



AUXILIARY POLICE *IN THE NEWS*

The official newsletter of
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Articles

- What were you doing on 9/11?
p. 1
- Ground Zero, New York
p. 1
- History of the Flags of the 48 Memorial
p. 4
- The Suffolk County SPCA at Ground Zero
pp. 4-5
- The 9/11 Volunteers Who Didn't Quit
p. 6

What were you doing on 9/11?

This issue of *Auxiliary Police in the News* is entirely devoted to the events of September 11, 2001. It consists of contributions from members of various auxiliary units in New York City and throughout the State of New York.

Auxiliary police officers are teachers, lawyers, taxi drivers, students, and everything in between. In New York City, they have served as unsalaried volunteers since at least

1915. At that time, the city maintained a unique **Junior Police Program** that routinely patrolled tenement districts looking out for the safety of families and especially, other young people.

Today, auxiliary police forces throughout the state work alongside law enforcement, playing a supporting role as their counterparts make arrests and diffuse criminal activity. They are identified by their uniforms and

insignia. Requirements for membership vary throughout New York State and interested persons should contact police agencies where they live or work for details regarding selection and training.

In New York State, all peace officers (including auxiliary police) appointed on or after June 2, 2011 must complete a minimum of 99 hours of training. In this regard, it should be noted that unlike volunteer firefighters and ambulance corps members, auxiliaries receive very limited benefits.

Ground Zero, New York



Ground Zero is the term used to describe the site once occupied by the original World Trade Center in New York City. Tragically the Center's Twin Towers, each 110 floors, collapsed on September 11, 2011.

On that day, two full passenger planes bound for Los Angeles from Boston were directed at the towers and culminated in the largest suicide attack ever carried out. The Pentagon in Arlington, VA was also attacked and a fourth plane crashed in western Pennsylvania after passengers tried to stop the hijackers from reaching a target in Washington, DC. Nearly 3000 people died the day of the attacks. People who were in the towers became casualties, including members of the

rescue teams attempting to save them. The two large towers came crashing down on themselves and buried a portion of lower Manhattan in dust and debris. A tree lined memorial including two reflecting pools in the footprints of the towers with the names of the victims can now be visited.

NYPD A/DI Kevin H. McGovern Remembers

"On 09-11-01, my paid job was a young School Safety Agent II with the NYPD just walking in for roll call at Queens North Command. When the towers got hit, we were mobilized immediately. I remember it as if it was yesterday. We were held over for the remainder of the day and night. I felt like an idiot because most, if not all of my Auxiliary Unit members were already at **Ground Zero**, or on their way there while I was stuck at the School Safety Command doing not much of anything helpful. When School Safety released us at midnight...I told my CO that I was not coming in tomorrow (Wed.) because I'll be working the night with the Auxiliaries. Well, I went directly into the Precinct that night (the 108) and worked that night right into the following day.

I was an Aux. Captain at that point and we were assigned to the BQE that night. Only Emergency workers and Emergency personnel were allowed on the BQE that night and the following day. I remember it was about a week later, I think, that I worked the candlelight vigil for the Rescue 3 Firefighters who were lost. I wound up going to I don't know how many funerals over the next 6-8 months for persons lost."

In July 2011, \$4.3 billion in compensation and health care benefits took effect to cover first responders and others who worked or attended school near Ground Zero, and suffer from illnesses related to exposure of toxic chemicals. However, cancer-stricken responders and residents were informed that they were not eligible to receive benefits. For more information contact your Congressional representative.

Croton's Auxiliary Capt. Lynn Sorenson Recalls

Aux. Capt. Lynn Sorenson notes that the Auxiliary Police are proud to be an addition to the **Croton-on-Hudson Police Department** and to have earned the respect of the law enforcement community and the residents.

The Department welcomes new members from the Village of Croton, School or Fire Districts who are willing to commit themselves to this organization. Equipment

and training are provided by the Department. Please call 914-271-5177 for additional information and to obtain an application.

On September 11, 2001, Sorenson recalls doing her regular job as parking enforcement/crossing guard. "My Aux Sgt was the only one that came in and road with the police. I on the other hand being on enforcement duty, I was told to take the high school post at the noon lunch and was told to observe the high school students for any adverse reaction, they were

the only ones going out for lunch that day. I was told to let headquarters know if I saw anyone that needed counseling. From there I crossed the elementary students at the end of the day. I was concerned for a friend that works in NY and lives near the elementary post. I later found out she was okay. The Auxiliary police were told to go home after 1600 hours, we were ready to stay longer but we were dismissed."

MIKE DiPALMA OF NYPD'S AUX/HWY1 REMEMBERS

"Within an hour, around six of us made it to HWY1. We had to show our ID Cards to get into the parking lot as the entire Command was on lock down. We suited up and managed to get a few RMP's and were told to keep the highways open no matter what. We did just that and made it to the gas station on the Hutch where civilians were in a state of panic. An off duty Cop tinned us and asked if we could get him and his wife and kids to Whitestone so he could drop the kids off and him and his wife could get to their commands. We

managed to do that by escorting them since the TBTA was shutting all bridges to anyone in civilian clothes. After it was all said and done he reached into his pocket and gave me his 45 collar brass..."You will remember the day I gave them to you..."

Later on we got a 10-2 FORTHWITH. We picked up a Doctor and were told to bring him to the scene. By that time we were able to get a few more RMP's, I drove down the Bruckner, the only car on the highway, across the Triboro to 125th St. I was amazed to find that 125th St. was shut to cross traffic with cops blocking each

intersection waving us on and not to stop. I drove straight across to the Henry Hudson Pkwy to complete our task. All traffic was stopped by Chambers St. We never made it all the way to the scene but spent the rest of the day ferrying all sorts of supplies downtown. For the next three weeks or so we worked almost every night going home in the wee hours. I have many memories, both sad and humorous but I will never forget the day."

NYPD's APO Ken Hubert has participated in the "Flags on the 48" mountain climbing hikes for the past ten years. His climbs have included Mount Marcy, NY's tallest mountain, a 16 mile round trip.

To learn why, see the article on page 4.

Eugene Souberman

A/D.I., Yonkers Auxiliary Police Recalls

"As the **Yonkers Auxiliary Police** executive officer, I was contacted, by telephone, by the Director of Yonkers O.E.M. at a few minutes after 1000 on 9/11/01. I was instructed to contact all members and to tell them to report at the 1st Precinct, in uniform, as soon as possible. With the exception of two heavy equipment operators and one EMT, who were retained at their regular

jobs, one APO, who was on medical leave, and one who was out of town, every other APO promptly reported for duty. It was decided to retain all **Auxiliary Police in Yonkers** as no one knew what else might happen.

The City of Yonkers set up three shelters: two for families, and one for unaccompanied children. In addition APOs were assigned to all of Yonkers railroad stations. Several

others were retained as a reserve and for reliefs as necessary.

APOs were frequently consulted by members of the public for information on railroad operations, where to donate blood, and for general information on what had happened. By about 2000 hours all of the **Yonkers Auxiliary Police** were released from duty."



Flag flying on top of Mount Liberty
- Saturday, September 15, 2001

The "**Flags on the 48**" began as act of remembrance and a demonstration of patriotism in response to the horrific terrorist attacks that took place in the United States on September 11, 2001.

On September 15, 2001, three days after the attacks, six hikers met at the White House Trailhead packing a 96 square foot American flag, 30 feet of PVC tubing, 100 feet of rope and 2 rolls of duct tape. These hikers felt compelled to do something

The History of the Flags on the 48 Memorial Hike

Reprinted from <http://flagsonthe48.org/history.php>

to express their grief for the tremendous and devastating loss of lives. In a small demonstration of their helplessness and compassion in the wake of incomprehensible violence, these six hikers ascended with heavy hearts to raise the American flag from the summit of **Mount Liberty**. This was their personal tribute to the thousands of men, women and children who perished in the attacks. Their patriotic and sympathetic display received such remarkable amounts of positive feedback and support that a committee was formed to establish an annual memorial. The Flags on the 48 Memorial Hike was officially brought to life.

Each year, on or around September 11th, patriotic and

impassioned hikers embark on a collective journey to raise American flags on all 48 of the 4,000+ foot summits in New Hampshire. This memorial hike continues to be the remembrance of the thousands of lives taken violently and unexpectedly. Participants create a moving memorial that is a compassionate show of emotional support to other human beings who have suffered heartbreaking, unfathomable loss. Since sorrow is felt across state lines, racial lines and party lines, our tribute knows no boundaries. **The Flags on the 48 Memorial Hike** remains a small token of support for every person still trying to come to terms with the enormity of all that has been lost. We hike with the inextinguishable spirit of hope for the mending of our nation's heart. ♥

THE SUFFOLK COUNTY SPCA AT GROUND ZERO

Roy Gross, Chief of Department remembers: "The phone call came in the morning- NYPD frantically asking for our mobile animal hospital. Would we come to the city immediately? Please bring all available supplies and personnel. A disaster of untold proportions. Chaos and devastation everywhere.

We set up our MASH unit as close to the site as we could. We grabbed

medical supplies and climbed through the debris and falling ash to provide immediate first aid to the search and rescue dogs and their handlers.

Our SPCA volunteers, as well as the veterinarians who arrived, responded without hesitation. They faced unspeakable horror and showed incredible courage, sacrifice and patriotism. All kinds of dogs responded to Ground Zero-all shapes,

sizes & breeds and with various job descriptions including search & rescue, cadaver, bomb dogs and even comfort therapy dogs.

Some of the ailments suffered by the dogs were severe dehydration-they had to be rehydrated intravenously. We provided booties for their paws that were cut up by the sharp debris or burned from the smoldering ruins.

Their eyes had to be irrigated with saline solution because of pollutants in the air. Their ears had to be cleaned-their bodies washed and decontaminated-cuts had to be sutured, scrapes and abrasions attended to. Yet they endured and kept on working like the true soldiers that they are.

(-- Cont'd. on p. 5)

THE SUFFOLK COUNTY SPCA AT GROUND ZERO

(-- Cont'd. from p. 4)

During the grueling 8 weeks that the **Suffolk County SPCA** was at **Ground Zero** we provided almost 1,000 treatments to the more than 300 courageous K-9's that came from all over the country. We even provided first aid to their handlers. We also helped civilians retrieve their pets from the evacuated apartments. Our peace officers escorted them from Pier 40 to their homes, brought them to our MASH unit for medical evaluation and returned them back to the Pier.

The brave dogs and handlers that worked at **Ground Zero** faced immense danger during that

horrific time and one thing has been proven to all of us-that these courageous canines-in the best of times and in the worst of times are truly man's best friend!"



Lieutenant Daniel Donadio on the right, in charge of the New York Police Dept.'s Canine Unit (formed in 1980) with Chief Roy Gross

Lt. Donadio supervised and directed the deployment of

police canine resources at the WTC disaster site and throughout New York City. **Lt. Donadio** was in overall charge of the canine unit and had been working the disaster site for over nine months beginning with hour one.

Contributions by veterinarians and others related to canines can be found at:

<http://www.suffolkspca.org/9-11.html>

Suffolk Commish Recognizes Efforts of Auxiliary Police Volunteers

Suffolk County Police Commissioner Richard Dormer recently honored members of the Suffolk County Auxiliary Police for their volunteer efforts throughout the year. Sixteen members of the civil defense force were recognized for improving the communities in which we live.

Suffolk County Auxiliary Police are equipped and trained to assist the Suffolk County Police Department, serving as additional eyes and ears, in an effort to improve police response to the needs of

Suffolk County residents and to assist the police during times of natural or man-made disaster. Most recently, the approximately 125 dedicated men and women who make up the auxiliary force played an important role during Hurricane Irene by assisting with traffic control.

"The members of the **Suffolk County Police Auxiliary** go above and beyond to assist their community," said Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy. "We are grateful for their outstanding efforts and their willingness to give back to the

residents of Suffolk County."

"Auxiliary police officers are an integral part of the Suffolk County Police Department," Suffolk County Police Commissioner Richard Dormer said. "Their assistance with traffic and crowd control as well as other non-essential police duties helps free up police officers to attend to other needs of the community."

For a list of honorees go to:
<http://www.lipolitics.com/suffolk-auxiliary-police.htm>



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The 9/11 Volunteers Who Didn't Quit

(This story is part of the "The Impact of 9/12," series, which focuses on those who were inspired to give back after the tragedies of September 11, 2001. It is reprinted from the *Huffington Post* article posted on 9/14/11.)

It was a late October night in 2001 when **Michael Bassano**, New York volunteer police officer and EMT, was working with his 9/11 recovery team to clear away rubble at the site of the Twin Towers. Some did the actual digging and handled the rescue saws, others worked to outfit the team in safety gear. Another crew handled the light towers. Together, the team made an important discovery: a hip bone. Next, they unearthed a badge. And then, a gun.

"It was a brother," **Bassano** told the *Huffington Post* of the fallen policeman the team found together. **Bassano's auxiliary police team** quickly sprung into action to help the Emergency Rescue Unit find the rest of his remains. The crew of volunteer police of the 7th Precinct on the Lower East Side of Manhattan worked tirelessly for nine months following 9/11. **Morris Fajtelewicz, vice president of the Auxiliary Police Supervisors Benevolent Association of the City of New York, Inc.** acted as coordinator of the citywide crew that came regularly each week, comprising about 15 people. **Fajtelewicz**, a Port Authority employee, would spend about 36 hours outside of his day job helping to chip away at the 9/11 wreckage each week.

At the site, the auxiliary police helped put together and maintain equipment such as air tanks, heat sensors, special cameras used to look between crevices, masks and gloves. When the emergency team would attend funerals -- which was often, according to Bassano -- the volunteer team was left in charge. Besides the heavy lifting, the team would also tour victims' families around the site and answer and field questions, working with groups ranging from search dog handlers to the FBI to customs agents. For these volunteer police, whose duties mostly mirror that of paid police outside of using a weapon, assisting the Emergency

Service Unit in the 9/11 recovery effort was one of the group's proudest moments, Bassano said.

"We would go around getting shovels and picks and lighting and anything we could. In our own small way, we were in the background, quietly and gently helping out."

Fajtelewicz and some of his crew members responded right away after the planes hit and the smoke cleared on 9/11. They worked tirelessly, clearing wreckage for hours on end. But after a couple days, the volunteers were told to leave. "The authorities told us, 'You're just the same as regular auxiliary police. You can't be there,'" **Fajtelewicz** said, explaining there were safety issues and perhaps the NYPD feared union complaints. But the volunteer crew stood their ground, determined to stay and help. "We decided we had to fight," **Fajtelewicz** said.

A volunteer policeman since 1974, **Fajtelewicz** made his case to officials that his crew was one of the only auxiliary teams on site who had worked with the Emergency Service Unit before. The volunteers' typical role was to provide backup for the unit, arriving on accident scenes to administer first aid, CPR and other rescue assistance. Officials were ultimately convinced. The Emergency Service Unit even wrote Fajtelewicz's group a letter, officially requesting for their help at the site.

Fajtelewicz said he felt it was a great victory for his fellow volunteer police that they were able to do their part. "Even though it was a sad time, we were there when the city needed us and when the police department needed us," he said. "Plus, we had lost friends, family workers, coworkers. We were able to do something for them all."