



FINCH PARK. RAMSEY

"You can't take the kids to Finch Park without recalling the day, because Ramsey's 9/11 memorial is right there. I get chills every time I'm there with the family — you see the memorial and you remember the day, and remember the people who died and think about their families. That's what 'never forget' means to me, that we'll always remember all those who were lost. Everything that happened that day is still vivid in our minds."

-Jason Brockport, 46, Ramsey

WESTWOOD TRAIN STATION. WESTWOOD

"It's hard not to think of 9/11 daily, not only because I work near Ground Zero, but because I see my town's memorial park right next to the train station. It's a haunting sight but a beautiful tribute to those who died in the Twin Towers. Seeing it up close, walking the path that's shaped like a memorial ribbon and reading the names of the victims can leave you choked up. Whenever I'm there, whether it's on September 11th or any other day, I like to say a guick prayer, look up to the heavens and let them know they're not forgotten."

-Jeannie Marie Coady, 42, Westwood

9/11 MEMORIAL, ORADELL

"As a mother to both Boy and Girl scouts. I have been to many services at the Oradell 9/11 memorial, which allow the community to mourn the lives that were lost. The Oradell memorial in front of the local firehouse is a perfect backdrop for the events. On the anniversary each year, I reach out to those who were my coworkers at the time. My office was on Spring Street and my husband, who was then my boyfriend, worked for Deutsche Bank. His building was destroyed, and afterward he ended up walking to my building. We discuss the day and are thankful that we were able to get out unscathed, and we remember all the lives that were lost."

—Heather Corrigan, 46, Oradell



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{ REMEMBERING }



CRESTWOOD PARK, ALLENDALE

"I often go on walks at Crestwood Lake, where there is a beam from one of the towers, bringing me back to a solemn drive I took 20 years ago. I was in Washington, D.C., for a work conference the day of the attacks. D.C. was completely shut down, and I had to drive back home to New Jersey the next day. No one was on the roads, which was eerie. Getting on the Turnpike and seeing smoke where the towers once stood is something I will never forget."

—Kevin Kennedy, 57, Allendale

"I've gone to Allendale's 9/11 memorial in Crestwood Park, and it's usually quiet and solemn. When I visit, I'm always reflective and prayerful, and in fact, I have prayed there. On September 11, 2001, I was sitting at my desk on the 80th floor of the North Tower when the impact hit. Though there was no emergency announcement and we did not know what had happened, we decided to get out of there. It was crowded as we walked down because people from the floors below us had already entered the stairwell. Most of the people were fairly calm; I attribute this to our ignorance of the true circumstances.

Sometimes people ask me if I think about my 9/11 experience much. I think about it mainly when the anniversary approaches, and when I do, I can't help but feel grateful. God gave me all these years of life since then. In those years, I watched my daughters grow up."

-Rick Albrecht, 61, Allendale

REMEMBRANCE PARK, CLOSTER

"The 9/11 Memorial at Remembrance Park in Closter is where a fellow rescue team member — Don Albelli — and I each year remember together the lives of two friends we lost. Don is on the Closter Volunteer Ambulance and Rescue squad. We grab coffee and look at the lights down by the ferry. In 2001 I was teaching at East Brook Middle School in Paramus and also working as a volunteer EMT in Closter. Each year, because I am a first responder, I work with my students to focus on the heroes. I start the lesson with a Mister Rogers quote, and we talk about how the students and school community came together."

-Lisa Oliveri Vreeland, 50, Closter





BAY PARK, HAVERSTRAW, N.Y.

"After 9/11, my parents became directly involved in the annual memorial held at Haverstraw Bay Park at the Rockland County Sept. 11 Memorial by the Hudson River, because my brother David was a Rockland County resident. He was 40 and working at Keefe, Bruyette & Woods in World Trade Center II as an equity analyst when he died in the attacks. I eventually got involved and now participate each year in the ceremony, which involves reading the names of the 81 Rockland natives who died during the WTC attacks (and one victim of the 1993 bombing). It is important to honor our loved ones who perished on that day."

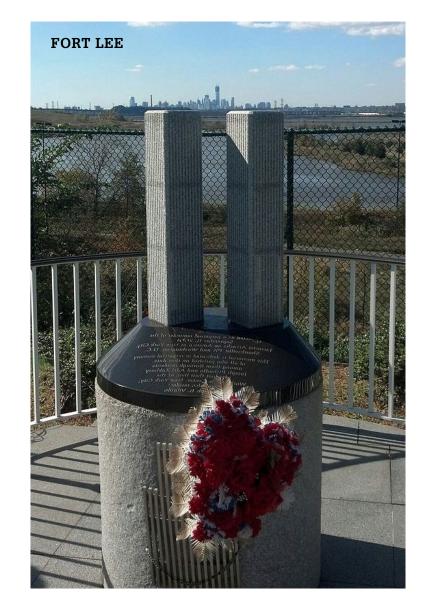
-Gary Graifman, Ridgewood

"I was a Bergen County Sheriff's Department detective at the time of the attacks and worked on the recovery efforts in New York. We checked in at a high school by the West Side Highway and walked down to the site. I remember the whole thing. I can still smell it. Pictures, like the ones you'd find on a fridge of kids and family members, were floating everywhere. People were walking around like zombies because they didn't know what to do. It's hard to forget being there. I dug through the rubble, and there are some things I just don't wish to relive."

-John Derin, 59, Edgewater

"My father, Lieutenant Robert D. Cirri of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Police Department, was killed on 9/11/01. Every 9/11, we visit his grave site and go to our town's memorial service. We end the day by going to dinner at the same restaurant every year — Tapas de Espana in North Bergen — with some of my dad's friends, and we sit and tell stories about the amazing person he was. We always want to keep his memory alive because he was truly one of a kind."

—Jessica Cirri-Perez, 33, West New York



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