

# Daily Herald

Wednesday, May 8, 2024

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COURTESY OF LISA HARING

The plaque at the site of the American Airlines Flight 191 Memorial Wall and Garden at Lake Park in Des Plaines.

## Remembering a tragedy

Ceremony marking 45th anniversary of American Flight 191 crash set for May 25

Submitted by Lisa Haring

Friends, family, and those affected by the deadliest non-terrorist aviation disaster in American history will gather Saturday, May 25, in Des Plaines to mark the 45th anniversary of the American Airlines Flight 191.

The remembrance ceremony will take place at the Memorial Wall and Garden in Lake Park, 1021 Touhy Ave.

"Each year more people reach out to us on the American Airlines Flight 191 friends and family Facebook group to share their stories and talk openly, sometimes for the first time, about how that fateful day has affected their lives," said Kim Jockl, whose parents were aboard Flight 191 when it crashed upon takeoff from O'Hare International Airport on May 25, 1979.

"A new generation of children and grandchildren, first responders, flight attendants, and pilots have a place to reflect on those in their lives that are now only a memory."

The memorial ceremony begins at 2 p.m. with a call to gather and presentation of colors by VFW Post 2992 at 2:40 p.m. At 2:55 p.m., Melody Smith, Jim Borchers and Jockl, children of passengers Corrinne and Bill Borchers, will address the dignitaries and attendees.

At precisely 3:04 p.m., all will turn toward Runway 032R and observe 31 seconds of silence, the length of time the flight was aloft. A reading of the names of the 273 crew, passengers, and those on the ground that lost their lives will follow.

Retired Chicago firefighters Ron Walerowicz and Jake Jakubec then will ring the Bell of Remembrance 31 times.

The program concludes with a prayer and blessing by the Rev. Michael G. Zaniolo, chaplain for the Interfaith Airports Chapels of Chicago and scattering of soil from the crash site in the memorial garden.

Crayons and paper will be available at the memorial wall for stone rubbings and red 45th anniversary ribbons will be handed out as



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Retired Chicago firefighters Ron Walerowicz, left, and Jake Jakubec, will ring the Bell of Remembrance 31 times at the ceremony marking the 45th anniversary of the crash of Flight 191 on May 25 in Des Plaines.

a remembrance.

The memorial features 273 bricks inscribed with the names of those lost in the crash.

A plaque at the site reads, "We Remember Flight 191 — Let us not forget the victims of May 25, 1979, who helped assure the safety of all who have boarded an airliner since that tragic event."

Flight 191 was a McDonnell Douglas DC-10 bound for Los Angeles.

As the plane took off, the left engine separated from the wing, causing a loss of control and a crash less than a mile from the end of the runway.

The National Transportation Safety Board later said that faulty maintenance procedures at American Airlines led to the engine separation.

The crash resulted in major reforms in maintenance practices and the engineering of planes.



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Kim Jockl, daughter of American Airlines Flight 191 passengers Corrinne and Bill Borchers, makes a rubbing of her parents' bricks during the 40th anniversary remembrance ceremony in Des Plaines.