

# FIELDNOTES

*A Common Field One Day, A Field of Honor Forever*



Volume VII, Issue 2 • June 2018

## LeRoy Homer Foundation Scholarship Winner Visits Flight 93 National Memorial



LeRoy Homer, the First Officer on Flight 93, is still having a profound impact on lives more than 16 years after he died as a hero on September 11, 2001.

A prime example is Courtney Vidt of Vacaville, California, who was still a high school student when she received a flight-training scholarship from the Leroy W. Homer Jr. Foundation in 2006. Courtney went on to follow in LeRoy's footsteps, graduating from the United States Air Force Academy in 2011, earning her pilot's wings in 2013 and becoming a captain in the 8<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron at Joint

Base Lewis-McChord in Washington.



Captain Vidt recently made her first trip to Flight 93 National Memorial to honor the legacy of the man whose heroism helped make it all possible. "I came to honor him because the scholarship from the LeRoy W. Homer Jr. Foundation was life-changing for me," she said. "As I stood looking at LeRoy's picture on the exhibit in the Visitors Center, I reflected on how much a man I never met has influenced my life. I like to think of his legacy as something of a phoenix; that out of such a horrific event rose the foundation, which has helped so many young people like me who wanted to become pilots."

The Foundation ([www.leroywhomerjr.org](http://www.leroywhomerjr.org)) was created by LeRoy's wife, Melodie, in 2002. Its goal is to "provide financial support and encouragement to young people with an interest in aviation to pursue professional flight instruction, leading to certification as a private pilot." Fifteen annual scholarships have been awarded since 2003.



"Melodie and the foundation board members have worked tirelessly to ensure that LeRoy's legacy lives on in each and every scholarship that is awarded," Courtney said. "That's where I feel most connected to him. I may never have met LeRoy, but I know his family and have become good friends with Melodie. I know that the love we all share is rooted in LeRoy's love – his love for his family, his love for flying and his love for others."

LeRoy completed his first solo flight at age 16, graduated from the Air Force Academy, served in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, achieved the rank of captain and later became a major in the Air Force Reserves. He joined United Airlines in 1995. As first officer, he was assigned to United Airlines Flight 93 on September 11, working in the cockpit with Captain Jason Dahl.

Courtney, whose father was a pilot, shared a similar love of flying from an early age. "As a high school junior I knew what I wanted to do in life," she said. "I wanted to fly. I started searching the internet one day in 2006 for flight scholarships, and the Leroy W. Homer Jr. Foundation's scholarship just spoke to me. I applied, not really knowing what would come out of it. I remember receiving the call that I'd been selected and was just in disbelief."

*Continued on page 2.*

# LeRoy Homer Foundation Scholarship Winner Continued



Her first visit to Flight 93 National Memorial was, as expected, an emotional experience. She was greeted by Henry Scully, executive director of the Friends of Flight 93, along with several members of the NPS staff and volunteers. She also had the chance to meet Wally Miller, the Somerset County coroner who happened to be a guest speaker at the memorial's Learning Center.

"My first impressions of Flight 93 National Memorial were ones of solitude, remembrance and respect," Courtney said. "You are in a place that used to be a common field one day and now is a field of honor forever. What stood out to me was how the flight path trajectory was portrayed in such an incredible way, both up top at the Visitor Center Complex and down at the Memorial Plaza."

"It was such an honor to meet and talk with Wally, who had an incredible impact on the families of the 40 individuals, and discuss the impact that the event and the families had on him. I think the greatest gift that Flight 93 National Memorial provides is a chance to understand the events that took place that day, and then offer a place of healing and personal connection for each person that comes to visit."

For more information on the Leroy W. Homer Jr Foundation scholarship recipients, please go to <https://leroywhomerjr.org/scholarships/past-recipients/>.

*Written by Tom McMillan*

## September 11 National Memorial Trail Alliance Visit's Flight 93 National Memorial

On April 15, a small group of cyclists came riding into Flight 93 National Memorial dressed in red, white and blue.

The September 11 National Memorial Trail Alliance Board of Directors led the first-ever complete bike ride connecting the three 9/11 memorial locations. The inaugural ride stretched 23-days, and covered almost 1,300 miles.

The cyclists arrived at Flight 93 National Memorial around 10:00 am and were joined by members of the Friends of Flight 93 Board of Directors and staff. The group took part in a presentation from park ranger John Bernstiel inside the Learning Center before departing in the afternoon towards Johnstown.



Photo by Dave Sutor: members of the September 11 National Memorial Trail's Board of Directors are greeted at the memorial on April 15 during the inaugural "first ride" of the 1,300 mile trail.

"It really means a lot to us that people come out here and help us memorialize these 40 individuals," Bernstiel said.

"The idea of being able to connect these sites via a trail system is going to have an impact beyond the idea of honoring these people – which is of the utmost importance – but it's more about giving people the means to get out and see all these sites and do this as a pilgrimage-type trail, which I don't think we really have in the United States," Brett Hollern, Somerset County's trail manager, said.

"This ride is a great way to build awareness of this national trail," said Brad Clemenson, a member of the trail group's advisory board and coordinator of Lift Johnstown. "I'm especially excited because more people will realize that this trail is coming right through the heart of Johnstown."

You can keep track of the September 11 National Memorial Trail through their website at <https://www.911trail.org/>. Source: Dave Sutor, The Tribune-Democrat.



## Down but not Out

### Special Temporary Exhibition

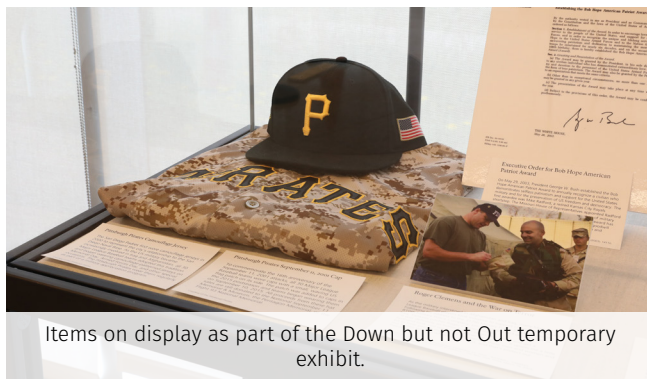
Partnering with Washington & Jefferson College, under the guidance of Professor David Keirnan, Flight 93 National Memorial has opened an exhibition focusing on baseball in the aftermath of September 11, 2001.

"Down but not Out" examines the longstanding relationship between baseball and the nation during times of national crisis, with a focus on baseball's role in recovery following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The special exhibit was researched, designed, and curated by W&J's History 410: Museum Exhibit Design class, an undergraduate course in museum studies. The exhibit includes items that tell the story of baseball's role in helping Americans respond to national tragedy and war from World War I to the present.

"This exhibit illustrates that our national pastime is more than a game," explained W&J junior Kathryn Prinkey, who is part of the Washington & Jefferson College class that researched, designed, and installed the exhibit. "By highlighting the relationship between baseball, the military, and patriotism over the past 100 years, it reveals how the sport has provided Americans with a platform and outlet to respond to wartime and moments of distress."

"This is a politically fraught topic, and we want to be able to spur real, purposeful debate, even within the narrow scope of our particular exhibit," said W&J junior Harley Moyer, another student in the history class.

"Down but not Out" was made possible through collaboration with the National Park Service and Friends of Flight 93, and the cooperation of Major League Baseball, the Pittsburgh Pirates, the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, Pentagon Memorial, George W. Bush Presidential Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, and Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory. The temporary exhibition will run on weekends in the Learning Center from 11-3pm and will remain on display through July 8. Due to the Speaker Series, the Down but not Out exhibit will not be available June 16 and 17.



Items on display as part of the Down but not Out temporary exhibit.

## Tower of Voices

### Construction has Begun!



Fabrication of the second tier of pre-cast columns at the Tower of Voices site.

There has been a lot of development at the Tower of Voices site this spring, with the pre-cast columns being installed by contractor Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. of Altoona.

Earthwork for the tower and micro-pile installation has been completed, and the concrete base has been poured. Pre-cast installation of the first 6 columns has been completed beginning with the inner beam columns before the upper beams. Pre-cast work will continue for the next 3-4 weeks before chime delivery and installation in July. Work will continue on schedule and the full tower is anticipated to be complete before August.

The Illinois chime fabricator, Fugate, is still working with the National Park Service on prototypes to modify and optimize final assembly of the chimes to give the best performance of the sound. Chimes and hanging lighting in the tower will be installed mid-summer, with site work scheduled to be completed with walkways, paths, sidewalks and seating areas after the chimes installation. A complete inspection will occur in August before the dedication the following month.

The Tower of Voices webcam has gone through some hurdles with charging the solar paneled feeds through the winter. The placement of the webcams is being moved and will be re-installed for uninterrupted viewing with an external power source. [Click here](#) to listen to a simulation of the Tower of Voices Wind Chimes. ***The Tower of Voices dedication will be held on Sunday, September 9 at 1pm.***



Superintendent Steve Clark pose on the Flight Path with the team from Washington & Jefferson.

## From the Director's Desk

There are some new Friends flying around the memorial these days! Over the past two years, Powdermill Nature Reserve has been doing scientific surveys in various locations across the memorial to see where honey bee homes would be most successful to begin a cross pollination environmental initiative.

The Nimick Forbesway Foundation awarded the Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial a \$25,000 grant last year to go towards wildflower meadows and honey bee home initiatives. The pollination of the memorial's wildflowers by the new honey bees is a wonderful opportunity, especially in light of the current spiraling death rate of honey bees across the globe.

The wildflower fields will be installed in the spring of 2019 after the land has been prepared this summer, and again this fall under the guidance of the polinator department at Penn State. Powdermill has contracted with Summer Smiles Honey Farm to purchase, build and install the honey bee homes. Summer Smiles Honey also purchased the Pennsylvania native bees and said there are approximately 10,000 bees in each of the four homes located at the memorial, including one "Queen bee" in each of the homes. You will notice these square boxes placed behind the memorial entrance sign and in the field behind the flag pole at the Memorial Plaza. Both Summer Smiles Honey Farm and Powdermill staff have reassured us that the bees are only interested in the wildflowers and should not be bothering the visitors. However, additional signage is being prepared to install beside both honey bee home sites. We are very excited to see how these projects grow over the next few years. *Written by Henry Scully*



Photo by Henry Scully: WEPA parks bio-tech Lindsay Bocian inspects new honey bee homes being installed at Flight 93 National Memorial by Summer Smiles Honey Farm.

## Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

### • Speaker Series

- June 16-17 – Family member Lorne Lyles, husband of Flight Attendant CeeCee Lyles, will relay personal stories.
- July 21-22 – Tim Lambert, former landowner/local media and Dennis Roddy, writer for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette who covered the events of September 11, 2001 and the Flight 93 story, will share the point of view from local media.
- August 18-19 – Air traffic controllers Mal Fuller (Pittsburgh) and John Werth (Cleveland) will discuss of being in their cities' air traffic control towers on September 11, 2001.

- Ligonier County Market Booth – Volunteers are needed to bring the Children's Discovery Table to the Ligonier Country Market from 8-12pm on August 4.

- Wall Washing – Six volunteers are needed in August to help clean the Wall of Names with curator Brynn Bendor ahead of the September 11 events.

- Flag Flying Opportunity – Volunteers who fly 100 flags will receive their own Flight 93 flown flag and a certificate of appreciation. This volunteer initiative helps supply the National Park Foundation with flown flags for \$93 donors, and creates a revenue stream for the Friends organization with boxed flags for sale in the Visitor Center bookstore. Nearly 400 flags are still needing flown!

### Welcome New Members!

#### April

Eric Brenner, Wayne Clark, Andrew Hamilton, Anne Maleady, 2018 Plant a Tree participants

#### May

Delores Bohm, Dorothy L. Brock, Anthony Campitell, Pamela S. Couth, Sara Gray, Bud & Imra Grimm, Shane Shaneman



Photo by Ranger Katie Cordek: Rainbow over Flight 93 National Memorial captured after Plant a Tree at Flight 93 on Friday, April 27.



## Educational Programming

The Flight 93 education program has grown over the past 2 years and now features 5 separate programs for schools to take part in. The programs feature both 2-hour and 4-hour versions, and cover grade levels 4-12.

Thanks to support from both the Penguins Foundation and Pirates Charities, the Friends of Flight 93 are able to offer transportation funding to schools in need.

In 2017, 2,846 students took part in an education program under the guidance of Education Specialist Gregory Zaborowski, with total transportation funding reaching over \$20,700.

In 2018, 2,516 students have taken part in the curriculum-based educational programming so far with funding left to support fall school district visits.

If you would like to submit a school for funding to take part in Flight 93 National Memorial's educational programming visit our education page at <http://www.flight93friends.org/plan-your-visit/apply-for-transportation-funding> to download and submit an application.

We have also applied for the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) funding to help support the memorial's education program into the future and ensure that school districts are able to apply for funding for many years to come.



## Plant a Tree Event Recap

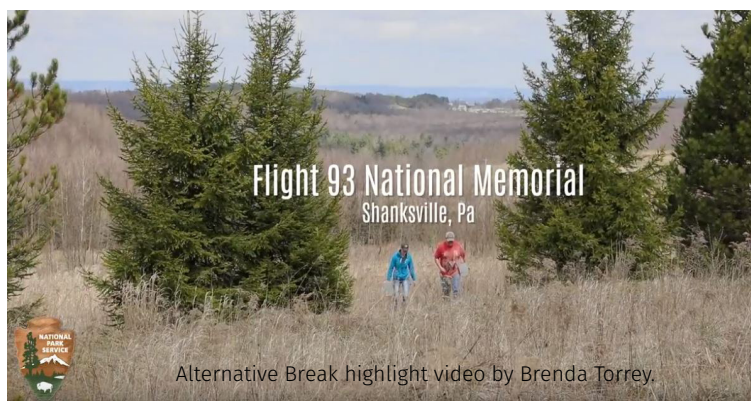
This year's Plant a Tree at Flight 93 was a huge success thanks to the volunteers who participated in the annual reforestation project.

The Friends of Flight 93 raised over \$16,000 to support the event and received in-kind donations of nearly \$8,000.

International Paper became a new sponsor for the 2018 and 2019 Plant a Tree events and presented a \$5,000 check during Saturday's planting.

This year saw new participants including Family member Albert Youngblood planting for the first time, as well as Penn State DuBois students who participated in both Plant a Tree, and the first-ever Alternative Break Program at Flight 93 National Memorial.

Two new awards were presented during the opening remarks to Forester Scott Eggurud from the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, and King Laughlin, Vice President of Major Giving at the National Park Foundation recognizing their outstanding commitment to the memorial, and in particular, the reforestation project over the past seven years. To date, 116,318 trees have been planted across 167 acres by over 2,500 volunteers! In total, 7,138 Restoration American Chestnuts have been planted. Overall survival of planted tree and shrub species is 74.5%. For event images visit <https://www.facebook.com/Flight93Friends/>.



### Stay Connected!

#### Facebook

Flight 93 National Memorial Campaign (Friends)  
Flight 93 National Memorial (NPS)

#### Twitter

@FriendsFlight93 (Friends)  
@Flight93NPS (NPS)

#### Instagram

@flight93\_nps (NPS)

# Volunteer Spotlight



Meet our volunteer and board member Sheena Baker!

Sheena began volunteering in 2012 and was inspired to support Flight 93 National Memorial for personal reasons. "I wanted to find a way to give back and to make sure that those stories and those lost that day won't be forgotten." Sheena feels the impact of volunteering after every shift. "I always leave the memorial feeling very positive knowing that I've helped visitors make a connection to the Flight 93 and September 11 stories. Volunteering has helped me grow as an individual and has helped me work on my public speaking skills, which, for a naturally shy person, aren't always the easiest to hone." Her most memorable moments at Flight 93 include the Plant a Tree events that "are special because I know that the seedlings I've planted will be at the memorial for generations to come. It's also amazing to see so many people from such a variety of backgrounds come together during that event for a common cause."

– Sheena Baker, Friends of Flight 93 member and Flight 93 Ambassador

We want to showcase YOUR contributions to the Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial because we wouldn't be the same without YOU – our volunteers!

Interested in submitting your volunteer story, or nominating a fellow volunteer for recognition? You can submit a story to be included in a future **Volunteer Spotlight** by [clicking here](#)! We will feature a new volunteer every month on social media and quarterly in the Field Notes Newsletter.

All photos by Brenda Torrey unless otherwise noted in the photo credits.



**Friends Staff:** Henry Scully  
Executive Director  
henry\_scully@partner.nps.gov  
Brooke Neel  
Development Assistant  
brooke\_neel@partner.nps.gov  
Call us at 814.893.6551 | 814.893.6552