

Did You Know
September 11, 2025

I was humbled to be asked to give opening remarks at the Southport Fire & Police 9/11 memorial event. The SFD staff does an excellent job of setting up a most impressive memorial display as a sign of tribute to those first responders who gave their lives to help others.

With Chief Drew's approval, I had the honor of introducing two distinguished members of our community who were at the Pentagon on that tragic day—and who remained there for the three weeks that followed.

Retired Arlington County Police Lieutenant Bruce Hackert, who led the Motor Squad and the Traffic Enforcement Unit, played a critical yet often overlooked role. While many might assume his most important duties involved Presidential and dignitary escorts, it was in fact the daily escorts of human remains on their first leg of the journey to the Dover Air Force DoD Mortuary that marked the most solemn and impactful moments. Each escort was a sacred duty—one that brought all responders to a respectful halt, paying silent tribute to the fallen.

Retired Homicide Detective Noel Hanrahan spent weeks in the debris field, painstakingly searching for evidence and remains. During his work, Noel recovered evidence belonging to one of the terrorists responsible for the attack.

It was only after I had spoken that I realized Retired Arlington County Assistant Chief Joe Reshetar, also now a respected member of our community, was also in attendance. Chief Reshetar played a vital leadership role during the response at the Pentagon, and his presence at this event was an unexpected but a meaningful reminder of the many unsung heroes who served with unwavering dedication during that time. For the firefighters on scene, the first three days were marked by relentless danger. Parts of the Pentagon continued to burn intensely, fueled by the building's construction materials. Massive fireballs erupted from the roof, shooting high into the air, as firefighters battled the flames under extreme and unpredictable conditions. Their efforts were further complicated by the eventual collapse of one section of the building—adding even more risk to an already harrowing mission.

It's been 24 years since that tragic day and as one watched the retired NYFD personal and others come across the pictures of their lost comrades, it still brings about tears.

There is now a whole generation that were not alive when these terrorist events happened, and we must ensure they are told the truth and pass this story from generation to generation.

Rich,

Retired, Arlington County Police Department Captain

