

The Spirit of 9/11

Letter to the Editor, Brunswick Beacon, 09.16.21

The twentieth anniversary of 9/11 brings memories of unspeakable horror — and unsurpassed sacrifice. At the Twin Towers, [403 first responders gave their lives](#), rushing into burning buildings to save others. At the Pentagon, after the crash of [Flight 77](#), coworkers [carried the helpless to safety](#). Aboard Flight 93, passengers [fought back against the hijackers](#), heroically going down with the plane to abort the attempt to destroy [the White House](#).

Twenty years ago, Americans came together selflessly to fight a common enemy — without regard for politics. Today, we have a common enemy in [COVID-19](#). To date it has killed a staggering [659,000 Americans](#). The medical science on the virus is clear: vaccines vastly reduce the [rate of serious illness requiring hospitalization](#), and [masks](#) help stop its spread.

COVID-19 vaccines were developed during the previous administration and effectively rolled out during the current one. Yet, somehow, this life-saving solution has become a political issue. Currently, the [vaccination rate](#) among Democrats is 88%; among Republicans it is 55%. People who disregarded medical experts' advice to get vaccinated are now monopolizing hospital beds, begging those same professionals to keep them alive. [Nurses](#) are beyond broken, tirelessly trying to save dying patients who refused to protect themselves or others.

Now, [pediatric Covid cases are higher than ever](#). Children under 12 cannot get vaccinated. Masks are their only defense. [Yet eight states with Republican governors](#) have tried to prohibit local school boards from requiring masks, ignoring [CDC guidance](#). [Parents are becoming violent toward school staff over mask requirements](#), some even harassing or punching teachers.

Misplaced partisanship has kept Americans from rallying together to protect even our children. We need remember the heroes of 9/11. They gave their lives for their fellow Americans. The least we can do is get vaccinated.

Mark Allen
Holden Beach