

Every night before he falls asleep, John Carlone thinks about the courageous New York firemen. He sees them running into the burning and perilous World Trade Center, not realizing their awful fate. "I think about those guys racing up the stairs while other people were coming down," says Carlone, certified superintendent of The Meadow Brook Club in Jericho, N.Y.

Carlone's memory is sad and haunting — but it's also inspiring. He will always remember the firemen as role models who died while trying to save others — and *not* as victims of terrorism.

Carlone's feelings about the happenings on Sept. 11 are similar to those expressed by others throughout the world. It's just that Carlone, president of the Metropolitan GCSA, which includes members from New York-area golf courses, was closer to the tragedy — geographically and emotionally. His course is located about 30 miles from Manhattan, and he knows people directly affected by the terrorism.

"Many clubs in the metropolitan area lost members," Carlone says. "Almost every club around here had members that worked in the World Trade Center buildings."

Carlone is thankful that no superintendents from the association lost immediate family members in the destruction. But he says many superintendents knew firemen, policemen and others who were killed or had co-workers who were killed. A fireman who works on the side as a carpenter for Carlone lost two colleagues from his firehouse when the Twin Towers collapsed.

Needless to say, superintendents who work and live near New York are distraught and depressed, perhaps more than others who live hundreds of miles away and watched the horror unfold on their television sets. It has also been difficult getting back to the daily grind of golf course maintenance with the tragedy still looming fresh in their minds.

"I felt really guilty about smiling and having a good time for a couple of weeks," Carlone says.

But, as Carlone said in October, life goes on. It must. "We still have a job to do; it's business as usual," he says, speaking for the association's members. "There are still members who want fast greens, firm fairways and raked bunkers."

There's nothing wrong with business as usual

A Sad but Inspiring Memory From 9/11

BY LARRY AYLWARD



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during such a mournful time. Superintendents need boring but predictable normalcy in their lives now more than ever to help them cope.

There is no bright side to Sept. 11, but Carlone is moved by the actions of his big-hearted peers. He has received several phone calls from superintendents and chapter representatives around the country offering monetary support to the victims' families. "They knew we were the chapter closest to the tragedy, and they wanted to help," Carlone says.

Carlone, not an experienced fundraiser, called GCSAA CEO Steve Mona for advice. Mona instructed the GCSAA Foundation, the association's charitable branch, to assist the Metropolitan GCSA with collecting donations. Together, they formed a relief fund. The money raised goes to the American Red Cross, the children of the firemen and policemen who died during the attack, as well as other victims' families. Carlone heard from a New York City policeman that 15,000 children lost parents in the tragedy.

GCSAA began the fund with a \$50,000 donation, and Carlone's association kicked in \$10,000. The fund also received a generous gift from the Treasure Coast GCSA in Vero Beach, Fla. Kevin Downing and Greg Pheneger, certified superintendents and Treasure Coast board members, said the association held its annual fundraiser in September and raised about \$10,000, normally given to an environmental cause. But Downing and Pheneger contacted Carlone and said they wanted to donate the money to his fund.

"It fits in with superintendents' personalities," Carlone says of his peers' altruism. "We're always willing to help each other."

It's no surprise that Carlone views the firemen as his heroes. After all, they willingly lost their lives to help others.

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