

CITY

Talk of Ground Zero Tribute, as West Street Reopens

By DIANE CARDWELL

The twin beams of light forming a nocturnal memorial to World Trade Center victims will go dark in mid-April as planned, but may be incorporated into a permanent memorial, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg said yesterday.

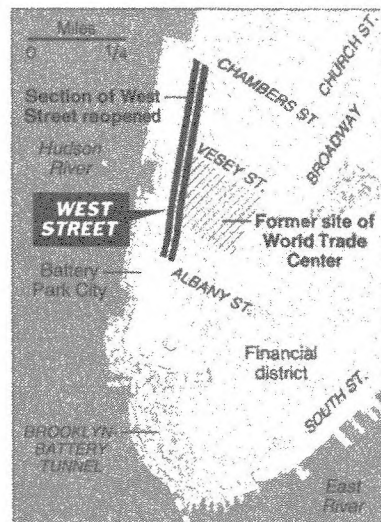
"When we first did it, a lot of the families of those we lost were against it, because they felt it would become the permanent memorial and they wanted something they thought was more fitting," Mr. Bloomberg said on his weekly call-in radio program, which took no calls yesterday.

"I think we should consider lights as part of the permanent memorial," he added, although he cautioned against the expense.

The temporary memorial, Tribute in Light, costs hundreds of thousands of dollars a month to maintain, Mr. Bloomberg said, adding that the agreement with the residents of Battery Park City limits its glow to about a month.

Several developments involving the World Trade Center site were announced yesterday, from reopened roadways to a new family viewing area to the fate of a tent nicknamed the Taj Mahal by ground zero workers.

Last night, officials reopened six lanes of West Street between Chambers and Albany Streets that had



The New York Times

Six lanes of West Street near ground zero reopened last night.

been closed to traffic since Sept. 11.

In addition, the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel, the last major crossing still shut down after the terror attack, reopened last night, and will be subject to traffic restrictions similar to those governing other crossings beginning on Monday, officials said. Cars carrying fewer than two occupants into Manhattan will not be permitted between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m., and there is a new lane open only to

cars using E-ZPass and carrying a minimum of three people. The rule also applies to buses and emergency vehicles during those hours. That lane will run from the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge across the Gowanus Expressway to the tunnel, Mr. Bloomberg said.

Also yesterday, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey announced that the Holland Tunnel is to reopen three Manhattan-bound lanes for cash-paying drivers at 7 a.m. today. The three center lanes will be for E-ZPass users, while three lanes on the far left will remain closed to allow the demolition of the Jersey City warehouse that caught fire last week.

As part of the alterations near ground zero, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation is setting up a new location, a room next to its offices on the 20th floor of 1 Liberty Plaza, where families can view the site where their loved ones perished. The room, which will include an area for children, will be open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and on weekends and holidays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., beginning April 8.

Officials said that the room was set up in response to the families' requests for greater privacy and because the view of the site has been obstructed as recovery work has moved underground.

"What the families will have here

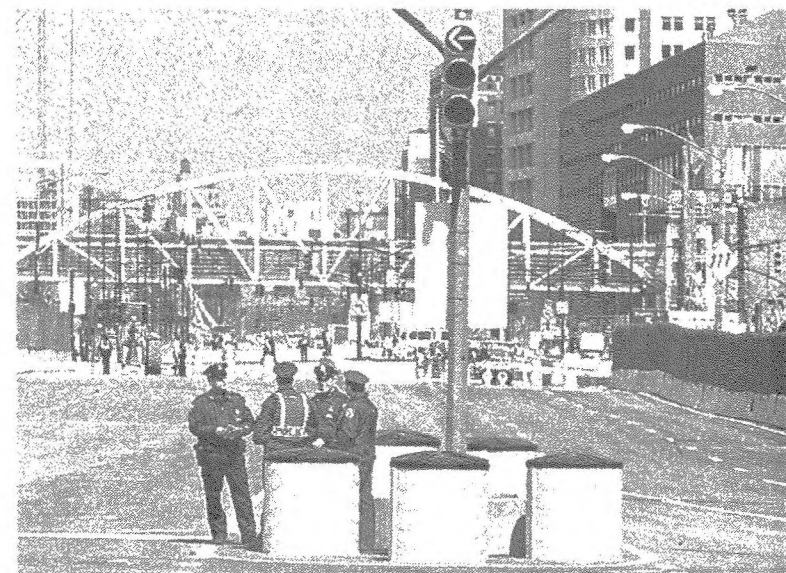
is their own room where they can sit and reflect and not be disturbed by anybody else," Mr. Bloomberg said. "It has always been contentious as to who really could get on to the platform. This will solve that problem."

Some of those family members, present at the news conference announcing the roadway openings, said they were pleased about the new center, as well as a decision announced by Gov. George E. Pataki that city officials had agreed that a tent where ground zero workers can eat and shower would remain open for at least the next few weeks, and perhaps for a month, if necessary.

That decision, Mr. Pataki said, would ensure "that those rescue workers who are down here still 24 hours a day have an appropriate place where they can sit and eat and bathe and just go about the activities they have to when they're not down at ground zero itself."

Officials said earlier this week that the tent would have to be taken down so that the Battery Park City Authority could use the area as a parking lot for businesses that are reopening, but family groups were adamant that it remain open.

After the news conference, Mr. Bloomberg, who had said that it would be "more than appropriate" to have a ceremony honoring the workers when the recovery operation came to a close, was beseeched by



Nicole Bengiveno/The New York Times

Police officers in the middle of West Street, before it reopened to traffic yesterday evening. A stretch of the road had been closed since Sept. 11.

two women who lost relatives in the attack to promise to keep the tent up until the end of the recovery operation.

Mr. Bloomberg sought to reassure them by repeating, "I hear you," and reminding them that Mr. Pataki had said the tent would stay up as long as necessary, but he stopped short of the full commitment they sought.

Martha Butler, who lost her husband, Tom, a firefighter from Squad 1 in Park Slope, Brooklyn, said that she thought the mayor understood her position, but suggested that she

wanted his reassurance in the presence of the news media and witnesses to ensure that officials would not change their decision.

She said she and other relatives of victims and workers could take great comfort in knowing that the workers had a place to go for coffee and emotional support. Speaking of the residents of Battery Park City, she said, "They want their park, their area back, but I want my husband back, and that's what I need to bring some kind of comfort to my family."

NEW JERSEY

In Jersey City, 2 Trains Derail Within 5 Days

By RONALD SMOTHERS

NEWARK, March 29 — A freight train derailed in Jersey City this morning — the second derailment in five days at the same spot — and Conrail police said that vandalism might have caused both incidents.

There were no injuries, damage to the tracks or hazardous-material spills in the derailments, each of which sent up to a dozen freight cars tumbling down the same embankment near the Newark Avenue trestle of the Conrail tracks.

"Both circumstances were strikingly similar and there is nothing to suggest that theft was the motive," said James McGeehan, a spokesman for Conrail, which is investigating the derailments. "It just looks like malicious vandalism."

He said that because of the heightened security growing out of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the freight carrier had notified the Federal Bureau of Investigation about each derailment — something he said it would not ordinarily have done.

Special Agent Sandra Carroll, a spokeswoman for the Newark office of the F.B.I., said the office was awaiting additional police reports to determine whether it would get involved in the investigation.



Associated Press

A firefighter near a derailed train in Jersey City on Monday. A second train derailed yesterday in the same spot. Conrail suspects vandalism.

cars of the train loaded with freight. A computerized system alerted the locomotive operator to the problem, and then automatically triggered an emergency braking procedure.

The sudden stopping of the train, which was moving at about 20 miles per hour on the River Line South en route to Camden, caused the freight cars to go off the tracks and down the embankment, where some were upended, Mr. McGeehan said.

The other derailment occurred about 1:30 a.m. today when nine cars loaded with trash bound for a Virginia landfill cascaded down the same

summoned from as far away as Pennsylvania to remove and right the derailed cars.

Mr. McGeehan said the trains were going slowly enough that someone "could have jumped it" and caused the damage that triggered the derailment. Someone could have also boarded the train as it stopped for one of the many signals along the route. Such vandalism, he said, is not uncommon, especially as trains pass through urban areas, he said.

Investigators discounted theft as a motive, noting that thieves are often very sophisticated and efficient in

A Family Dinner Makes the Headlines

By MARIA NEWMAN

RIDGEWOOD, N.J., March 29 — As Richard and Jenny Breining and their children were lighting candles Tuesday night at their home here, flashbulbs went off, a newspaper reporter furiously scribbled notes and the blazing lights of a television camera upstaged the tiny flames.

"You would have thought we were examining the Shroud of Turin," Mrs. Breining said.

In fact, they were doing something much more prosaic: preparing a family dinner, an event that apparently has become so rare in modern America that to have one is big news. Tuesday was Family Night in Ridgewood, a night in which families were encouraged to set aside their hectic schedules of lacrosse practice and book clubs and Girl Scout meetings to engage instead in activities — any activities — that would get family members to talk with one another.

Organizers will not know, until they conduct a survey, exactly how many families took part in the event, but it attracted nationwide attention. Residents were interviewed on NBC's "Today" show and ABC's "Good Morning America," and quoted in USA Today. And they plan to repeat Family Night next year — perhaps several times.

"I think it touched a nerve in our culture, in our families," said Marcia Marra, a parent and manager of community initiatives for Children's

Not all the attention was positive. Some callers told organizers that they were giving the impression that Ridgewood does not usually care about its families, so it has to set aside a special day for them. On CNN's "Crossfire," one host, Robert Novak, found it absurd that it took such effort to come up with a single night when everyone could pencil in a few hours to devote to family.

"How ludicrous is it for these people to sit around for seven months," he said, "to pick one night, just one night, where everybody goes home?"

A media spotlight on parents relaxing with children.

Isn't that silly?"

But one of his guests, Genevieve Wood of the conservative Family Research Council, said the event was proof that Ridgewood was not the only community where parents felt so pressured to provide children with as many organized activities as possible that they had limited time to just sit down together and talk.

"If everybody was having Family Night and it was extremely common, then why would it be making the national news and why would 'Cross-

they wanted to repeat the event again next year. The committee that planned the event is to meet Tuesday to discuss the next step in what members see as consciousness raising about how a family should apportion its time.

"Some people think it should be at least three times a year," Ms. Marra said. "A lot of parents told us they were really surprised and impressed by how much their kids liked having their undivided attention."

Some people dragged out the family photo albums and laughed over old pictures. Some played card games like Uno, while others roasted marshmallows in their fireplaces. Many fathers and working mothers made a point of getting home in time for the entire family to sit down to dinner, some over candlelight.

The idea for a family night was borrowed from Wayzata, a suburb of Minneapolis, where parents also felt that family time was getting lost. One of the organizers there, Barbara Carlson, said they continued to get calls from communities interested in holding similar events.

In New Jersey, the town of Bergenfield, inspired by nearby Ridgewood, spread its family time over the entire week, and called it Timeout. One of the organizers, the Rev. Stephen T. Giordano of the Clinton Avenue Reformed Church, said families told him they wanted to repeat the event next year.