

BOLDPRINT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

A TRIBUTE TO ANCHORS OF 9/11



SEPTEMBER 11TH EDITION

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9/11 CEREMONY

ORDER OF SERVICE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2022
1100 HRS

WELCOME REMARKS	CO Yosef Cooper
PROCESSIONAL	DOC Pipe Band
NATIONAL ANTHEM	Regina Miller
INVOCATION	CO Rahman Telfair
WELCOME ADDRESS	Commissioner Louis A. Molina
INTRODUCTION HARBOR UNIT VIDEO	CO Yosef Cooper
HISTORICAL REFERENCE	CO Robert McMahon
SPECIAL PRESENTATION OF PLAQUES	Commissioner Louis A. Molina
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF UNIONS	CO Yosef Cooper
MOMENT OF SILENCE	
CLOSING PRAYER	Imam Abdurrahman Kareem



MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

As the newly appointed Commissioner of the NYC Department of Correction, it is truly my pleasure to acknowledge and salute the contributions made by the men and women of DOC during 9/11.

I first want to thank every member of our staff for your hard work and consistency. A career in law enforcement is not easy and I appreciate each one of you for showing up and showing out.

September 11, 2001 is a day that will forever be engraved in our hearts and minds. It is a day that forever changed us as a country.

It is safe to say that we are all united in the remembrance of where we were, and how we felt when we were attacked. Those shared memories will continue to connect us and remind us that we are not alone.

As we reflect on that day, we recognize and honor those precious lives lost and pay homage to our first responders who within hours after the attack rushed to help with the rescue and recovery operations.

Members of DOC worked alongside NYPD, FDNY, PAPD and so many first responder agencies consistently showed up in the days, weeks, and months that followed this devastating attack.

Our Correction Officers played a vital role as we built and managed the Ground Zero communications system as well as created all the IDs that were used there, we help set up and staff the temporary morgue at Bellevue Hospital, joined other responders at the Fresh Kills landfill to collect and identify the remains of those who perished, and our Harbor Unit was a major anchor during the clean up of ground Zero.

Our lives changed on that day, but our unity, bravery and spirit grew. We are the Boldest for a reason and for that alone I am proud to honor and thank you all!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of three distinct, flowing loops.


Commissioner Louis A. Molina

LIKE MANY OF US, WE ALL SHARE MEMORIES FROM THE EVENTS DURING AND AFTER 9/11.

By: Bianca Adamson

I had the honor of speaking with Correction Officer David Saladellacuna who has currently been with the department for 25 years. On September 11, 2001, he was assigned to the Transportation Unit with 4 ½ years on the job. On that day C.O. Saladellacuna was home, he soon received a phone call notifying him that a plane was stuck in the north tower of the World Trade Center. At that point he ran outside to the roof of his building which had a view of Manhattan to see for himself. He states, "I witnessed the second plane strike the South Tower." He immediately went back to his apartment and called the Transportation Division dispatch and was advised to come in as soon as possible. Upon arrival, roll call was being conducted and his assignment was to take a court bus to Manhattan Courts with his partner and evacuate the courts and return the individuals in their care back to Riker's.

I could not help but want to know how he felt when he drove into the city right after the attacks. He explains, "I remember the streets were very quiet except for the many emergency and military vehicles on the road, the streets were also very dark due to no electricity. The odor in the air had a smell of burning electricity and asbestos." The night of the attack Officer Saladellacuna went with a team of officers to the DCAS Central Warehouse in Maspeth to drive trucks back and forth to Stuyvesant High School, (which was the temporary command post at the time) they brought supplies and materials to the rescue workers. He also recalls the DOC Harbor unit assisting with evacuating people from lower Manhattan. DOC's Harbor Unit normally patrolled the waters around Riker's and assisted the NYPD and Port Authority Harbor units on a regular basis.



Initially C.O. David Saladellacuna was shocked by what happened and the aftermath he witnessed at ground zero. However, he now has a sense of pride knowing that he was able to help during such a horrific time. He states, "I am and will always be proud of our Emergency Service Unit members, and all the member of service that worked at the Staten Island landfill and at the Medical Examiner's office. DOC played a huge roll in the rescue and recovery effort, and I'm proud to be part of it." September 11th impacted so many individuals in different ways.

Like Officer Saladellacuna, I am proud to work with the Boldest agency and I honor those members of service who were there and helped bring closure and normality back to New York City!



CO David Saladellacuna (left) and
CO Israel Vega (right).

See CO Vega story on page 12.



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

HARBOR UNIT

By: Jason Kersten



On September 11, one of DOC's smallest units ended up playing a very big role in the rescue and recovery.

Two minutes after the North Tower of the World Trade Center collapsed, the call came over the radio: "All available boats, this is the United States Coast Guard, aboard the pilot boat New York. Anyone wants to help with the evacuation of Manhattan, report to Governor's Island".

The call had been made by Coast Guard Lieutenant Michael Day, who had watched the tower fall from the bridge of the *New York*, which was stationing just offshore from the Battery. Lower

Manhattan was now a blast zone, and hundreds of thousands of people were now wandering towards the shore through a cloud of toxic ash, seeking safety and escape.

Within twenty minutes, dozens of boats began appearing on the horizon. Everything from tugboats to pleasure yachts to ferries were plowing towards Lower Manhattan to help in what would become the largest maritime evacuation in history.

Three of the rescue boats would be from DOC's own Harbor Unit—a small, scrappy outfit that no longer exists. But on that day and the ones afterwards, they would make history. Not only would they evacuate hundreds on 9/11, but they would also play a vital role in the recovery efforts to come.

ANCHORS AWAY

The Harbor Unit fell under the Security Operations Division. It was formed in 1980, when DOC obtained a 23-foot Environmental Protection Agency patrol boat from a federal surplus program.

"The thinking was that we needed a boat, because what would happen if a plane from La Guardia crashed into the bridge to Rikers?" says Retired Warden Tony Critelli, who started the unit with just six officers. "Some of the guys didn't know much about boats, but they learned very quickly. They were a great crew."

"Most the Harbor guys were like the guys from 'Jaws.' They were kind of rough around the edges," remembers Retired Harbor Unit CO Mike Banahan with a laugh.

The unit started off on Rikers Island, then moved to City Island, where it provided support for DOC's operations on nearby Hart Island and assisted boaters in Long Island Sound.

In 1994, after DOC ceased housing detainees on Hart Island, the Harbor



Unit returned to Rikers. At the time, the city's jail population was close to its all-time high, and a few years later then-commissioner Bernard Kerik decided to expand the unit.

"At some point, Commissioner Kerik came to me and said, 'Listen, common sense: We're surrounded by water, one of the escape routes would be the water...What would it take to bring [the Harbor Unit] up to par?'" remembers Retired Harbor Unit CO Robert McMahon.

Put differently, Commissioner Kerik had a revelation similar to Chief Brody in "Jaws": *You're gonna need a bigger boat.*

McMahon reached out to some associates at NYPD's Harbor Unit, and learned that they were about to retire a 26-ton, 52-footer. Though older, the boat was



seaworthy, and McMahon arranged for it to be transferred to DOC. After sandblasting it down to the hull, repainting it, and adorning it with DOC decals, McMahon was stunned.

"The boat came out and it was completely showroom. Beyond showroom," he recalls fondly.

The 52-footer instantly became DOC's flagship—and other first responder agencies took notice. Its primary duty was patrolling Rikers, but NYPD was soon calling it in to assist with jumpers at the Triboro Bridge, the Port Authority Bridge and the Secret Service would request it to provide security off LaGuardia when the president flew in. The Coast Guard would also commission it to work during Fleet Week. In 1998, it was christened the *Officer Guy Hudson*, after a beloved CO from AMKC who had tragically passed away the previous year.

With twin diesel engines, the *Guy Hudson* was a workhorse, but it was not without comforts. Its galley seated four, and there were even bunks where crew could grab a little shuteye in a pinch. After Mayor Rudolph Giuliani took a ride on the boat to visit Rikers, he was so impressed with it that he became a regular passenger.

"He could have called PD, but he'd call us!" McMahon says.

Soon DOC's Harbor Unit was as fully equipped as NYPD's. Two jet skis were added so rescuers could

quickly slip off the stern and race ahead, a zodiac was mounted amidship, and a SCUBA team was trained for underwater rescue and recovery. To increase response speed even more, the department also acquired a Boston Whaler, capping off DOC's fleet at 3 vessels—6 if you counted the jet skills and the zodiac.

"At that point, we were running with the big dogs," says McMahon.

All these investments would prove critical for what the Harbor Unit faced on September 11, 2001.

ALL HANDS ON DECK

Bob McMahon had September 11th off. As a union delegate, he often spent Election Day poll watching in the Bronx, which is where he was when he heard that a plane had hit the North Tower. He thought it was a prank. Minutes later, after two more calls came in over the radio, he saw smoke to the southwest and called the commissioner's office.

"Get back here, get on the boat, and go down there," Commissioner Fraser's staff told him.

McMahon raced across the Whitestone Bridge and drove straight to the *Guy Hudson*. Mike Banahan, who had worked the previous evening, was there along with most of the Harbor Unit. They were running full throttle down the East River within minutes.

The South Tower had already collapsed, and a massive cloud of smoke and ash was enveloping Lower Manhattan.

"Do you have any idea how many people are dying where we're headed?" a fellow officer asked Banahan, with tears in his eyes.

"Let's just go down there and see what we have to do," he replied.

Banahan always thought that the biggest emergency they'd face would be a crash off LaGuardia. This was something unthinkable, but they were trained to respond to emergencies. At ARDC, he had responded to many alarms, and knew that feelings had to be put aside to do what needed to be done.

They had rounded the tip of Manhattan when the North Tower fell. More ash and debris billowed out between the remaining buildings and over the water like some apocalyptic, urban sandstorm.

The Coast Guard request for boats to help evacuate Lower Manhattan came over the radio two minutes later.

THE BOATLIFT

The *Guy Hudson* headed for North Cove Marina on the Hudson River, the closest mooring to Ground Zero. As they approached the marina, the crew saw hundreds of people corralled behind a long chain-link fence, desperate to reach the vessels pulling up below. The gate to the marina was padlocked, and Banahan watched as an NYPD officer snapped the lock with bolt cutters.

"As soon as he broke that lock, it was a madhouse," Banahan recalls. People poured onto the docks in search of the first craft that could take them out of the destruction zone.

Once the *Guy Hudson* docked, Banahan realized that he had another, more earthly mission to take care of first. The *Guy Hudson* was not equipped with a head, so he boarded a nearby yacht, where a woman told him he could use the vessel's well-equipped facilities. Then, when he emerged from the head, she presented him with a tray of tea and crumpets.



"Would you like some?" she asked. Lower Manhattan was collapsing, thousands were dead, and on this small spot right in the middle of Armageddon it was apparently tea and crumpets time. Banahan was speechless.

"Ma'am, there are terrorists attacking, and you're giving him tea and crumpets?" another woman on board interjected, incredulous.

"Lady, I'm from Belfast. I'm used to this," the crumpet lady retorted.

Banahan gazed over the crumpet lady's shoulder. Guests on the yacht were gathered around a large screen TV, watching video that they themselves had shot minutes earlier—of people jumping out of the North Tower.

"I'm not a federal agent, so I can't confiscate that, but please shut it off. I don't want to see that," he told the crowd.

Back on the *Guy Hudson*, the crew helped the businesspeople and

residents of Lower Manhattan onto the boat. Ash-covered, shocked, and exhausted, they clambered aboard without caring where they were headed—anywhere but there. Neither Banahan nor McMahon remembers where they took the first group. There were too many my trips that day, most of them to Jersey City, Weehawken, and Brooklyn Heights. At one point they picked up Deputy Warden Patrick Walsh in Brooklyn. He was on his way to Ground Zero to establish a command post for ESU.

Late in the afternoon, McMahon and some of the crew left the boat to get a closer look at the destruction. As they walked down Broadway, they suddenly heard what sounded like a thunderclap. Before they could understand what was happening, a 20-story wall of ash came mushrooming up Broadway straight at them. Seven World Trade Center had just collapsed.



They bolted to the nearest storefront for shelter, but the door was locked. Just as the cloud was enveloping them, the store owner inside let them in.

THE DAYS AFTER

Most of the Harbor Unit didn't go home for days. They kept making supply and passenger runs nonstop. Two days after 9/11, Michael Banahan ran into an exhausted FDNY battalion chief near the marina.

"Sir, we have a vessel. I'll take you anywhere in New York you want to go," Banahan told the chief.

The chief thanked him and walked off towards The Pile. An hour later, he returned with his battalion, or what was left of it.

"We want to go to the Statue of Liberty," he said.

The firefighters lumbered onto the launch with their equipment. With that much weight, the crew had to carefully space them on opposite sides of the boat to maintain balance before casting off.

Ten minutes later, in the shadow of the majestic statue, the men dropped to their knees and began crying. Banahan wanted to do something, anything, to comfort them.

"Sir, listen, why don't you go inside the cabin," he quietly told the chief. "We have food. We have supplies. Anything you need."

The chief jumped to his feet and did something none of Banahan's supervisors ever had: he grabbed Banahan forcefully by the collar.

"Let me tell you something, officer. I stay with my men," he said.



Banahan was both taken aback and moved by the confrontation.

"Okay, sir. Okay, all right," he said to the chief.

One day while he was loading up supplies in New Jersey, Robert McMahon ran into a friendly, 6'5" hulk of a man who asked if McMahon could take him and his friends to visit Ground Zero. They wanted to show support for the first responders. Ground Zero was a restricted area, but this wasn't the average visitor: the man was Michael Strahan, and his "friends" were the New York Giants. After making a few calls, McMahon ferried most of the team over on the *Guy Hudson*. When they arrived at Ground Zero, spirits soared.

McMahon remained on the boat for five days. He was still there when his son called and begged him to come home for his birthday. He called Commissioner Fraser to ask for permission.

"Go home, you've done enough," Fraser told him.

McMahon drove home, watched his son blow out the candles, then turned around and went back to the boat.

MANY RIVERS CROSSED

For the next nine months, the Harbor Unit never stopped making trips to Ground Zero. They brought in ESU teams every morning, along with water, batteries, PPE—anything that was stored on Rikers Island and needed. Then they'd head over to New Jersey and pick up more donated materials; everything from food and flood lights to tiny protective boots worn by the K9s. Countless pallets of supplies were needed for the hundreds of responders picking away at The Pile like ants.

Sometimes the crew would get off the boat to walk down to The Pile and see how things were going. They had no idea what they were breathing in.

In May of 2002, the Harbor Unit made its last run in support of recovery operations, then returned full time to the waters surrounding Rikers Island. Just three years later, the unit was heartbroken when they learned they were being disbanded due to budget cuts. That same year, Mike Banahan learned that he had Stage 3 oropharyngeal cancer—a rare cancer linked to 9/11 first responders. He was only 44. Thankfully, he's beaten it, but not a day goes by that he doesn't wonder if it will return.

"I wasn't supposed to be here now, but I'm here," he says.

~The End~



Like many of us, we all share memories from the events during and after 9/11.

By: Bianca Adamson



Correction Officer Israel Vega

Correction Officer Israel Vega shared his memory with me of that day. Officer Vega who currently has 32 years on the job was 11 years in on September 11, 2001. He was home on vacation with his son when he heard his next-door neighbor screaming. He went next door and she had informed him a plane hit the Twin Towers. "I felt a chill and couldn't believe it," he recalls. Once he got back home, he turned on the news and witnessed the horrible news. Although Officer Vega did not work at Ground Zero, he lived in Staten Island and for months he recalls the smell of burning plastic and chemicals. Eventually, he did drive by ground zero and it had a haunting look, part of the city was dark and there were no cars, just spotlights.

That day affected so many people, C.O. Vega shared one of his memories with me. He states, "The one thing that I remember to this day is how the attacks on the building affected everyone, either through friends, or family. My brother-in-law was there, and he is still traumatized and ill from working there. That day my wife was at the academy for

training, she is also a Correction Officer and I had to get her. It took me 5 hours from Staten Island to the academy, the roads were closed, and the expressway was shut down, that was the only time the city was shut down. It was sad."

I for one know of so many familiar stories like this and can relate, just like most of us when we think of that day one word that comes to Vega's mind is "Sadness."

"It changed me a lot to see so many friends pass away from the effect of the site, meaning the exposure of hazardous material. A lot of them didn't know what they were exposed to. It made me appreciate life more and, in many ways, appreciate my family more," Officer Vega shared. Although his life changed and the lives of his loved ones, he is still proud that DOC was there to help. Like so many of us who were around during the attack on the twin towers, we all share memories of that day, and those memories left a lasting impact. Our memories and stories will forever keep us connected, we are Bold and we were there!

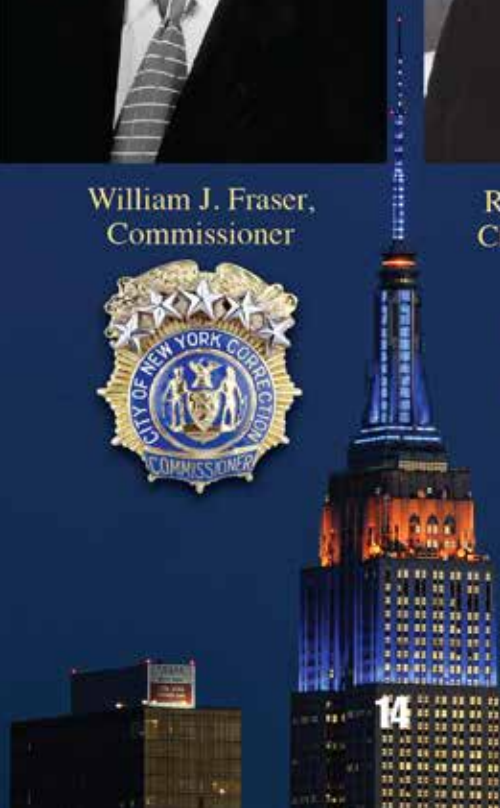
We honor former Commissioner Fraser and Chief of Department Davoren for their leadership and bravery during and after 9/11.



William J. Fraser,
Commissioner



Robert N. Davoren,
Chief of Department





WE WERE THERE

9/11

WE REMEMBER





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NEW YORK

**New York's BOLDEST
attended last year's annual 9/11
subway series game at Citi Field!**



Photos courtesy of the NY Mets

IN MEMORIAM

OF NY DOC 9/11 HEROES

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UMAR ABDUL-JAHILIL

COMMISSIONER
WILLIAM J. FRASER

CORRECTION OFFICER
JOSEPH RODRIQUEZ

CORRECTION OFFICER
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A TRIBUTE TO ANCHORS OF 9/11



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