

9/11: A call to remember

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Geneva's ceremony was in front of Long Pier yesterday morning.

"I don't think anyone alive will ever forget that day," said 6th Ward City Councilor John Greco, ranking it with the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy as the worst events in U.S. history. However, he said, it made our country stronger.

Greco was one of several speakers, including state Sen. Michael Nozzolio, R-54 of Fayette, Assemblyman Brian Kolb, R-129 of Canandaigua, and retired brigadier colonel and city police Lt. John Cataline.

Jack Hart, the Legion's Americanization officer and a former U.S. Marine, was the keynote speaker. He asked people not to forget what happened that day two years ago and to "continue to fan the flags of patriotism" by flying the American flag, supporting U.S. troops and rallying to keep the VA Hospital in Canandaigua open.

Hart also distributed blue star banners to family members whose loved ones serve in the military.

Nozzolio spoke about friends and colleagues who lost their lives — or their loved ones — and called the attacks "the most horrific crime ever to take place on American soil."

Nozzolio also introduced Stephen and Joanne Galvin, of Wolcott, who presented city officials with a flag they designed to commemorate 9/11. Featuring four stars symbolizing the locations of the terrorist attacks, it currently flies in 16 states and two countries. Proceeds from the sale of the flags go toward 9/11 relief efforts; so far, the couple has raised \$3,500.

Kolb told people to remember how precious life is and to remember what matters most — family, friends and community.

"What's important is the people on this Earth," Kolb said.

The one-hour ceremony also featured color guards from the city's fire and police departments and the Dough Boys, from the American Legion Winnek Post. Patrisha Blue sang the national anthem and the Rev. Jim Fennessy of St. Stephen's Roman Catholic Church gave the invocation and benediction.

City Fire Chief Ralph DeBolt and police Lt. William Hastings placed a wreath in front of the flag post at the lakefront; Hart performed "Taps" on his trumpet; the Dough Boys fired the salute; and Councilor-at-Large Paul Schroeder, a Vietnam veteran, read the names of the 11 wars the United States has been involved in, as Greco tolled a bell for each.