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HEARTBREAK HIGH



KATELYN LAWLER
Lost mom, brother.



JENNIFER POMPONIO
Father died in crash.



TRAGEDY UPON TRAGEDY: Classmates (above, from left) Jennifer Lawler, Jennifer Rorke, Michelle Phillips (seated), Patricia DiGiacomo and Kaitlyn Stackpole posed together before the World Trade Center attack killed Stackpole's father and Monday's air crash took Lawler's mother and brother.

B'klyn students lose loved ones to WTC & crash

By BRIDGET HARRISON and BILL HOFFMANN

The close-knit Bishop Kearney school in Brooklyn was transformed into Heartbreak High yesterday — for the second time in two months.

Students, their eyes bloodshot from crying, wandered through the halls like zombies after learning of the losses suffered by three of their own in Monday's crash.

Jennifer Lawler, 15, and her sister Katelyn, 17, two well-liked varsity basketball players, were at practice Monday morning when Flight 587 crashed into their Rockaway home.

Their mom, Kathleen, and older brother, Chris, a promising law student at St. John's University, were killed instantly in the fierce inferno.

At the same time, Jennifer Pomponio, 15, a member of the varsity softball and junior varsity basketball teams, was at home with her mom getting ready to go to practice.

As the pair dashed out the door, plane parts plowed into their house, killing Jennifer's dad, Franco, who was asleep in the bedroom upstairs.

Frank, as he was known, was the school's beloved softball coach.

The tragedies, announced to students over the public-address system during homeroom, had the kids gasping in horror and sorrow.

But the pain didn't end there.

Another senior, Teresa Vasquez, learned she had lost a family friend from the Dominican Republic aboard the flight.

Incredibly, the popular $6,100-a-year Catholic school, at 60th Street and Bay Parkway in Bensonhurst, has now been hit by seven tragedies relating to this week's plane crash and the Twin Towers terrorist attacks.

"I feel like there's a curse on us. We keep asking, why us?" said Nicole Pandolfo, 15, who is close friends with both Jennifers.

And they have a perfect right to ask.

On Sept. 11, Kaitlyn Stackpole, a 15-year-old sophomore and pal of both Jennifers, was hit by the devastating news that her father, Capt. Timothy Stackpole, one of the best of the Bravest, had perished at the Twin Towers.

School gym teacher Pat Heinz lost her firefighter brother, Capt. Walter Heinz, and senior Kathleen Henry learned that her firefighter brother Joseph Henry was also killed.

The losses devastated the school of 1,140 pupils — 50 from the Rockaway area — who spent weeks saying special morning prayers and turning to guidance counselors in an effort to ease their pain.

But those healing wounds were ripped open Monday morning with news of the new disaster.

"Finally, things were getting back to normal. Now this has happened. Every time something happens, it seems to hit us," said Alexandra Tirado, 16, as classmates around her hugged and cried.

Sister Joan McAvoy, the school's headmistress, said: "We thought we were just coming out of it."

"This morning in homeroom, you couldn't hear a sound. Everyone sat there staring," said one teacher who asked not to be identified.

And the school will not likely return to normal for quite some time.

Patricia DiGiacomo, 15, who spoke to Jennifer Pomponio shortly after the tragedy, told The Post:

"The scariest thing is that she watched her house burn down. She was so shaken up, hysterical and crying. She lost everything.

Yesterday, the basketball team raised $2,000 and the softball team raised $1,000 from pupils and teachers to help the three girls who were left with nothing but the clothes they were wearing when their homes were incinerated.

Meanwhile, Kaitlyn Stackpole, who lost her dad in one of the most publicized deaths of the WTC tragedy, missed school to help her friends get through their new nightmare.

"She was finally getting used to things. Now she's trying to be there for the other girls, too., But she can hardly be there for herself," said DiGiacomo.

"She said she didn't want anyone to feel the pain she's been going through."

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