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Liberal firefighters stand at attention in their dress blues at last year's Patriot's Day, which will occur again Wednesday at Cottonwood School in Liberal. L&T file photo

By ROBERT PIERCE

• Leader & Times

The students currently attending Liberal's Cottonwood Intermediate School were not even born yet when planes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City on Sept. 11, 2001, but for the adults leading them into the future, the memories of 12 years ago Wednesday are still fresh on many of their minds.

In the years since, the school has observed its annual Patriot Day ceremony to help the

community thank local first responders and military for their service.

Coordinator and Cottonwood music teacher Becky Robison said while Patriot Day may be becoming more of a history lesson for kids, she is one of those for whom the events of 9/11 can be easily recalled.

“Several local people were affected because they knew people in New York when it happened,” she said. “Many of us can still remember where we were standing the day we found out about the tragic events.”

The Patriot Day event will have a moment of silence to honor the memories of the lives lost that day, and Robison said plans call for those in attendance to pay homage to local veterans, active military for the sacrifices they make daily.

“We hope another tragic day never befalls our country again, but we don’t want to wait until it does before we say thank you to our men and women in uniform,” she said. “If you’ve been coming before, you’ll know that we like to add different elements each time.”

Robison said the ceremony will likewise feature two new songs not done at other Patriot Day observances.

“The kids have all been making their own flags to use at the event,” she said. “We welcome any and all that would like to join us in saying thank you to those who are serving and have served.”

Hero classroom visits following the event are still a welcomed tradition at Patriot Day. The event will take place at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday in the north parking lot of Cottonwood located at 1100 W. 11th Street.

“We look forward to seeing you there,” Robison said.

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