

2,200 flags pay tribute in Auburn



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Auburn (WSYR-TV) - A sea of more than 2,200 American flags is wrapping the City of Auburn in a blanket of patriotism in anticipation of Memorial Day. The "Healing Field" tribute is larger this year than last and will honor both veterans and those who perished in the September 11 attacks.

"We have to honor the veterans, it's because of them that we have our freedoms," said Darlene Nila, a member of the Healing Fields committee. "They've sacrificed so much for us."

Last year, children at St. Joseph's Catholic School put up the flags as part of a fundraiser. The response was so overwhelmingly positive that they decided to do it again this year.

This time, a \$16,000 contribution from Medent Community Computer Services, an Auburn company, added more than 450 flags. Each represents a Cayuga County veteran who died fighting in a war and bears a tag with the name of the individual.

"I thought it would be nice seeing how they've sacrificed more than anyone if we could somehow put it together to get a flag for all of them and I wanted [it] to be a separate field and that's why we're

putting it across the pond," said Medent President Doug Cuthbert.

As the 10th anniversary of one of the country's darkest days approaches - Sept. 11 - there are plans to take the flags down after this holiday weekend and put them back on that somber anniversary.

"Auburn and some people in the surrounding communities did lose some people in the 9-11 tragedy and how could you not. It's touched so many peoples' lives," Nila said.

An opening ceremony for the display will be held Friday night at Hoopes Park, starting at 7:00 p.m. Fireworks will be set off at dusk.

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