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## **Patriot Day ceremony to remember 9/11 victims and honor local first responders**

A wreath-laying and bell-ringing to signify key events of 9/11 will be solemn highlights of the Patriot Day Memorial on the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of what many consider the darkest day in modern American history.

The City of Enterprise will join forces with local Veterans Service Organizations Sunday to commemorate the anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks that killed 2,983 people and injured more than 10,000 civilians.

Mayor William E. Cooper, City Councilman Scotty Johnson and VSO volunteer Micheal Sutterfield said the ceremony will also honor first responders whose value, dedication and bravery became more apparent than ever on that fateful day when many ran into danger rather than away from it.

“On Sept. 11, Patriot Day gives all of us time to reflect on the devastating terror attacks that shocked the nation,” Sutterfield said. “The ceremony will be a public opportunity to commemorate those we lost and give thanks to the brave first responders who put their lives on the line.”

The Patriot Day Memorial will begin at the Wall of Freedom at Johnny Henderson Park at 7:20 a.m., with retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Bob Schmidbauer as the guest speaker. Schmidbauer, commander of VFW Post 6683 in Enterprise, performed duties at “Ground Zero” in New York City while on active duty.

The Memorial will be the second sponsored by the VSO’s with assistance from the City of Enterprise. Last year’s Memorial was conducted at VFW Post 6683 in conjunction with the post’s grand reopening.

This year, the organizing groups chose to move the observance to the Wall of Freedom, a granite monument engraved with the names of war dead from Coffee County from World War I to the present. Sutterfield said it is fitting that the ceremony be conducted at that location. He is hopeful the Memorial will be an annual tradition for many years to come.

Everyone attending will be asked to observe a moment of silence as a fire truck bell is rung five times at 7:46 a.m. (8:46 EST), the moment by most historic accounts, when American Airlines Flight 11, a Boeing 767 commandeered by Islamic extremists, hit the north tower of the World Trade Center’s twin towers.

Because the fiery crash was only the first of many horrors of 9/11, Mayor Cooper, Johnson and Sutterfield ask that everyone as they go about their day also observe a moment of silence at the following times in addition to 7:46 a.m.:

- 8:03 a.m., when a second hijacked Boeing 767, United Airlines Flight 175, hit the south tower of the World Trade Center.
- 8:37, when the Boeing 757 designated as American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon.

- 9:03, when United Airlines Flight 93 carrying the heroic passengers who tried to subdue their hijackers, crashed in a field in Pennsylvania.
- 9:59 and 10:28 a.m., when the south and north World Trade Center towers collapsed, respectively.

Sutterfield reminded that on Patriot Day, U.S. flags are lowered halfway, and a country-wide moment of silence takes place at 8:46 a.m. EST. Although the attacks were in the U.S., Patriot Day is recognized worldwide as the news devastated and impacted people on every corner of the globe.