

**A Celebration of Heroes**  
**In Tribute to the Sacrifices Made on September 11, 2001**  
**60 Centre Street - September 11, 2006**

**First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau:** Good afternoon.

**First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau:** It is my great honor and privilege to be able to welcome you all today to the court system's commemoration of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, to a ceremony that has become so important and meaningful to all of us. On behalf of Chief Judge Kaye, who could not be with us today because of the Court of Appeals schedule, and the entire judiciary, I want to thank you for taking time out of your very busy schedules to join us. It's been five years since the tragedy of 9/11, a phrase that has sadly become part of our lexicon, and we thought it particularly appropriate to mark this occasion with the celebration of the judiciary's heroes, our own officers who have demonstrated remarkable heroism on behalf of our judges, court staff and the public. We are so very honored to have them join us today. I particularly want to recognize and thank the families of the officers we lost on 9/11: Harry Thompson, Mitchel Wallace and Tommy Jurgens. We're enormously grateful that you continue to share this day with us. Thank you.

Marking the importance of this event we are joined by many members of the bench, and again we thank you for being here on this most important of days. I particularly

want to thank Judge Jonathan Lippman, the Chief Administrative Judge of the Unified Court System, for his presence today and his remarks. I also want to express our gratitude to Major Reggie Mebane, who is retired but who is here with us to introduce the officers, who like Major Mebane, responded on September 11.

September 11— it is not and never will be for us a day like any other day. It will always be a day to remember and to celebrate the lives of our beloved officers, Tommy, Mitch and Harry, and the enduring legacy of their heroism. This is also a day when we honor their families, sharing their grief and recognizing the unbearable losses that they have borne. This year I am particularly honored to pass on an announcement of the New York State Court Officers Lodge 35 of the Fraternal Order of Police and an official dedication that will take place on September 30 at 11:00 a.m. at Lafayette and Franklin streets, just nearby. The corners of Leonard, Franklin and White streets intersecting Lafayette will be named the “Captain Thompson, Officer Jurgens and Officer Wallace corners.” In honor of all New York State court officers, LaFayette Street, from White to Leonard Street, will become “Court Officer Way” It is especially fitting that this year, with our celebration of heroes, that this wonderful and important landmarks will take place.

Today’s program begins with the Pledge of Allegiance, which will be led by Deputy Chief Baccellieri. Please stand and join us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Deputy Chief of the Department of Public Safety Joseph Baccellieri:** I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**Hon. Ann Pfau:** Thank you. Please be seated. It is my very particular honor to introduce Judge Jonathan Lippman, who as you all know has been such an extraordinary and outstanding leader for all of us in the judiciary, particularly over the past five years since the terrible events of September 11. He will be our keynote speaker today. Judge Lippman.

**Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman:** Good afternoon. I'm so pleased to be here with all of you at this 2006 celebration of heroes, commemorating the events and sacrifices of September 11, 2001. At this time, on behalf of the New York State Judiciary, I would like to acknowledge and welcome the family members and friends of our dear departed heroes, Captain William Harry Thompson, Senior Court Officer Mitchel Wallace and Senior Court Officer Tommy Jurgens, as well as the many colleagues who served shoulder to shoulder with them over the years. Five years after the attacks, it seems like the process of healing is finally under way. But on this day, we have to admit that the wounds of 9/11 are also still very, very fresh.

They are still painfully visible in the eyes and faces of the family members and friends who had their loved ones taken away from them so viciously.

The story of 9/11 started out in darkness and tragedy with the senseless loss of so many innocent lives, but it was clear from the very beginning that this would never be the whole story. In fact, the brightest and most important chapter in the 9/11 story was written as an immediate counterpoint to those cowardly attacks, and it was written in a matter of minutes as thousands of uniformed heroes like Harry, Mitch and Tommy rushed headlong into one of the most dangerous situations anyone could ever imagine. Their spirit of self-sacrifice demonstrated in the most eloquent terms that whatever depth of darkness may lurk in the human soul there is still a brighter light of humanity and compassion that can never be extinguished.

The actions of these heroes, those who fell and those who survived, embody not just the hope but the assurance that good will always stand in opposition to evil, and that the light will always overcome the darkness. But make no mistake, this chapter however hopeful and eloquent and reassuring, was written with the blood and the sacrifices of hundreds upon hundreds of our public safety heroes, and I use that word advisedly, in the NYPD the NYFD and of course our very own beloved court officers, and we can never forget them for that. Nor should we forget, and I'm sure that Harry, Mitch and Tommy would never want us to. The fact that so many of their

brothers and sisters were right there alongside them on that day, acting out of the very same impulses, putting their lives on the line, rescuing victims, providing aid, and comfort to the stricken, and taking part in rescue and recovery efforts at ground zero in the hours and days following the attacks.

So today, as we honor the memories and deeds of Harry Thompson, Mitchel Wallace and Thomas Jurgens it is only right that we take a few moments to recognize and show our appreciation to the many extraordinary court officers who responded to the attacks on the World Trade Center. We also take a moment today to recognize the actions of those court officers who since 9/11 have kept the spirit of our fallen heroes alive through individual acts bravery and heroism. These recent recipients of the Unified Court System's Award for Heroism symbolize the courage, selflessness and devotion to duty that so characterized Harry, Mitch and Tommy. In fact, prior to 9/11, Mitch Wallace had himself received one of these awards for saving the life of a man who had collapsed from cardiac arrest on a Long Island Railroad train, which tells you all you need to know about Mitch.

Here we are, five years later, and it is hard to believe — I think everyone in this room was saying to each other it's five years since September 11, 2001— and the pain has barely subsided, but what sustains us and lifts our hearts today are the pride, the hope and the inspiration that we take from the memories and deeds of Captain

William Harry Thompson, SCO Mitchel Wallace and SCO Thomas Jurgens. They have written the real 9/11 story and it is one that gives us great strength and hope for the future. We were truly blessed to have had them among us. Thank you all for joining us here this afternoon.

**First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau:** Major Reggie Mebane, one of our own heroes, who responded to 9/11 with so many others has joined us today and will now introduce the officers, who with him went to the World Trade Center on the greatest rescue mission that this city has ever seen. Major Reggie Mebane.

**Major Reggie Mebane (Retired):** Thank you judge. Good afternoon. When I call the names, I would ask all of the officers to please come forward and stand on either side of the podium. Deputy Chief Joseph Baccellieri, Jr., SCO Tyree Bacon, Sergeant Frances Barry, Captain John Civelia, Sergeant Gerard Davis, Officer William Faulkner, Officer Gerard Grant, Officer Edwin Kennedy, Officer Elyane Kittel, Officer William Kuhrt, Officer Theodore Leoutsakos, Officer Craig Lovich, Sergeant Patricia Maiorino, Sergeant Al Moscola, Sergeant Kathryn Negron, Officer Joseph Ranauro, Sergeant Albert Romanelli, Sergeant Richard Rosenfeld, Officer Andrew Scagnelli, Officer Mahindra Seobarrat, Sergeant Andrew Wender, myself, retired Major Reggie Mebane.

Missing from this group is Captain William Harry Thompson, SCO Thomas Jurgens and SCO Mitchel Wallace; those three gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Five years and we are still healing. On September 11, 2001, we in New York experienced our own Pearl Harbor. And just like Pearl Harbor there were those who responded, putting aside all thoughts of self and putting on the mantle of caregiver. Each one of us heard an inner voice that echoes the words of SCO Tommy Jurgens before entering building 5 for the last time, “There are people hurt. They need help.” There were 25 of us that responded to that voice. Twenty-five caregivers drawing upon the training of the academy and life itself. There were three that without reservation made the ultimate sacrifice: Captain William Harry Thompson, SCO’s Thomas Jurgens and Mitchel Wallace. To their families I say they gave that others might live.

In closing, I would like to leave with this quote from the Bible: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You may be gone but not forgotten.”

**First Deputy Chief of the Department of Public Safety Jewel Williams:** Good afternoon. Continuing the tradition of heroism and sacrifice, I would like to acknowledge the officers who are past recipients of the of the Merit Performance Award.

In 2003, Captain Neil Schloth, SCO Jacqueline Mahon and SCO Randall Meirerdierks, all emergency medical technicians, administered medical aid to an attorney using an automated external defibrillator, saving the attorney's life.

In 2004, Senior Court Officer Albert Alfano, while on vacation in Mexico saved a young girl and her potential rescuer from drowning.

In 2005, Court Officers Gary Diesel and Gregory Gerner, braved smoke, intense heat and flames to rescue residents from an apartment building burning in Nassau County. These officers continued their rescue mission until all the tenants were evacuated from the dwelling.

In 2006, Senior Court Officer Frank Pastore, rescued a young woman who was being assaulted by a would-be carjacker attempting to steal her car.

At this time, I would like to welcome Battalion 1, Ladder 1, Engine 7 and ask them to stand. (Audience Applauds) Tommy's brother, Joe Jurgens, just received the Daily News Hero of the Month Award for rescuing four people from a burning building.

We would like to give Tom and Joe a big round of applause.

On behalf of the Unified Court System, Judge Pfau, Judge Lippman and Judge Kaye, we salute all our heroes. Thank you.

**First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau:** I would ask the officers to stay as we close our program, and we close this program as we do every year with

music. This year we would end as we began with the Pipes and Drums, our own members of the judiciary family. But before we close I want to again thank all of you for your attendance and particularly thank and recognize the members of the families of Captain Thompson, Officer Jurgens and Officer Wallace for once again being with us for the program and to honor the heroes who are here with us. Our gratitude to all of you is expressed today, but it continues every day and every year. I also want to thank the caretakers of this beautiful, historic courthouse, Administrative Judge Jacqueline Silbermann, County Clerk Norman Goodman and Chief Clerk John Werner. They made today possible.

The program, you should know, will be immediately followed by a reception in room 131 in this building. We hope you will be able to join us. And finally I want to thank and recognize the musicians playing the Pipes and Drums so beautifully and memorably today.

Our program is now over, and you should feel free to either quietly leave as the Pipes and Drums play, or remain and hear them until they have finished. Thank you for joining us and thank you for celebrating our heroes. Thank you.