

**TRIBUTE TO THE SACRIFICES MADE ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001
NEW YORK COUNTY SUPREME COURT, CIVIL TERM
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2013**

Administrative Judge for Civil Matters Sherry Klein-Heitler: Ladies and gentlemen, please rise for the New York State Courts' Ceremonial Unit and Pipe and Drum Band to open our program.

Male Voice: Would everybody please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance?

Everybody: I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

Administrative Judge for Civil Matters Sherry Klein-Heitler: Please be seated. Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to 60 Center Street. My name is Sherry Heitler and I have the honor of speaking with you this afternoon. Twelve years ago some of us witnessed the most atrocious act of terrorism that we ever had on our soil, and three of our family ran toward that blazing inferno and gave their lives to help people that they did not even know. We are here today to remember these three very brave gentlemen and to honor them for what they did, and it is especially difficult

for us to think that even though we will never forget these men that they are gone, gone from the lives of their family and our court family.

So thank you all for coming here today. It is so appropriate that this is in a house of law because we are a country of laws and I can promise you that our court family will never forget. At this time I have the honor of introducing the Honorable Fern Fisher, who will be your mistress of ceremonies. She is the Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for the New York City Courts.

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Fern Fisher: Good afternoon. God Bless America, our home sweet home. Today we observe September 11th, and today we remember how close we came to losing it all. Today we remember the thousands of lives that were lost at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania in the airplane crash, but particularly, as a court family we remember the loss of three of our own: Sergeant Mitchell Wallace, Captain Harry Thompson and Sergeant Thomas Jurgens. We promised, and I made a personal promise, that each year the Court System will make sure that we do not forget our three family members who were so brave that day.

And each year, this is our 11th court ceremony, the family of our heroes joins us, and so I'm very happy to start off the program by acknowledging the family members that are here today to share this moment with us, and I thank you because each year you manage to get here and each year you share with us this precious observation. Ken Wallace, father of Mitch Wallace; Rita Wallace, mother of Mitchell Wallace; Ruth Wallace, Michelle Miller and daughter Lindsey; Noreen McDunner, fiancée; and Maureen, Noreen's sister.

From the Jurgens family, Robert Blakeman, grandfather; Linda Proper, mother; and Linda's children, Joseph Jurgens, brother who is a hero in his own right, he's with the Fire Department; Jessica Jurgens, Bradley Jurgens, all siblings; John and Kylie Jurgens and Jim and Catherine Jurgens.

From the Thompson family, Rashon Thompson, and I understand that Michael was with us earlier and couldn't remain behind, so family members, thank you for being here and you know that I consider you part of my family.

Let me also acknowledge some of the court officials that are here. Unfortunately, Chief Administrative Judge Gail Prudenti had a schedule conflict and you will hear from our Chief Judge shortly. The Chief of

Operations, Eugene Meyers, is here. The Executive Director of Operations, Ron Younkins, and the First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence Marks, are sitting here in the front row; the Chief Clerk of New York County Supreme Civil Court, John Werner, and Administrative Judge Barry Kamins. Thank you for being here also.

This is all about remembering, remembering and honoring, and so our first business will be to ask Chief Joseph Baccellieri, who was there that night and who knew all three very well.

Chief Joseph Baccellieri: Thank you, Judge. Good afternoon. Welcome again to the family members of Captain William Harry Thompson and Sergeants Thomas Jurgens and Mitchell Wallace. Judge Fisher, Judge Marks, Judge Heitler, Judge Irizarry, Judge Kamins, honored guests, brother and sister officers, friends and colleagues. We have assembled once again on this solemn day to commemorate the loss of three wonderful men, Harry, Mitch and Tom, to reflect a tribute and honor them for they are true heroes.

It's hard to believe that 12 years have passed since that horrific and infamous day when the forces of evil, and I don't use that term lightly, evil, pure evil, without provocation or warning, committed the most heinous, mass attack against innocent civilians on American soil. The pain, suffering

and carnage experienced and witnessed by our nation is indelibly etched in our hearts and minds, but no one knows this better than the families of Harry, Mitch and Tom, who have suffered an unfathomable loss that endures unabated and will continue to do so forever.

Whoever coined the phrase that time heals all wounds was utterly and completely wrong. No amount of time can heal the wounds of a loss so deep. We try to cope and ease our pain and suffering by seeking solace and comfort from family, friends, colleagues, medical professionals and our religious leaders. But alas, as mere mortals, all we can do is to try to find that comfort, as difficult as it may be, but try we must. We must understand and always remember that there are those in the world who hate us and our way of life and will do everything and anything to destroy it. The danger is real and ever present, and we must pay homage to the men and women who have sworn to protect us no matter the cost.

I've heard comments and opinions over the years that we seem to place a greater value on the lives of first responders than innocent civilians. Let me respond first by saying that every life is sacred and that all lives lost are tragic. However, I humbly submit to all of you that men and women who respond to emergencies to protect complete strangers, while putting

themselves in harm's way, are in fact, very special people. Yes, we choose to do what we do and the reason is simple, help others. It's our calling and not everyone can do it. Can you imagine a world without first responders? Calling 911 and no one answered, or the world without the men and women in our armed forces?

We constitute the first line of defense. So, yes, people like Harry, Mitch and Tom who selflessly sacrifice everything to serve others are very special. I fear, as the years pass and the memories fade, people will forget those who made the supreme sacrifice on 9/11. A stark example of that to me was this past June 6th, the 69th anniversary of D-Day.

June 6, 1944, when the largest armada of ships ever assembled in the history of the world and the allied forces led by the United States of America stormed the beaches of Normandy, France. The cause was noble, rid the word of tyranny. The loss of life was unimaginable and yet, on June 6, 2013, I didn't see one news article, I saw nothing mentioned on television and radio, and most people I asked did not even know or remember the significance of the day. It made me realize that we had forgotten the sacrifices of those brave soldiers and it saddened me, and I have to admit, a bit of me got a little angry.

We must not and we will not ever forget 9/11 or our heroes. For me, not a day goes by that I don't think of Harry, Mitch and Tom, and the horrible atrocity committed against our nation and its people. I believe with all my heart and soul that good always wins over evil, but the cost is high, and for some, the cost no higher, their lives.

A smile and a serene feeling overtake me when I reminisce in solitude, especially about Harry and our daily discussions about raising children, fighting for the underdog, race relations in the United State, life; and how the two of us could solve all the world's problems right from our office. And if anyone could do it, Harry could. Yes, life goes on, the journey continues, but it will never, ever be the same. We will always have our cherished memories of Harry, Mitch and Tom, and we are all better people for having been blessed to have known them. We must remain steadfast in our commitment to serve and protect others because that is what's right and that is what Harry, Mitch and Tom epitomized, and that is what they deserve, nothing less.

We all sleep better knowing there are men and women like Harry, Mitch and Tom standing watch, protecting us, no matter the cost, and we are grateful. Former Deputy Former Chief Administrative Judge Joan B.

Carey once said metaphorically that Harry, Mitch and Tom autographed the air with their honor on September 11th. What more can I say other than amen? As we continue our journey through life, please take a moment each day to reflect and to remember our heroes. Keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers for they are truly America's best.

Thank you all for being here today, and thank you for the privilege and honor to speak about my brothers who I will never, ever forget. God bless you all. God bless America.

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Fern Fisher: Our officers are the best and he's one of the best. To start our remarks, it's my please to introduce you to Attorney Glenn Lau-Key, who is the president-elect of the New York State Bar Association.

President-Elect of the New York State Bar Association Glen Lau-Key: Thank you and good afternoon. I'd like to thank the Office of Court Administration and Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Fern Fisher for hosting this event and inviting me to join you today. Judge Irizarry, Administrative Judge Heitler, and the many Honorable Judges that have joined us today, court officers, honored guests, and most importantly the Thompson, Wallace and Jurgens families. During events like this one we remember the terrible

attacks that took place on September 11, 2001, and the thousands of lives that were lost on that day.

We come together to honor their memory and to recognize the individuals who risked their lives and gave their lives responding to the attack and all of the first responders who protected our safety, help maintain order and assist people in need every day throughout our state and our nation. As we recognize the court officers who responded on September 11th, we particularly remember the three whose lives were lost, Captain William Harry Thompson, Sergeant Mitchell Wallace and Sergeant Tommy Jurgens. Their sacrifice demonstrates the exemplary dedication of the uniformed officers who serve in courthouses throughout the state.

The attacks on 9/11 provided a stark and tragic reminder of the importance of the rule of law in maintaining order in our free and democratic society, and the critical role the courts and our court officers play in upholding our justice system. Court officers like Captain Thompson, Sergeant Wallace and Sergeant Jurgens protect our courts and our legal system every day. And, as we saw on 9/11, their bravery and dedication are not limited to the confines of a courthouse. After 9/11, it was because of

the rule of law that we're able to move forward without more violence or chaos.

Without safe and orderly courts to allow us to resolve our disputes we would not have a free and fair society. Those of us who enter a courthouse, whether as attorneys, litigants, judicial staff or members of the public have court officers to thank for our safety and for a secure and orderly environment where our justice system can function properly. On behalf of the New York State Bar Association, I join you in remembering and honoring the court officers who lost their lives on 9/11, and in recognizing and thanking those who work every day to keep our court safe.

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Fern Fisher: Our next speaker we still consider one of our own although presently, she sits in the United States District Court, Eastern District of New York, remember she is still one of us. It's my pleasure to introduce Federal Court Judge the Honorable Dora Irizarry.

Federal Court Judge Dora Irizarry: Good afternoon everyone. I want to thank Chief Judge Jonathan Lipmann for graciously giving me the opportunity to participate in this most important memorial program. The honor and privilege of doing so, it is a return home to the courts where I

grew up professionally as a prosecutor and then as a Judge, to reunite with my court family. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Fern Fisher and so many others who are here today, Judges, court staff and, of course, the court officers, for so many years.

I miss all of you and I think of you often with great fondness and high regard for the work that you all do under very challenging circumstances. But if truth be told, I miss the court officers the most. In the Federal Courts, while we have United States Marshals and court security officers who do a wonderful job of maintaining security and decorum in our courts, we do not have in the courtroom a regular court staff of officers the way that the State Courts do, and the court officers are unsung heroes, as we've heard today.

Daily, in the most unassuming way, they courteously and professionally assist the public in maneuvering through the court system while maintaining security and decorum. I've always been impressed with the professional, patient and courteous manner in which they look after jurors, but never more than when I got the call to serve as a juror and experienced their professionalism firsthand. More than once in my

courtroom here in State Court they came to the aid of a juror or a litigant in distress.

Their training and sensitivity earn them the gratitude, respect and appreciation of those whom they help; but no other event has served to highlight most dramatically the courage, selflessness, dedication, professionalism and training of our court officers than the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Court officers, while considered law enforcement officers and, indeed, they are, technically are not considered first responders in the same way the police officers and firemen are. But on that fateful day, three outstanding and courageous court officers saw the devastation, they saw the people in need of assistance and they responded.

I had the distinct honor of having worked with Captain Harry Thompson for more than 20 years. I saw him rise through the ranks. Who could forget that brilliant smile that spit polish attire and can do attitude? I was always so pleased when he would bring his academy students to my courtroom to observe and learn. His mere presence brought comfort to all.

Sergeant Tommy Jurgens was also dear to me. You know he not only kept our perimeter safe, but I know he volunteered as a fireman in his

community as well. I used to tease him about how skinny he was and he was fairly newly married, and I kept saying what kind of wife, what is she feeding you that you're so skinny? And I used to tell him, I've got to give her my Puerto Rican recipes to fatten you up. I am sorry that I never gave him my recipes.

At the time of the attack on the World Trade Center, Sergeant Mitchell Wallace had only been at 111 Centre Street about six months. There's where I had my courtroom. So I was just getting to know him, but as we all learned, he was already a hero having used his EMT skills to save a passenger having a heart attack on the Long Island Railroad just a year before. That last image that we have of him is amidst all the smoke and rubble, bent down, giving aid to a victim.

I think of them often. I am inspired by them. They went outside of their normal duties to do the extraordinary, to put themselves in harm's way to rescue others. It took me a long time before I could go back to Ground Zero and to the 9/11 memorial. I finally went there last Christmas. It was fitting that they should be included and remembered among the first responders and others who gave their lives that day.

To their families who are here today, while we all mourn their absence, they served as a tribute to, and glorious example of the greatest love that we as human beings can have for one another, the willingness to give up one's life for another in need. Post 9/11 there has been an ongoing debate about whether alleged terrorists should be tried in military tribunals or in the Federal Courts. The courts have always been at the forefront of protecting our civil liberties, for example, in cases involving free speech, discrimination of all kinds, voting rights, right to counsel and writs of habeas corpus.

Even in the everyday cases, litigants who come before me express their view that the Federal Court is the only venue in which to vindicate their rights. A report issued on July 22 of this year by the Heritage Foundation entitled *60 Terrorist Plots since 9/11: Continued Lessons in Domestic Counterterrorism*, tracked post 9/11 terrorist plots against the United States in order to study the evolving nature of the threat and garner the lessons learned to better protect the United States from future attacks.

The current state of sequestration with its cuts to the federal budget, particularly the judiciary, law enforcement and defense, and the privacy concerns engendered by intelligence gather techniques, will have a role to

play in protecting our society from future terrorist attacks. The study found 60 such plots. The recent Boston Marathon bombing was 59th publicly known terror plot since 9/11. Increasingly, we are facing threats from homegrown terrorists' plots involving one or more actors who are U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents or visitors radicalized primarily in the U.S.

This brings to the forefront the tension between the use of the Federal Courts with public trials or military tribunals with virtually secret proceedings to try accused terrorists. The study showed that of the 60 terrorist plots, 56 were prevented, four were successful, and of those that were prevented, 53 were thwarted by U.S. law enforcement and intelligence before the public was ever placed in any danger. The other three were prevented by sheer luck. The Federal Courts often have a role to play in the investigative phase, such as by authorizing and supervising the use of pen registers, wire taps, subpoenas and search warrants.

Of the 60 plots, 49 were considered homegrown plots. Many of the persons arrested in connection with the 60 plots were tried in U.S. courts and of those, a significant number were tried in New York City Federal Courts, right next door in the Southern District of New York and in my court

in the Eastern District. I presided over the JFK Airport plot in which four men were arrested in June of 2007 for attempting to blow up the fuel tanks and pipe lines to JFK Airport, which if successful, was intended to have resulted in far greater devastation than the 9/11 attacks, if you could even imagine.

One defendant pled guilty just prior to trial and the other three were tried in two separate jury trials and convicted. Their convictions were recently affirmed by the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Notably, in the cases prosecuted in Federal Courts, many of the defendants pled guilty and what we have seen as a result is that the courts continue to play a vital role in ensuring that our civil liberties are protected in a public and transparent way. But all of this is in jeopardy given the current political and fiscal state of affairs in this country.

The State Courts have long struggled to provide services in the face of ever increasing budget cuts. When I sat as a State Court Judge, both in Criminal Court and in Supreme Court, it was challenging to dispose of highly congested dockets. Sometimes up to 200 cases or more in Criminal Court and a hundred or more in Supreme Court by 5:00 p.m. Now, the courts are forced to close at 4:30 p.m. This can only lead to more congested dockets,

longer jail terms and delayed justice. As the saying goes, justice delayed is justice denied.

Yet, through it all, the State Courts continue to look for innovative ways in which to administer justice efficiently, equally and fairly, such as moves towards electronic case filings and pro bono requirements for attorneys. Federally, we have been impacted severely by sequester. In the Eastern District alone, a District that serves over eight million people, our probation and pre-trial service officers have been furloughed, staff has been cut and services for offenders under supervision cut or eliminated all together. That is a security and a public safety issue.

We have a bare boned staff in the Clerk's Office and facing even more layoffs or elimination of positions. Our ability to remain open and accessible 24/7 is in serious jeopardy. Parties need this access, especially in terrorism cases where sensitive evidence review must be done under very secure settings. Juror resources are in jeopardy and significantly, the budget for our defender services have been cut so severely that members of the Federal Defender's Office, our equivalent to legal aid, were furloughed and were in danger of being let go.

But these are our Criminal Justice Act panel attorneys, which is the 18B equivalent, have been cut, including for capital defenders and we have, believe it or not, a lot of death penalty cases in Federal Court, and they will have some of their payments deferred until the next fiscal year. In some criminal cases, trials and conferences have been delayed and the attorneys' ability to investigate and defend is hampered by the lack of funds to hire investigators, interpreters and experts.

We must remember that the Judiciary was established by the Constitution by our forefathers as one of three co-equal branches of government. These kinds of budget cuts hamper the Judiciary's ability to administer justice effectively, efficiently and fairly. We all have a duty to guard our civil liberty zealously and to remember, above all else, the example that was set by the heroes that we honor here today. Thank you for the privilege of speaking with you today.

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Fern Fisher: On that fateful day, much of the court management was in Albany, including myself, and so we heard what was happening from afar. We all ran to our courts to see if they were still standing, whether they were under siege, and then we were sort of paralyzed. What got us through the moment was the leadership of the Chief

Judge at the time, Judith S. Kay, and the Chief Administrative Judge at the time, Jonathan Lippman, who brought us to our senses, made us realize that we had a job still to do, and I remember clearly huddling in that room, trying to figure out what the next step would be. It was clear on that day that Judge Lippman was a leader. And as we know, he is our leader now. He is the Chief Judge of the State of New York. The Honorable Jonathan Lippman will address us by live video.

Chief Judge of the State of New York Jonathan Lippman: Good afternoon to all of you on this September 11 event which has such great meaning for all of us in our nation; and especially here in New York. The year 2013 represents a landmark in the remarkable recovery of our country and our state since the events of September 11, 2001. If you have spent any time in lower Manhattan recently, you've seen the Freedom Tower now reach its full height. With its spire the building stretches to 1,776 feet, a number that is meant to remind us of the year of our nation's birth, 1776. The Freedom Tower is now the tallest building in the country.

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, we really could not have envisioned this day would finally come and we would be so strengthened by it. For those of you at Centre Street, every day you have also watched the

dazzling glass skin of the building rise up to encase its steel skeleton. In the coming months, new tenants will move in, making the building part of their daily routine, but the Freedom Tower is not just a building. It is a monument. It symbolizes our resilience, our refusal to bow or shrink in the face of attack. Most of all, it symbolizes our commitment to freedom.

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon that killed thousands and the planned attack on our Capitol that resulted in the crashing of Flight 93 that killed dozens more were designed to strike at our heart, to find out where we live and to cripple us. But although we suffered deep grief, fear and anger, we held strong. We remain true to the ideals that made our country great. More than ever, we need monuments like the Freedom Tower to remind us of the horrific acts of terror against us on September 11, 2001. Each of you has a vivid recollection, I know I have, shaped by your own experiences on that clear autumn day, and then by the images you saw on television and the newspaper accounts you read.

For those of us working in the courts back then, these memories include our fallen heroes, Captain William Harry Thompson, Sergeant Mitchell Wallace and Sergeant Thomas Jurgens. They did not hesitate to do their duty in the face of grave danger and they gave their lives for it. We

remember their great heroism and we deeply mourn their loss to this very day. Their courage will forever be an inspiration and they live on in our hearts and our minds. I extend my warmest best wishes to their families on this day of remembrance.

As much as these events are part of our personal memories, they are now 12 years on, becoming a part of our history as well. More and more as the years go by there will be people who only learn about September 11 secondhand. People who were toddlers when the towers fell are in high school now. In another 12 years, 30 year olds will have only the vaguest recollection of the 9/11 attacks. Just as many of you can't say where you were when Kennedy was shot, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, more and more there will be Americans who did not live through 9/11 themselves.

They will understand 9/11 as part of our American historical past. So now is the time to reflect and remember. It is the time to talk, to articulate what happened and why and how it has changed our lives and our nation's identity at home and around the world. And it is time to celebrate the monuments like the Freedom Tower and the 9/11 Memorial that are a daily reminder of a terrible and unforgettable moment in our history. Let us not

forget what happened and let us be sure that the events of 12 years ago remain very much a part of our story on this day and every day.

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Fern Fisher: We are often divided by political and social issues in this country, but today we are one nation indivisible as we remember what happened on 9/11 and as we support families who lost loved ones in the tragedy. And today we offer our support to the Wallace, Jurgens and Thompson families. It is not easy to lose a child or a loved one, brother. It is the greatest loss that one can experience. And so our hearts go out to the families every day, but particularly today.

It is our pleasure to unveil the court's tribute to Sergeant Mitchell Wallace, Captain Harry Thompson and Sergeant Thomas Jurgens. The world has the Freedom Towers and the court system will have this, and this will be hung prominently at 111 Centre Street. But we are also happy to present to family members a smaller version. So will Michelle Miller, Linda Proper and Rashawn Thompson please come to the podium? This is but a small token of our love and our tribute to your lost family members.

We hope that that it is something that you will take some solace in when you look at it. Those are our heroes and I know in your hearts, they're

your heroes too. So thank you very much. I believe Michelle Miller will speak.

Ms. Michelle Miller: Twelve years, 4,380 days, 624 weeks, it doesn't matter how you do the math; that is the amount of time that has elapsed since 9/11. Three of those individuals are the reason we are sitting here today. One of them is the reason I am up here speaking.

When Craig called to ask somebody to speak, I was hesitant. The biggest problem I have with 9/11 is the public nature of the day. I hate having to share the day my brother passed away with the entire country and the entire world. It is a constant struggle I have each year as I also understand that nobody should ever forget. However, every year our family and Noreen come back home. We are very grateful to spend the day with all of you here. From day one you have all stepped up and taken us into your family. At the risk of leaving anyone out, I will not mention names, but you know who you are.

You have called, you have come into our home in the very early days following 9/11. You have sat in our living room and you have written beautiful pieces about Mitch in your court publications. You have made very generous offers to my children and you have made my parents feel like

Mitchell was never forgotten. For that we are forever grateful. The one person I will single out, because you can always single one person without risk, is Craig. He has continued to be an ongoing presence in our lives. For my daughter, Lindsey, he has always been a connection to Mitch.

Because she was only three and a half on 9/11, her memories are made by listening to us. From the little girl who held Craig's hand when she was four years old to place a flower at the site, to the young lady he lifted up to sign her name on a wall a few years ago, I thank him on behalf of all of us. He is religiously by my dad's side every year and makes sure he gets to where he needs to go always, and he always makes sure that a car is sitting in front of my mom's apartment without fail for 12 years. For that we cannot thank you enough.

Most of you sitting here just knew Mitch only a few years before 9/11 and some of you not at all. We knew him for 34 years. I wish there was a way to creatively explain the Mitch that you really didn't know. I had an idea to make him into something that my kids always do as an assignment in school, take the letters of your name and tell us a bit about yourself.

M, Mitch was magnetic. Although he did not have a huge friend base and was happy as I think with a small group of people, he drew people to

him. He was not comfortable with a lot of people but could put people at ease. I watch my son, Logan, and understand the power of genetics as that trait has been passed on to him. It is a gift Mitch had and when he was treating a victim or someone who was sick, it was invaluable as they trusted him and were drawn to him and believed everything he was telling them in order to keep them calm.

I, Mitch was innovative. Always quite the character, Mitch had to be quite innovative at times. Like the time he had his ear pierced quite young, he didn't want my dad to know, but he couldn't take it out because the hole would close. He spent most of his time wearing a long hat or a band aid and walking with his head to the side. Or the time he got his first tattoo and wore long pants the entire summer so no one would see it on his legs.

T, Mitch was thoughtful. Most of the year I was pregnant with Lindsey, Mitchell lived with us. It can be hard at times when someone is living with you, but that was not the case. I was very lucky that my husband, Brian, welcomed him and they had a nice bond over anything music related. Mitch did his share around the house. Thankfully, someone knew how to change a light bulb, and was very helpful and thoughtful when spending time with our son, Logan, that year.

C, Mitch was crazy. I'll just leave this one to your imagination. There are a few colorful stories that I can't really share here. They may just involve some firecrackers being held in your teeth for as long as possible, but I'll leave with you with that visual.

H, Mitch was hilarious. When he got on a role about something, there would be times when entire tables of people would fall on the floor. It was a natural kind of funny where he didn't have to work hard to get a laugh. His presentation and timing were impeccable, and you didn't just laugh from the craziness of the stories, but makeup would run down your face and you would be lying on the floor because it was just too insane what was coming out of his mouth.

E, Mitch was EMT. His love for helping people and being the first one on the scene is exactly why we're here today. It wouldn't have matter if he was told not to go; anyone who knew him knew that was exactly here he was going to be on the morning of 9/11. Even if he were still at home, he would have made his way there. Whether it was an accident at Bayside while he was working on the volunteer ambulance or saving a dying man on the Long Island Railroad, or bringing out as many people as he could on the

morning of that fateful day, his love for administering to patients was the focal point. Running to help was his usual MO.

L, Mitch was a loving son, brother, brother-in-law, uncle, nephew, colleague, fiancé, stepson and friend. If he fell into one of those categories for you, then you should consider yourself very lucky. I only wish most of you were able to know him for a longer amount of time. On behalf of my family, thank you again for the opportunity to become part of your family.

Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Fern Fisher: Thank you Michelle for sharing with us and again, thank you for the families that are here. As we close out, let us just take a moment of silence and reflection to remember the thousands of individuals that perished in the 9/11 tragedy, but particularly, Mitchell Wallace, Thomas Jurgens and Harry Thompson. Ladies and gentlemen, the ceremonial unit once again.

Thank you to the Ceremonial Unit and the Pipe and Drum Band for being here today. Until we meet again when we give tribute and we remember; be healthy and be safe.