



## The giving trees of the 9/11 Memorial

**A** cold rain fell on the 9/11 Memorial the morning of Feb. 25. Then a thick fog rolled in, engulfing the New York City skyline in a sea of gray.

The dreary weather was a fitting backdrop as visitors perused the names of more than 2,700 people who perished in New York on September 11, 2001. Some of them took pictures. Others outlined the engraved letters gently with their fingers.

Through it all, the memorial's gushing waterfalls silenced the hushed conversations of visitors, leaving a resounding quiet upon the site, even as the city roared with life beyond its walls.

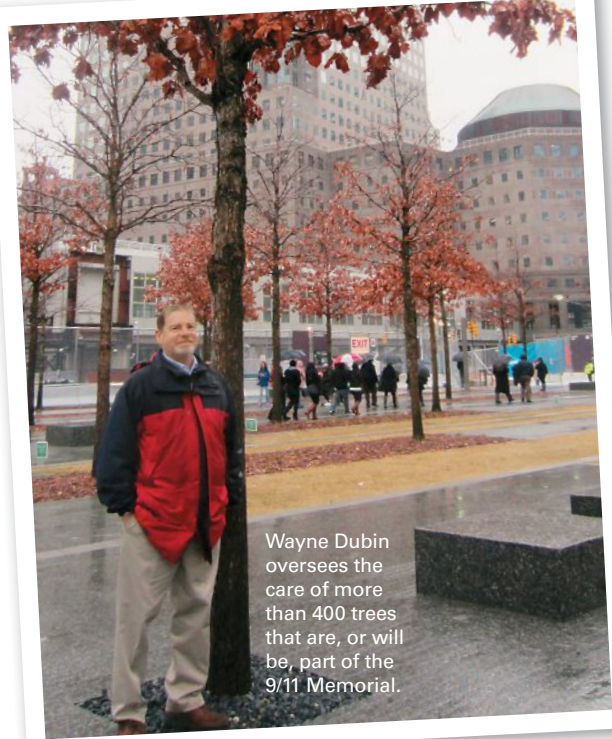
It felt strange to be at the memorial, to feel so vividly the space of 10 years that have passed since that tragic day. It's just one of many sentiments that collide at the memorial. Look at its two, acre-wide basins and you'll feel the weight of knowing that the World Trade Center once stood there. That's when you realize how truly enormous those buildings were. That's when you feel, down to your core, how much life was lost that day.

You sense it even before you lay eyes on the more than 2,700 names carved in stone on the site.

As a visitor, I was hardly immune to the memorial's significance. But I wasn't there to pay my respects. I was there for a different reason: to write about the role of the memorial's landscape — specifically its trees.

With me was my host, Wayne Dubin, vice president and division manager for Bartlett Tree Experts. Dubin oversees the care of the memorial's roughly 225 swamp white oak trees. And more than 200 swamp white oaks under his tutelage in New Jersey will join them at the site by the time memorial construction is complete.

As the one overseeing the care of the memorial's trees, Dubin feels a great responsibility for them.



Wayne Dubin oversees the care of more than 400 trees that are, or will be, part of the 9/11 Memorial.

They are, after all, his livelihood. He notices every detail about them. Pointing to a missing chunk of bark on one of the trees, he observed it didn't fall away naturally. "I'm not happy to see that," he said.

It was the voice of a man who has more than 20 years of experience in tree care. A man who takes ownership of, and great pride in, his work.

Dubin knows how important the memorial is. It's why he cares so much that the trees remain healthy and beautiful. Yet he knows darn well that people don't go there to see the trees.

Even so, the trees' role in the memorial's landscape is important. Without their shade, summertime visitors strolling the memorial's black stone would bake beneath the blazing sun.

Dubin's ardor is an important reminder that much more goes into maintaining the 9/11 Memorial than meets the eye. There are, after all, scores of people behind it. It's a collaborative effort built upon a thoughtful, creative vision and hours and hours of hard work.

It's work that makes it just a little bit easier to carve, quite literally into our memories, those who made the ultimate sacrifice on 9/11.

Read more about the memorial's trees and the people behind the 9/11 Memorial in our April cover story.