

Ceremony honors veterans and first responders

Event held in conjunction with display of Global War on Terror Wall of Remembrance

BY JOSH JONES

SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MT. VERNON — The Global War on Terror Wall of Remembrance was on display at Mt. Vernon Outland Airport through Monday, honoring both the victims of the 9/11 attacks and fallen soldiers.

A ceremony focusing on remembrance and patriotism was held Sunday afternoon, allowing several speakers to discuss the sacrifices made for our freedom.

"This wall is here for one reason: to honor those that paid the ultimate sacrifice for us," stated HOOAH coordinator Tom Gaither, whose volunteers helped make the

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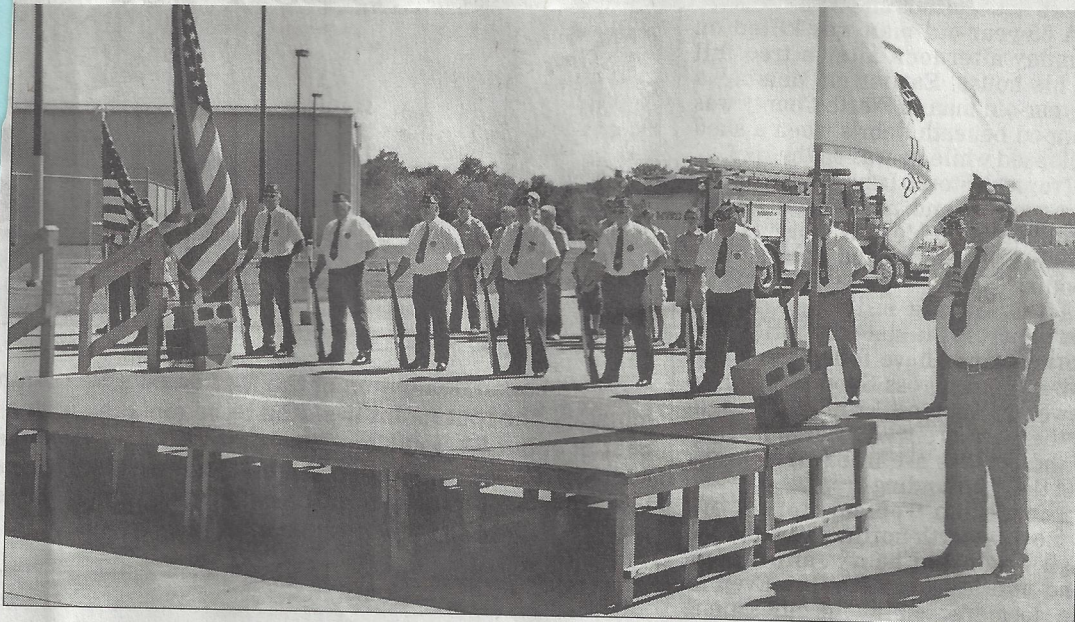
Sentinel Photo/JOSH JONES

PRESENTATION OF ROSES — Boy Scout Troop 102 and the 103 Young Marines presented roses to Gold Star families during Sunday's presentation that honored both fallen veterans and first responders at Mt. Vernon Outland Airport.



Sentinel Photo/JOSH JONES

MEMORIAL — Several came out on Sunday to view the Global War on Terror Wall of Remembrance. The memorial is 120 feet long by six feet high and carries the names of more than 10,570 fallen heroes and victims, from Beirut to the current day, who were killed in combat or in an act of terrorism.



Sentinel Photo/JOSH JONES

HONOR GUARD — The American Legion Honor Guard provided the opening ceremony on Sunday. The event was held in conjunction with the display of the Global War on Terror Wall of Remembrance.



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FIRST AND ONLY — The first and only government official bagpiper for Pearl Harbor, Major Steve Pace, closed out Sunday's ceremony by performing the bagpipes.

Ceremony:

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event possible. "Soldiers and first responders alike on this wall who didn't run away from trouble, but straight into it for you and me. We must never ever forget that."

Marine Derek Hendershott, who brought the memorial to Mt. Vernon, gave a presentation on the history of the memorial, noting that the memorial was only meant to go up once, for the 10-year anniversary of 9/11.

"We realized that we needed to get this across the nation," Hendershott said. "And the goal of this wall was to get it within 50 miles of all the Gold Star Families, because they are near and dear to our heart."

Continuing, Hendershott discussed the significance of the wall and of helping veterans.

"There are roughly 11,000 names here, and we have lost way too many more here at home, and because of organizations like HOOAH we can combat the veteran suicide that is going on," Hendershott said. "It is an epidemic, it is something that we are facing. So when you see a vet ... you are not going to totally understand the issues that they have gone through, but you can let them know that they are not alone and they are loved."

He continued.

"If a veteran wants to open up to you, he is going to probably do that," Hendershott said.

According to information provided, the memorial is 120 feet long by six feet

high and carries the names of more than 10,570 fallen heroes and victims, from Beirut to the current day, who were killed in combat or in an act of terrorism.

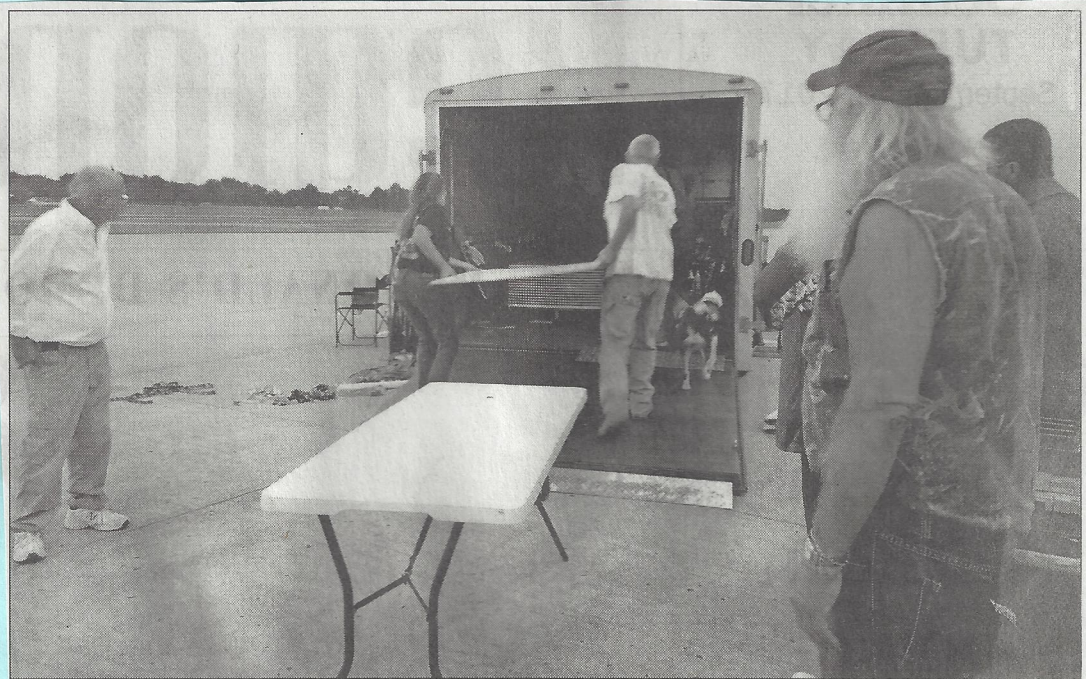
Mayor John Lewis was the last speaker for the ceremony, and he discussed growing up in a military family and his gratitude to everyone who took the time to come to the ceremony.

"Events like this are some of the most important things we can do for those who paid the ultimate price,"

Lewis said. "The men and women we honor today were real people, sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, wives and husbands. They were strong, vibrant people; they loved and were loved and they are missed."

The ceremony closed with the presentation of roses to Gold Star Families and the first and only government official bagpiper for Pearl Harbor, Major Steve Pace, playing the bagpipes.

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Submitted Photo

PACKING UP — Kyle Price's parents, Cheryl and John Hunsell, put away the final panel of the Global War on Terror Wall of Remembrance on Monday at Mt. Vernon Outland Airport.

9-12-17