

FINAL TRIBUTES

OCTOBER 7, 2001—MARCH 15, 2015

*Incredible Ways Americans
Are Remembering Our
Fallen Troops*



FINAL TRIBUTES

OCTOBER 7, 2001—MARCH 15, 2015

*Incredible Ways Americans
Are Remembering Our
Fallen Troops*



Pat Gavros



Branthony
Publishing

Final Tributes

Copyright 2015 by Patricia Gavros

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the author.

Book Design by David Moratto

Edited by Jane Mackay

Cover Photo by Pat Gavros

Author's Photograph by Scott Ballinger

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 978-0-692-42229-8

BRANTHONY PUBLISHING

P.O. Box 249

Oswego, IL 60543

IN LOVING MEMORY

OF

JAMES G. GAVROS

1946–2012

CONTENTS



PREFACE	xi
INTRODUCTION.	xiii

PART I

★ 1 ★ AMERICAN SERVICEMEN & WOMEN PROJECT	3
★ 2 ★ ARLINGTON WEST PROJECT	9
★ 3 ★ BASEBALL HEAVEN	15
★ 4 ★ THE CROSSES OF LAFAYETTE	19
★ 5 ★ EYES WIDE OPEN	23
★ 6 ★ FACES OF THE FALLEN	25
★ 7 ★ HONOR AND REMEMBER FLAG	29
★ 8 ★ IN MEMORIAM	35
★ 9 ★ KAZIAH THE GOAT WOMAN — PROJECT COMPASSION	37

★ 10 ★ MIDDLE EAST CONFLICTS MEMORIAL WALL 41

★ 11 ★ FALLEN HEROES PROJECT 45

★ 12 ★ NORTHWOOD GRATITUDE & HONOR MEMORIAL 47

★ 13 ★ RIBBONS OF REMEMBRANCE 51

★ 14 ★ LOST HEROES ART QUILT 53

★ 15 ★ WARRIORS WALK 61

★ 16 ★ GOOGLE EARTH MAPPING OF THE FALLEN 65

★ 17 ★ HOME OF THE BRAVE QUILT PROJECT 69

PART II

★ 18 ★ STATISTICS OF WAR 75

★ 19 ★ OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM & OPERATION NEW DAWN . . . 79

★ 20 ★ OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM 2001 – PRESENT 289

★ 21 ★ OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM MAY – AUGUST 2012 . . . 387

★ 22 ★ OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM & OPERATION
INHERENT RESOLVE SEPT 2012 – MARCH 2015 397

★ 23 ★ MILITARY WORKING DOGS KILLED IN ACTION 411

AFTERWORD 419

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 421

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY 423

To those who have given their lives so that others may know peace; you are the faces of freedom. May every American honor you by honoring the country in which they live. Your courage, allegiance, dedication and bravery make us all proud to be Americans, and for this we are forever indebted to you.

INTRODUCTION



It was late November 2010 when I received an email that included pictures of the Santa Monica Pier area with scores of crosses in the sand. Something about it just grabbed me emotionally and I needed to know more. The sight was so disturbing, yet mesmerizing, that I read with curiosity the story of the crosses and the group, the Veterans for Peace (VFP), which had begun the project in 2004 after the first casualties of the Iraq War. In time it had become known as the Arlington West Project, and a committed group of volunteers have continued to place the ever-growing number of crosses on the beach *every Sunday* since that time; a commitment of 6,800 hours, the equivalent of working a 40 hour job for over three years! They had decided to begin this project to honor the men and women who have lost their lives during Operation Iraqi Freedom (the Iraq War) and Operation Enduring Freedom (The Afghan War).

I was immediately hit with an incredibly strong reaction to the sight of all those crosses and a feeling that I should do something. It

was emotionally compelling, something I'd never felt before, and yet, I didn't know what I was supposed to do. As the days passed, a nagging feeling and a deep sense of urgency became a part of me. Somehow I knew I was to go there, but exactly why wasn't clear to me.

That thought seemed unrealistic, impossible, even a little weird. I had no money with which to travel and was unable to take time off from work. I had a job, actually a cleaning service, with clients on a fairly tight schedule. It would be difficult to rearrange my schedule, and I couldn't afford the lost revenue or the travel expenses.

Even if I went, what did I actually hope to accomplish when I got there? Was I going to have some sort of an epiphany? Was God going to speak to me ... to direct me to do something? Why would He want to talk to me? Who am I? I'm no one important, or famous, or powerful. I'm just an ordinary person living an ordinary life. Was I supposed to go to the beach and wait for a sign?

Being a person who likes to have everything in order and to have a plan, I don't enjoy just "letting" things happen; although I can go with the flow when necessary, it's not really my comfort zone. That being said, I do believe that there are things we can't explain and must attribute to a power higher than ourselves. The answers might not be neatly packaged, but miracles happen every day, and I have had several unique experiences that were, without question, a message and affirmation of God's presence in my life. Maybe this was going to be one of those experiences. I didn't know.

In July of 1999, I lost my mother to brain cancer. It had been a hard-fought battle but the disease had finally taken her from us, and time and life continued on even though Mom was now gone. My son, Bryan, was fifteen at the time and we were involved in the usual summer activities. Sadly, it was also the same time that my marriage was in its final stages of decomposition. It was Tuesday, September 2; Bryan and I had been out running errands. Upon returning home we walked upstairs to the kitchen area, but suddenly, at the top of the stairs, I stopped in my tracks as the incredibly pungent odor of gardenias struck my nostrils. Both my son and I stepped in and out of this "cone of unmistakable gardenia fragrance" for almost fifteen

ways of calling attention to that. War is ugly ... it's brutal; people die and loved ones are left behind to grieve. Saying that no crosses should be put out, or boots shouldn't line a street to demonstrate these losses, won't make that fact go away. Many in our society need to be hit in the face with the cold reality of what's happening. They live in a small, selfish bubble of "me" syndrome, completely insulated from the wars, political upheaval, economic disaster, etc. We must not hide from these wars and the subsequent losses. Doing so is a degradation of our brave American troops who gave their very blood for the cause of freedom around the world.

Perhaps you will look for the name of a family member, a neighbor, a friend or a hometown hero. Many of you won't know any of those named here, but who "now belong to the ages"; however you'll be overwhelmed by the sheer number of pages it took to list all of our losses, losses that we feel collectively as a nation, and individually as human beings. I hope it will be an awakening for you and that you'll feel a deeper need to honor all of our service members: those who have died, those who live on with their wounds, and their families who wrestle with this pain. Their lives must matter. Both as a society and as individuals we owe a debt of gratitude to them and their families. It is now our duty to honor them and their sacrifices. It is the very least we can do.

The life of the dead is placed in the memory of the living.

— CICERO (106–43 BC), *writer, politician and great Roman orator.*

PART I

ARLINGTON WEST PROJECT



*We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most—feels the noblest—acts the best.*

— PHILIP JAMES BAILEY, *Festus: A Poem*

In early January 2011 I received an email with a picture showing thousands of crosses on the beach in Santa Monica, California. As I've said previously, that picture would change my life.

This memorial, The Arlington West Project, was first set up on Sunday, February 15, 2004. It was erected in the sand just north of the pier, where thousands of visitors come daily. Every Sunday since that time, the growing memorial has been set up by the volunteers from the Veterans for Peace (VFP).

Their mission is

- ★ To remember the fallen and wounded
- ★ To provide a place to grieve
- ★ To acknowledge the human cost of war
- ★ To encourage dialogue among people with varied points of view
- ★ To educate the public about the needs of those returning from war

This massive undertaking is only accomplished because of a loyal contingent of men and women who come weekly, rain or shine, to honor those soldiers who have given their lives in service to their country. I know firsthand how the memorial is created because I was privileged to go there in the spring of 2011 and help on one of those Sundays.

Only a few hearty souls are there at the 4 a.m. hour quietly setting out the grid so that, as others arrive, they know exactly where to place each cross. When I arrived before dawn that morning, I was greeted by Michael, and as we walked toward the underbelly of the pier, where the crosses and supplies were kept when not in use, Michael and I chatted as he instructed me on how to wheel out the big cart that contained just a fraction of the crosses that would eventually be planted in the sand. After demonstrating the art of dropping them into the sand, he left me in solitude as I quietly began this solemn task.

There weren't many people out that morning so I had ample opportunity to contemplate the enormity of our losses and collective grief as a nation while silently dropping hundreds upon hundreds of the white crosses onto the sandy beach (some with the Star of David or the Star and Crescent on them). I was glad to be alone in this endeavor because it would have been difficult to talk about the emotion of it all.

There were thousands of white crosses, each representing one serviceperson, but there were also a large number of red crosses, each representing ten service members killed. The logistics of time and space had created the need for the red crosses. They appear as a swath of crimson color running down the middle of the memorial.

Several hours later, fresh volunteers began showing up to help continue with the set-up. Finally, at around 10:30 a.m. it was time to erect the temporary coffins that would represent the soldiers killed during the past week. On that Sunday, we would erect ten coffins. Then Steven, a tall, lanky guy, demonstrated how to drape them with the American flag, and to do it with precision. This was the most solemn task performed that morning, and upon completion of the caskets, we began a funeral cortege onto the beach to place the caskets next to blue crosses.

Also included at the memorial site is the “wall” of names. The Arlington West Memorial website explains that “pillars are positioned where the public can review the frequently updated list of fallen American military personnel since day one of the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. The list contains the name, age, rank, branch of service, unit assigned to, date and place of the circumstance of death, as well as their hometown and state.”

The day I visited the memorial, the official count of lives lost was 5,932. I remember that because each volunteer is given an armband made of black duct tape with the number of fatalities written on it in silver marker. Kenny, who was sitting in a lawn chair, called me over and handed me my armband that day. When I arrived back home I carefully peeled it off my jacket and stuck it on the back of my bedroom door. Each night before I turn out the light, that’s the last thing I see before I close my eyes. How can I ignore the price that has been paid by these men and women, heroes all. I am honored and indebted to them. They have inspired me to be a better American, and each day since that visit, I have endeavored to do so.



ARLINGTON WEST PROJECT

IN MEMORIAM



*For as long as this nation has known war,
we have embraced the heroes it has produced.*

—JIM WALSH

A massive project of twelve 10' × 10' paintings, one for each major conflict of the U.S. military, is almost a bizarre idea. Hatchmarks, one for each fatality and placed in varying patterns, create a mind-boggling geometric illusion when one imagines that each of these little marks denotes a life lost in service to the nation. These engrossing images create an undeniable power that pulls you into the canvases. It doesn't really seem possible that little marks on a canvas, devoid of faces or other human images, could elicit the response that the enormity of this work as a whole does.

Jacob Joubert, the artist behind the images, wanted to design a work of art that would provoke thought about the cost of war. He believes that “the juxtaposition of the work will allow the viewer to come to terms with the sacrifice, life, death, and cost of freedom.” He believes it's difficult to understand massive numbers; the real goal of his “In Memoriam” project is to assist others in processing the enormous loss of lives and to “force them to question the value of a single

life. Often times it is easy to relegate the lives lost to history, forgetting the impact they have on us today. My goal is to create a piece of work that forces the viewer to come to terms with the massive amount of lives lost to warfare and to feel that loss on a personal level in the way loved ones feel when a single life is lost. I don't want the viewer to see lines, I want them to see sons, daughters, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, cousins, neighbors, and friends. I want them to see heroes."

That's a goal that many others who offer memorials strive to achieve, each in their own way. They feel an almost desperate drive to "make" people feel these losses. A picture is worth a thousand words! A connection occurs when our intellect is boosted through our visual senses. We often hear people say, "Wow, I really didn't get it until I actually saw it." We've all been there. These memorials—reminders of our humanity—help us to understand the loss of the men and women who have sacrificed their lives for our freedom. It's important that we allow ourselves to feel the pain. To honor these heroes is a small price to pay for the gift we've received.

PART II



HOW TO USE THIS DIRECTOR

The following chapters list the deaths of soldiers, including a chapter listing the deaths of Military Working Dogs. Each of the five chapters are in alphabetical order.

If you know they died in a specific conflict, you can go to that chapter and look for their name.

If you know the person's name, but don't know the date of their death, you can look through chapters 19 to 22 in each alphabetical list to find the soldier's name.

If they died in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the war in Afghanistan, there are three sections:

- ★ Oct. 7, 2001–April 30, 2012 is Chapter 20
- ★ May 2, 2012–Aug. 31, 2012 is Chapter 21
- ★ Sept. 1, 2012–Mar. 15, 2015 is Chapter 22

Note: Chapter 22 includes three deaths from Operation Inherent Resolve which is the war on ISIS.

Note: Every effort has been made to ensure all names have been entered with correct information. We sincerely regret any errors or omissions. Please be kind enough to notify us of any such errors or omissions. All of the information contained herein was gathered from ICasualties.com which is supplied by the Department of Defense. It has been my sole intention to honor our soldiers and their families. Therefore, I apologize if there are any errors, etc.



★ 18 ★

STATISTICS OF WAR



DEATHS BY BRANCH OF SERVICE

Air Force — 155
Army — 4,948
Coast Guard — 1
Marine Corps — 1,478
Navy — 231

DEATHS BY AGE

18 to 22 = 2,467
23 to 28 = 2,388
28 to 35 = 1,430
35 to 45 = 799
45+ = 148

DEATHS BY CONFLICT

Operation Iraqi Freedom — 4,403
Operation Enduring Freedom — 2,341
Operation New Dawn — 67
Operation Inherent Resolve — 2

Note: These statistics were available from Military Times as of March 15, 2015.

★20★

IN MEMORIAM

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

OCTOBER 7, 2001–PRESENT



In grateful recognition for the service to their country, we honor these brave heroes for their service and sacrifice.

Note: The following list is alphabetical order and provides the name, age, hometown, state, date of death, branch of service, rank and manner of death.

**Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is correct. We regret any errors or omissions and ask to be contacted by an authorized family representative with the correct information.*

A

Aamot, Aaron S.	22	Custer, WA
<i>Nov. 5, 2009 Army Specialist IED Attack</i>		
Abad, Sergio	21	Morganfield, KY
<i>July 13, 2008 Army Private 1st Class RPG Attack</i>		
Abbate, Matthew	26	Honolulu, HI
<i>Dec. 2, 2010 Marine Sergeant Hostile fire</i>		

Abeyta, Christopher P. 23 Midlothian, IL
Mar. 15, 2009 Air Natl. Guard Sergeant IED Attack
 Aceves, Omar 30 El Paso, TX
Jan. 12, 2011 Army Sergeant IED Attack
 Acosta, Edward J. 21 Hesperia, CA
Mar. 5, 2012 Army Specialist IED Attack
 Acosta, Rudy A. 19 Canyon Country, CA
Mar. 19, 2011 Army Private 1st Class Small arms fire
 Adamkavicius, Clayton Lee 43 Fairdale, KY
April 21, 2006 Army Natl. Guard Captain Small arms fire
 Adams, Christian M. 26 Sierra Vista, CA
June 11, 2010 Army Specialist Non-hostile
 Adams, Danial R. 35 Portland, OR
Sept. 13, 2011 Army Sergeant 1st Class Mortar attack
 Adams, Ryan C. 26 Rhinelander, WI
Oct. 2, 2009 Army Natl. Guard Sergeant RPG Attack
 Adamski III, Frank E. 26 Moosup, CT
Mar. 29, 2011 Army Staff Sergeant Small arms fire
 Adkins, Charles L. 36 Sandusky, OH
April 16, 2011 Army Sergeant 1st Class Suicide bomber
 Adkinson III, Vinson B. 26 Harper, KS
Aug. 31, 2010 Army Staff Sergeant IED Attack
 Aguila, Francisco X. 35 Bayamon, PR
April 14, 2009 Army Corporal Non-hostile
 Aguilar, Amaru 26 Miami, FL
May 13, 2011 Army Sergeant Hostile fire
 Ahmed, Shane H. 31 Chesterfield, MI
Nov. 14, 2010 Army Specialist Small arms fire
 Ainsworth, Jesse W. 24 Dayton, TX
July 10, 2010 Army Staff Sergeant IED Attack
 Akins, Kevin D. 29 Burnsville, NC
Mar. 12, 2006 Army Reserve Sergeant IED Attack
 Albert, Phillip R. 41 Terryville, CT
Nov. 23, 2003 Army Sergeant Major Helicopter crash
 Alcaraz, Raymond C. 20 Redlands, CA
Aug. 31, 2010 Army Sergeant IED Attack
 Alden, Nicholas J. 25 Williamston, SC
Mar. 2, 2011 Air Force Senior Airman Hostile fire
 Aleman, Nicholas J. 24 Brooklyn, NY
Dec. 5, 2010 Marine Sergeant IED Attack
 Alexander, Leroy E. 27 Dale City, VA
June 3, 2005 Army Staff Sergeant IED Attack

Alexander, Tobias C.	30	Lawton, OK
<i>May 20, 2012 Army 2nd Lieutenant IED Attack</i>		
Allen, Justin B.	23	Coal Grove, OH
<i>July 18, 2010 Army Sergeant IED Attack</i>		
Allen, Nekl B.	29	Rochester, NY
<i>Sept. 12, 2009 Army Staff Sergeant IED Attack</i>		
Allers, Thomas C.	23	Plainwell, MI
<i>May 23, 2011 Army Private IED Attack</i>		
Allgaier, Christopher M.	33	Middleton, MO
<i>May 30, 2007 Army Chief Warrant Officer Helicopter crash</i>		
Allison, Thomas F.	22	Roy, WA
<i>Feb. 21, 2002 Army Specialist Aircraft crash</i>		
Altmann, Joseph J.	27	Marshfield, WI
<i>Dec. 25, 2011 Army Staff Sergeant Small arms fire</i>		
Ambard, Philip D.	44	Edmonds, WA
<i>April 27, 2011 Air Force Major Small arms fire</i>		
Ammon, Jeffrey A.	37	Orem, UT
<i>May 20, 2008 Navy Lieutenant IED Attack</i>		
Amores, Jason G.	29	Lehigh Acres, FL
<i>Jan. 20, 2011 Marine Sergeant IED Attack</i>		
Amper IV, Nicanor	36	San Jose, CA
<i>July 5, 2011 Army Sergeant RPG Attack</i>		
Amundson Jr., William M.	21	The Woodlands, TX
<i>Oct. 19, 2004 Army Corporal Vehicle accident</i>		
Anderson, Billy G.	20	Alexandria, TN
<i>May 17, 2010 Army Private 1st Class IED Attack</i>		
Anderson, Brian M.	24	Harrisonburg, VA
<i>June 12, 2010 Army Specialist IED Attack</i>		
Anderson, Marc A.	30	Brandon, FL
<i>Mar. 4, 2002 Army Specialist Hostile fire</i>		
Anderson, Nicholas R.	21	Sauk City, WI
<i>Mar. 13, 2006 Marine Lance Corporal Vehicle accident</i>		
Andrade, John E.	19	San Antonio, TX
<i>Aug. 7, 2010 Army Private 1st Class IED Attack</i>		
Andrews, Darryn D.	34	Dallas, TX
<i>Sept. 4, 2009 Army 2nd Lieutenant IED Attack</i>		
Andrews, Evander E.	36	Solon, ME
<i>Oct. 10, 2001 Air Force Master Sergeant Non-hostile</i>		
Andrews, Scott A.	21	Fall River, MA
<i>June 21, 2010 Army Specialist IED Attack</i>		
Angus, Daniel M.	28	Thonotosassa, FL
<i>Jan. 24, 2010 Marine Sergeant IED Attack</i>		

IN MEMORIAM

MILITARY WORKING DOGS KILLED IN ACTION



*My eyes are your eyes,
To watch and protect you and yours.
My ears are your ears,
To hear and detect evil minds in the dark.
My nose is your nose,
To scent the invader of your domain.
And so you may live, my life is also yours.*

— CICERO

More and more people have come to understand the incredible role military working dogs play in protecting, defending and serving our troops. The mostly unsung heroes save between three and five of our troops' lives each day. They play an invaluable part in not only safeguarding our men and women who serve, but also improving the morale of these soldiers. It is with tremendous gratitude that I honor them by including them with the fallen.

Note: MWD denotes Military Working Dog; IDD denotes Improvised Detection Dog, MPC denotes Multi Purpose Canine.

MPC Apollo	U.S. Army	June 5, 2013
IDD Archie	U.S. Marine	Aug. 9, 2011
MWD Arras	U.S. Air Force	Sept. 25, 2007
MWD Bak	U.S. Army	Mar. 11, 2013
IDD Banon	U.S. Army	Nov. 1, 2012
MWD Bart	U.S. Navy	Aug. 6, 2011
IDD Bingo	U.S. Marines	Nov. 25, 2010
IDD Cade	U.S. Marines	June 20, 2014
IDD Cane	U.S. Marines	Dec. 21, 2010
MWD Cole	U.S. Marines	Oct. 15, 2010
MWD Cooper	U.S. Army	July 6, 2007
MWD Dinomt	U.S. Navy	Sept. 30, 2012
MWD Fibi	U.S. Army	April 26, 2012
SSD Flex	U.S. Marines	May 4, 2013
MWD Grief	U.S. Marines	Oct. 9, 2010
IDD Heron	U.S. Army	Aug. 27, 2012
MWD Hunter	U.S. Army	May 29, 2011
IDD Lydia	U.S. Marines	Aug. 29, 2010
MWD Macy	U.S. Army	Oct. 25, 2009
MWD Marco	U.S. Air Force	Jan. 20, 2007
MWD Patrick	U.S. Marines	May 9, 2011
IDD Rupert	U.S. Marines	May 24, 2010
IDD Sugar	U.S. Marines	Nov. 28, 2011
MWD Tar	U.S. Marines	May 6, 2010
IDD Tick	U.S. Marines	May 14, 2012
MWD Toby	U.S. Navy	Nov. 26, 2008
MWD Torry	U.S. Marines	June 1, 2011
MWD Tosca	U.S. Marines	July 31, 2011
EDD Tygo	U.S. Army	Nov. 10, 2012
MWD Zora	U.S. Marines	July 16, 2012

BIOGRAPHIES OF DOGS & HANDLERS KIA/MIA

MPC Apollo U.S. Marines June 5, 2013

MPC Apollo and his handler, Sgt. 1st Class, Jake Harman, were on a patrol in Afghanistan when Apollo was killed by a bomb which detonated near him. Although he had already detected six IEDs, the seventh one killed him instantly. Handler Harman was a short distance away from Apollo and received severe shrapnel wounds. Apollo was on his fourth deployment.

IED Archie U.S. Marines Aug. 9, 2011

Archie, a three and a half year old black lab, was with his handler, Cpl. David Cluver, when he used the ‘covering’ position to warn his handler of an explosive and lay down directly over the pressure plate to protect him. He was killed instantly when the bomb detonated.

MWD Arras U.S. Air Force Sept. 25, 2007

Five-year-old Arras was a Dutch shepherd. While on patrol with his handler, Staff Sgt. Marcus Reaves, conducting a building search for explosives and weapons, he touched a location that was electrified by power cables. He was killed instantly. Sgt. Reaves sustained minor injuries, but returned to duty.

MWD Bak U.S. Army Mar. 11, 2013

Army Sgt. Marel Molina and his MWD Bak were turned on in a Green on Blue incident when an Afghan policeman turned his AK-47 rifle on them. MWD Bak was mortally wounded, but Sgt. Molina received life-saving surgery.

IDD Banon U.S. Army Nov. 1, 2012

No further information available.

AFTERWORD



The common thread throughout all of these stories is the need for people to act in whatever way each individual's talents leads him or her. Whether writing names on baseballs, attaching ribbons to trees, crafting quilts, painting portraits, planting trees, using satellite technology, making sketches in pencil, placing boots in a memorial or crosses on a beach, each artist's striking visual expression of grief and honor has elicited powerful emotions from all who have seen it. To some, these memorials have offered solace and gratitude; sometimes they have created controversy or provoked anger and protests. But in doing so they have sparked conscious thought about the price paid by these men and women. They have also offered a way that we, as a nation suffering the collective pain of loss, can begin to heal.

It's doubtful that the men and women creating them could ever have anticipated the far-reaching impact that would be attributed to their demonstrations of remembrance. I believe that in any society,

especially the larger it becomes, the more essential it is to connect to our inner humanity, to reach out to others with acts of compassion, connecting us on one of the deepest human levels. Although it cannot change what has happened, a memorial can certainly soften the pain and bolster the spirits of those left behind to suffer. It offers us a chance to be better, kinder, more deeply in tune with what is truly important.

Secondly, it provides an opportunity to display our patriotism and love of country. I hope this book has demonstrated that we, ordinary people, are not powerless to do something. True, we cannot change the events, or their outcome, but we can change our attitudes on *how* we respond; attitudes about *why* we should respond. When there are no longer those who would fight for the ideals of freedom and democracy, then we will live in a world of little value. If there were none to mourn or remember heroes who suffer for the greater good, then there would be no worth in fighting.

It's impossible to care too deeply, and we cannot say it often enough: God bless America, and God bless our soldiers now gone ... but not forgotten.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Every book requires a team of people to help bring it to fruition. *Final Tributes* is no different. Without the help, support and encouragement of numerous people, there would be no book. My editor, Jane Mackay, is incredibly patient and has helped me tremendously with all the little style and technical aspects that I'm simply unfamiliar with. Her help in polishing it and guiding me was, as always, invaluable.

David Moratto, my incredibly creative and patient book designer, always seems to be in tune with my vision, and created a work of art. Even up until the final proofing, he's thinking about ways to improve or create something very special. Each time, I'm both surprised and delighted with the outcome. Thank you, David!

At one point, I was losing my way and needed a compass to help get me back on track. So, who did I call? My fellow Rotarian and business mentor, Barry Kolanowski—owner of The Compass Group, and soon-to-be newly published author! With his guidance I was able to

set goals and and restore my confidence; finally emerging re-energized and back on track. Thank you, Barry, for your guidance and encouragement.

After everything was done, there came the time to proof all of these names and data; it took many hours and a number of wonderful friends to do so. A huge thanks to my friends Elin Rezek, Karen Noggle and Rickie Wilhelm, who patiently sat and helped go through this massive amount of information. I was fortunate to find Oswego High School senior, Alissa Cullen, who helped type many of the names. Additionally, a number of great students from Oswego High School chipped in and donated many hours to help with the proofing process. A special thanks to Mrs. Pauline Hilderbrand, who oversees the Interact Club. Her help in supplying the following great students to help is deeply appreciated: Alexandra Janiak, Ruby Garcia, Nicole Graves, Tia Carr, Anna Dutton and Dona Ganzorig. A big thank you to my son, Bryan, who always pitches in to assist and encourage me as I continue with these incredibly large projects. Sometimes I just need a shoulder to cry on, and he's always there for me.

Most importantly, it has been an honor to make contact with a number of the amazing people whose stories I've shared. Their generosity in supplying information and photos is deeply appreciated. A very special thank you to Kenna Larson, Kaziah Hancock, Julie Feingold, George Lutz and Catherine Kreter for their assistance in supplying photos and information about their projects. Also, a special thank you to the Saatchi Gallery for supplying the photo of The American Servicemen & Women Project.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY



Pat Gavros, author, publisher and speaker, has a mission: “to live each day with passion, purpose and patriotism.”

The author of two previous books, *Crumbled Oak Leaf—Words of Grief and Hope*, and *So Gallantly Waving—Words of Patriotism & Gratitude*, she is well known throughout the Fox Valley area for her community-wide projects and events. Through her charismatic leadership, she has galvanized thousands to participate in numerous projects; helping them find their own “patriotic action button”. With strong support from area schools, residents and businesses, she has gifted them with her incredible energy, enthusiasm and drive to actively participate in her community and America by taking personal responsibility.

As a consummate advocate for veterans, Pat seeks opportunities to call attention to important issues that “grab her emotionally.” Non-political, but strongly patriotic, she has the ability to bring people together. Her deep commitment, vibrant sense of humor and can-do attitude have helped overcome some of life’s most challenging

roadblocks. The only girl of six children, Pat is definitely from a Boys-R-Us family, which includes her four remaining brothers, a son and two stepsons. Dade City, Florida with her son, Bryan, and their Siberian husky, Lola.

As a speaker she embraces the opportunity to share her patriotic perspective, which reflects John F. Kennedy's words: "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." *Final Tributes* offers her a way to reach out to the thousands of families who have lost a hero in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. It also demonstrates that each of us possesses the power within to "do" something to demonstrate both our individual and national gratitude to those families.

ALSO BY
PAT GAVROS



Crumbled Oak Leaf—Words of Grief and Hope

ISBN # 978-0-578-06859-6

Softbound, 272 pages

Price: US \$16.95

So Gallantly Waving—Words of Patriotism & Gratitude

ISBN # 978-4507-7712-4

Softbound, 56 pages

Price: US \$6.00

CONTACT THE AUTHOR

For speaking engagements and personal appearances
please contact the author at:

Branthony Publishing, 249, Oswego, IL 60543

Email: branthonypublishing@yahoo.com

Phone: 630-788-6964

Website: www.patgavros.com