

WFWP's flag was raised on a tall flagpole outside the Clifton City Hall for 7 days

Claire Haider
June 29, 2019



A green and yellow emblem set against a white background waved proudly in the sky among a sea of red, white and blue on July Fourth this year. Claire Haider, WFWP Chairwoman of Paterson, New Jersey, looked up with joy in her heart as she walked by. Through her determined efforts, the WFWP flag was raised on a tall flagpole outside the Clifton City Hall for seven days.

The city of Clifton has a long-standing tradition of displaying flags outside its city hall, in particular the large collection of US flags honoring veterans that is exhibited five times a year on the well-known Avenue of Flags (read more about them [here](#)). While the vast majority are US flags, every now and then there is a special flag-raising ceremony for a particular nation or group. After seeing the flag of another organization being displayed recently, Claire decided to go to the city hall herself and inquire how WFWP could also apply to have their flag raised.



Clifton with Claire on the right

She was told that all she had to do was submit a letter of request, so she promptly asked the WFWP USA

national office for support, who provided an eloquent letter introducing the organization and its chapters nationwide. According to Claire, the city hall was so impressed with the [letter](#) and our general consultative status with the UN that it took them no more than ten minutes to respond and agree to honor our flag! Our great track record "can open up so many doors," emphasized Claire.



leaders in their communities.

To our great surprise the mayor permitted the flag to remain for a total of seven days, whereas generally the flag is taken down after a few hours or a day. Claire together with her husband walked by the flag every single day and felt grateful to God for having chosen this special time. On July 4th, the WFWP flag was the only flag among more than 2,500 flags at Clifton City Hall not representing any state or government. Claire later shared in awe, "It was an incredible sight. I lost my breath [seeing the flag]."

Inspired by this success, Claire is moved to ask coffee shops and other public areas to show the WFWP flag, and encourages other WFWP chapters to try the same. It is time to let the WFWP flag and all that it stands for wave proudly all across the United States!

The date was set for June 29th, and about 90 people attended the flag-raising ceremony that officially started at 11am. Among the notable guests were the mayor of Clifton, James Anzaldi, and local Councilwoman Lauren E Murphy, who decided to attend after passing by and seeing the WFWP banner displayed on the street side. Alan Tamelessio, a representative from our partner organization Universal Peace Federation NJ, was also in attendance.

Ms. Nora Waldmann set the tone as she movingly sang the national anthem, facing the US flag in front of the city hall. After a welcome by emcee Meadow Talakson, Pastor Manoj Jacob of the Family Federation for World Peace NJ offered an opening prayer. Claire invited a couple of guest speakers from Paterson to say a few words: Dr. Judy Foster from the Christian Fellowship Church and Lorenzo Carpenter, from a grandparents care organization.

WFWP USA Vice President Juanita Pierre Louis representing the national office gave a powerful introduction to WFWP, our vision and mission. She spoke with great enthusiasm, and emphasized the important role of women and their value before God.

In his address, Mayor Anzaldi spoke about the wonderful diversity represented in Clifton and how he wants to proudly display it. He shared that even though he gets pushback for it, he believes the diverse display of organizations at city hall respects our nation's freedom of speech and freedom of expression.

To conclude the ceremony, two dance groups offered beautiful performances, first a group of Japanese ladies and then a group of Filipinos. Photos were taken, and all WFWP members and friends gathered felt very proud to see the organization receiving such public recognition after so many years of investing in outreach, networking and empowering women



WFWP
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May 14, 2019

Clifton City Hall
900 Clifton Ave.
Clifton, NJ 07013

Dear Ms. Nancy Ferringo,

Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) is a dynamic organization that is committed to providing women with the opportunity to create lasting peace in the world, through talks, forums at the United Nations, racial and religious reconciliation projects, national and international conferences, benefits, and service projects.

The Women's Federation for World Peace is a non-governmental organization in General Consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and in association with the UN Department of Public Information.

With more than 35 state and city chapters in the US—including 5 in the state of New Jersey, in Clifton, Hackensack, Paterson, Elizabeth, and Newark—WFWP USA was established in 1992 by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. Dr. Moon and her husband, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, are a remarkable couple who have worked together for over 50 years, to pioneer a way for peace. A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, WFWP USA has ongoing programs in five areas: Leadership of the Heart, Marriage, Family, and Relationships, Peacebuilding, Human Rights and Women's Dignity, and Spirituality and Healing.

Our organization encourages every woman to become a "woman of peace" through cultivating her heart, the mother's heart, to care not just for her own children but for the children of others, the children of other nations, the children of the world, by developing and expressing the qualities of empathy, forgiveness, and unconditional love.

As such, we would like to hereby request that the Women's Federation for World Peace flag be raised at Clifton City Hall. Please contact WFWP NJ Chairwoman Mrs. Claire Haider for further information.

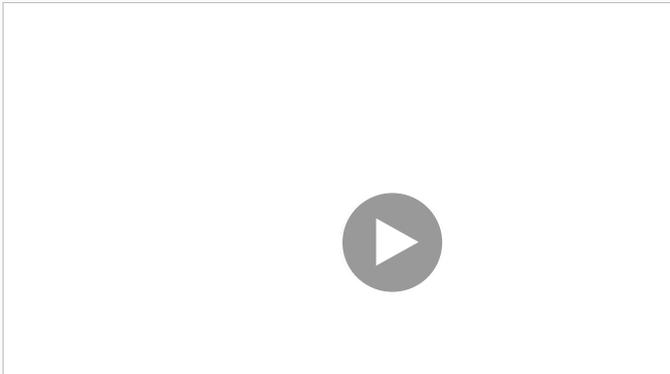
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Angelika Selle
President, WFWP USA
Vice President, WFWP International

Clifton pays tribute to veteran who created patriotic display

Deena Yellin, NorthJersey Published 6:56 p.m. ET June 10, 2018 | Updated 7:14 p.m. ET June 10, 2018



John Biegel, who died at the age of 83, in March, was remembered Sunday as the barn that holds Clifton's 2400 plus flags was renamed, the John E. Biegel Flag Barn. June 10, 2018 Kevin R. Wexler/NorthJersey.com



(Photo: Kevin R. Wexler/NorthJersey.com)

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He was the flag man of Clifton.

John Biegel was the force behind the Avenue of Flags, Clifton's grand spectacle of patriotism that springs up five times annually in a red, white and blue tribute to veterans.

Biegel and his team of dedicated volunteers worked diligently behind Clifton City Hall — out of a historic building called the Barn — where they labeled the flags, each one dedicated to a veteran.

Every Memorial Day, Flag Day, July Fourth, Patriot Day (Sept. 11) and Veteran's Day, residents awoke to a star-spangled effect: hundreds of flags planted in City Hall's backyard, billowing in the wind from dawn to dusk.

Biegel died in March, but his legacy lives on in the Avenue of Flags.

On Sunday, Clifton residents gathered to honor Biegel by naming the barn after him.

"This was John's life for years: to honor the armed forces with profound love," said Clifton Mayor James Anzaldi at the dedication ceremony, adding that he always came to him with ideas to make things better. "He was here to build up, never to tear down."

At a barbecue after the ceremony, Tom Fieldhouse, Biegel's son-in-law, recalled Biegel as a leader in whatever he did, whether serving as president of the Daughters of Miriam Residents Association, or commanding the local American Legion and VFW.

But ultimately, it is the Avenue of Flags that will be his legacy.

"This was his life. It's what kept him alive," Fieldhouse said.



Two of John E. Biegel's children, Kathleen Fieldhouse and Jeffrey Biegel are shown at the

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The Clifton City Council voted unanimously in March to name the building after the 83-year-old Korean War veteran and Marine, who had overseen the Avenue of Flags program for more than 15 years. When Biegel first heard the news, he was moved to tears. He told his friends and family, "I'm so glad they are doing this while I'm still alive."

The next day he was rushed to the hospital, where he died.

At Sunday's ceremony, friends, town leaders and fellow volunteers became choked up as they recalled Biegel's love for veterans and for his country, and his dedication to the veterans groups he was involved with.

They also joked about his grumpy personality. "If he didn't holler at you, he didn't love you," his son, John Biegel III, quipped. Apparently, he hollered at many people, particularly those he worked with around City Hall. And he never shied away from giving his opinion, whether it was wanted or not.

Joe Tuzzolino, a volunteer on the committee, remarked that the Avenue of Flags is a great honor for the city of Clifton. "There's a lot of love for Clifton coming out of those flags," he said.



Liz Velez, Leo Velez, 17, Isabel Velez, 7, and Dannyboy Velez, 15, all of Clifton are shown during the John E. Biegel Flag Barn Dedication. Leo Velez decided to join the military after speaking to Biegel. Sunday, June 10, 2018 (Photo: Kevin R. Wexler/NorthJersey.com)

Biegel and a friend had the vision for the Avenue of Flags more than 15 years ago, and Biegel brought it to life.

Every year since, the [collection has grown](#) as people purchase flags in honor of veterans, including 294 flags in memory of soldiers killed in action. Altogether, there are now more than 2,043 flags in the Avenue of Flags.

"This is probably one of the largest displays like this in the United States," said Anzaldi. "It's one of the most beautiful things I've seen in Clifton."

Longtime Clifton resident Vivian Semeraro was among the first to purchase a flag and did so in memory of her uncle, Jack Semeraro, who fought in World War II.



Clifton Police Capt. Chris Stabile and Fannie Ballard, of Hackensack, salute the flag during the dedication service for the John E. Biegel Flag Barn, in Clifton, Sunday, June 10, 2018. (Photo: Kevin R. Wexler/NorthJersey.com)

"It's so moving to see all the flags. All you need is a little breeze and they are all flowing. You want to stand there and salute," she said. "Everyone who comes to see it is amazed."

To buy a flag in honor of a service member or veteran, visit cliftonnj.org and click on Links/Information and Clifton Avenue of Flags.

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