

VICTIMS STILL DISRESPECTED



Sally Regenhard is presented with son Christian's helmet in 2001.

BY SALLY REGENHARD
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

FIFTEEN YEARS later, buildings are constructed, the stores are open and the shopping malls and parks are in place. But that cannot hide or disguise the fact that more than 1,100 people – including my son, Firefighter Christian Regenhard, remain missing from the World Trade Center site.

This represents an astonishing 40% of all uniformed and civilian victims.

These heroic human beings will most likely never be identified. Their precious human remains – instead of being treated with reverence and dignity and respect in an aboveground crypt or tomblike structure akin to the tomb of the unknowns – are instead languishing ignominiously in the basement of the private, admission-charging 9/11 museum.

The personal grief and indignity that myself and the families of the missing victims have to endure is both inhumane and intolerable.

While America reveres its dead military on Memorial Day and celebrates this country on the Fourth of July and once again remembers this attack on America every 9/11, we want to scream out to the world: “Why are the missing heroes and victims’ remains being treated as a tourist trap freak show attraction at the \$24 per person pay-to-grieve museum?”

The personal grief and depression and the indignity that we have to bear is an atrocity not only to this city, but to America as well. It is truly an affront to all military to know that people like my son, a decorated U.S. Marine recon sergeant who died for this city and this

country, are being treated like dirt – placed precariously at a subterranean level in a flood zone “A” area of this city, 80 feet below sea level in the basement of a museum.

Bill de Blasio was elected as the supposed great hope for the common person in this city. He turned out to be nothing but a suckup rubber-stamper to the system. Long after his election, he was still kowtowing to Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who installed himself as the chairman of the board of the September 11 Memorial Foundation and fast-tracked the master plan to dump the human remains of heroes and victims in that basement, mostly because he just wanted to get this damn thing over with before he left office.

Instead of helping the common people, de Blasio instead turned out to

be one of the greatest disappointments that the families of the missing ever encountered. He turned his head away from the pleas of the citizens of this city whose loved ones perished trying to save others on that dark day.

Today, the thousands of family members of the 1,100 unidentified victims are asking themselves why the elected officials of this city and state are not correcting this atrocity.

Our plea to de Blasio, Gov. Cuomo, Sens. Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand and every member of the New York and New Jersey congressional delegation is:

Meet with the families of missing WTC victims to ensure dignified entombment of human remains for the unidentified heroes and victims of 9/11. That is the least that they deserve.

Sally Regenhard is the Asst. Chair of “9/11 Parents & Families of Firefighters and WTC Victims.”

