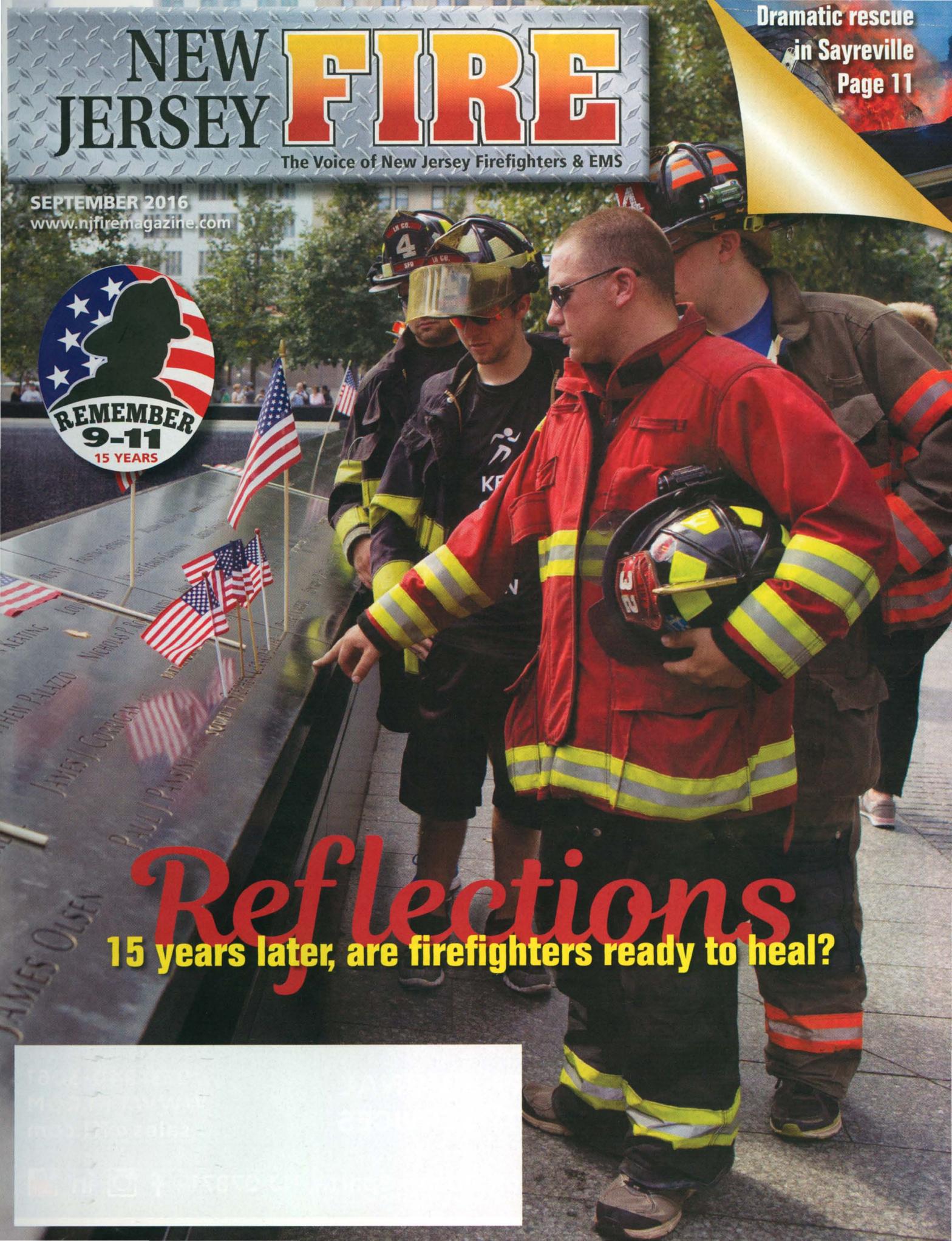


NEW JERSEY FIRE

The Voice of New Jersey Firefighters & EMS

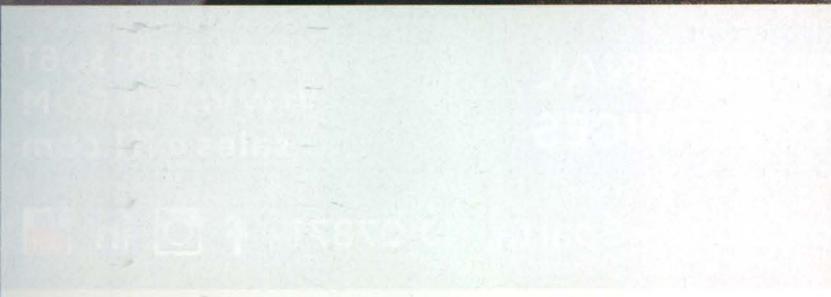
Dramatic rescue
in Sayreville
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Reflections

15 years later, are firefighters ready to heal?



Regain your 'Voice'

Voices of September 11th and CDC/NIOSH provide special care for Ground Zero first responders

After Mary Fetchet lost her 24-year-old son Brad during the attacks on the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, the Licensed Clinical Social Worker vowed to do whatever it takes to help families heal after tragedies.

What spawned from that driving force became Voices of September 11th, an organization that, 15 years later, continues to address the long-term needs of those impacted by 9/11 and helps communities prepare for, respond to and recover from other acts of mass violence and disasters.

"As a family member of someone who died, I feel incredible gratitude for the sacrifices made by those who worked in rescue and recovery – those responders who died that day and also those who have since died from 9/11-related illness and those who, along with their families, continue to struggle with physical and/or psychological injuries as a result of their 9/11-related service," Fetchet explains.

In conjunction with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the Center for Disease Control (CDC) agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related injury and illness, Voices strives to enroll 9/11 survivors and responders with medical and mental health issues in the World Trade Center Health Program made possible by the Zadroga Act.

"There were a lot of New Jersey firefighters who volunteered and worked the pile for a long time," confirms Voices Program Director Lori Harris, whose father and two brothers are or have been Kearny firefighters. "A lot of those volunteers don't realize they are eligible. We do a lot of CDC outreach to get those folks enrolled in the health program."

Out of the eight clinics in the area that are part of the WTC Health Program, one is in New Jersey – the centrally based clinic out of Rutgers

University in New Brunswick that regularly sees around 1,400 responders. And since Zadroga is funded until 2090, there's still time to get involved.

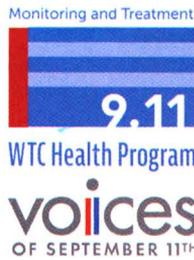
"Frankly, general practitioners don't connect the dots in the same way (we do at the clinics)," Harris emphasizes. "If you're presenting a particular ailment, they might not ask if you were at Ground Zero, for example."

"We cater to our patients' needs – not just for their illnesses but also if they need something outside their conditions," adds Chauntel Wright, Member Services Coordinator at the World Trade Center Clinical Center of Excellence at Rutgers University. "Things such as food or transportation assistance, we can help with that as well. It's about giving them overall support and the treatment they need."

On top of getting physically better, the clinic also provides a sense of community among the responders who participate in the network.

"Social workers call it 'Post-Traumatic Growth,'" Harris describes. "It's about finding meaning and being able to give back."

For more information about the WTC Health Program, visit voicesof-september11.org/initiatives/wtc-health or call 855-709-0100.



Don't miss Voices of September 11's 15th anniversary events:

September 9 and 10
New York Symposium and 15th Annual Information Forum
Downtown Marriott, New York City

September 12
Inaugural Symposium
Grace Farms, New Canaan, Connecticut