



Senator Clinton Visits

Marian Fontana

I still find it difficult to look at Ground Zero without getting emotional; however, the window in our office overlooking the site seemed like a fitting place to start our meeting with the Senator on March 6th. Our loved ones were in the forefront of Vice President Lee Ielpi's mind as he pointed out to the Senator where his son Jonathan was found, emphasizing the painful reality that over, forty percent of the families have received nothing of their loved ones remains.

We noted to the Senator that, except for a tall fence with a few signs, the site no longer bears any trace of the tragedy that took place there over three and a half years ago. She nodded, watching twenty floors below as tour buses unloaded people from all over the country and the world hoping to take home some sense of what happened that day.

Lee explained that this was the impetus to open the Tribute Center. He pointed to the Tribute Center's home on Liberty Street that will serve as a temporary visitors center until the permanent memorial is built. We emphasized our commitment to ensuring that the people who visit here will not only learn of the tragedy through the exhibits offered, but through the family members, residents, volunteers and rescue workers who will serve as guides. People will leave our Center with an intimate understanding of 9/11 and how this event and losing our loved ones changed our lives forever—the true story of 9/11.

The Senator offered her support and was overwhelmingly enthusiastic about the Tribute Center. She emphasized that the material included in the exhibit should be handled with the utmost reverence and respect, to which we agreed. While we noted that our group was a non-partisan organization beholden to none, we were grateful that the Senator shared our commitment to creating a place to reflect on the events of 9/11.

Now, with the Freedom Tower plans stalled and so many families disappointed with the slow process of memorialization, the importance of the Tribute Center seems evermore paramount. The family members' input and the commitment of so many like the Senator, strengthens our resolve to create a place that will not only emphasize this tragedy, but will serve as a testament to the resilience of our nation, the city and most of all, the human spirit. We thank the Senator for taking time out of her busy schedule to offer the families, once again, her support.

Healing Bridges

Jennifer Adams

In July, 2004, Mrs. Shizue Takahashi, who lost her husband in the March 20, 1995 sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway, visited New York to learn about victims' rights in the United States. Upon her return, Mrs. Takahashi sponsored representatives from the September 11th Families' Association to attend a symposium in Japan on the sarin gas attack. Ten years after the attack, 12 families continue to grieve the loss of their loved ones. Over 5,000 survivors continue to deal with varying physical and psychological effects. Families and survivors have yet to receive any support or compensation from the Japanese government. Mrs. Takahashi is founder and president of the Tokyo Subway Sarin Incident Victims Association which advocates for victims of the attack.

On March 19, 2005, the Tokyo Subway Sarin Incident Victims Association and the Tokyo Bar Association sponsored a symposium to update families, survivors and the public about continued health effects and victim rights. At the symposium, Lee Ielpi delivered a letter of support from Mayor Bloomberg that stated in part, "the global community must stand united in our efforts to protect and provide assistance to our citizens." The Tokyo Subway Sarin Incident Victims Association reported on survivors living with varying degrees of paralysis from sarin exposure and post-traumatic stress. Representatives of the September 11th Families' Association delivered an educational presentation about the September 11th relief efforts and US government support.

Survivor Yuli Kim, whose sister was hospitalized after exposure to sarin, explained how survivors continue to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and physical limitations. "I am one of very few people who speak out about the attack and its impact. I feel it is important to remember, and for victims to be supported." Suze, a psychologist and professor of criminal victimology in Japan, says, "Victim rights are not traditionally acknowledged in Japanese culture. The understanding we now have of the importance of support in response to terrorism will help Japan shape policies for the future." Mrs. Takahashi extended her sincere appreciation for attendance of the September 11th Families' Association in a statement at the Foreign Press Club and at Japan's House of Representatives. "Understanding how the US supports victims of terrorism and crime provides a model for Japan."

While in Japan, Association representatives met with families of September 11th victims. Twenty-six Japanese citizens died on 9/11. Japanese families have had difficulty in receiving and understanding September 11th-related information. Many families have traveled to the World Trade Center site for the anniversaries. They expressed confusion in recognizing their loved ones' names at the site. While families have been able to learn what their loved ones' names look like in English, Japanese friends and relatives are unable to find the names, since they are not in Japanese characters. Lee Ielpi brought this concern to the attention of the LMDC Family Advisory Council that represents the interests of families in developing the WTC memorial.



Senator Clinton visits the September 11th Families' Association to learn about the Tribute Center.

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The voice and information source for all families of 9/11 victims.

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9/11 Resource Corner

American Group Psychotherapy Assoc.
Diane Feirman
www.agpa.org
Community-based group interventions, training & support services

American Red Cross September 11 Recovery
(877) 746-4987
www.redcross.org/september11/help
Case management & mental health support

Chinese Staff and Workers' Association
(212) 334-2333
(718) 633-9748
Community-based support

Committee for Hispanic Children and Families
Vanessa Ramos
(212) 206-1090 x348
www.chcfinc.org
Case management & mental health support

Financial Planning Assoc.
Claude Collins
(800) 322-4237 ext. 7138
www.fpanet.org/public
Workshops & education

Safe Horizon
Emily Lohman
(212) 729-5513
www.safehorizon.org
Counseling & support

The World Trade Center Permanency Project
New York, NY 10018
(212) 473-0222
jamesb@coac.org
Counseling in English, Spanish, French and Creole

Week of Hope

Elia Zedeño

Recently, I returned home from a week spent in Oklahoma City. For a survivor of the February 26, 1993 bombing and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center, it was both an honor and a privilege to share time and words of comfort during Oklahoma City's "Week of Hope."

Through the World Trade Center Survivors' Network, I have made friends with some who survived the Oklahoma City bombing on April 19, 1995. During my stay in Oklahoma City, Richard Williams, who survived the bombing at the Murrah Federal Building, was my personal guide. Mr. Williams has been instrumental in the creation of the National Memorial and the National Memorial Museum in Oklahoma City.

This past week was Oklahoma City's 10th Anniversary; and the National Memorial sponsored many events beginning with a Candlelight Vigil and culminating in the 5th Annual Memorial Marathon, in which close to 12,000 participated. In addition, during the "Week of Hope," many organizations and institutions throughout the City took part in the week's events. I was witness to such contributions as a presentation by Holocaust survivor and writer, Elie Wiesel, and the 1st Annual Model UN Council presented by 15 high schools throughout the state, at Oklahoma City University. I also participated in an outreach-to-schools program sponsored by the National Memorial.

The National Memorial speaks of serenity, peace and respect. The moment I stepped on Memorial Grounds, I was provided with the opportunity of reflection, as my image was immediately captured in the reflecting pool.

As Richard Williams explained the symbolism behind everything at the Memorial, and pointed to park rangers providing guided tours to visitors, I understood more than ever the importance of building the Tribute Center near our Ground Zero, as well as the necessity for our input as survivors in volunteering as tour guides.

Finally, I came face to face with the "Survivor Tree." There was nothing for me to do except feel humble as I took note of the scars he still wears shamelessly and guiltlessly. In defiance he stands with a tremendous will to survive, knowing all he needs is the Grace of God to suffice him.

The National Memorial Museum is breathtakingly inclusive. The stories are told in ten chapters beginning at 9:01 that fateful morning before the attack. Furthermore, the Museum has an area dedicated to the terrorist acts at the WTC.

Although the magnitude of the events at the World Trade Center was greater in numbers, the time spent in Oklahoma City presented me with renewed confidence that the people of New York City will be inspired to utilize the model provided by the National Memorial and the National Memorial Museum to create a respectful, serene and inclusive space for family members, survivors, and rescue and recovery workers for generations to come.

Everything in Oklahoma City has been created via collaborative efforts among family members of victims, survivors, and rescue and recovery workers. They have even made room for people who were not directly affected by the bombing, but consider their lives having been "changed forever."

Mostly everyone I met in Oklahoma City speaks of renewed strength, re-enforced faith and a deep sense of purpose. When combined with the hospitality and compassion displayed by Oklahomans, this trip became a most powerful and notable experience.

Freedom Tower Redesign

Michael Kuo

In early May, after more than a year of taking a backseat to the 2012 Olympics and the west side stadium proposal, the World Trade Center site has returned to front-page news and in public statements by Governor Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg. A nearly two-week period of back-to-back news reports has caused the administrations and their agencies and planners to take a second look at some design and scheduling issues. The topics under discussion include the design of the site plan's signature building, the Freedom Tower, and potential delays that will affect its projected opening date in 2009. The Freedom Tower's neighbor, the proposed performing arts centre designed by architect Frank Gehry, also faces major delays as the Memorial Foundation's Phase I funding plan did not include efforts to raise money for the construction of the Center.

In response to a recently publicized NYPD report that warned that the Freedom Tower was dangerously close to West Street and potentially vulnerable to a truck bomb, Governor Pataki declared that "a new design for the Freedom Tower is required." The tower's spiraling form, designed by architects David Childs and Daniel Libeskind, will most likely have to be straightened in order to create a smaller building base that is further away from the street. The tower will still sit on the northwest corner of ground zero and rise to the symbolic height of 1,776 feet.

A 20-ton granite cornerstone was laid last July 4, with construction expected to begin this spring, however delays of a year or more are now being projected.

The WTC memorial, "Reflecting Absence," is still on track and may actually be completed before the Freedom Tower is built. The memorial itself, however, has not been immune to questions and criticism. There is growing concern that the only above-ground presence in the memorial quadrant is that of a cultural building, whose relationship to September 11 is unclear. The building, which is to house the Freedom Center, Drawing Center and a memorial visitor center, could potentially be constructed only 25 feet away from the eastern edge of the sunken north tower pool with a height of 10 stories. If it is constructed to those specifications, eastern sunlight in the morning will cast shadows over the much of the north tower pool.

Correction: In the article "WTC Memorial and Foundation" in the previous edition of the Tribute newsletter, the writer claimed that "almost 100% of bedrock at the North Tower footprint will be publicly accessible." The issue of how much bedrock will be accessible is still under debate and the underground layout of the memorial is still under design. As of December 2004, the plans called for the exposure of the boxbeam column footings of the North Tower at bedrock and a room at the center of the footprint that contains a repository for the unidentified remains.



Courtesy of Oklahoma City National Memorial.

The September 11th Families Association visits Japan to support international healing and understand 9/11 families' concerns.



Barbara Horn, Shizue Takahashi, Lee Ielpi and Jennifer Adams in front of the Sarin Gas Memorial Plaque, the only recognition of the event, in Tokyo, Japan.



Standing in front of the memorial in Hiroshima, Japan: Mr. & Mrs. Sumiyama, who lost their son Yoichi Sumiyama on 9/11, Lee Ielpi, who lost his son Jonathan Ielpi on 9/11, and Mr. Ito, who lost his son Kazushige Ito on 9/11 and lived in Hiroshima when the atomic bomb was dropped.



Jennifer Adams, Barbara Horn and Lee Ielpi meet with Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Staff.



Representatives from the September 11th Families' Association meet with Mr. and Mrs. Kawauchi who lost their son Hideya on September 11th.

Tribute Center Progress

Sally Yerkovich

Tribute continues to make progress! Working with BSKS Architects, the Tribute team has begun to bring our vision for a welcoming, inclusive visitor center closer to reality. Schematic designs for the leased space at 120 Liberty Street are in place and we expect to "break ground" (or, in our case, begin demolition) on June 1.

In three main exhibition and program areas, the Tribute Center will put a human face on the events of February 26, 1993 and September 11, 2001 for the thousands of visitors who are coming daily to the World Trade Center site. Tribute is projected to open in the early spring of 2006.

Public Workshops

Over the past two months, the Tribute Center staff has held a series of public workshops in an effort to gather information from family members, survivors, residents, and rescue workers as well as the general public. This public comment will inform Tribute's program as we move forward.

We are pleased that response to the Tribute Center has been overwhelmingly positive. All groups with whom we met commented that Tribute will fill a void both within the September 11th community and for World Trade Center site visitors. It will complement what already exists – signage around the site, in the World Financial Center and at St. Paul's Chapel – providing a more complete picture of the events on 9/11 as well as the response and rebuilding.

Other comments focused upon the stories to be told in the Center. People felt that they should represent all parts of the September 11th community and convey the impact of the events upon the local area, its residents and workers.

Finally, some expressed concerns about the impact of large numbers of visitors to the Tribute Center on the local area. They also urged the Tribute staff to consider carefully how to deal with this volume in the Center's relatively small space.

All comments were documented and reviewed by the staff and our advisors; they are informing the Tribute Center's development. We are committed to public outreach and engagement as a means of nourishing the community spirit that inspired Tribute's creation.

Volunteer Program

The Tribute Center is designed to bring together members of the September 11th community who wish to share their stories with visitors to the World Trade Center site. McKinsey & Company has helped us create a unique volunteer training program that will facilitate this interaction, developing a pool of docents who will lead walking tours as well as volunteers who will help with other aspects of the center's operations and activities.

Volunteers will participate in a variety of roles, from helping with office tasks (involving little or no visitor interaction) to being a docent (greeting visitors and/or leading tours of the World Trade Center site).

To date, many individuals have expressed interest in helping us with this program, and over the next few months we will continue to recruit volunteers from the September 11th community, reaching out to as many groups as possible. These will include the

families of those who perished; survivors; residents; rescue and recovery workers; volunteers from the site; and those affected by the 1993 WTC bombing. We will begin interviewing potential volunteers shortly after July 1, 2005. Trained volunteers will lead walking tours during which they will share their first-hand experience of what happened on September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993 to deepen the public's understanding of this incredible story. In turn, visitors will have the unique experience of interacting with members of the September 11th community. This connection between the public and volunteers so personally affected by the attacks further ensures that we never forget those who perished or the amazing response of those who helped afterwards.

Training for a pilot group of twenty volunteers will begin during the month of July. Once the program is tested and many of our logistical questions answered, we will begin to train our regular corps of volunteers. We plan to have a regular tour program operating at the World Trade Center site by the Thanksgiving holidays and a group of 150 volunteers trained and leading tours in the spring of 2006.

If you wish to volunteer or wish more information about our program, you may contact us by e-mail: TributeVolunteers@911families.org.

Future Community Meetings

To spread the news about the Tribute Center we will be conducting a series of community meetings over the next few months. More information on these meetings and their schedule as well as about the Tribute Center will soon be available on our Website: www.911families.org.

New Family Liaison from the OCME

Kimberly Grieger

In March, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) announced that, due to the limits of current technology, the World Trade Center DNA identification process is now paused. A letter detailing this suspension recently went out to all families who have not asked for no contact by the OCME.

"Our work continues," Chief Medical Examiner Charles Hirsch declared. "It may have paused, but ladies and gentlemen, we will never quit."

To date, 1,161 victims -- 42% of the total -- remain unaccounted for. Three victims were identified on March 11, 2005. This brings the total number of victims identified to 1,588 of the 2,749 people who were killed at the World Trade Center.

Any family member who did not receive a letter, or who has concerns or questions can contact the OCME at (212) 447-7884.

Giovanna Vidoli will be replacing Katie Sullivan as World Trade Center family liaison at the Medical Examiner's Office. You can contact Giovanna at giovanna@ocme.nyc.gov or at (212) 447-7884.

Tribute

Donations in Memoriam

*John A. Candela
Clinton Davis Sr.
Ryan D. Fitzgerald
David Fontana
Timothy & Thomas Haskell
Charles L. Kasper
Vanessa Langer
James Francis Lynch
Kathleen Moran
Seth Allan Morris
Durrell Pearsall
Kenneth Frederick Rice III
Kevin Michael Williams
John Charles Willett*

September 11th Families' Association



Register for information at
www.911families.org
or call (212) 669-6122

Did you know?

If your employer has an "Employee Matching Gift Program," your donations to us can be matched or doubled by the corporation. See our website for more information.

Camp Better Days

Where: Island Lake Sports and Arts Center, Starucca PA.
(www.islandlake.com)

When: August 17-24, 2005

Who: All children between the ages of 6 years old and 16 years old who lost loved ones September 11th, 2001.

Camp Better Days is free to all eligible children.

Applications are available on our website
www.thebetterdaysfoundation.org.

Contact: Amy Callahan, Camp Director
(201) 216-1561 or email acallahan99@hotmail.com

America's Camp 2005

Enrolling boys & girls ages 7 to 15

For the week-long, sleep-away camp in

Lenox, Massachusetts in the Berkshire Mountains

Camp is offered at no cost to all children who lost a parent in the 9/11 attacks. Campers participate in a range of sports, crafts, water activities at the pool and lake, and special events.

Camp runs from Wed., August 17th to Wed., August 24th

For information or to enroll call (800) 548-6295 or visit

www.americascamp.org

e-mail: info@americascamp.org

Tribute Volunteer Program

9/11 community members including family members, survivors, residents, recovery workers and 9/11 volunteers are welcome to register for information about the Tribute Center

Volunteer Program. Return the enclosed reply card or e-mail TributeVolunteers@911families.org

We are interested in hearing from you!

Send your feedback or questions to info@911families.org.

THIS NEWSLETTER WAS SUPPORTED BY A SEPTEMBER 11 RECOVERY GRANT FROM THE AMERICAN RED CROSS LIBERTY DISASTER RELIEF FUND.

Calendar of Events

May 16 at 10:30 AM

Dedication of Brooklyn 9/11 Memorial, 69th Pier
For more info, call Rep. Vito Fossella's office at (718) 356-8400

June 1, 2005 12:00 PM

Dedication of WTC 9/11 Pen-T Memorial
For more information call George Ecker at (920) 439-1853 or e-mail eckerprof@new.rr.com
www.wtc911memorials.com

June 5 at 11:00 AM

Richard M. Keane Foundation Annual 5K run
At Standish Park- Old Whethers, CT
For more info, call (860) 563-7316
www.keanefoundation.org

***June 12 12:00PM**

4th Annual Jason DiFazio Memorial Fund
Nansen's Park 3465 Victory Blvd. Staten Island, NY
\$35 Adult, \$10 Children

***August 17-August 24**

Camp Better Days
Sleep away camp for children
For more info call (201) 216 1561
www.thebetterdaysfoundation.org

***August 17 - August 24**

America's Camp in the Berkshires
Sleep-away camp for children
For more info, call (800) 548-6295 or visit
www.americascamp.org

**RSVP Required*

Open for all 9/11 Families

Bring Memorial Park ID Card for Access

OCME NYC Memorial Park
520 East 30 St., at 1st Avenue
Call (212) 447-7884 for appointment

Family House at World Trade Center
Washington & Liberty Street

Family Room overlooking World Trade Center Site
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor

To submit an event for our calendar, e-mail
info@911families.org

September 11th Families' Association
22 Cortlandt Street 20th Floor
New York, NY 10007

