Pakistan**

**Oct. 2001
U.S. invasion of Afghanistan**

**Sept. 11, 2001
World Trade Center and Pentagon attacked**

NEW YORKER

Many landmark events have occurred in the last ten years as a result of 9/11. A few are listed in the timeline above.

Teacher worked in WTC three months before 9/11

By Haley Castelveccchi
Center-spread Editor

When informed about the collapse of the World Trade Center, drama teacher Bridget Banas felt like "time just stopped." She watched the buildings fall down on TV, wondering about all of her former co-workers.

Banas left her job at the WTC on June 1, 2001- just three months before its collapse.

After she graduated in 1999, Banas headed off to New York City in hopes of pursuing a drama career. She lived with her best friends, even describing them as her family. In order to support herself, she needed to pick up other temporary jobs.

Banas took a secretary job on the 101st floor of the World Trade Center South Tower.

Though her job at the WTC was only supposed to last three to four months, Banas was offered a permanent position. She declined the offer, saying she had a gut feeling that she needed to

move back to Chicago.

She started working at a high-profile building in the loop. On Sept. 11, she was the first in her building. A co-worker called her and said to turn on the TV. Banas watched the second building collapse and was evacuated shortly after.

It bothered Banas that she could remember every detail of her now demolished work place.

"Extreme details still stick out to me about that place," Banas said.

She would never know what happened to the co-workers that she did not keep in touch with. Fortunately, none of the close friends that she had lived with were injured.

The WTC had an express elevator where people transferred on floor 78. This is exactly where the plane hit on the South Tower. The people above that floor had no way of escaping the building, unless they disregarded the government's initial warning not to evacuate. 200-300 people died where Banas had worked a temporary job just three months previous.

"Reliving it every day really got to me," Banas said.

The events of 9/11 caused her a lot of bittersweet emotion, happy that she left but grieving the event. She felt like she should have been there.

Banas hopes to visit the WTC memorial in the near future.



Photo by Tyler Engle

Lake Villa police chief Ronald Roth gives a speech at the 9/11 commemoration at Caboose Park.

Lake County holds ceremonies in remembrance of 9/11

By Tyler Engle
Staff Reporter

Everyone knows where they were on Sept. 11, 2001, and many community members will remember where they were on the 10th anniversary, too.

Local towns held their own services to honor the event, including Antioch and Lake Villa, which had separate ceremonies.

Senior Becca Bowen sang the National Anthem to begin Lake Villa's ceremony.

"It was definitely an honor and the only way I knew how to serve my country," Bowen said.

The keynote speaker was Navy Region Midwest Chief of Staff Captain Caroline Neilson. She spoke about the significance of Naval Station Great Lakes and how they transform men to seamen, and seamen into sailors. She also spoke about the struggles of being involved with the military during dangerous times, whether it is in active duty, as a civilian, or a family member.

On the other side of town, Antioch Township had a very different ceremony: a candle light vigil.

Before the vigil started, however, there was patriotic country music playing as members of the community reminisced and caught up and the police chiefs and township coordinator greeted them.

Candles were passed out to the around 400 people in attendance. All of these members sported American flag shirts and other statesmanlike attire.

The vigil was initiated with a prayer led

by the fire house clergyman. Following the prayer, Antioch police chief Craig Somerville gave a very emotional speech about the duty to defend the country.

"God Bless America, and I don't care if it's politically correct or not to say that!" Somerville said during his speech which prompted the crowd to "hoorah" and applaud.

After Somerville's speech, Antioch Mayor Lawrence Hansen initiated the lighting of the candles. He extended his candle's flame and lit the community flame.

The event ended with the township's community holding candles in the evening sky. It was a somber ceremony to show respect for the victims of 9/11 and first responders.

Even Lakes had its own way to show respect for local first responders. Social Studies Department Chair Rebecca Holst was in charge of coordinating the event. Holst was very happy about how well the ceremony ran, however, she said, "I was very happy with the turnout of the event, however, I wish more first responders were in attendance—especially those in the Grant community. There were even first responders standing behind me," adding that the responders were very humble and did not necessarily want to be recognized by the community, due to the fact that they are just doing their daily job.

The events in Lake County reminded people that though 9/11 was a decade ago, it is still a time that deserves remembrance and the utmost respect.

We Remember 9/11

The Talon Times shares your stories about this tragic day in American history.

What were you doing on September 11, 2001?

"I was watching Good Morning America. My mom and I thought [9/11] was a movie trailer."
- Mudasar Siddiqui, senior

"I stayed at home and watched the news all day with my mom...and we were crying."
- Christina Cherry, senior

"I was teaching at McHenry High School. It was between first and second period. I was traveling between buildings. I heard it on the radio and the rest of the day was just kinda numb."
- Brian Phelan, math teacher

"I was at school and we got let out early."
- Sean Donovan, senior