

## **HOMEWOOD COMMUNITY CONTINUES TRADITION WITH PATRIOT'S DAY CEREMONY**

By JESSICA STEELE

HOMEWOOD, ALA. – At 9 a.m. on September 11, community members and elected officials held an annual Patriot's Day Remembrance Ceremony, complete with the release of doves, speeches and performances at Homewood City Hall. The event, which rotates between Homewood and two other neighboring towns, Vestavia Hills and Mountain Brook, is put on each year to remember fallen heroes and to keep the tragic day in our country's history from going forgotten. This year, the focus was put on encouraging community youth to carry on the tradition with pride.

Elementary students were encouraged to become active participants in this year's ceremony, with the entire fifth grade class in attendance and Homewood High School show choir performing several songs for community members. Mayor Scott McBrayer explaining the significance of this participation, said, "I think it's important that we continue these ceremonies, so those who weren't born can understand what sacrifices were made to help make this country great." Interviews conducted with students later that day revealed that Patriot's Day events such as Homewood's really do help youth in better understanding this important day in our nation's history. In one interview, when asked about 9/11, 10-year-old Leny Obogo said, "It was a really tragic moment, well no one really knew that it was going to happen." Obogo makes an important statement in that

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although the attack was unexpected, the United States still managed to bounce back, a sentiment in which Patriot's Day ceremonies are all about. Backing up this idea, keynote speaker, Army Captain Christopher Tanner, said, "September 11 is a reminder that evil and terror still exist, but it is also a reminder that when things are at their very worst, we are at our very best."

The ceremony, which lasted most of the morning and early afternoon, also included a performance of the national anthem sung by City Counsel Member, Walter Jones, as well as a performance of "Amazing Grace" by bag piper Brian Bowman. The event concluded with the release of doves along with a bell ceremony put on by the Homewood Fire Department. A moment of silence was taken to honor both victims and those who had fallen as heroes that day. A video recap of the ceremony can be found at:

<http://wiat.com/2015/09/11/children-reflect-on-911-attacks-at-patriots-day-ceremony/>

While it will be hard to forget the terror of 9/11 for those who lived through and experienced the day, it is essential to recognize the importance of passing on the memory to generations to come. Patriot's Day ceremonies such as the one put on by the Homewood community help to remember the day in a more positive light, by taking the time to reflect on the sacrifice of those heroes who fought to save so many lives amid such chaos and confusion.

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Sources:

<http://wiat.com/2015/09/11/children-reflect-on-911-attacks-at-patriots-day-ceremony/>

<http://thehomewoodstar.com/news/homewood-to-host-annual-patriot-day-event-0910/>

<http://thehomewoodstar.com/news/bag-piper-performs-amazing-grace-0911/>

<http://thehomewoodstar.com/news/patriot-day-ceremony-remembers-sept-11-0911/>