

# NY Ladder 20 firefighter remembers 9/11 at healing field

## Firefighter: Never take life for granted

Updated: Wednesday, 07 Sep 2011, 6:49 PM EDT

Published : Wednesday, 07 Sep 2011, 6:49 PM EDT

BRYANT, Ind. (WANE) - A New York firefighter from Ladder 20 is looking back on 9/11.

Almost 10 years later, he spent the day at the Healing Field in Bryant in Jay County. There was a group of school-aged children at the Healing Field Wednesday. His message to them and others is to never take life for granted.

Almost 10 years later lower Manhattan firefighter from Ladder 20, Bob Barrett, remembers September 11, 2001 like it was yesterday. He lost his bestfriend on that day.

"Me and my bestfriend had worked together for 24 years and in any month period there was only one day that we didn't work together and that was 9/11," NY Ladder 20 firefighter Bob Barrett said.

There were 75 firefighters in his company. Dozens never returned home after they punched in on the time clock on 9/11.

"We lost 4 fire trucks and we lost 15 firefighters that day."

Bob became the family liaison. Whenever a firefighter was found under the rubble he'd go to their families home to break the news.

"I was there to counsel them but they ran over and counseled me. They said 'Bob, cheer up. You're bringing back our son and our brother so we can bury him with dignity and respect.' And so that became my mission."

Bob and his partner Mike worked 20 hour shifts days after 9/11. They searched desperately to find missing men, women, and children. Letters from school children kept him and others motivated along the way.

"A little boy wrote us a simple poem all he said 'Twinkle twinkle little star. How I wonder where they are.' Me and my partner Mike would say 'Come on. We're not tired. Lets get back to work.'"

Bob quickly learned to never take life for granted. In a second, it could be taken away from you like it did to the almost 3,000 that died on September 11, 2001.

"My friend, Jimmy Grey, at his memorial his 8 year-old daughter got up and spoke and all I can remember her saying is 'Daddy if I knew you weren't coming home I'd let you tickle me a little harder.' That's what we remember. The little things."

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