

In the February 13 issue of the *Gazette*, Ed Horn, Director of Community Services at St. Michael's Cemetery, East Elmhurst, announced that a permanent memorial to all New York City and Port Authority First Responders lost in the line of duty from 1995 to date, including members of the New York City Police Department, the Port Authority Police Department and the New York City Fire Department, with the exception of those lost on 9/11, would be dedicated. A Memory Medallion for each family to remember their loved one with up to 500 words and a photo of their choice would be donated and placed on the memorial, and an annual memorial service would be held to honor those listed upon the monument and to include recent losses, if any.

Glenn Toothman, chief executive officer of Memory Medallion Inc., Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, recently advised Horn that Memory Medallion Inc. on February 29 had received the first story related to the Memorial. Toothman shared the story with Horn and with the readers of the *Gazette*.

"This story is so very touching," Toothman told Horn. "This is a very honorable cause you are undertaking and much credit should be given to you and your facility for your participation in this endeavor. Reading this first story so very strongly reinforces the reality to me that someone's loved one was lost and lives were greatly affected from this death we seek to honor. By Memory Medallion's participation I want you to know that I do feel honored and blessed to be doing this important work of allowing this life story to be remem-

## St. Michael's 1st Responders Memorial Gets 1st Story

bered...not just this name remembered but this life.

"As always, I am grateful for our opportunity to participate in these activities because they are clearly manifesting what we are all about...providing the opportunity for life stories to be shared. Yet, as I read through this story it caused me to reflect back to the last two dedication ceremonies that Candice [Toothman's wife] and I attended and I feel compelled to share our mutual sentiments about how we felt as we gathered our things and did the drive back to Western Pennsylvania. You have been around me enough to know that more than a business, for me, Memory Medallion is a mission...almost a ministry.

"One time as a child I was with my father (as you know, he was my inspiration for developing the MM) and we were standing at a point where our view was the vast expanse of the Arlington Cemetery [near] Washington D.C. and as we looked out across the view, my father said, 'Names....heaped upon the wreck of names...if I could reach across the Great

Abyss and snatch back but one ...that it might be remembered for the life that made it live.'

"I know I am my father's son because this is what I do, and what we do at Memory Medallion—we seek to reach across the great Abyss and snatch back, to the extent possible, the life that made these names live. You know Candice well enough by this point to know that she clearly does her work at Memory Medallion because she shares in this heartfelt mission.

"My point in all of this is to share for the both of us who have been to these programs that we have come home these last two years very subdued after enduring the seemingly endless political parade of words. I know all too well, having been a politician myself, how you have to give them something in order to get something—which translates into the reality that they will only come if they get a chance to say something. (I only wish they really said something meaningful that would draw the families of these lost closer, but it hasn't happened yet for me in what they have said, so I doubt

**"This story is so very touching," Toothman told Horn. "This is a very honorable cause you are undertaking and much credit should be given to you and your facility for your participation in this endeavor. Reading this first story so very strongly reinforces the reality to me that someone's loved one was lost and lives were greatly affected from this death we seek to honor.**

that the families have related to their words much as well.)

"My real focus point in writing this is to say that at no time in the last two years were the life stories talked about ...shared in any way with the attendees, nor were people invited to come and touch these lives (as only this monument allows). This is why St. Michael's is truly special and unique to this city and its ability to honor these people, for people can by this touch come to know these lost heroes in words and deeds as told by their families.

"Ed, this is the power and the glory and the good that is at the very core of what should be the theme to these ceremonies...lives remembered not names. Touch our monument so that these lost heroes might touch you with who they were and what they did as told by their families ...this powerful and important part to what you have to offer ends being supplied by many of the families (their humble words are far more meaningful than most anything anyone else has to say).

"I am not seeking for you to be a commercial for Memory Medallion; however, I feel we have been grossly under-utilized for the heartfelt good we have to offer and our ability to provide to you a clear and powerful spotlight that separates you from the ordinary and places you in the extraordinary, as I know that the real value that we bring to your endeavor (emotional commitment and connectivity to the life stories) has

See page 37



# KIWANIS CLUB OF ASTORIA/LIC



Come Join Us on the Fourth Wednesday  
of Each Month at 6:30P.M.

at

## PONTICELLO RISTORANTE

located at 46-11 Broadway, Astoria, NY

New members welcome.

For more information about Kiwanis,  
please contact Linda Perno at: **(718) 752-1601**

PRESIDENT, TONY SIANO