

# Grateful for 41 years in FDNY

BY MARIA ALVAREZ  
Special to Newsday

The FDNY's longest-serving firefighter, Battalion Chief Don Hayde, came to work on his final shift Sunday wearing heavy-duty black work boots as if it was just another day in his 41 years on the job.

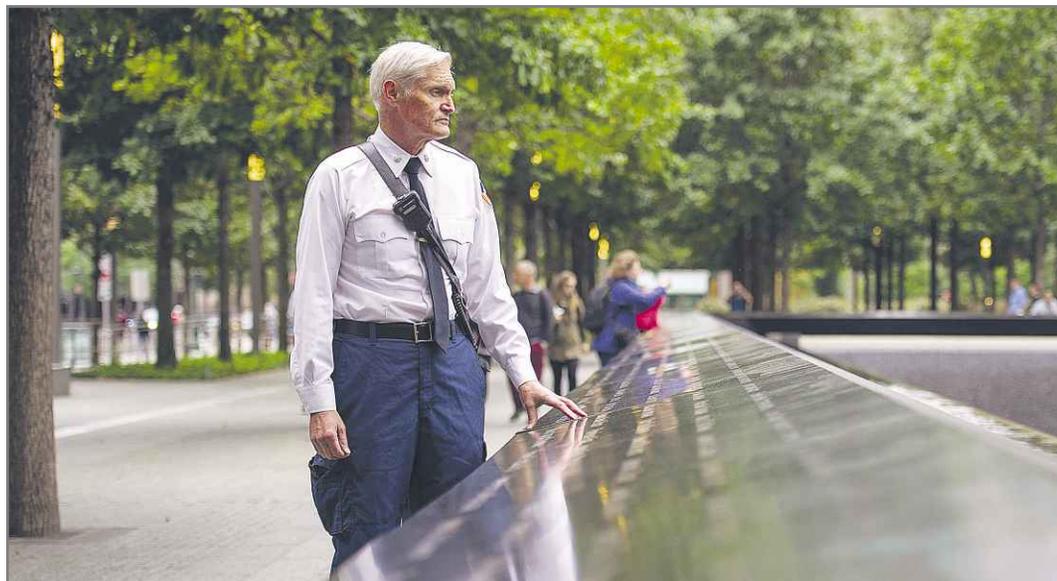
"Always 110 percent prepared," said Hayde, who Sunday turned 65 — the FDNY's mandatory retirement age.

Hayde, a Baldwin resident whose firefighting career started at 18 as a volunteer in Uniondale, described his final day wearing the FDNY uniform as bittersweet. He said he'll miss "the guys" he worked with over the years but is ready to become a civilian again. Hayde credited his late father, a volunteer firefighter in Uniondale, with motivating him to take the same path.

"I am grateful," Hayde said. "My father gave me a great career — a great living that supported my family. I'd do it again."

Hayde made a brief visit Sunday morning to the twin reflecting pools at the 9/11 Memorial and thought of his fellow firefighters who lost their lives just over 17 years ago.

"There is a certain amount of peace here," Hayde said. "A somber feeling. . . . A tremendous loss of life and sacrifice



Baldwin resident and FDNY Battalion Chief Don Hayde, left, visits the 9/11 Memorial Sunday, and, above, at 26 in the 1970s when he was assigned to a Manhattan ladder company.

was made that day. Those guys made the supreme sacrifice. They knew what they were going into and went in anyway."

He has stressed the importance of always being prepared and maintaining a steady demeanor to a generation of young firefighters in his role as an instructor at the Nassau County Fire Service Academy, said FDNY Battalion Chief Richard Wylie, 45, of Bethpage.

"I have seen him in action. He is cool, calm and collected — something I try to emulate," Wylie said of Hayde, who trained him when he went

through the Nassau fire academy.

Hayde said he will continue as an academy instructor.

Wylie pointed to Hayde's service in Harlem in the 1970s — at a time when the city was plagued by arson fires and urban decay — as an example of his dedication to New York City over four decades.

"This is more than a job for Don. He has given his all to people he doesn't even know," Wylie said. "He always did it willingly and that is as honorable as you can get."

Hayde received a commenda-

tion when he rescued an unconscious man, 80, from his bed inside a Harlem apartment building on 113th Street after it went up in flames.

On the day that would change the city and the FDNY forever — Sept. 11, 2001 — Hayde was off. He took it as an opportunity to go to early Mass, he said. Afterward, he learned of the attacks and drove into Brooklyn with another firefighter and hitched a ride to Ground Zero in an FDNY ambulance.

Less than a month later, Hayde responded to Rockaway, Queens, after American Air-

lines Flight 587 crashed into a residential neighborhood there after taking off from Kennedy Airport headed to the Dominican Republic.

Hayde's wife, Carol, said her husband's skill and experience helped ease her mind when he would venture into hazardous situations.

"I always had confidence in his ability," Carol Hayde said. "There was never a question. I was never a worrier, but after 9/11, I worried about what he was going through emotionally because he has always loved his job immensely."

## Suffolk jail open house aims to connect with community

BY KRISTOPHER J. BROOKS  
kristopher.brooks@newsday.com

Children from across Long Island stepped behind bars Sunday as the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office gave public tours of its correctional facility in Yaphank.

Tours were part of an Open House and Family Day event that Sheriff Errol Toulon Jr. said was aimed to make residents feel a connection with deputies. In addition to giving jail tours, deputies demonstrated routine aspects of their job, such as conducting a felony car stop and a K-9-assisted takedown.

"One of the most dangerous things we do as officers is the car stop, believe it or not," Deputy Sheriff Tom Indence told a crowd of about 125. "You never know who you are pulling over. The person could have just got



Dep. Chris Anderson and Nathalie Bartholomew, 9, of East Moriches.

finished robbing a bank or doing some other crime."

During the demonstration, a

car driven by a volunteer speedster zoomed down a gravel roadway just outside the correctional

facility. As a sheriff's deputy gave chase, Indence explained that it's difficult to catch a speeding motorist because deputies must obey traffic laws, while a suspect often disregards traffic signals.

During the K-9 demonstration, Deputy Sheriff Kevin Tracy said police dogs become part of their commanding officer's family.

"My dog sleeps at the foot of my bed every night and follows me around everywhere," he said.

K-9 Officer Phillip, a 6-year-old German shepherd, drew applause as he obeyed commands to follow an officer, stay in ready position, and apprehend someone who is running away.

Deputies gave 30-minute tours of the jail, showing the public the booking area, the jail chapel and the medical unit. Deputies said the Yaphank jail has between 800 to 900 inmates. More than 500

cameras watch every corner of the building, deputies said.

Capt. Vincenzo Barone said deputies also host this event because "a lot of people don't know what goes on" at the sheriff's office.

The office is split into a corrections division and an enforcement division. It runs two jails, one in Yaphank and another in Riverhead, an emergency response unit, and a marine bureau.

Karen Rivers of West Babylon attended the open house with her 11-year-old triplets, Henri, Helaina and Henniyah. Rivers said she liked that there were plenty of activities for her kids to see and touch.

"I liked seeing the emergency truck because you get to see the stuff they use to save people, and they have a lot of first-aid kits," Henniyah Rivers said.

HAYDE FAMILY

COREY SIPKIN

JAMES CARBONE