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The community is set to remember the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks Saturday. Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church is holding a luminaria remembrance service, similar to the service it held on the 10th anniversary of Sept. 11. Pictured above are church volunteers completing the luminaria display.

20 years later Community to remember 9/11 Saturday

BY MELANY SLAUGHTER

The 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks is this Saturday, calling the community to remember one of America's most devastating tragedies.

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, located on Gloucester's Main Street, will hold a luminaria remembrance service in the church parking

lot beginning at 6 p.m. on Saturday.

"We want it to be remembered," said the Rev. Doug Nagel, pastor of Grace Covenant.

Church volunteers will meet Saturday morning to set-up approximately 500 luminaries, each one consisting of a white paper bag, sand and a tea light.

"We need to come together," said Nagel.

At 6 p.m., the luminaries will

be lit. At 6:30, the church will have a brief remembrance service which will include a prayer for those who lost their lives on Sept. 11 and a round of "God Bless America." The service will wrap up no later than 7. Gloucester Volunteer Fire and Rescue will also be there with its American flag on the extension bucket.

"It is a contemporary issue that is in the news right now,"

said Nagel about the U.S. withdrawing from Afghanistan after 20 years of war.

In 2011, on the 10th anniversary of Sept. 11, Grace Covenant lit 2,997 luminaries for each person who lost their lives in the attacks. The church had about 150 people show up for that service.

DAV

Gloucester's Disabled American Veterans Chapter 58 will

also be hosting a Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony on Saturday. According to Louis Valcourt, commander of the chapter, the outdoor ceremony will include the raising of colors, the national anthem and some reflection time.

The ceremony is set to start at 11 a.m. at the DAV building, located along Short Lane behind WXGM. If it rains, the ceremony will be moved inside.

Mathews native plays part in getting Afghani friend to safety

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

For three weeks, Scott Sadler's life was on hold. On Aug. 10, the Mathews native and current Arlington resident got a telephone call from an old friend who urgently needed help, and he stopped everything to render aid.

He didn't go out to dinner or to shop or to visit friends. For the first time ever he missed a wedding he had said he would attend, and he in fact didn't leave home at all except for work. Even his job took a back seat to the task he had set for himself—getting his friend Afzal Afzali out of Afghanistan.

On Thursday, Aug. 26 (Friday, Aug. 27 Kabul time), after days of enduring the push of crowds around Hamid Karzai International Airport and trying to stay under the Taliban radar, Afzali and his family were among the last refugees to escape Afghanistan before

the Taliban took over.

Sadler met Afzali in 2012 while serving in Afghanistan as the senior communications and policy advisor to Gen. John Allen, commander at the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul. Afzali was the program manager at the Afghanistan Academic and Islamic Research Center, and he assisted the American military and defense contractors as they made outreach efforts to the Afghan people. The two men stayed in touch over the years, but more urgently once they learned that U.S. forces were going to be withdrawn from Afghanistan by the end of August.

In an Aug. 11 letter to the Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Sadler recommended that Afzali and his family be granted special immigrant status, saying that

SEE HELPING TO SAFETY, PAGE 2C



Mathews native Scott Sadler, left, of Arlington was instrumental in helping his longtime friend and colleague, Afzal Afzali, escape from Afghanistan last month, along with his wife, Sohaila Saleem Afzali, and their son and daughter, Aryan and Bahar.

HELPING TO SAFETY: Mathews native joins forces with others to get family out of Kabul

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1C)
Afzali's "keen intellect and knowledge of the delicate local political environment was indispensable to our team's success in engaging with senior Afghan officials" while in Afghanistan. Sadler stated further that evacuating the family would be a way to "repay those who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with our civilians and forces during perilous times."

Afzali suggested that Sadler contact another American who had become his friend while serving in Afghanistan—attorney Brennan Heuser of Colorado Springs, a former U.S. Psychological Operations NCO who in 2011 worked with the Military Information Support Team in support of the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan.

Sadler made contact, and soon there was another letter in support of Afzali being granted a visa. In his letter, Heuser explained that Afzali had been well known by the U.S. Embassy's Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Office, and that Afzali had helped him establish a "highly sensitive Religious Leader Engagement Program."

"His messaging directly contradicted the extremist religious narratives that were being pushed by the Taliban," said Heuser. "Mr. Afzali risked his life to support the U.S. mission and coalition forces ... I have no doubt that as the security situation in Afghanistan deteriorates he and his family will be targeted."

The network
With letters of support written, Sadler and Heuser began a telephone campaign that was part of a much wider effort to help U.S.-friendly Afghans escape from the looming clutches of the Taliban. An informal communication network was rapidly established by an organization called Society Seventy-Six, with people using encrypted messages to exchange information and ideas on how to help their friends and colleagues.

Heuser said it was "the most decentralized, impromptu yet functional network I've ever seen, and it happened almost

overnight."
"The amount of collaboration and information from people both inside and outside the government was enormous," he said. "None of us had ever met, but we were all driven by a moral imperative that we would fulfill our duty even if our leaders didn't. I've never seen anything like it."

Sadler got two names to call from a person he knew at the National Security Council, and over the next two weeks, he and Heuser developed a list of 50 contacts as they called one person and then got referred to another, then another.

"The whole week of the 16th we were trying to figure out through our contacts how to make it happen," he said.

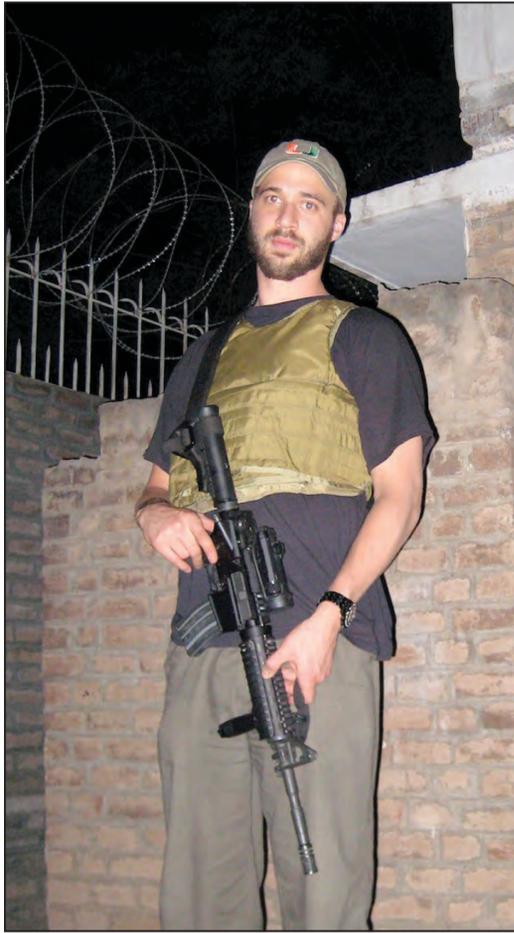
The network included people on the ground in Kabul getting real-time information and passing it back to the states, and vice versa.

"I basically didn't put my phone down," said Sadler. "We had moments when we thought Afzal would be retrieved and it would 'go south.' We were on the edge of our seats. Brennan and I talked probably 15 times a day."

On the ground in Kabul
All the while that Americans were anxiously networking, Afzali, his wife Sohaila, and their son and daughter Aryan and Bahar were daily taking chances, joining the pressing throng of Afghans surrounding the Kabul airport, hoping to be among those let inside while continually dodging contact with Taliban on the ground. At one point, the family waited at one of the gates for 36 hours and never got in, and Afzali swore he would never put them through that again.

"There were at least three or four times in the process when we went for a gate time and had tremendous hope, and Afzal would move his entire family and something bad would happen with the Taliban," said Brennan. "It was a very dangerous time for him to move throughout the city."

Brennan said that Afzali's biometrics had been taken by U.S. forces, and somehow that



Attorney Brennan Heuser had to dress like the locals when he served in Afghanistan as a Psychological Operations NCO with the Military Information Support Team.

information had gotten into the hands of the Taliban, making his discovery more likely.

"If we didn't hear from him during a movement, we didn't know what might have happened," he said. "He had to continually delete messages because of the danger of having them if he were taken."

Breakthrough
On Wednesday, Aug. 25, there was a breakthrough. Four children whose father had been killed by the Taliban

eight years before, the oldest a 17-year-old girl, were hiding in a safehouse in Kabul and needed a male escort to get to the airport. Their mother, a U.S. citizen, had been trying to secure their passage to the U.S. for weeks and was anxiously waiting for them here.

"If Afzal accompanied them, it would provide incentive for him to be let in, but it was a significant risk for his family," said Sadler. "Afzal said, 'absolutely I'll take care of these

children."

The mother called Afzali and was comfortable with having her children go in a bus to Afzali's house, and from there to the airport, so the arrangements were made. However, a guard at the safehouse wouldn't let the children leave until he heard from the right person, and that took hours, Sadler said. The government had collapsed and the Taliban were taking over, and the chaotic situation and time delay left no time for Afzal to be included in the move to the airport.

Sadler said it was a huge blow.

"I was already pretty distressed," he said. "Wednesday afternoon I really thought we had done everything we possibly could do and would never get him out. I called Afzal, and it was a very emotional conversation. I was a total wreck. This guy had done a lot for us, and we knew he would be killed. I had a long cry."

For Brennan, it took a psy-

chological, physical and emotional toll that was akin to his many deployments to the Middle East.

"This felt like a mission that continued for two weeks," he said. "Usually overseas there's a constant level of stress, but it's not so intense. For two weeks, it all became a blur. I felt like I was in Kabul again."

Brennan had to step back from the efforts briefly to regain his composure.

Wednesday night (Thursday morning in Kabul), Sadler called Afzali again only to find out that the safehouse had sent the children in a bus directly to the airport's north gate, and they had been there waiting for 13 hours straight. Afzali was able to make arrangements to have the children taken to his house, where they finally met. The children arrived cold and hungry, and Afzali and his wife fed them and cared for them.

SEE HELPING TO SAFETY, PAGE 3C

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Afzal Afzali took this photo of the packed C-17 he and his family flew on to escape from Afghanistan on Aug. 27. His shoes are visible at the bottom of the photo.

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HELPING TO SAFETY: *Anxious hours as Sadler waits for news of Afghani friend*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2C)

Although Afzali had sworn he would never take his children back to the airport again, the Afghans' code of hospitality requires that a guest be treated better than one's own family, said Sadler, so once more, the Afzali family headed to the north gate, this time with four extra children in tow.

While they were at the gate, news came through to the U.S. that a suicide bomber had detonated a bomb at the southeast gate, and Sadler anxiously messaged Afzali to find out if he was okay. The family was fine, and even though Sadler received a message from a contact in the military saying he should tell Afzali to go home, he didn't do it.

"I felt if they went back home, there would be no chance of this happening," said Sadler. "These four children were White House and high level state department priority. Because Afzal was involved with them, we became increasingly optimistic that he could get out. They were the golden ticket."

Success

Late Thursday night (Friday morning in Kabul), Sadler got a message from Afzali saying that the four children he had taken under his wing had been let in the gate. Although he had told the Taliban that the children were in his custody, they did not let him through. He sent Sadler a picture of where he was standing at the airport wall, and Sadler quickly sent it to Brennan, who passed it to teams on the ground working within the airport, while Sadler sent it to a friend in Kabul he had been talking to. The Kabul contacts recognized how close Afzali and his family were to the gate, and they sent a team to "grab" Afzali's family and get them inside.

It was a moment of joy and relief for Sadler and Heuser, who had been "tied at the hip" since the ordeal began. "I won't forget the message I received on Signal from a friend on the ground by the north gate of the Hamid Karzai Airport that said, 'He's in!'" said Sadler.

Now all they had to do was wait for Afzal and his family to

be put on a flight to the U.S. That happened shortly afterward. The Afzalis and the four children were flown out on the same C-17, and on Sunday, they all finally arrived in the U.S.

Sadler and Afzali were able to reunite briefly at the Dulles Expo Center on Monday morning before the family was whisked away to Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas, where they'll complete the process for a P-2 Visa. Afzali's brother Faiz, who immigrated to the U.S. several years ago, lives in Dallas, and he will welcome the family into his small, two-bedroom apartment. A software engineer, Faiz Afzali plans to use money he's been saving to put a down payment on a house for both families until his brother and his family can stand on their own feet.

"I feel good about that," said Sadler. "There's stability there. A lot of these folks have no family at all ... When Afzal's brother came to America a few years back, it was only him. He had to figure it out on his own. He eventually met his future wife and they have two children. He told me that the support system Afzal will have will allow him to overcome the challenges quicker."

Also on Monday, the four children were reunited with their mother in New York. News channel CNN did a piece on their journey, mentioning the critical role Afzali, Sadler and Heuser played in their rescue.

Sadler said on Monday that he felt he would finally be able to sleep that night, for the first time in three weeks.

"I feel blessed, and Brennan does too," he said, his voice breaking. "It was so humbling."

Sadler said Afzali has been texting him and Brennan

about how excited he is being in the United States—about how safe he feels here.

"We still live in the greatest nation on the face of the planet," said Sadler. "So many people around the world just wish they could be here. I feel so grateful. And I feel fortunate to have been engaged in this—in something bigger than yourself. It has forever changed my life."

Sadler said people have been reaching out to offer assistance to the family. People in Mathews have been collecting boxes of goods to send to them, he said, so "they're going to be fine. They'll have things."

Those wishing to provide cash assistance may contact Sadler for address information. He can be reached at jscottsadler@gmail.com or 804-815-4330.

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Gloucester native Lt. Garrett Hendrickson, a helicopter pilot serving in the U.S. Coast Guard in Clearwater, Florida, spent a week in Haiti recently, providing humanitarian aid and disaster relief to victims of the Aug. 14 earthquake.

Hendrickson making a difference in disaster-stricken Haiti

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

Gloucester native Garrett Hendrickson has been serving his country for the past six years, three as a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter pilot, but his most recent assignment was unlike anything he's done before.

Stationed at USCG Air Station Clearwater in Clearwater, Florida, Lt. Hendrickson commanded a crew that served a special mission to provide humanitarian aid and disaster relief to Haiti after a 7.2 magnitude earthquake hit the island nation on Aug. 14.

As the pilot of an H-60 helicopter, Hendrickson spent a week flying from his base in the Bahamas to remote, mountainous areas of Haiti that were cut off from the rest of the country when the earthquake wiped out bridges and left roads impassable. His primary mission was the medical evacuation of stranded earthquake survivors, and the only way to get to them was by flying into deep mountain valleys and finding sometimes very small patches of flat terrain to land on. In addition to the steep mountains and damaged infrastructure, the weather and winds made the landings quite hazardous.

"We'd find an area that looked like the clearest, best place to land," said Hendrickson. "Then we'd fly out people who were in critical condition."

Scouts from USAID and other non-governmental organizations were first dropped off in the remote areas to find people who were in need, he said, and then they let the Coast Guard and the Department of Defense, which were concurrently providing relief efforts, know their location.

Once he landed, Hendrickson said, hundreds of people might show up to get possi-

bly their first ever up-close glimpse of a helicopter. Then the medics would sort out the patients that were most in need of some type of care that wasn't available where they were. The crews saw a lot of complex compound fractures of the lower legs and pelvis that, if not treated, could have become septic and infected.

The very first day on the job, Friday, Aug. 20, Hendrickson made a challenging landing in a small mountain valley, and "everybody came out to see the helicopter," he said. The medical team began se-

SEE HAITI RELIEF, PAGE 5C

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HAITI RELIEF: Gloucester native responds to help after earthquake devastates island

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4C)
 lecting the injured villagers they would fly back to the capital, Port-au-Prince, and the first person they chose was a little girl who was in severe pain and was frightened and crying. She was severely dehydrated, he said, and the rescue team was having trouble placing an IV. After they had tried three times with no success, they asked her if they could try one more time, and her response inspired Hendrickson.
 "She smiled and gave a thumbs up," he said. "In spite of her pain and fear, it was incredible to see how resilient she was, and how willing to accept help from strangers un-

der very scary circumstances. It made me feel from the first day that we were making a big difference there."
 Hendrickson said if hadn't been for the capabilities of his crew, "who knows what would've happened" to the little girl. And he said he had seen the same thing over and over again.
 "So many were in incredible pain and frightened," he said, "but they trusted us because they knew we were there to help."
 The culture of Haiti is very different from United States culture, said Hendrickson. In a lot of the villages the people live in makeshift buildings that would never be seen in

the U.S.
 "It made me appreciate the privileges and standard of living in America," he said.
 In addition to picking up patients, Hendrickson delivered relief supplies such as food, water, and medications to the remote areas, and he dropped off volunteer medical crews who had come from all over the world.
 "At least we were able to get the people what they needed to survive," he said.
Primary job in Coast Guard
 Hendrickson's primary job in the Coast Guard is performing maritime search and rescue in the Clearwater area, but he is also routinely deployed to serve in Operation Bahamas, Turks and Caicos, or OPBAT, which performs anti-drug and migrant smuggling operations in the Bahamas. However, as soon as he arrived in the Bahamas last month for that mission, he was assigned to the special mission in Haiti.

Critical to all response efforts are the Coast Guard's rescue swimmers, said Hendrickson.
 "They don't just jump in water to save people," he said. "They are all trained EMTs. They can assist with pre-hospital lifesaving care and sort out who needs immediate help ... They know how to take care of patients while they're in the helicopter. They can make them comfortable and place IVs while in flight."
 Hendrickson said it's important that he, as the pilot and person in charge of the mission, understands what's happening, so he has asked the rescue swimmers to educate him "so I can assist them in the best way possible."
 "I recognize my authority, but also my limitations," he said. "I'm not a trained medical expert ... I always leave it up to the crew to decide who



Lt. Garrett Hendrickson in flight during a rescue mission to help victims of the earthquake in Haiti.

needs to go in the helicopter and who doesn't."
Group effort
 The mission in Haiti was a coordinated effort between the Coast Guard and U.S. Department of Defense forces, said Hendrickson. While the Coast Guard was on the scene first, the DOD showed up "and added a lot of value."
 "The coordinated effort was very, very impressive," he said. He described one rescue of a number of people in a remote area. His helicopter was limited by weight and couldn't take all the people who need-

SEE HAITI RELIEF, PAGE 12C



Lt. Hendrickson was often required to land in less-than-prime conditions, on mountainous terrain, with heavy surrounding vegetation.

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Gloucester Sheriff's Office Sgt. Brad Simmons is shown with one of two GSO drones packed into its hard carrying case. Simmons is heading up the GSO's drone program and plans to have six licensed drone pilots on the agency's staff.



A GSO drone is shown with an attached speaker on top. The drone also has a search light, a beacon and infrared capability.



The drone collapses into a small unit that can quickly be slipped into a backpack along with its controller. The drone can be taken to a site and deployed in 15 minutes or less.

Drones: Another tool in the Gloucester Sheriff's Office's law enforcement chest

BY KIM ROBINS

Gloucester Sheriff Darrell Warren is adding drones to his chest of law enforcement tools.

The use of drones can help the agency to save manpower and money in many situations, according to GSO Sgt. Brad Simmons, who is overseeing the drone program.

Simmons said the GSO is currently awaiting a certificate of authorization from the Federal Aviation Administration, which is required before public agencies may use a drone. He said there is a lengthy application to fill out

for the certificate, and then the application has been completed and submitted.

Once the agency's certificate is in hand, the drone program will be fully operational. At least three officers—Lt. Scott Little, Lt. Jay Klink and Sgt. Nick Leaver—have already obtained their individual remote pilot's license from the FAA and are ready to operate the GSO drones.

"Our goal is to have six pilots licensed, then we can have one on each patrol shift (there are four shifts), one on our special operations unit and one for investigations," said Simmons. The GSO has

two drones to utilize and both units are small and readily packable. Simmons said the drones only require 15 minutes or less to set up and launch.

Simmons said the drones cannot be used to violate someone's civil rights or used in violation of search and seizure laws. However, they can be utilized if a search warrant is obtained. In executing a search warrant, the agency may use whatever tools it has available.

The drones can be utilized without a warrant in some cases, such as when an Amber Alert, Senior Alert or Blue Alert is activated. The drone can also be used when it is determined to be necessary to alleviate an immediate danger to any person. It can be used by a law enforcement officer to survey aerially a primary residence of the subject of an arrest warrant to formulate a plan to execute an existing arrest warrant or capias for a felony offense.

The drone can be used without a warrant to locate a person who has escaped custody or fled from a law enforcement officer who remains in pursuit of such person. Additionally, it can be used if a person gives consent. In no case may a weaponized drone be deployed in Virginia.

When a search warrant is obtained, the drone can be used to gather intelligence prior to the search and can be operated while the search is being conducted. Simmons said it can be used to help search for missing persons and operated while a crime is in progress to help locate sus-

pects.

The GSO drones also have crash avoidance systems, search lights, beacons and speakers and they can be useful both outdoors and indoors. They are equipped with cameras and infrared systems for picking up on heat signatures.

Each weighs a little less than two pounds and has a maximum flight speed of 44 miles per hour. Simmons said they have flight times of 30 to 40 minutes when they have fully charged batteries.

"We could use it to negotiate with someone, for example, or to search for a suspect. If we needed to search Walmart it would be a lot quicker than men on the ground. Or if we had to look for an active shooter inside of a school," said Simmons.

The drones can also be used to help with crowd control and to photograph traffic crash scene. Outside of law enforcement, Simmons said the drone can assist the county with damage assessments in events such as floods or storms, saving the expense of a helicopter survey. It could also be used to assist the fire departments as it battles a large and spreading wildfire.

While the drone can assist law enforcement, it can also be used against it. For example, Simmons said a drone can be utilized by a drug dealer to watch for police in the area. He also said there is no provision for law enforcement to defeat a drone.

Simmons said while awaiting the use of its own drones, the GSO has utilized the drone unit from the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office. He estimated they have used it about six times in the last 18 months. But calling in this mutual aid takes time which is not always available in emergency situations.

When the GSO obtains its FAA certificate of authorization it will be able to respond a drone immediately, as needed, and eliminate the need for one type of mutual aid.

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FILE PHOTOS

Twenty years

The 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks is Saturday. Twenty years ago, the people of Gloucester and Mathews came together to do anything they could to help ease the burden of that devastating day. A dive back into the Gazette-Journal's files show the patriotic and resilient spirit of the community. Pictured clockwise from top left: Nicholas Mann, age 3 at the time, waves an American flag while watching the "Sea of Flags" ceremony at old Lee-Jackson's Primary School on Sept. 18, 2001, one week after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks; About 50 people took part in a candlelight memorial service at Gwynn's Island Park, marking the one-month anniversary of the terrorist attacks at the Pentagon and World Trade Center. Above, the group sings "God Bless America." Remarks by the Rev. David McKnight of Gwynn's Island Church of the Nazarene, and the Rev. David Patton of Gwynn's Island Baptist Church. Prayers and other patriotic songs made up the brief service; Only three days after the Sept. 11 attacks, T.C. Walker Elementary School students held a patriotic rally, bearing American flags, both small and large, they made themselves. The students stood by the road, receiving a number of honks and cheers from the drivers who passed by; Gloucester County employees and others who worked in and around the court circle took part in a brief service at noon to reflect on the events of Sept. 11 a couple weeks after the attacks. Approximately 50 people sang "America the Beautiful" and "Amazing Grace," ending the service holding hands to form a prayer circle. Animal control officer Carl T. Shipley and Barbara Coulson of the Gloucester Circuit Court office organized the observance.



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Gloucester firefighters reflect on their years of service

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

It's tough to get firefighters to talk about themselves. Every member of a department knows the critical role that teamwork plays on a fire or accident scene, and no one wants to take personal credit for what was ultimately a group effort. Instead, they talk about the truck, the equipment ... anything except themselves.

When three of Gloucester Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad's longest serving members got together recently—Lewis Horsley, Bruce Soles, and J.D. Clements—they recalled some highlights of their years serving as volunteer firefighters.

Lewis Horsley

Lewis Horsley, a member for 54 years, was 18 years old when he officially joined the department in 1967, but he started putting in time long before that. When Gloucester's Fire Station 1 first opened in 1951, anyone who wanted to be a firefighter had to live within hearing distance of the siren. Horsley's family lived on Foster Road, just a mile away, so his dad qualified.

Horsley was just 2 1/2 years old when he went to his first fire—at the old ice plant in the spring of 1951. It was the first Tuesday of the month and Horsley's mother had a circle



Bruce Soles, J.D. Clements, and Lewis Horsley, from left, are some of the longest-serving members of Gloucester Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad. They've shared a multitude of experiences over the years.

meeting, so he and his dad were at home. His dad was popping some popcorn when the siren went off, and he said, "We gotta go." He shut off the popcorn and off they went.

"We went around Hinkle's curve and saw the fire truck go down T.C. Walker Road," said Horsley. "Just before we got to the ice plant, we could

see the fire glowing in the sky."

Horsley's dad stopped on a hill and told him to stay in the car, then vanished in the direction of the fire. Horsley said he remembers watching as the glow in the sky got dimmer and dimmer, and finally the sky went dark.

By the time he was 10 years old, Horsley had been on a lot of fires, and his dad started letting him get out and walk the fire lines and check for flare-ups. It was his responsibility to tell somebody when he found one so they could put it out.

Horsley was allowed to operate a pumper for the first time at the age of 16, when the Booker furniture store on Main Street caught fire in 1964. One truck was parked at the hydrant in front of the Coca-Cola plant, and it was Horsley's job to stand by that truck and keep the pressure at 160 psi to keep the water going up the hill to the truck that was feeding the hose lines fighting the fire.

"The fire got so hot it spontaneously combusted a couch," said Horsley. "It blew the glass out of the window and shot across the road and broke the window in the hardware store across the street."

Horsley recalled the first time the department saved a fire victim with an air pack. It was 1968, and Norton Foods in Urbanna caught fire. Gloucester had been given its first air pack—a surplus Scott pack from Fort Eustis, rather than the old WWII charcoal filter canister masks the volunteers had been using—and Bill Schultz, a state trooper who volunteered with the department, put it on and went in the building.

"He stumbled on some-

thing," said Horsley. "It was a person, and he got him out, gave him oxygen, and revived him."

J.D. Clements

J.D. Clements' father was a firefighter, too. He said he was with his dad once when there was a fire at Millers Landing. He recalled the fire jumping across Davenport Road, hitting a pile of brush, and shooting 50 feet in the air. The fire was so intense that everybody age 14 and over was recruited to help fight it or walk the fire line to put out hot spots. Three houses burned in that fire, he said.

Clements himself didn't join the department until 1988, and he recalled the first call he went on as an official member—at Lee's Neck in the upper part of Gloucester, where a big barn caught on fire in the middle of the night. He recalled the glow in the sky as the truck was going up the road, and the confusion on the scene, with hogs running around, severely burned. A brooder pen with a heat lamp had caught the straw on fire, wreaking havoc.

Bruce Soles

For Bruce Soles, the first call was "probably a traffic accident," since "there were five or six traffic accidents to one fire call."

But one fire stands out clearly to Soles—the one on Starvation Road in 2008 that burned 1,000 acres. Soles said there was lots of mutual aid available for the fire, but it jumped Adams Creek and burned a garage, a house, a trailer, and a bunch of out-buildings. He said they didn't put a stop to the fire until it reached Puritan Bay.

"The wind was driving it," he said. "I saw the bulldozer come plowing through, trying to cut a line. There were eight houses and seven fire trucks, and the only house that burned didn't have a fire truck."

Fortunately, said Soles, that one house was empty, but still "to watch the fire walk right up and consume it left a sick feeling."

Horsley and Clements were on that call, as well. Horsley said he was trying to keep an eye on everybody during the fire because, "if you got in front of the fire, it would burn you up. It was so hard and fast, it would jump in front of you." Clements said the state police flew a helicopter over the site after the fire was knocked down to see what was left burning.

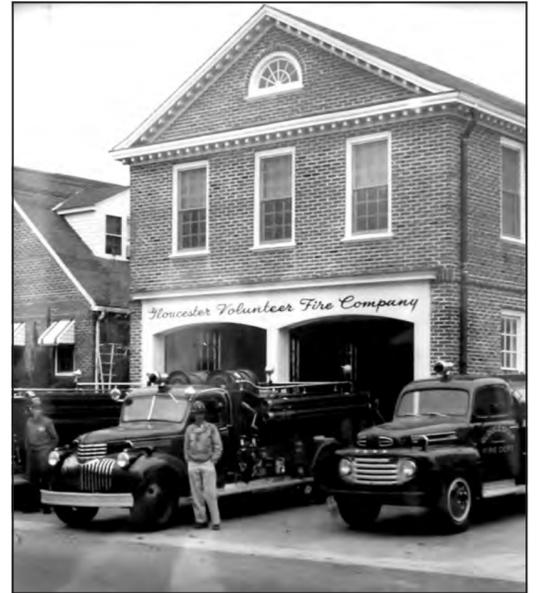
Severnby fire

All three men were on the call when the historic Severn River home Severnby burned in 2002. The incident was an example of the value of mutual aid, as fire departments from all over the region responded to assist. With so much help, some crews were able to fight the roaring fire that was ravaging the building as others entered the home to save a number of precious antiques, some of which had belonged to founding father Thomas Nelson.

"It's not often you get a fire of that magnitude and are able to save so much stuff that was so valuable," said Clements.

Tanker fire

Horsley remembered a tanker fire that occurred back when road crews were turning Route 17 into a four-lane road.



GVFRS's Station 1 on Main Street in Gloucester has expanded and changed over the years, but the original two-bay structure, built in 1946, still looks the same.

The tanker was filled with diesel fuel, he said, and a small truck was taking fuel from the larger truck to keep the working trucks filled. At one point during the process, the fuel ignited.

"People told us we couldn't put it out," said Horsley.

"They might just as well told us the sky won't blue."

Horsley remembered a technique his dad had used, in which he would put oil in a pond, set it on fire, and practice putting it out.

SEE YEARS OF SERVICE, PAGE 9C

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YEARS OF SERVICE: Gloucester firefighters reflect on the early years

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8C)

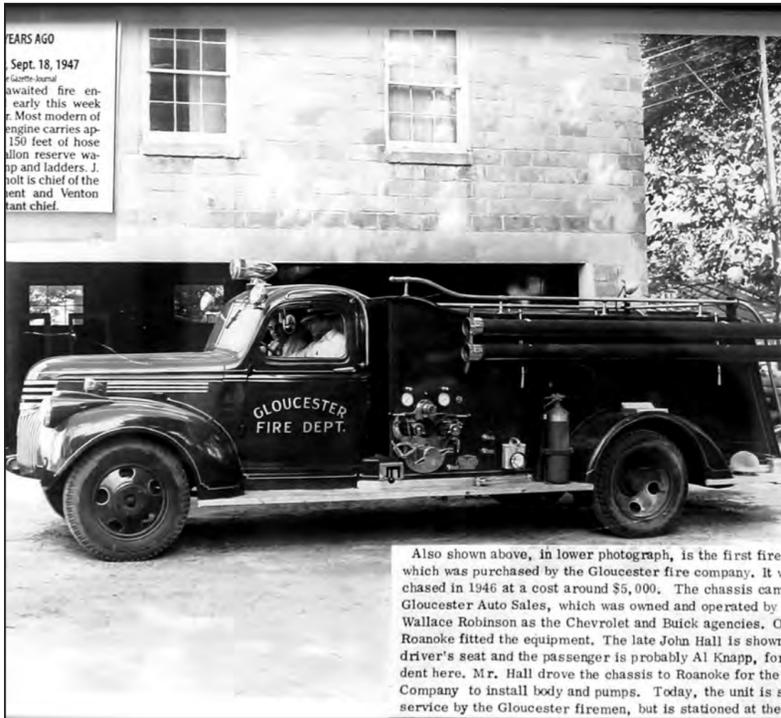
"I learned from him how to keep pushing it until it was out," he said. "That's what we did, and we put it out."

Rescue squad

Up until 1968, funeral homes were in charge of transporting sick or injured patients to the hospital, but the Virginia Ambulance Law was passed that year, setting standards for all ambulance services. It established the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, and rescue squads were suddenly incorporating all across Virginia.

Gloucester was the only fire department in the state to make the crucial decision to incorporate a rescue squad with the department from the very beginning, said Clements. He credited this decision with the fact that Gloucester is the only department left in Virginia that's fully under volunteer control, with volunteers in charge of calls during all shifts except the day shift, when there are paid personnel.

The men emphasized the amount of training and expertise it takes to become an EMT and to maintain certification, but they didn't have much to say about rescue calls. HIPAA laws prohibit divulging any personal information, but beyond that, the calls that are memorable are often tragic,



YEARS AGO
Sept. 18, 1947
The Gloucester Journal awaited fire engines early this week. Most modern of engine carries approximately 150 feet of hose and ladders. J. Holt is chief of the department and Venton is assistant chief.

Also shown above, in lower photograph, is the first fire truck which was purchased by the Gloucester fire company. It was purchased in 1946 at a cost around \$5,000. The chassis came from Gloucester Auto Sales, which was owned and operated by Wallace Robinson as the Chevrolet and Buick agencies. Of Roanoke fitted the equipment. The late John Hall is shown in driver's seat and the passenger is probably Al Knapp, former chief here. Mr. Hall drove the chassis to Roanoke for the company to install body and pumps. Today, the unit is in service by the Gloucester firemen, but is stationed at the

The first fire truck GVFRS owned was purchased from Gloucester Auto Sales in 1946 at a cost of around \$5,000.

as well. "The worst things are the auto accidents where people

lost their lives," he said. **Equipment and training**

Soles said he would put Gloucester Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad's training, equipment and tactical attack capabilities up against any department in the country. The department can work three major fires or accidents at one time with the equipment it has, he said, adding, "We have tried to continue to modernize our fleet and equipment and keep up with our training."

Clements agreed, saying, "We've got the capability to fight a fire from any of our three stations if we have the people."

But all that capability comes at a cost. In 1988, GVFRS's total budget request of the county was \$300,000, said Clements. This year, it's over \$2 million.

"It's a lot of money," he said, "but what we do is very expensive."

While a brand-new GMC fire truck cost \$47,000 in 1968,

said Horsley, a new pumper these days is \$750,000, and the department needs to replace two. A new ladder truck would cost over \$1.2 million. The one the department has was \$400,000 in 1997. Then there's equipment, such as gas detectors, infrared cameras for finding hot spots in a wall, air packs and turnout gear that are so advanced the firefighter doesn't feel the heat at all.

The number of rescue calls has increased tremendously over the years, said Horsley, partly because of the population increase and partly because of the increase in the number of medical and assisted living facilities that are now located in the county. "It's nothing for us to run 18 calls in a day," he said. And with an increase in calls comes an increase in the equipment needed.

A refurbished ambulance costs \$208,000, said Clements, and the department tries to be proactive with medical equipment. New stretchers don't require any lifting—there's a device that does that—but the maintenance alone is \$1,200 a year. With a population that's growing heavier, the department has purchased lift bags that will pick very large people up off the floor and put them in a seat.

"It's truly incredible the level of care we're able to give people today," Clements said. "We see on a routine basis things people do in the field that in 1968 you wouldn't have dreamed of."

The department also has an 18-foot Carolina Skiff for water rescues. Because the number of such calls has increased, said Clements, more boats are needed.

With new standards coming out regularly, said Horsley, the company has to plan ahead to keep up. That's one reason the department decided to erect a new 25,000-square-foot Station 1 on Main Street.

Most of the standards involve safety for personnel, he said, and that is becoming increasingly difficult in the current firehouse at the corner of Main Street and Walker Avenue. The close quarters, lack of space for modern equipment and inadequate ventilation all present health threats.

"We don't want someone to get sick or hurt and go to court and the judge asks whether we're familiar with the standards, and why we didn't follow them," said Clements. "Some of the things we're doing now weren't required years ago, and we're trying to stay on top of the curve."



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Remembering some of Mathews Volunteer Fire Department's longest-serving members

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

Longevity is hard to achieve in the fire service. The work, whether done by a volunteer or paid professional, is hard on the body—harder still on the mind and spirit.

A good number of volunteers might make it to 20 years, but not many make it to 30 or 40 or 50 years. The late Roland Wilson, who was an active volunteer with Mathews Volunteer Fire Department, was one of those who lasted.

According to Kenny Garrett, vice president of MVFD, Wilson was the first volunteer with the department to achieve 60 years of service, and he continued serving until his death three years later, on Oct. 12, 2016. During his time with the department, Wilson was the Fire Chief twice and served as Station 1 Captain for many years.

Wilson lived and breathed the fire department, serving as a paid firefighter for the federal government until he retired.

"Roland was the first one in a house that was on fire, even up into his 60s," said Garrett. "He wasn't scared of fire at all."

Even before firefighters had

air packs to protect them from the toxic fumes, Wilson, like everyone in those days, would go inside a house to put down the flames, said Garrett.

"He'd go in, hit it, come out and get a breath of fresh air, and go back in," he said. "We saw him as a hero."

Another man Garrett saw as a hero was his own father, the late Calvin Garrett, who was the only firefighter Mathews ever had who died while on duty. Garrett had responded to a vehicle accident on the North End Bridge on Jan. 17, 1984, but when he found there were no injuries, he waved off the ambulance, which was crewed by his niece and great-nephew, Betty Jane and Jackie Miller. Moments afterward, said Kenny Garrett, Sheriff Hugh Jordan got on the radio and told the ambulance to come back. Calvin Garrett had suffered a massive heart attack.

Calvin Garrett had served as Chief of Bohannon Station 2, and the community responded to his loss. In letters to the G-J editor, Mary Haislip of Mobjack described him as "a man who loved his family, his church and his community (and) loved good clean



Calvin Garrett was the only member of Mathews Volunteer Fire Department to die while on duty. He had a heart attack and died at the scene of an overturned vehicle in 1984.



Roland Wilson was the first member of the Mathews Volunteer Fire Department to serve on active duty for 60 years. A respected leader in the department, he ended up serving 63 years before he passed away in 2016.

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fun and practical jokes," while the Miller family of Saudi Arabia praised his unselfishness, compassion, generosity, and character. "Friend or stranger, black or white, if Calvin knew of man, woman, or child in trouble, he was there to help and to comfort," said the Millers.

There are also people still with the fire department who have served for many years, said Garrett. Jimmy Stewart is still a member after having served over 60 years, while Jimmy Hudgins and Sammy Dutton have both served over 50 years. Garrett himself has served with the department for over 45 years.

Memorable fire

Garrett said the "luckiest fire we ever had" was the one that burned down Mathews Motor Company, a Ford dealership which was located on Main Street at the site of the present Trend Masters Salon. Garrett was 15 years old at the time, and his dad let him trail along on that cold day in 1968. He said the building was filled with cars, and heat had cracked the windows of the Faulkner building across the street.

"If they had fought the fire the way they were supposed to, it would've burned the whole town down," said Garrett.

But instead of making a rear attack on the fire to keep it from moving through the building, the fire crew decided to attack from the front of the building.

"The whole building was on fire by the end," he said, "but it saved the whole town."

History of the department (from Mathewsvfd.org)

The precursor of the Mathews Volunteer Fire Department was the Mathews Fire Protection Association, which was formed after several disastrous fires in the court

house area. The first piece of equipment was a hand-drawn, two-wheeled cart with two small soda and acid tanks and a small hose. The association charged a fee for calls made outside the court house. In 1937, a one-bay firehouse was built at the corner of Church Street and Brickbat Road, where the present-day firehouse now stands. A soda and acid truck, a 1929 Chevrolet, was purchased to replace the cart.

Mathews Volunteer Fire Department was formed in 1946 by civic-minded people who continued to use the firehouse and the 1929 Chevrolet. In 1948, the department purchased an up-to-date fire truck to furnish fire protection to the whole county.

A second fire station was built in the county in 1949, in Bohannon, equipped with the 1929 Chevrolet, and in 1951, a 1945 Ford replaced the Chevrolet. That Ford was special because it was equipped by

SEE LONGEST MEMBERS, PAGE 11C

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The precursor of today's four-bay Mathews Volunteer Fire Department Station 1, located at the corner of Church Street and Brickbat Road, was this one-bay station built on the same site in 1937 by the Mathews Fire Protection Association. The association used this 1929 soda-and-acid Chevrolet truck until 1948.

LONGEST MEMBERS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10C)

department member Willie Brewer and some other men. They installed a pump, tank, hose reels, and ladder racks, and built a body for the truck. It served at that station and others for many years.

"In those days," said Garrett, "they'd sometimes have to take money out of their own pockets to put gas in the trucks."

Over time, other firehouses were built, each equipped with an older truck from an existing station, which would get a new truck. Station 3 was established on Gwynn's Island in 1956, thanks to the efforts of the Mathews Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary, and that was followed by the enlargement of Station 1 in 1957. Cobbs Creek got its own Station 4 in 1964, and Station 5 was built at New Point in 1985.

In 1975, Station 1 was replaced with the current two-story, four-bay building at the same site, and in 2002, Gwynn's Island got a new station, at the site of the former Civic League building on Ferry Road.

In 2014, it was Cobbs Creek's turn to get a new station, this one on Route 198, across from the industrial park, and Bohannon got a new station in

2018, not far from the original station on East River Road.

Garrett said when he joined the department in 1972, the most water any truck could carry was 800 gallons. Over time, the department has modernized and kept up with the times, and now each fire truck has a 1,000 gallon tank and a 1,250 gpm pump. The tanker holds 3,000 gallons.

"The trucks now are so much better, so much more well-equipped, and they're all the same," said Garrett.

Officers

Current MVFD officers are Donnie Lewis, president; Kenny Garrett, vice president; Steve Rife, secretary; and Lisa Deaton and Sara Lowe, treasurer.

Ronnie Lewis is the Fire Chief, and Steve Ray is the Assistant Fire Chief.

Station Officers are: **Station 1**—Capt. Ricky Tomlinson, 1st Lt. Ben Haywood Jr., 2nd Lt. Steve Tomlinson, and Training Todd Wilson; **Station 2**—Capt. Lee Smith, Lt. Donne Owens, and Training Karen Townsend; **Station 3**—Capt. John Bassett, Lt. Neal Hudgins, and Training Scott Bergman; **Station 4**—Capt. Danny Howlett, Lt. Jason Rowe, and Training Kyle Mountford; and **Station 5**—Capt. William Walker Jr., Lt. Malcolm Conway, Training Trey Haywood, and Training Capt 1 Jake Callis.

Garrett said that some other people who served the fire department faithfully over the years were Tommy and Ray Hunley at Mathews Station 1; Jack Clements, Bobby Smith, and Gerald Jones at Bohannon Station 2; Ed Jarvis, Vernon Moody, and Logan Gay at Gwynn's Island Station 3; Robert Minter Lewis, Coles Diggs, and Vernon Thompson at Cobbs Creek Station 4, and Waverly Powell Hudgins and Robert Freeman Owens at New Point Station 5.

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Health care workers are front and center in the battle against COVID-19. Among those serving on the front line every day are, seated from left: supervisor Betty Wyatt, cashier team lead Menchu Wells; standing, Emergency Department RN Ashley Walton, radiologic technologist Tarsha Jarvis, CT technologist Carey Boughan, Environmental Services aide Steven Hogue, patient access representative Stacey Sheets, Medical-Surgical RN graduate Aaron Goetz, protection officer Andrea South-Brown, Critical Care RN Allison Creasy, and heavy equipment machinist/electrician Matthew McNeely.

Health care heroes need community support through vaccinations

BY MELANY SLAUGHTER

The world has been living through the COVID-19 pandemic for the past year and a half, leaving many exhausted by its long-lasting effects.

No one knows that better than all of the health care heroes who work every day to keep communities healthy and to treat them when they are sick, in spite of diminishing community support and poor vaccination rates.

Ester Desimini, president of Riverside Walter Reed Hospital, reflected on the outpouring of community support that the hospital received 18 months ago when the pandemic first started. This included restaurants providing food, Girl Scouts giving cookies, and people bringing in masks.

"But over time, everybody's now worn out, not just Riverside Walter Reed Hospital team members and our practices and our cancer center," said Desimini.

"We've also seen the impact of COVID that nobody anticipated in the country or in Gloucester right for that matter 18 months ago," said Desimini. "Little did we know we would have such workforce issues."

"At that time, everybody was worried about not being able to come into work and now we have challenges recruiting and finding people who want to work in all of our departments," said Desimini. "Not just one department, but all of our departments."

She also said that others in the community, like restaurants, are having workforce

issues as well.

"When that happens it puts more on those that are remaining working," said Desimini. "And the acuity of the illness has not gone away."

She said that the pandemic has evolved over the past 18 months.

"It's not just the clinical condition of COVID; it's also workforce issues, it's supply issues," said Desimini. "We have everything we need in the hospital but construction has been a little bit delayed because we can't get the lumber or the items that we need for our new cardiac diagnostic testing center."

Desimini also said that the release of the COVID-19 vaccine was not the end of the pandemic as it was originally expected to be.

"There was so much hope with the vaccine," she said. "You could feel it when the vaccine was rolled out and we were giving it and people were so excited to get it because we thought that was the end."

"But what has happened is, because of the number of people who are vaccinated is insufficient, we now have a variant to that COVID virus," she said. "And that variant is much more contagious than the original COVID virus. We are seeing as many folks, if not more, because they didn't get vaccinated."

"But now you don't have as many nurses responding to the call," said Desimini.

Health care needs are not only related to COVID-19, but also to those who did not have their other health issues addressed when the pandemic first began. Since January, the hospital has seen more admissions of heart disease, vascular disease, COPD exacerbations, and other health care problems.

"That is the bulk of our admissions with the COVID non-vaccinated patients as well."

This has been a source of stress for all RWRH staff members.

"The staff is frustrated," said Desimini. "They got vaccinated. They looked to the end of this pandemic. And now they're having to take care of people that they know who are just as sick and the oxygen needs just as high with fewer people to assist."

In addition to treating a community that is currently experiencing a higher COVID-19 transmission rate with people more unwilling to take safety measures, she said that people seem to be less tolerant of each other and more irritable.

"Compound that with a community that now doesn't want to wear a mask when they're inside the hospital, despite the fact that we know it's safer for our patients, our families, our team members—it's driven by the CDC," said Desimini. "And you have family members and other people, patients as well who are coming in for an outpatient test—yelling at a screener, yelling at a registration person."

"People are yelling at our team members, our nurses,

our laboratory technicians, our phlebotomists, our physicians," she said.

"We're all called to care for those who are ill and to care for those as we would care for those we love," said Desimini. "And we're getting criticized and berated. That wears on employees. I have seen many employees retire in the last three months because they can no longer do health care."

Desimini said that all health care workers are heroes, no matter which position they are in. Laboratory technicians, housekeeping personnel, dietary staff, the facilities team, nurses, clinicians, nursing assistants, physicians, nurse practitioners and others are all important to the hospital and keeping the community healthy.

"These people all are heroes," said Desimini.

"As their leader, I struggle with how I help them be resilient," said Desimini. "How do I remind each and every one of them that they are a thread in the fabric that provides high-quality, compassionate care for this community?"

The best way the community can help local health care personnel is to get vaccinated.

"Getting vaccinated is no different than getting vaccinated when you're a small child whether it's for polio or mumps or whatever," said Desimini.

Desimini would like the community to be more compassionate and understanding through this difficult time.

"Please be patient with us," said Desimini. "Please know that our hearts are in the right place. We want to care for you. We wouldn't be there if we didn't want to care for this community. We love this community. We live in this community and we want to see it continue to thrive."



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PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARY ANN GILMAN

One hundred years ago, the central portion of Mathews Court House lay in ruins after a fire swept almost unchecked through the village. These photos show the extent of the damage. A boy in a well and ladies applying wet blankets to buildings were the main tools of firefighting. In top left photo, Sibley's General Store, now the Mathews Visitor and Information Center, center left, and the Bank of Mathews, now Mathews Memorial Library, center right, survived the blaze.



Everyday citizens became heroes in an emergency

BY ELSA VERBYLA

As a spreading fire devoured much of downtown Mathews a century ago, hometown heroes worked to contain it ... a boy in a well, ladies wetting blankets.

With no fire department to call, the efforts of everyday citizens young and old finally contained the blaze.

The village fire was one of many in 1921 that destroyed landmarks and businesses in both Gloucester and Mathews counties; these were featured in the Gazette-Journal in a July 22 article. With no organized firefighting service in either county, structures could rarely be saved when flames erupted.

The Mathews Journal report of the late August 1921 fire has been clipped from our file copy and all we previously had to describe it are

articles from the Gloucester Gazette and in later weeks of the Journal.

But now we have an account of an eyewitness to this historic event.

Mary Ann Marchant Gilman of Port Haywood brought a sketch and a handwritten reminiscence made by her aunt Catherine "Kitty" Marchant Freed. The Marchant store stood on the corner of Main and Church Streets, and the family lived nearby. It was saved from the fire that destroyed its neighbors.

According to Gilman, her aunt wrote this account in 2005, just four years before her death in 2009 at the age of 98. She recalled:

"Fire started behind Jarvis & Pugh's Store. It spread in both directions. Behind J. & P. Store was an old street car full of stuffed birds & animals which belonged to Theodore

Miller. It was destroyed but the home was saved. It must be the Tompkins Cottage.

"Marchant had sold the hotel property to the Farmers and Fishermen's Bank. They had razed the hotel which left the vacant lot the night of the Village fire. Quentin Marchant, 15 yr. old at the time, spent the night in the Well on the Court Green filling buckets to stem the fire. Three others sons of G.S. Marchant helped save the family business by soaking bed comforts to place on the eaves of the Bldg.

"The fire spread South from J.&P.'s to ___ places of business to the ___ next to the Rectory."

Adding to Freed's account of the hometown heroes were details in the papers. The Gazette wrote that "The



FILE PHOTO

This image from the early 1900s shows many of the structures that burned in the 1921 fire.

SEE **HOMEGROWN HEROES**, PAGE 15C

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Catherine Marchant Freed's map of the Mathews Court House area, showing the location of businesses affected by the 1921 fire.

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY MARY ANN GILMAN

HOMEGROWN HEROES: *Fighting a big fire before organized firefighting arrived here*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14C)

store of L. M. Callis across the street was saved only by being kept saturated with wet blankets. The plate glass front was cracked by the heat." The Journal noted the next week that "Inadvertently the editor neglected to men-

tion in his last issue the work done by the ladies during the fire. They fought fire, carried water and helped move out the contents of the threatened buildings with admirable pluck and perseverance." Destroyed were numerous

buildings and offices, according to the Gazette, including "Jarvis & Pugh's store,

Mathews Drug Co.'s store, R. W. Foster's store, The Post Office, Farmers and Fisher-

mens Bank, Green & Hurst smith shop owned by Mrs. V. E. Davis."

When fighting fires was everyone's job

The legendary "bucket brigade" saved a local schoolhouse in the early years of the 20th century. The Mathews Journal of Feb. 14, 1907 contained this brief report from the community of Mobjack: "Friday about eleven o'clock there came near being a very serious conflagration at our village school. People around were attracted by the violent ringing of the school bell. Fortunately the usual crowd was gathered at the post office waiting for the mail, a bucket brigade was formed, and ten or twelve men responded promptly to the call and soon had the fire under control without any great damage to the building which was repaired at once."

How to create an effective fire safety plan

(Metro) While fire can provide warmth and safety, it also can cause immediate and significant damage that can uproot lives and devastate homes. Because fire is such a formidable foe, it's imperative that people from all walks of life have a fire safety plan. How quickly fire can spread may surprise some people. The Grand Traverse Metro Fire Department says that in the average two-story home fire, fire ignites in 30 sec-

onds, smoke pours into most rooms by 2.5 minutes, and roughly 4.5 minutes after the fire has ignited, flames can be visible from the exterior of a house. Temperatures inside can grow from 190°F to more than 1400°F in two minutes.

Planning is critical
When fires ignite, time is of the essence to make a fast evacuation. Unfortunately, panic may set in and people may not know how to act when under such acute stress. That's why planning for the event of fire can provide families with the information they need to evacuate safely. Evacuation plans and drills should be established and practiced frequently so that getting out alive becomes second nature.

Find two ways out. Look at your home's layout and identify two ways out of every room, if possible. Walk around the house in each room and practice what to do if a fire broke out in that space, offers Safe Kids Worldwide.

Choose an outside meeting place. Establish a spot to meet a safe distance in front of the home where everyone can gather after they've gotten out safely.

Assign help to those with mobility issues. Elderly adults, infants or young children may have difficulty escaping on their own. Plan a buddy system.

Check fire protection. Be sure that there is a working smoke alarm in every bedroom and on every level of the house.

Drop it low. Heat and smoke rise and escaping on hands and knees is essential for survival. Practice several times a year. Conduct a fire drill a few times each year, and choose a different escape route each time.

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Never Forget: A timeline of the events of the morning of Sept. 11, 2001

(METRO) On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, 19 terrorists hijacked four commercial airplanes bound for California. The planes departed from airports in Boston; Newark, N.J.; and Washington, D.C.

September 11 would become an infamous date in American and world history, and the events of that day would forever change the world. As the world commemorates the 20th anniversary of 9/11, the following timeline, courtesy of the National September 11 Memo-

rial & Museum in New York City, can help people fully understand how events unfolded on that late-summer morning two decades ago.

—5:45 a.m.: Two of the hijackers pass through security at Portland International Airport in Maine. The men will take a short flight to Boston Logan International Airport, where they will join three other hijackers and board American Airlines Flight 11.

—6 a.m.: Two of the hijacked planes, American Airlines Flight 11 and United

Airlines Flight 175, will eventually crash into the North and South Towers of the World Trade Center complex in New York City. The day was a significant one on the New York City political calendar, as polling stations opened at 6 a.m. for primary elections.

—7:59 a.m.: American Airlines Flight 11 takes off from Boston with 11 crew members, 76 passengers and five hijackers on board. The plane, which will eventually crash into the North tower at the World Trade Center, is filled with more than 76,000 pounds of fuel.

—8:15 a.m.: United Airlines Flight 175 takes off from Boston with nine crew members, 51 passengers, and five hijackers on board. This flight also is loaded with 76,000 pounds of fuel.

—8:19 a.m.: American Airlines ground personnel are alerted by flight attendant Betty Ann Ong that Flight 11 is being hijacked. This call lasts roughly 25 minutes and Ong reports that the cockpit is unreachable. In the moments before Ong's call, one of the hijackers stabbed Daniel M. Lewin, who was sitting in front of him in first class. Lewin is likely the first person killed in the 9/11 attacks.

—8:20 a.m.: American Airlines Flight 77 takes off from Washington Dulles International Airport. The flight has 49,900 pounds of fuel and is carrying six crew members, 53 passengers and five hijackers.

—8:21 a.m.: The transponder on Flight 11 is turned off. This device is meant to allow air traffic controllers to identify and monitor the flight path of a plane.

—8:24 a.m.: One of the hijackers of Flight 11 unwittingly broadcasts a message to air traffic controllers alerting them to the attacks. The hijacker was attempting to communicate with passengers and crew within the cabin.

—8:30 a.m.: Around this time, roughly 80 people have already begun gathering on the 106th floor of the North Tower of the World Trade Center for a financial technology conference. The conference is one of many events on the Trade Center schedule that day.

—8:37 a.m.: The Boston Air Traffic Control Center alerts the military that a hijacking is underway.

—8:42 a.m.: United Airlines Flight 93 takes off from Newark International Airport. The flight was due to take off at roughly the same time as the other hijacked planes, but was delayed due to routine traffic. Seven crew members, 33 passengers and four hijackers are on board. The flight is filled with 48,700 pounds of fuel.

—8:46 a.m.: Five hijackers crash Flight 11 into floors 93 through 99 of the North Tower of the World Trade Center. Hundreds, including everyone on board the flight, are killed instantly. The crash severs all three emergency stairwells, trapping hundreds of people above the 91st floor.

—8:46 a.m.: Police, paramedics and firefighters are sent to the North Tower.

—8:50 a.m.: While visiting an elementary school in Florida, U.S. President George W. Bush is notified that a small plane has hit the North Tower.

—8:52 a.m.: A flight attendant aboard Flight 175 reaches a United Airlines operator in San Francisco and reports the flight is being hijacked. By 9 a.m., various passengers on Flight 175 have called family members.

—8:55 a.m.: The Port Authority informs people inside the South Tower via a public address system that the building is secure and there is no need to evacuate.

—8:59 a.m.: The Port Authority Police Department orders both towers evacuated. One minute later Captain Anthony Whitaker expands the order to include all civilians in the entire World Trade Center complex.

—9:02 a.m.: An evacuation order is broadcast in the

South Tower.

—9:03 a.m.: Five hijackers crash Flight 175 into floors 77 through 85 of the South Tower. All onboard the flight are killed, as are an unknown number of people inside the building. Two of the three emergency stairwells are impassable and most elevator cables are severed, trapping many people above the impact zone and inside elevator cars.

—9:03 a.m.: A second call for mobilization brings the total number of New York City Police Department officers responding to the scene to roughly 2,000. In addition, the FDNY issues a fifth alarm and deploys several hundred additional firefighters to the scene.

—9:05 a.m.: President Bush is informed that a second plane has crashed into the World Trade Center.

—9:12 a.m.: Flight attendant Renee A. May calls her mother and tells her that hijackers have seized control of Flight 77. When May's call is disconnected, she calls American Airlines.

—9:30 a.m.: Amidst reports of additional hijacked planes, the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management at 7 World Trade Center is evacuated.

—9:37 a.m.: Hijackers crash Flight 77 into the Pentagon. All 53 passengers and six crew members perish, and 125 military and civilian personnel on the ground are killed in the fire caused by the crash.

—9:42 a.m.: The Federal Aviation Administration grounds all flights, ordering all civilian planes in United States airspace to land. Departures also are prohibited.

—9:45 a.m.: Evacuations at the White House and the U.S. Capitol begin. Both the House of Representatives and Senate are in session at the time the evacuation begins.

—9:58 a.m.: Flight 93 is flying so low to the ground that passenger Edward P. Felt is able to reach an emergency 911 operator in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

—9:59 a.m.: The South Tower collapses after burning for 56 minutes. The tower collapses in just 10 seconds.

—9:59 a.m.: Continuity-of-government procedures are implemented for the first known time in American history.

—10:03 a.m.: Four hijackers crash Flight 93 into a field near the town of Shanksville, Pennsylvania. All 33 passengers and seven crew members on board perish. Passengers and crew had stormed the cockpit, and the

plane ultimately crashes just 20 minutes' flying time from Washington, D.C.

—10:15 a.m.: The E Ring of the Pentagon collapses.

—10:28 a.m.: The North Tower collapses after burning for 102 minutes. More than 1,600 people are killed as a result of the attack on the North Tower.

—11:02 a.m.: New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani urges the evacuation of lower Manhattan.

—12:16 p.m.: The last flight still in the air above the continental United States lands. Within two and a half hours, U.S. airspace has been cleared of roughly 4,500 commercial and general aviation planes.

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Memorials serve as reminder of that fateful day

The nation remembers

Across the United States, the people will remember on Saturday the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001: the planes, the victims, the sites ... and the unforgettable sights and sounds of that terrible day.

Fitting memorials at each crash site will serve to remind us in generations to come of the day that America came under attack.

World Trade Center site

Among the more indelible images to emerge on September 11, 2001 was the sight of two planes crashing into the North and South Towers of the World Trade Center. Still photos and video footage of those planes flying into the Twin Towers were the first images of the attacks many Americans saw, and no one who watched events unfold that morning will ever forget those images.

Though both the North and South Towers fell on that day, today the site where each tower once stood is a serene retreat in the bustling lower Manhattan neighborhood that was shaken to its core on the day of the attacks. The 9/11 Memorial was designed by architect Michael Arad and landscape architect Peter Walker. The 9/11 Memorial and Museum notes that Arad and Walker's proposal was chosen in a design competition that featured 5,201 submissions from 63 countries.

The 9/11 Memorial is located on the western side of the former World Trade Center where the Twin Towers once stood. Two enormous reflecting pools are part of the Memorial Plaza, which is where the North and South Towers once stood. The pools feature the two largest man-made waterfalls in North America. Around the edges of the pools, the names of people who were killed in the 9/11 attacks in New York, the Pentagon, on Flight 93, and in the 1993 bombing at the World Trade Center are etched in bronze.

In recognition of the crash sites, 400 swamp white oak trees were selected from nurseries located in New York, Pennsylvania and near Washington, D.C. These trees are located throughout the Memorial Plaza, providing a peaceful respite separate from the surrounding city. The Memorial Plaza also includes one Callery pear tree. That tree was discovered at Ground Zero weeks after the attacks and it was severely damaged. The tree, now known as the Survivor Tree, was nursed back to health by members of the New York City Parks and Recreation Department and returned to the World Trade Center site in 2010, where it still stands as an enduring symbol of resilience and perseverance.

The 9/11 Memorial in New York City is free and open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. More



information about the 9/11 Memorial and the 9/11 Memorial and Museum can be found at www.911memorial.org.

Pentagon site

Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon in Arlington County, Virginia. All 53 passengers and six crew members perished in the crash, and an additional 125 military and civilian personnel on the ground were killed in the fire caused by At 9:37 a.m. on September 11, 2001, five hijackers crashed American the crash.

The hijacking of Flight 77 was part of the broader attack on 9/11, which remains the deadliest terrorist attack in world history. The Pentagon Memorial was created to honor the 184 people whose lives were lost at the Pentagon on 9/11, as well as their families and all those who sacrifice to protect and preserve the freedom of Americans.

The design of the Pentagon Memorial was developed by architects Julie Beckman and Keith Kaseman. Their design was chosen from 1,100 submissions.

The Pentagon Memorial sits on two acres of land just outside where Flight 77 struck the

building. The memorial includes 184 benches that are dedicated to each of the victims. The benches are organized in a timeline of their ages, stretching from the youngest victim, 3-year-old Dana Falkenberg, to the oldest, 71-year-old John Yamnicky. Each bench is engraved with a victim's name and arches over a shallow reflecting pool of water, lit from below. The benches for the passengers who were aboard the plane at the time of the crash are positioned so visitors will face the sky when reading the victim's name. The benches dedicated to the victims who were inside the building are positioned so their names and the Pentagon are in the same view.

A curved wall known as the Age Wall also is a significant part of the memorial. The wall increases in height from 3 inches to 71 inches to represent the ages of the victims.

Eighty-five paperbark maple trees were clustered throughout the memorial, and these trees feature foliage that changes to orange and red each fall. The trees will eventually grow to 30 feet, providing a canopy of shade over the memorial.

The Pentagon Memorial is free and open seven days a week year-round, though visitors are urged to contact the Memorial in advance due to potential restrictions or closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. More information about the Memorial is available at <https://washington.org/find-dc-listings/national-911-pentagon-memorial>.

Washington, D.C., but passengers and crew stormed the cockpit, prompting the hijackers to crash the plane into the field, which is less than 20 minutes' flying time to Washington, D.C.

The efforts of passengers and crew on-board Flight 93 were nothing short of heroic. Though everyone aboard the flight perished in the crash, the attack on the U.S. Capitol was thwarted, saving untold number of lives. All passengers and crew on board Flight 93 were awarded a Congressional Gold Medal on September 11, 2014.

The Flight 93 National Memorial is located in Stonycreek Township in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, roughly two miles north of Shanksville. The memorial was opened to family members of the victims on September 10, 2015, and is now open to the public seven days a week, 365 days a year, from sunrise to sunset, though visitors are urged to contact the Memorial in advance due to potential restrictions or closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In September 2005, the Flight 93 Advisory Commission, which included family members of the victims as well as design and art professionals and community and national leaders, chose a design proposal submitted by Paul Murdoch Architects and Nelson Byrd Woltz Architects from among 1,100 entries.

The Flight 93 National Memorial includes the Tower of Voices, a 93-foot-tall musical instrument that holds 40 wind chimes, one to represent each of the 40 passengers and crew members who perished in the crash. The tower is located on an oval concrete plaza that includes two curved concrete benches facing the opening of the tower. The tower is surrounded by concentric rings of white pines and deciduous plantings. A live webcam of the Tower of Voices can be viewed at <https://www.flight93friends.org/plan-your-visit/webcams>.

Visitors to the Flight 93 National Memorial also can visit the Memorial Plaza. The Memorial Plaza features the Wall of Names, which is made up of 40 white polished marble stones inscribed with the names of the passengers and crew who were aboard Flight 93 on 9/11. The Memorial Plaza extends one-quarter mile alongside the area where Flight 93 crashed. Visitors can walk along the Memorial Plaza and view the impact site, including a grove of eastern hemlock trees that were damaged by the crash. A gap in the tree line is still visible and serves as a lasting scar of the crash.

More information about the Flight 93 National Memorial is available at <https://www.nps.gov/flni/planyourvisit/index.htm>.



Flight 93 site

At 10:03 a.m. on September 11, 2001, the last of four planes that were hijacked earlier that morning crashed into a field near the town of Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The people behind the 9/11 attacks later claimed the hijackers who commandeered the plane intended to crash it into the U.S. Capitol Building in



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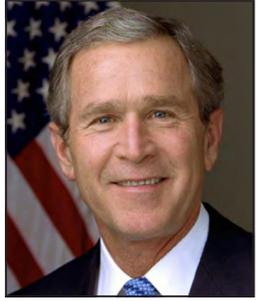
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Remembering the words of President Bush after 9/11

The president's speech



On the evening of September 11, 2001, United States President George W. Bush addressed a nation that earlier that day witnessed the deadliest terrorist attacks in world history.

That morning, hijackers took control of four airplanes, ultimately crashing two into the Twin Towers at the World Trade Center in New York City and another into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. A fourth hijacked plane crashed in a field near the town of Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after passengers and crew attempted to regain control of the plane from the hijackers. All passengers and crew on board all

four flights died on September 11, and thousands of others on the ground lost their lives that day as well.

It was under those conditions that President Bush delivered the following speech to a shaken nation.

Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes, or in their offices; secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers; moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despi-

cable acts of terror.

The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed; our country is strong.

A great people has moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.

America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.

Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature. And we responded with the best of America—with the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington, D.C., to help with local rescue efforts.

Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks.

The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight, and will be open for business tomorrow. Our financial institutions remain strong, and the

American economy will be open for business, as well.

The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.

I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance.

America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism.

Tonight, I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: 'Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me.'

This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood

down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day. Yet, we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

Thank you. Good night, and God bless America.

How to honor first responders

(METRO) This Saturday marks the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The attacks on Sept. 11, 2001 remain the deadliest terror attacks in world history, claiming more than 2,900 lives and causing countless injuries and long-term health problems for tens of thousands of civilians and first responders.

The 20th anniversary of 9/11 will no doubt evoke responses that span the emotional spectrum. Sadness may dominate such responses, but the anniversary of 9/11 also is a great time to reflect on the efforts of first responders. First responders played a vital role on 9/11, and many lost their lives and/or suffered long-term health consequences resulting from their selfless efforts to save innocent victims of the attacks.

In the two decades since the 9/11 attacks, first responders have continued to make countless sacrifices to ensure their communities are safe and peaceful places to call home. The 20th anniversary of 9/11 is a great time to recognize the efforts of first responders and honor them for all they do.

—Donate to local fire departments. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, 54 percent of active firefighting personnel are volunteers. Many of those volunteer firefighters work for underfunded departments that are in need of financial support. Donating to such departments is a great way to show first responders how much their efforts are appreciated. Donations may be used to purchase new equipment, upgrade existing facilities, provide vital training, and/or improve response times, the latter of which can increase the likelihood that firefighters make it through calls safe and sound.

—Back legislation to support wounded first responders. Many first responders suffer significant mental and physical injuries while on the job. Various nonprofit organizations help wounded first responders who may need to make modifications to their homes or purchase costly equipment to get through their daily lives. But nonprofit organizations cannot go it alone in support of wounded first responders. Citizens can do their part by promoting and voting for local, state and national legislation that makes it easy for wounded first responders to get the help they need, when they need it. In addition to urging local politicians to support such legislation, private citizens can utilize social media to promote proposals and other efforts to support wounded first responders. Many 9/11 first responders are still fighting for government-backed support to treat injuries suffered 20 years ago, and a vocal citizenry can be a strong asset in their fight and the fight of countless others

in need of help.

—Commit to supporting first responders year-round. The 20th anniversary of 9/11 will call attention to the efforts of first responders on that day 20 years ago as well as the countless times since then that these brave men and women have served their communities. But first responders deserve vocal, year-round support. Make a concerted effort to thank policemen, firefighters, EMTs, nurses, and doctors in your community whenever you interact with them, and urge others to follow suit.

First responders play a vital role in communities across the globe. The 20th anniversary of 9/11 can serve as a catalyst for communities to express their support for first responders.

Thank you for your service!

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