NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

THE NEW YORK TIMES, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2001

NOTEBOOKS

Drinking to the Rescuers, and Getting Autographs

Quench, a bar on Smith Street in Brooklyn, was so crowded Thursday night that dozens of customers spilled onto the sidewalk. Were they oblivious to the city's pain? Seeking to drown their own?

Neither, said the bar's owner, Kathryn Scinto. She had let it be known that the night's proceeds would go to the Twin Towers Relief Fund and the Firefighters' Children and Widows Fund. And so from 5:30 p.m. to 4:30 a.m., the neighborhood came to drink.

Some of the community's police officers and firefighters (they parked their truck outside) came, too. Quench is more of a yuppie hangout than a uniformed one. But when the firefighters and cops entered the bar, they were met with screams and cheers, and by comely women in "I Love the FDNY" tank tops who wanted them autographed.

Ms. Scinto, who says she is "pretty cute," auctioned off a date with herself. The total raised: $10,000, including tips donated by waitresses and bartenders. *AMY WALDMAN*

Anti-Immigration Posters

A week after the attack on the World Trade Center, 40 posters appeared on phone kiosks around Manhattan. "Immigration will double U.S. population in our lifetimes," read one; "U.S. population now growing at a faster rate than China's," read another.

They are part of an ongoing campaign by a group called ProjectUSA, which calls for changes in United States immigration policy. Advertisements it has placed on billboards around New York in recent years have been removed by the city.

Craig Nelsen, the group's president, said the posters were commissioned before the attack. He said he tried to delay the postings but could not. Asked about an e-mail message sent out by the group on Thursday that called the timing of the posters "propitious," Mr. Nelsen said they were not aimed at immigrants but were designed to "divert attention away from immigrants themselves and look at the larger picture."

Several pedestrians passing by one of the signs near Times Square said they took it to be an anti-immigrant statement. Ruby Persson criticized the timing. "I think a lot of people are going to come out of the woodwork to get their messages out," she said. "That's what they do, hit people when they're most vulnerable." *TARA BAHRAMPOUR*

From Bosnia to Ground Zero

As Heather Kryszak and other members of her Buffalo-based National Guard platoon packed their bags for Manhattan on Sept. 11, they slowly came to the realization that their nine-month tour in Bosnia would no longer stand as their most harrowing experience in the military. "To know that something like this could happen where you live," Ms. Kryszak said. "It's hard."

During their tour in Bosnia two years ago, members of the 105th Military Police Company saw civilians weep when they found their homes reduced to rubble and gagged from the stench of rotting corpses at mass graves.

Called up from the across the city and state, thousands of New York Guard members spent 12-hour shifts at scenes of devastation around the trade center that they and other Americans thought occurred only in distant, more troubled lands.

Sgt. Richard Frohlich, a 56-year-old facilities manager whose 28-year-old son, Clifford, also serves in the unit, said Bosnia helped prepare them for the shock of seeing the World Trade Center in ruins, but not for the anguish. "It doesn't take my breath away," he said. "But it hurts just as much." *DAVID ROHDE*

Saving Precious Voice Mail

One of the first things Verizon Communications officials did after the World Trade Center attack upon arriving at their heavily damaged switching station at 140 West Street was to begin preserving the voice mail system that serves thousands of local customers.

On Friday, Verizon asked voice mail customers todelete messages they did not need, in order to avoid overtaxing the system. What Verizon did not say was that it wanted as many messages discarded as possible so it could turn off the so-called electronic janitor that automatically deletes messages, and allow people to retain last-minute messages they received from loved ones who may have perished in the twin towers, according to Eric Rabe, the chief spokesman for Verizon.

Mr. Rabe said that unless people deleted the messages they did not need, servers could have overflowed and crashed, possibly losing all old messages. In the meantime, Verizon officials were looking for answers on how customers can store messages from Sept. 11 in perpetuity. "We are trying to think of ways that we can preserve those messages so people can save them for the long haul," Mr. Rabe said. *JAYSON BLAIR*

The Symbolism in Shopping

After the company where she worked five blocks from the World Trade Center lost power and telephones almost two weeks ago, Tory Tunnell searched for ways to help the city recover. She collected bags of socks and took them to a donation site. She hoped to give blood, but was turned away because she is recovering from Lyme disease. Unsure of when she would be able to return to her job at Open City Films, she kept looking for a means to contribute.

She found one a few days ago while strolling in and out of shoe stores along Broadway in SoHo.

"I really don't feel like shopping but I was listening to Mr. Giuliani, and he's right, getting out and going back to the stores is a way to help make the city stable again," Ms. Tunnell said. "I still feel like I need to be doing something to help, and right now shopping is a way for me to help put the city back on track."

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