



Park News

Flight 93 Volunteer Newsletter

March 2009

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Three Crew Members Honored in Black History Month Features

The following article was written by Victoria Tagliabue of the National Park Foundation for use at the NPF website during February, Black History Month and also appears on the NPS website for Flight 93 National Memorial. The item received national news attention and ran in dozens of papers across the nation.

FLIGHT 93 SALUTES AFRICAN AMERICAN HEROES

The Flight 93 National Memorial and the African American Experience Fund are joining together to celebrate the extraordinary heroism of modern day African Americans. Among the 40 people on board Flight 93 were three African American crewmembers who helped to change the course of history on 9/11.

First Officer LeRoy Homer, Jr. and Flight Attendants Wanda Green and CeeCee Lyles had a combined service record of more than 35 years with United Airlines when Flight 93 took off from Newark, New Jersey en route to San Francisco, California. Their quick thinking and resourcefulness, along with that of their fellow crewmembers and passengers, were ultimately responsible for preventing

the hijacked plane from reaching the nation's capital.

Wanda Green, 49, had been with United Airlines for almost 30 years, fulfilling a passion for flying and seeing the world. According to her mother, Wanda was one of the first African Americans to join United Airlines as a flight attendant.

Wanda was a dedicated mother to her daughter, Jennifer, and her son, Joe, a deacon in her church and active in her



local community in Linden, New Jersey. She had also earned her real estate license and planned to open her own real estate office after retiring from United.

LeRoy Homer, Jr., 36, earned his pilot's license at age sixteen, and after graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1987, serving in Operations

(continued, page 2)



Training Date: March 31

Please plan to attend this informative training session. Superintendent Joanne Hanley will present the latest information regarding the design drawings and plans for the permanent memorial. After this training we will be able to describe the timetable and phasing of construction for visitors and help them to envision the future memorial. You can also expect an update on land acquisition and other aspects of the memorial project.

Date: Tuesday, March 31

Time: 6:30 PM

Place: St. Mark Lutheran Church, Main Street, Shanksville

Governor, Senators, and NPS Director Ink Commitment Letter

A distinguished group gathered in the historic Somerset Trust building on February 20 to sign an important document: a Letter of Commitment pledging that the first phase of Flight 93 National Memorial will be dedicated on September 11, 2011. This letter (reproduced on page 3) was signed by Governor Ed Rendell, Senator Arlen Specter, Senator Robert Casey's designee, the Acting Direc-

tor of the National Park Service Dan Wenk, and representatives of the Families of Flight 93, the Flight 93 Task Force, the Flight 93 Advisory Commission, and the National Park Foundation.

Following the signing, a reporter asked Senator Specter to describe the significance of this document. (continued on page 3)

Black History Month Feature, continued

Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He began work for United Airlines in



1995 and continued his military career with the U.S. Air Force Reserves, achieving the rank of Major. LeRoy and his wife, Melodie, married in 1998, settled in Marlton, New Jersey, and

had a daughter, Laurel, who was nine-months old at the time of her father's death. Because of his heroic actions on September 11, 2001, the Tuskegee Airmen honored LeRoy Homer posthumously, awarding him

the title, "Tuskegee Airman".

CeeCee Lyles, 33, had changed careers only nine months earlier, leaving a position as a police officer in Fort Pierce, Florida. When her flight was hijacked, CeeCee phoned her husband, Lorne, to relate information about the take-over and to express her love for her family. The two had been married for only a year, forming a family with four sons. Just minutes before the crash of Flight 93, CeeCee phoned her husband again, revealing the

plans the crew and passengers had to fight the hijackers.

"These three heroes are a source of inspiration to a new generation of African Americans – and to all Americans," said Cynthia Morris, Executive Director of the African American Experience Fund. "The Flight 93 National Memorial will be another important link in the story of African American history.



Expect to see other Flight 93 passengers and crew members featured in the future as the federal government celebrates months of special emphasis.

Short Subjects of Interest

- Recent press reports about the agreement that has been reached on the Svonavec property may lead visitors to think they can now walk to the crash site itself. This is NOT true. As in the past, the public is permitted only in the paved and gravel areas of the memorial.
- What are those flat, black stones that have been placed on the ground at the tempo-

rary memorial? At the request of the architect and the NPS design team, samples of various types of granite are being tested at the

memorial before materials are selected for the Sacred Ground Plaza.

Nineteen Flight 93 volunteers recently became certified in CPR and First Aid through the American Red Cross.

- How many visitors came to the temporary memorial in 2008? Total visitation for this year was 136,091, including 439 bus groups.
- Nineteen Flight 93 volunteers became certified in CPR and First Aid in recent trainings. Thank you, instructor Dawna Bates for these informative sessions. Other volunteers who also have current CPR and/or First Aid certification should register with Adam at the NPS office.

Local Writer Notes Winter Visitation, Thanks Volunteers

The Volunteer Ambassadors know that visitors continue to come to the memorial throughout the winter, regardless of the freezing temperatures, ice, and snow. Thanks to a column by Somerset free-lance writer Ralph Couey, published in the February 24 edition of the Johnstown Tribune Democrat, many more people now know this too.

Couey wrote praising "the tireless and dedicated volunteers of the Flight 93 Advisory Commission, the Flight 93 Memorial Task Force, the Families of

Flight 93, Joanne Hanley of the NPS, and the tough, weather-hardened members of the Flight 93 Ambassadors, who have performed magnificently as the faces and voices for the fallen as they interact with the hundreds of thousands of visitors to the site."

Couey went on to cite remarkable visitation figures for the snowy days of December (2595 people) and January (1423). He recognized that "out at the Field of Honor, the Ambassadors were there every day, gutting out the effects

of the elements."

We thank you and America thanks you for your service.



Photo by Donna Glessner, January 2004

Commitment Letter Signed, continued

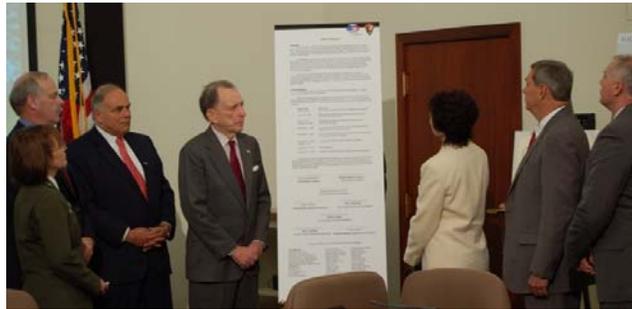
Specter explained that the letter is “a forceful statement” that represents the commitment of people at the highest levels of government to make this memorial a reality. “Watch out to anyone who is going to intervene,” he said.

When asked what he would do to make sure that the milestones in the letter were met, Specter answered, “Whatever it takes.”

In addition to lending his signature to this letter, Governor Rendell made a surprise announcement of the Commonwealth’s desire to move forward on the design and construction of the access road into the memorial from Route 30. Rendell pledged that the road, which will roughly follow the alignment

of the existing PBS Coal Haul Road, will be complete in time for the memorial dedication on September 11, 2011. The project also will include safety improvements at the intersection with Route 30. Rendell predicted that the memorial will become one of the most visited spots in Pennsylvania.

Specter closed the press conference with the familiar words of Lincoln, “The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it will never forget what *they* did here.”



Following the ceremony, NPS Acting Director Wenk visited the temporary memorial for the first time. Ambassador Clarence Caldwell was on duty and welcomed the Director into the shelter on this very cold, windy February day. The Director spent some time at the site speaking with visitors.

The Text of the Letter of Commitment

Our Commitment

On this day, February 20, 2009, at the Historic Somerset Trust Building, 131 North Center Avenue, Somerset, Pennsylvania:

We, the undersigned, are committed to ensuring that the first phase of the Flight 93 National Memorial is completed and dedicated on September 11, 2011 - the tenth anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. To that end, the following targets will serve as milestones in this process:

July 30, 2009	Construction design documents completed and approved
August 15, 2009	National Park Service Director’s approval to proceed to advertising for construction
August 17 to October 29, 2009	Prepare bid documents; solicitation and bid period for construction contract
November 1, 2009	Construction contract awarded when all land secured and federal and private funding in place
November 7, 2009	Ground Breaking Ceremony concurrent with Federal Advisory Commission/Task Force meeting
Dec 1, 2009 to Aug 1, 2011	Contractor mobilization and construction activities
September 1, 2011	Final Inspection
September 11, 2011	Dedication of the first phase of Flight 93 National Memorial

We will communicate, cooperate, and collaborate on all aspects of the project to make this the highest priority for completion. We do this to honor the heroes of Flight 93, who on September 11, 2001, courageously gave their lives, thereby thwarting a planned attack on our nation’s capital; to leave a legacy for future generations; and to provide a place for our country to heal, remember and reflect.

Flight 93 National Memorial
109 W. Main Street, Suite 104
Somerset, PA 15501

Phone: 814 443-4557



www.nps.gov/flni

From the Archives

Sandy Dahl, wife of Captain Jason Dahl made these remarks at the September 11, 2002 memorial service:

"If we've learned nothing else from this tragedy, we've learned that our lives are short and there is simply no time for hate Flight 93 was an extraordinary gathering of individuals. We shall grieve that they died, but we shall rejoice that they lived We honor the crew and passengers of flight 93 for their selfless sacrifice. Their legacy gives us the hope to know that we do have hope for tomorrow."

At the same memorial service, then-Governor Mark Schweiker made this observation:

"Today we stand on a battlefield. It is unlike other battlefields in our nation's history because that day America's first defenders weren't battle-

tested. They weren't even armed. They were ordinary Americans who were off to work or to visit family. And in an instant, they became one of the most heralded military units in our nation's rich history . . . And that's why we come here together today to remember heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice. They decided their fate wasn't in the hands of terrorists. It was in their own. Their heroics are so incredibly pure, their sacrifice so enduring."

Remarks by Former Governor Tom Ridge on 9-11-02:

"Your loved ones did not expect to serve the cause of freedom on that Tuesday morning, but serve it they did. Faced with the most frightening circumstances one could imagine, they met the challenge like citizen-soldiers—like Americans There were no survivors in this field on Sept. 11.. But I have no doubt that thousands of Americans survived that crash. And all Americans are gratefulIn a field in rural Pennsylvania, "right" prevailed over "wrong." And hope was born."

