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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Hunterdon County Sheriff Fred W. Brown Hosts Annual September 11th Remembrance Ceremony

Guest Speaker Mark Desire Regales Crowd With Personal 9/11 Experience

On Sunday, September 11th, Hunterdon County Sheriff Fred W. Brown hosted the County's annual 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony, which included local dignitaries, First Responders and special guest speaker, Mark Desire, a Forensic Biologist for the New York City Office of Medical Examiner and Manager of the World Trade Center (WTC) Identification Team.

The ceremony began at 8:30 AM with a procession from Court Street of all First Responders in attendance, led by Sheriff Brown, onto the Historic Courthouse portico, while Jim Curry, Readington Township's Public Safety Director, played the bagpipes.

Master of Ceremonies Dan Torrone greeted the crowd and introduced Hunterdon County Surrogate Susan J. Hoffman, who presented the Pledge of Allegiance, Reverend Dave Errickson who offered the invocation, and the Hunterdon Harmonizers who sang 'God Bless The USA,' the National Anthem and 'You'll Never Walk Alone.'

Sheriff Brown thanked everyone in attendance and said, "I believe we have an obligation to honor the lives that were lost each and every year, ensuring they are not forgotten. And each year as we reflect on the attacks of September 11th, I always want to make a clear statement: It was a terrorist attack that murdered thousands, by enemies of our nation, of our values, our freedoms, and our way of life."

Sheriff Brown also recognized the dignitaries, elected officials and all members of the First Responder community in attendance at the ceremony, including the National Guard from the Flemington and Morristown Armories who presented the Colors, and Chaplain Larry Coyne, a member of the Clinton Fire Department and Hunterdon County Fire Chiefs Association, who said the benediction.

The program continued with guest speaker Mark Desire who commented about his personal experiences at the WTC on September 11th, 2001.

Mr. Desire was dispatched to the WTC with two other Medical Examiner colleagues to begin the gruesome task of assessing those who had died, after the first tower had been hit. This was before the second plane, flight 175, crashed into the south tower.

Mr. Desire described his harrowing escape from the building, referencing the tattered and torn agency windbreaker he was wearing on September 11th, which was on display next to the podium during the ceremony, and that in spite of his injuries, he was back at work the very next day.

As the only remaining member of the original WTC DNA Identification Team, Mr. Desire has been identifying loved ones for twenty-years to bring closure to every family who lost someone on that terrible day.

Following Mr. Desire's remarks, the Historic Courthouse bell rang sixteen times to honor the sixteen Hunterdon County residents who perished on September 11th, 2001, and Mark Winey, a bugler with *NJ Taps*, played TAPS.

Sheriff Brown referenced the banners on the Historic Courthouse columns which display the names of the sixteen Hunterdon County souls lost that day and said, "We thank Mark and his group for their commitment and the dedicated work they continue to do, twenty-one years later, to help bring solace and closure to the families of the victims. To ensure while we don't forget, no one is forgotten."