

## LOCAL

# 9/11 Patriot Day Observance today at City Hall

## KMFD remembers brothers who gave it all September 11, 2001

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At 8:46 a.m. September 11, 2001, American Airlines Flight #11, under the control of terrorists, flew into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York. Minutes later a second commercial airplane crashed into the South Tower, another crashed into the Pentagon and a fourth plane, headed for Washington, D.C., crashed into a Pennsylvania field.

Over 6,000 died.

On September 11, 2008 at 8:46 a.m., the Kings Mountain Fire Department will lower flags to half staff. At 12 p.m. a ceremony will take place in front of Kings Mountain City Hall, where Mayor Rick Murphrey, Fire Chief Frank Burns, and other guests will speak.

The Patriot Day program will also feature soldiers, who survived a harrowing tale from the battlefields in Iraq.

"I've wanted to have a ceremony every year. I think it's important that we remember what happened," Murphrey said. "We've always come together to fight for our freedom. We'll never forget the heroic personnel on September 11. The spirit of democracy cannot be killed!"

The Patriot Day Observance will include:

- Welcome by Mayor Rick Murphrey
- KM Police Honor Guard to Post Colors
- Invocation by Police Chief Melvin Proctor
- Pledge of Allegiance led by Fire Chief Frank Burns
- National Anthem sung by Shana Adams
- Introduction and Recognition of Special Guests by Mayor Murphrey
- Ringing of the Fire Bell by Fire Chief Burns
- Retirement of Colors by KMPD
- Closing Comments from Mayor Murphrey

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When Kings Mountain volunteer firefighter Lenny Wright reads 9:11 a.m./p.m. on his alarm clock he says that his mind goes back to *that* day.

"A lot of talent died that day. A lot of knowledge that wrote our books (fire training manuals) died that day," Wright stated.

That day was September 11, 2001 when many firefighters lost their lives. KMFD Chief Frank Burns was in a Christian resort area, which didn't have phones or televisions, when it happened. His wife paged him and at noon he watched re-runs of hijacked planes flying into New York City's Twin Towers.

"Seeing the buildings collapse was unbelievable. We knew there were a lot of firefighters, 373, that lost their lives. A lot of their remains were never found," Burns said.

"We were all shocked. We knew that with the first building basement, which housed a fire command center, there would be a lot of deaths. A lot of eyes were opened to the hazards of firefighters," said KMFD Assistant Fire Chief Jamie Black.

The devastation, according to Black, went deeper than many realized. When he visited NYC less than a year after 9/11 he listened to stories about an entire

fire department unit that was wiped out. Families were devastated because a father and son, brothers, or uncles had died together, and those that survived carried guilt on their shoulders, "because their brothers died," Black said.

"It tightened the brotherhood," Wright said.

"It was eye opening," Black said of a fireman memorial he visited. "They still had candles. There's a club that still has the dust on the shelf (from 9/11). The owner won't clean it. He doesn't want people to forget," Black stated.

"It's hard to imagine shifting through that much debris. We hear stories from firefighters from NYC trapped in those buildings (who survived) and what they were thinking. They thought of their families and their lives in past tense," Burns said.

Both Wright and Black said that the devastation of 9/11 had stayed in the media about a week, yet the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are still on the news around the clock. It's not that they don't support the wars, but they feel that the national media has downplayed the true memory of September 11, 2001.

"Some (Americans) have gotten to where we glorify death. Guys (firemen) that day truly were just doing their job," Wright stated.

Black said, "We (Americans) heard about Al-Queda, but we never took it seriously."

However these firemen claim that they remember that fateful morning not once a year, but everyday. Inside the KMFD, framed photographs of the burning towers hangs on the wall as a reminder.

"It brings home to life how quick things can change," Burns said.

One response, which all three men said, was that September 11 caused Washington, D.C. to realize what firemen really do for a living and that is being prepared to sacrifice their lives and rescue others on a daily basis.

"We got more grant money and equipment," Black said.

"Those men made no where near the salary they deserved," Wright said, adding that after 9/11, "The government stepped-up on grants!"

One thing that has stuck with Wright for seven years is what a NYFD firefighter told him - the scene of people fleeing from the towers that day saying of the NY firemen, "I couldn't believe as we were running out, they were running in."

Burns said with tears in his eyes, "Things can go wrong any second. Living on the edge, you know that potential. It (9/11) made me proud to be in a profession where firemen are willing to give it all."

## ARC blood drives offered through Sept.

The following American Red Cross blood drives have been scheduled within the surrounding area throughout the month of September:

Friday, Sept. 12 - 1:30-6 p.m. at the Kings Mountain Red Cross Chapter, 101 W. Mountain Street, behind Kings Mountain Baptist Church; free Cleveland Mall Chick-fil-A coupons will be given to donors

Saturday, Sept. 13 - 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Shoal Creek Baptist Church, 2707 Shoal Creek Church Road, Shelby; free Cleveland Mall Chick-fil-A coupons will be given to donors

Thursday, Sept. 18 - 3-7:30 p.m. at Central UMC, 200 E. Marion Street, Shelby

Friday, Sept. 26 - 12-4:30 p.m. at Wal-Mart, 705 E. Dixon Boulevard, Shelby

Saturday, Sept. 27 - 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Buffalo Baptist Church, 1223 Yarn Mill Road, Shelby; free Cleveland Mall Chick-fil-A coupons will be given to donors

Saturday, Sept. 27 - 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Calvary Baptist

Church, 320 Old Boiling Springs Road, Shelby; held in honor of Garland Ridings; free Cleveland Mall Chick-fil-A coupons will be given to donors.

If you see this  
University of Tennessee  
fan on September 11<sup>th</sup>  
wish him a  
Happy Birthday!

Go Vols!

## DEADLINES



### ADVERTISING

Display Ads - 12 p.m. - Friday  
Classified - 1 p.m. Monday

### NEWS ITEMS & SOCIAL NOTES

12 p.m. Monday

### LETTERS to the EDITOR

12 p.m. Monday

### OBITUARIES

5 p.m. Tuesday

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### Hours:

Monday through Friday

8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### POLICIES

- Submission of news items and social notes are recommended to be done a week in advance. Submission of items is not a guarantee that they will run in the newspaper.

- Letters to the editor must be signed and include address and phone number. Thank you letters are required to be placed as paid personal notes.

- Weddings & Engagements will be published with one photo for \$25 each.