

# World Trade Center steel going in Salisbury memorials

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By Emily Ford

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SALISBURY - - Two pieces of steel recovered from the World Trade Center will stand in Salisbury as permanent reminders of the 343 firefighters and 60 police officers killed in the 9/11 terror attacks.

Members of the Salisbury Fire Department are expected to return from New York late tonight with two 2,000-pound steel I-beams from Ground Zero, which will become part of local memorials.

“Our hope is that all who touch and see these artifacts will continue to remember the sincere heroism and selfless acts displayed by our fellow Americans on that fateful day,” Fire Chief Bob Parnell said in a statement.

The city will publicly unveil the 8-foot beams in the coming weeks, Mayor Susan Kluttz said. The Fire Department is building a trailer to transport the beams throughout the city so residents can see and touch them, reminders of the nation’s strength and resilience.

“It gives us a connection to that horrible tragedy,” Kluttz said.

The beams will be permanently installed in time to mark the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

The Fire Department will integrate one beam into the Salisbury-Rowan Firefighters Memorial at 1400 S. Main St.

The other will become part of a memorial site at the entrance to the Firefighters Training Facility on the Rowan-Cabarrus Community College campus.

Parnell, Capt. Mark Thompson and firefighter Chet Hedrick drove one of the department’s dually trucks to Queens, N.Y., Wednesday to take possession of the steel. Capt. Rodney Misenheimer offered his flatbed trailer to haul the beams.

For Salisbury residents unable to travel to New York, the steel will connect them with Ground Zero, Kluttz said.

“It’s a very emotional experience to be there,” said Kluttz, who was on site in January 2002 when firefighters still were recovering bodies.

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The Fire Department participated in a year-long application process through the Port Authority and WTC Artifacts Program to receive the recovered steel. To be considered, recipients could not disfigure the artifacts or use them for profit.

Tammy File, a senior office assistant for the Fire Department, has worked since 2009 to obtain pieces of the World Trade Center.

“It shows you the dedication of the people who work for the Fire Department,” Kluttz said. “It shows you the compassion and brotherhood they have for each other. They have a kinship.”

If a firefighter dies anywhere in the country, fire department employees everywhere feel the pain, she said.

File’s efforts to bring the beams to Salisbury means future generations will have a permanent reminder of the sacrifice firefighters and police officers made on 9/11.

“Her persistence in not giving up on this and making it a reality for our community is really commendable,” Kluttz said.

#### World Trade Center artifacts

- Steel artifacts from the World Trade Center are housed at JFK Airport in New York.
- Through the Port Authority and WTC Artifacts Program, more than 1,000 pieces of steel will be distributed before the tenth anniversary of 9/11.
- A legal transfer of ownership was completed Dec. 4, 2009, and Salisbury’s steel pieces were assigned ID numbers. The transfer was handled by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.
- Salisbury’s two steel pieces weigh 2,087 pounds and 2,177 pounds.

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