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## [Remembering 9/11](#)

### **Local ceremonies honor those who died**

By Dave Rogers [Staff writer](#)

More than 500 American flags and several hundred people converged yesterday afternoon on the Bartlet Mall to take part in The Exchange Club of Greater Newburyport's Field of Honor. The event was one of several around the region organized to honor and recognize the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks in New York City, Washington, D.C., and rural Pennsylvania.

Yesterday marked the second year in a row that hundreds of American flags were planted in organized rows inside arguably Newburyport's most cherished location. Each of the flags bears the name of someone affected that day 10 years ago when nearly 3,000 men and women were killed. On that horrific day, terrorists hijacked four commercial airline jets and flew them into both towers of the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon just outside Washington, D.C., and into a field in Shanksville, Pa.

"Takes your breath away, doesn't it?" asked current Exchange Club of Greater Newburyport President Kathleen Bailey minutes before the event.

Bailey went on to describe yesterday's event as a way of helping people remember, in a positive way, the horrible tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001.

Sponsors paid \$40 for the chance to dedicate a flag to a loved one and their names were read as part of the "verbal wall" section of yesterday's ceremony. Proceeds are being given to the regional Michael B. Christensen Family Support Center in an ongoing effort to prevent child abuse; the Veterans Northeast Outreach Center to support those who have served; the local Kids As Peacemakers initiative to promote peace and reduce bullying; and to the general charity fund for local community services. Co-sponsor proceeds will go toward services of their choice.

Among the dignitaries spotted in the crowd or taking part in the ceremony were Mayor Donna Holaday, city councilors Ed Cameron, Barry Connell, Thomas O'Brien, Ari Herzog and Allison Heartquist. Joining Exchange Club members on stage were state Sen. Steven Baddour, D-Methuen, state Rep. Michael Costello, D-Newburyport, and Newburyport School Superintendent Marc Kerble.

Before the noontime event, Holaday said it was hard to believe that 10 years had already passed since the terrorists attacks. She went on to say events such as yesterday's were a solemn and reflective way for the community to recognize the anniversary together.

"These are the kind of events that make you really proud of your community," Holaday said.

In neighboring Amesbury, nearly 400 people filled Landry Memorial Stadium last night at 7 to witness An Evening of Heroes, a multi-faceted event organized by former Our Neighbors' Table director Rosemary Werner. The event featured songs, speeches and a helicopter flyover to honor the heroes of that fateful day.

Music for the Evening of Heroes was provided by the Merrimack Valley Concert Band and Amesbury High School band. Hundreds of American flags were planted along the stadium grounds as well. An almost full moon added its own illumination to the four banks of lights surrounding the stadium during the ceremony.

A tribute to police was offered by police chief Mark Gagnon with a siren and three volleys for emergency responders. A tribute to firefighters was offered by fire Chief Jonathan Brickett; and "The Star-Spangled Banner" was sung by Daniel Cleary, retired Amesbury police sergeant.

Mayor Thatcher Kezer spoke of three local soldiers "who gave all for our nation" by giving their lives defending this country: Sgt. Jordan Shay, Lt. Derek Hines and Sgt. Andrew Nicol.

The Girl Scouts then unfurled a massive American flag and took it to the middle of the stadium.

The evening ended with the singing of "God Bless America."

In West Newbury, residents young and old — some holding American flags — met at the Central Fire Station yesterday.

Firefighters dressed in their formal dress attire pulled forward three fire vehicles from the station's bays and placed a set of turnout gear — the boots, pants, jacket and helmet each firefighter wears to a fire call — on the ground in front of the trucks.

A bell solemnly tolled, safety personnel saluted and fire Chief Scott Berkenbush asked for a moment of silence. One lone pickup truck slowed and pulled to the side of the busy state highway in front of the fire station, resuming his travels only after the tolling bell had ceased and he had a chance to return the salute.

"Everyone remembers where they were on 9/11," said Berkenbush. The firefighters who rushed into the World Trade Center following the terrorist attacks were doing what they had been trained to do, unaware that the buildings they entered were about to collapse, he recalled.

Across the region, moments of silence were observed at the moments when the four planes struck and when the two World Trade Center towers collapsed.

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Daily News correspondent Jennifer Solis contributed to this report.