

# THE DAILY RECORD

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## The resilience of America

I met with a few first responders Sunday. A few hours after their ceremony at the firehouse, they got a call that a wheelchair-bound veteran was in critical condition and needed an ambulance.

They worked without complaint. They did their jobs with professional poise and dignity.

They did not let the weight of 9/11 hinder their work in the slightest.

It was what they have done every workday since the towers crumbled.

They did what all Americans try to do as well — to balance the need to honor those who have fallen with the need to honor our ability to resume our lives, and to seek normalcy in a horribly abnormal set of circumstances.

Sunday we tried to find the balance between honoring those who began fighting back the second they knew we were under attack — those on Flight 93, such as University of Rochester grad Jeremy Glick, who formed the first group to actually attack those who were attacking us — and those who knowingly ran into the twin towers despite knowing they would likely never escape.

You may remember Jeremy and others on Flight 93, they learned that the towers had been hit, and then eventually heard the ultimately devastating news via cell phones. They found out that the Pentagon had been hit also. These strangers then decided that there was no alternate conclusion — that their plane was going to be used as one more weapon against America.

Then they realized the plane was headed to Washington, D.C. The White House was the likely target.

Glick and his fellow heroes met secretly at the back of the plane, and decided to fight back before most of us really knew how horrible the situation was. They grouped together and stormed the cabin, defending us all in the process.

As terrible as 9/11 was — there can be no question that if the Capitol or the White House had been hit as well, the level of destruction to our country, our hearts, our souls and our spirits would have been even worse.

We endeavor to find the rational balance in reaction to such irrational circumstances. Some of us are now saturated with remembering the horror. We strive to find an adjustment back to normalcy. While we can never forget, we must also always

remember the resilience of America.

That resilience cannot be forgotten when looking down at the USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor. It still lies just below the water, paying tribute every day. It exemplifies the resilience of America, even after the devastation from an unwarranted and unprovoked attack on this great nation. We rose to fight back and survive after Pearl Harbor, and we rose to fight back and survive after 9/11.

We cannot hope to individually honor all those whose names were so proudly broadcast over the course of Sunday's ceremonies. It would be overwhelming, and unrealistic.

Instead we must remember to thank all of those we come into contact with each day, those who have attacked our attackers, and defended this great nation.

Collectively, we must ultimately remind them of our gratitude, even if only one person at a time. Individually we are small, and individually we may be weak, and trying to save everybody or everything is overwhelming and paralyzing. But working together, this great nation is resilient, and is, in fact invincible.

Just as the group of strangers on Flight 93 banded together and overwhelmed the terrorists from hell, we can accomplish so much together. Speak out, honoring all who have shielded us from further harm, all those who band together to knowingly rush into harm's way — to protect us from terrorists at home and abroad.

Honor those first responders, like those who came to my neighbor's rescue on Sunday, the 10th anniversary of 9/11, who arrived quietly, without glory, without expectation of reward, just doing their jobs for the good of us all.

Despite those who wished to destroy us, we persevere, we continue on, and we remain one nation, under God, indivisible, and we still seek liberty and justice for all.

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