

OMAHA WORLD HERALD

Speaker after speaker at a 9/11 remembrance ceremony this morning reminded listeners that they shouldn't forget what happened that day five years ago.

"Today, I encourage Omahans to join together once again to commemorate that tragic day in our nation's history and to remind each other of what is most important in our lives," Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey said. "We must never forget what happened that day or the nearly 3,000 people who lost their lives."

Similar messages were delivered by Gen. James Cartwright, commander of the U.S. Strategic Command; Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb.; and Rep. Lee Terry, R-Neb. They were featured speakers at the "In Honor and Remembrance" program at Heartland of America Park in downtown Omaha .

It was one of several events scheduled across the region to mark the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. Others included a day of prayer at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a prayer service at Creighton University; a flagpole dedication at the Nebraska Humane Society; a tribute at Bellevue's Haworth park to honor soldiers and those who died in the terrorist attacks; events at area schools; a "Freedom Walk" in Bellevue; and a lighting ceremony at the Woodmen of the World building tonight.

In that last event, set for 9 p.m., two columns of light will shine high into the sky in a tribute to the World Trade Center towers that fell five years ago. The Woodmen Tower , at 18th and Farnam Streets, also has two huge American flags draped over the east and west sides of the building.

"This is a time to remember Sept. 11," Nelson said at the morning ceremony. "It's also a time to look forward to see the strength of . Go from pain to purpose . . . to show strength and resolve."

Cartwright described the morning of 9/11 as being "a severe, clear day" in airline terminology. But, he said, it turned to "unimaginable horror at 8:46 a.m. when the first plane slammed into the World Trade Center ."

Cartwright noted that the nation now is at war fighting enemies abroad before they get the chance to attack on soil.

"We have always known that hatred burns deeply within some people and that man is capable of unspeakable violence," he said.

Glenn Freeman, president of the local chapter of the Freedoms Association, said heroes shouldn't be measured by how well they perform on the playing field.

"The hero should be someone who's willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice," he said before his organization presented flags to officials attending the program.

Although they weren't able to attend, representatives of Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman and Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., read letters. After Tom Janssen, Hagel's deputy chief of staff, read Hagel's message, an Omaha woman in the audience chastised Hagel for not attending and said his brief message was inappropriate. She was escorted from the ceremony.

Susan Smith later said she also was upset by Hagel's stance on immigration

matters.

After the ceremony, Terry said: "Fifty years from now, we'll look back and see how historic 9/11 was in changing the and the world."

Jose Fooshee, a retired Air Force officer, attended the program with a large flag that he said was his base flag in . He said he was working as a civilian employee at Offutt Air Force Base on the day of the terrorist attacks.

"We can't forget," he said.

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