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'The Rising' to shine for Empire State Games

Westchester plans to install lights to showcase memorial

Glenn Blain
The Journal News

VALHALLA — Westchester's Sept. 11 memorial "The Rising" will be getting a new look for the opening of the Empire State Games, and it will be a glimpse of things to come for the spiraling steel structure.

The county plans to install temporary lights on the top of Kensico Dam that will shine down on the memorial during the games' opening ceremonies, which are set for Wednesday at the plaza beneath the dam. The memorial,

dedicated to county residents who died in the 2001 attacks, is just to the side of the main plaza.

"We obviously want it lit when we have the Empire State Games opening ceremonies," said Susan Tolchin, chief adviser to County Executive Andrew Spano. "We're proud of it, and we want people to see it."

While the memorial already features 30 spotlights shining up from the base of the sculpture, the original plan for the site always called for the installation of lights on the dam to also shine down on it, Tolchin said.

The memorial, which cost \$1 million to construct, was dedicated Sept. 10, 2005.

Peter Tartaglia, a spokesman for the county Parks Department, said permanent lights for the dam

have already been purchased and should be installed within the next several weeks.

But seeing those lights, at least initially, will be somewhat problematic, county officials admitted. Because the park closes at dusk and the memorial's location gives it only limited visibility from the surrounding roads, the county recently stopped turning the lights on at night.

A fact that is not lost on park visitors.

"You can see it from afar, but you are not allowed in there," said Judy Delano, 4, of North White Plains. "So who are they lighting it for?"

Sylvia Sagnibene, 36, of North White Plains had similar feelings.

"Once the sun sets, within a half hour, everyone is gone," said Sag-

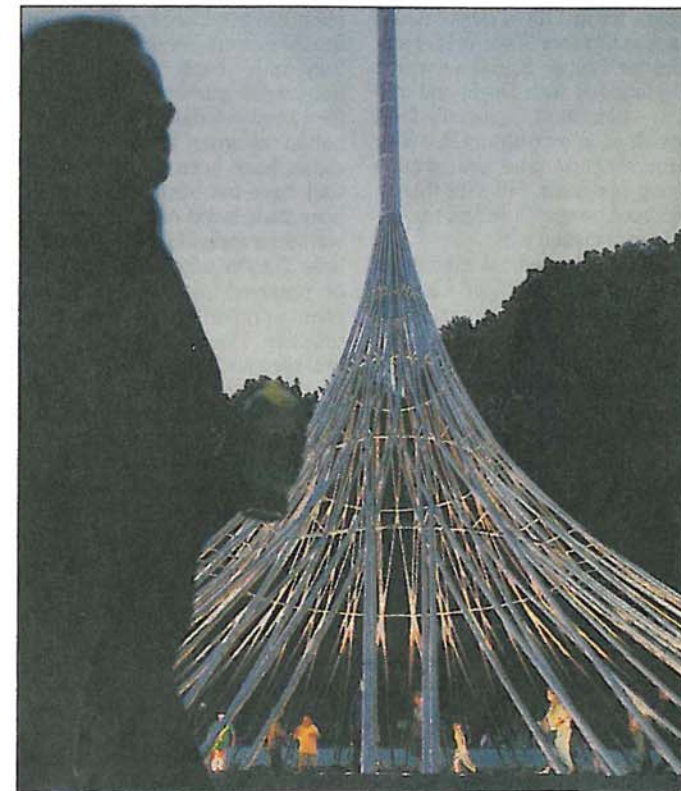
nibene, 36, during a visit to the park Thursday with her son, Alex. "To keep the lights on when it's dark, I don't think that helps, unless they want to keep the park open at night."

Tartaglia said the memorial's lights will be used mostly for special events at the park. However, the county does have plans to improve the overall lighting at Kensico Dam Plaza, which would allow the park to be kept open at night.

Those improvements will likely not be completed until sometime in 2009.

"The memorial will be in sync with the park hours," Tartaglia said.

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Mike Roy/The Journal News

"The Rising" was illuminated for the Fourth of July fireworks display at Kensico Dam Plaza.