

Roswell remembers fallen in 9-11 ceremony

Julia Grochowski Sep 17, 2018



From left, Marine 1st Sgt. Walter Marques; Police Chief Rusty Grant; Jackson Kell, son of Rotary 9-11 Chair Dwayne Kell; and Fire Chief Ricky Burnette laid wreaths honoring the first responders and victims of 9-11.

ROSWELL, Ga. — The weather matched the solemn atmosphere Sept. 11 as residents met at the Mike Gann 9-11 Memorial in Roswell Area Park for a memorial service on the 17th anniversary of the terrorist attack on America.

The Roswell Rotary Club once again partnered with the City of Roswell for the service, which included several Roswell dignitaries and dozens of attending residents.

The master of ceremonies was retired radio personality Moby Carney.

The keynote speaker was Travis Ellis, the co-founder of Shepherd's Men, a volunteer group that works to help rehabilitate veterans with traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder. The organization has raised more than \$3.2 million so far.

"It should always be too soon for all of us," Ellis said about 9-11. "Today is a day that should be forever in the fabric of who we are as a people. It is a day to remember, but also a day to challenge ourselves to earn the sacrifice made by so many – to be more, to do more, and to give more."

Ellis, along with several other speakers recounted where they were that day and emphasized that Americans have an obligation to remember the events of that day.

During the ceremony, representatives laid wreaths in memory of fire, police, civilian and military efforts on 9-11.

"This is something that needs to reside in our hearts and our souls daily, not just one day of the year," Ellis said. "We need to be consumed by the fire that is protecting our republic. And we should never rest on the fact that liberty is always guaranteed, because you can look through the course of our history, and it's not."

Ellis and his organization strive to raise awareness of the problems of veterans whose ranks are reduced by 22 suicides a day, he said.

His efforts have earned him a Citizen Honors Award, the highest recognition a civilian can receive, for his work with the Shepherd's Men.

"You don't have to put on the uniform; you don't have to fire rounds down range; and you sure don't have to take down a private jetliner to a field," Ellis said. "But what you have to do is serve. You have to engage in the fight, because we must remain vigilant to be free."