

The Faces of Urban Forestry



Jeanne Kavinsky
Family volunteer



Memorial Trees Help People Cope with Loss

September 11, 2001 left an indelible mark on our nation's soul. Of the many lives lost that day, more than 2,600 were lost in the collapse of the Twin Towers, 631 were from New Jersey.

The New Jersey Community Forestry Program (NJCFP) quickly saw a need to help the many families and friends of loved ones lost find hope and healing in the wake of their tragic loss. That's when the idea of a Grove of Remembrance came to life. Together with the New Jersey Tree Foundation and with funding from the U.S. Forest Service, the NJCFP helped organize the planting of 631 trees in Liberty State Park, located just across the river from the National September 11 Memorial.

Jeanne Kavinsky was asked to represent the families of 9-11 during the entire project. Her sister, Carol Ann LaPlante, was one of the Twin Tower victims.

"At the time, I didn't realize how important this would be," recalls Jeanne. During the dedication ceremony, Jeanne was asked to speak. She chose to read from a poem her sister had written titled, "The Withered Tree."

"I know a withered tree doesn't bloom, but I probably did wither at that point", remembers Jeanne. "Whenever I come to Liberty State Park, I go outside and look at the site, cry, and use the grove to get my mind around it. The whole project was really a very healing step. It has given me a foothold to get myself back on track."

“It's been a long journey from 9-11. I can't say it's been easy. I owe a lot to the community forestry program.”

— Jeanne Kavinsky



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A joint project of U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Arbor Day Foundation. For more information visit arborday.org/faces