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## National Remembrance Flag

by Patricia Sutton

**WOLCOTT** - With the first anniversary of the horrific events of September 11 approaching, area residents may be looking for a way to remember the events and the thousands who lost their lives.

While they were fortunate that they hadn't lost anyone in the attacks, one area couple felt the need to do something. They wanted to do something more than just donate money to the various causes and organizations helping victims and victims' families deal with the aftermath of losing a loved one.

Joanne and Stephen Galvin, of Ridge Road, Wolcott, decided to design a flag to represent that day as a way of remembrance. Once the design was completed, they researched more than 1700 other flag designs, to insure they did not infringe any copyrights on other flag designs.

The flag is white, blue, black and red. The blue section on each side of the flag represents the color of the state flags for each state where a plane was downed, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia. The center black section represents the sorrow felt for the innocent lives lost in the tragedy; those on the planes, those working in the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, those working in the Pentagon, and those rescue workers who gave their lives in the rescue effort. The stars represent the four planes that crashed and the innocent lives lost on those planes and in the buildings. The blue star represents the Pentagon and American Airlines Flight 77, the innocent lives lost and those that survived. The two white stars represent each of the towers of the World Trade Center, American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175 and the innocent lives lost and those that survived. The red star represents United Flight 93 that crashed in Shanksville, PA, the innocent lives lost and those who sacrificed their lives to protect the loss of others. The four stars touch, as well as the white stars touching the blue sections of the flag, representing our unity.



JoAnne and Steven Galvin display the National Remembrance Flag they designed.

Stephen Galvin designed the flag, based on the POW/MIA flag "that we may never forget."

"We need a flag for this, so many people compared the attacks to Pearl Harbor and many people couldn't remember when that happened. We need this to keep people from forgetting," said Steve.

The original 3' x 5' flag was sewn by Bobby Chillson, of Waterloo. After numerous attempts at securing a manufacturer, the Galvins were assisted by Patrice Corletta, of the Veteran's Outreach Center, in Rochester.

"It was very important to us that the flags are manufactured in the United States," said Steve.

It took nearly 11 months for the Galvins to move from conception of the idea for the flag to the delivery of the first manufactured flags.

The first flags were delivered in mid-August.

"Seeing the flag, after working on it yourself was overwhelming," said Joanne.

The Galvins have been contacted by a number of victims' family members who have expressed their appreciation for the effort the Galvins have put forth to remember the events of September 11 and the thousands lost.

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"You wouldn't believe the number of email messages and stories we've heard from victims' family members. The stories are phenomenal," said Steve.

The Galvin's son, has helped them immensely. He recently took one of the flags to New York City where he dedicated it to one of the stations of the New York Fire Department. He also left brochures and stickers and placed a flag at a memorial site at Ground Zero.

The Galvins would like to thank everyone who has helped out with the manufacturing of the flag, Patrice at Stars & Stripes, those who've purchased a flag, those who stopped to say "good job", the Wolcott Fire Department and Dic Lasher, who allowed the Galvins to participate in the parades, Assemblyman Robert Oaks and Congressman Tom Reynolds for their support, and the Galvin's son, Dan, for all he's done to assist them and promote the flag.

The National Remembrance Flag, which sells for \$40, is currently available by contacting the Galvin's at (315) 594-9274, e-mailing them at [jmgalvin@zlink.net](mailto:jmgalvin@zlink.net), or visiting their website at [www.911remembranceflag.com](http://www.911remembranceflag.com) (currently under construction). The flags are also available at Stars and Stripes, 455 South Avenue, Rochester; 585-546-3524.

The 9/11 National Remembrance flag, 4" by 7" stickers, as well as 4" x 6" hand held flags are also available at the Galvins or Stars and Stripes. The stickers are \$2.50 and the hand held flags are \$5.

Proceeds from sales will be given to various relief efforts of the September 11 tragedy. Anyone wishing, may also purchase a flag and donate it to a family who lost a loved one on 9/11.

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