NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

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GROUND ZERO

1,200-mile trek to find 'brother'

By BRAD HUNTER

Freddie Cox was more than just a best friend to Rob Nason.

And more than just a brother-in-law-to-be.

He was like a brother.

And so, when he learned that Cox was missing in the attack on the World Trade Center, he decided to spare no effort to try to find him.

He and his fiancée, Nancy — who is Freddie's sister — got into the car and drove all the way from Kansas City, Mo., to the Big Apple.

They drove nonstop, and it took them 24 hours to drive the 1,200 miles.

They left at 10 p.m. Tuesday and arrived at 10 p.m. Wednesday.

But yesterday, they were no closer to finding the 27-year-old Freddie than when they left.

Their only recourse was to fill out forms for missing people at the Lexington Avenue Armory, which, ironically, is around the corner from Freddie's apartment.

Telling his story, Rob, 34, often broke down in tears. His face was red and his eyes puffy from lack of sleep.

"This is really, really hard. I'm just trying to sort everything out," Rob said, tears welling in his eyes again.

"Freddie was everybody's friend, but he was my best friend. Right now, we've done everything we possibly can. I don't know what else to do."

Freddie grew up in Arizona and decided he wanted to make it big on Wall Street.

He came to the Apple five years ago and got a job with Sandler O'Neill Associates, a bond house that had offices on the 104th floor of the center.

Rob said Freddie's parents are heartbroken but are still holding out hope.

Rob, a salesman for Hallmark, and Nancy, who works in a hardware store, learned of the tragedy when they stopped for gas on their way to work.

They got into their Ford Expedition "and we just drove and drove and drove. We'd only break for coffee."

When they got to Manhattan, they called Annelise Petersen, Freddie's fiancée.

She told them no one had heard from Freddie.

The three had a big hug and they all broke down in tears.

"He totally enjoyed life," Rob said of Freddie.

"He was absolutely the nicest guy you could ever meet. He was a lot more than my best friend. He was my brother."

Heroes

Port Authority cop **Dominick Pezzulo** gave his heart and life to the job.

The Bronx resident, who patrolled Port Authority Bus Terminal, rushed to the disaster site and helped save two officers when he was struck with debris.

Pezzulo, 36, died while the cops escaped. When rescuers pulled out his body, they covered it with the Stars and Stripes and later gave the flag to his widow, Jeanette, and their two children.



JOURNEY OF HOPE: Rob Nason and fiancée Nancy Cox, who drove here nonstop from Kansas City, share a tearful embrace as they search for her brother Freddie. Joey Newfield

Fearless Conn. Marine springs into action



DAVID KARNES
Helped save PA cop.

By JOHN LEHMANN and ANDY GELLER

David Karnes did not think twice when he saw the World Trade Center horror unfold on TV.

A Marine sergeant, he jumped into his car and drove from his home in Wilton, Conn., to the Brooklyn Bridge.

Then, the 43-year-old reservist made his way to the living hell that once was one of the signatures of the New York City skyline.

Poking through the rubble with another Marine, he thought he heard a human sound coming from deep inside the ruins.

He got on his cell phone.

"I called my sister in Pittsburgh and my wife. I said, 'I'm in the middle of the World Trade Center.' I told them to contact an operator to get in touch with the NYPD command center. Fifteen minutes later, help arrived."

Karnes, who is based at Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn, and his fellow Marine were joined by a firefighter and two paramedics.

They started digging in the direction of the sound. In a few minutes, they realized there was an air pocket in the rubble and they dropped a two-way microphone into it.

A voice replied.

It was Sgt. John McLoughlin, a 21-year veteran of the Port Authority police. He said he was trapped in the air pocket with another PA cop, Will Jimeno.

They had been underground for a terrifying 19 hours.

Karnes and the other rescuers dug down about 20 feet. At one point, a rescuer told Karnes he didn't know what would happen if he moved some of the rubble.

"Everything could come down," he warned.

The Marine told him, "Go for it. We're all here to get them out. We accepted the risk and did what we had to do."

After three hours of exhausting work, the men managed to pull out McLoughlin and Jimeno.

It was 7:45 a.m. Wednesday.

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