



Ramifications



Poudre Fire Authority firefighters sent to help recover human remains and remove debris from Ground Zero in New York City following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks are, from left, Joe Gutierrez, Bryan Hanson, Tim England, Andy Vigil, Jeff Gillespie, Jim Salisbury and Len Lindholm. V. RICHARD HARO/THE COLORADOAN

Destruction's scope stunned responders

By Kevin Duggan

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Tim England believes that while in a place that resembled hell, he felt the touch of God.

England, a Poudre Fire Authority captain and 33-year member of the department, led an urban search and rescue team deployed to Ground Zero in New York City 10 days after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Operating under the auspices of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the team known as Colorado Task Force 1 was charged with assisting the Fire Department of New York in recovering human remains and clearing debris from the overwhelming devastation at what had been the World Trade Center.

England recalls looking at the nine-story pile of twisted metal and powdered concrete and the smoke that continuously rose from the ruins. The smell of death was in the air.

The enormity of the task that lay ahead struck him, England said, and he felt "hopeless" as he surveyed the 16-acre site and the army of people getting ready to go to work.

"I remember choking on the smoke," he said.

Just then, a stiff breeze blew off the Hudson River, pushing away the smoke. England breathed in the fresh air and the sun broke through the clouds, lighting up his face and a huge American flag on the side of a building that made up part of the urban canyon. The great flag rippled in the breeze.

"For whatever reason, I knew we would be OK and that

MORE ONLINE

Click on this story at coloradoan.com to see a video interview with members of Colorado Task Force 1

INSIDE

Pilot was midflight when planes struck the World Trade Center/**Page A2**

How we've changed/**Page A2**

Commemorative events/**Page A4**

ABOUT THIS SERIES

To mark the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the Coloradoan will present stories today, Sunday and Monday highlighting this historic event and the people it affected. To see more on this series, visit coloradoan.com

Today

- » Seven Poudre Fire Authority firefighters remember the search and recovery operations at Ground Zero
- » How have our lives, our world changed?
- » Pilot Jim Kelley was in midflight the day the world changed

Sunday

- » Lee Cooper joined the Army Reserves at 38 after watching young men and women deploy overseas
- » Ten years later, Craig Woodall still feels the personal pain and loss
- » Fort Collins woman remembers fleeing
- » Readers remember
- » Young adults reflect on how their

lives changed after 9/11

- » In our opinion

Monday

- » Through the eyes of a child: 10-year-olds share thoughts on the world and war
- » Live coverage of 9/11 memorials
- » Local Muslims recall the community's embrace



Several 100-ton cranes are used to remove debris from Ground Zero in New York City in this photograph taken by Poudre Fire Authority firefighter Bryan Hanson. COURTESY OF BRYAN HANSON

Effects of attack still linger

By Kevin Duggan

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The shock waves that swept across the country on Sept. 11, 2001, did not spare Fort Collins.

And 10 years later, their effects still are being felt in the city on emotional and logistical levels.

Security measures implemented after the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., have not changed, said Dennis Harrison, former chief of Fort Collins police. And they are not going to go away.

"The ramifications are still in place — we're not done yet," Harrison said. "I think as long as we have a situation through which we could be targeted we have to remain vigilant. That's the reality of the situation and it will continue."

As local officials learned of the attacks that morning, they moved to secure facilities that could be targets for terrorists, such as federal buildings, water-treatment plants, power stations, dams and reservoirs.

Fort Collins-Loveland Municipal Airport was closed as were county courthouses and post offices.

ANTHRAX SCARE

In 2001, Fort Collins was not immune from concerns about the possible use of biological weapons by terrorists in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks. Both post offices in Fort Collins were closed Nov. 10, 2001, for testing after a postal worker became ill and was hospitalized with what turned out to be pneumonia. The closure was a precaution against the possibility of exposure to anthrax. The health department provides antibiotics to local postal workers. At the time, officials nationwide were concerned about the possible contamination of tens of thousand of letters and packages after anthrax-laced powder spilled from letters mailed to congressional leaders. Nationally, five people died that fall from anthrax inhalation.

See **RESPONDERS**, Page A2

See **EFFECTS**, Page A2

Gessler to help raise cash to pay off GOP fine

Fundraiser is conflict of interest for secretary of state, some say

By Robert Moore

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Secretary of State Scott Gessler plans a fundraiser this month to help the Larimer County Republican Party pay a \$15,700 campaign finance fine — a penalty Gessler's office levied after reducing the original fine by \$33,000.

Gessler's spokesman and the

Larimer GOP chairman said the fundraiser is appropriate, an opinion rejected by a political scientist, government watchdogs and the state Democratic

chairman.

"This just doesn't seem like the best exercise in judgment. One would think the secretary would instead go to great lengths to keep his distance so as to avoid any appearance of partisanship with respect to the fine reduction," said John Straayer, a political scientist at Colorado State University and a leading expert on state government.

Gessler will participate in a dunking booth at 5:30 p.m. Sept. 22 at Fossil Creek Park Pavilion in Fort Collins. Larimer GOP Chairman Tom Lucero said the idea is to allow Republicans upset over the fine to take out their frustrations on Gessler, the Republican whose office is charged with enforcing Colorado campaign finance laws.

Gessler spokesman Richard Coolidge said Gessler is doing nothing improper.

"The Larimer County Republicans are angry and frustrated having to pay the largest fine ever imposed in our office's history. This is a way for them to relieve those frustrations," Coolidge said.

Lucero said Gessler is among several Republican elected officials who have been asked to help raise money to pay off the fine.

"We would love all elected officials to be honored guests for fundraising events. Congressman (Cory) Gardner is holding an event in November. We're hopeful others will help us too," he said.

The Larimer County Republican Party, led at the time by Larry Carillo, failed to file any of its required campaign finance reports in 2010. The Colorado Constitution calls for a fine of \$50 a day for each day a report is overdue, though the secretary of state has the power to waive or reduce the fine upon a finding of "good cause."

Carillo was charged with felony theft in July, and an arrest affidavit said he allegedly stole about \$17,000 from the party. He has pleaded not guilty.

Larimer GOP officials have said the unfiled reports were part of Carillo's attempts to cover up his theft, though they admit other party leaders were

See **GESSLER**, Page A4



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Business.....B1-2
 ClassifiedsE section
 Comics.....C2-3
 Dear AbbyC2
 HoroscopesC2

LifeC1-6
 Local news.....A1-3, A5
 LotteryC3
 Nation & WorldB7
 OpinionA6

PuzzlesE7
 SportsD1-4
 StocksB2
 Things to doC4
 WeatherC8

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