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COMMUNITY

The Leavey Foundation Gives Back to Pelham Middle School

The Lt. Joseph G. Leavey Foundation, created to manage the distribution of funds raised at the annual Leavey softball tournaments, announced that its board recently voted to bestow the first foundation gift in the amount of \$10,000 to benefit the new Pelham Middle School Library.

The funds will be used to purchase books in memory of Lt. Leavey, a longtime Pelham resident and member of the Fire Department of New York City who died in the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001.

The Leavey Foundation's objectives are to raise money to enhance educational opportunities in the community. Its officers, elected last October, are: Carole Leavey and Brian Leavey, co-presidents; Joseph Gioia and Peter Reynolds, co-vice presidents; Janis Viola, treasurer; and Mary Lou Coronios, secretary. Members of the Board are Ciro Greco, Joseph Longobardi, Debora Marsden, Michael Mattesi, Deborah Jones and Rita Martell.

Pelham Fire Department firefight-

ers Joseph Gioia and Peter Reynolds, along with Michael "Moose" Mattesi, organized the first Leavey softball tournament in August 2002. The tournament



Right to Left: Samantha Viola, Rita Martell, Caitlin Leavey, Janis Viola, Carole Leavey, Joseph Longobardi and Librarian Anne Calacci.

has since become an annual event to honor the memory of Lt. Leavey.

Lt. Leavey died at the age of 46. He served at Engine 23, Ladder 4 and in 2001 was a lieutenant at Ladder 15 on South Street.

On Nov. 13, 2001, hundreds of

mourners filled St. Catharine's Church for funeral services on what would have been Joe's 47th birthday. Former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, in his eulogy, reminded people that Joe had a civil engineering degree and was someone who knew an encyclopedia of facts and figures regarding New York City architecture. "He had a knowledge of almost every building design in this city. He was a student of the buildings of New York. The World Trade Center had a special place in his heart. He thought of it as an engineering marvel," the mayor said.

As a graduate of the Manhattan College School of Engineering, Lt. Leavey was fascinated by the World Trade Center as an architectural landmark and took his family to pose for pictures in front of the massive structures on more than one occasion.

Lt. Leavey was the son of Mary and Joseph Leavey and was raised in the Inwood section of New York City. His father, a retired New York City Transit Police Officer, died in 2004. Lt. Leavey's

wife, Carole, and their children, Caitlin and Brian, are still Pelham residents today. Caitlin is a freshman at Pelham Memorial High School, and Brian is completing his third year at New York University. Joe and Carole's daughter, Kerri Kelly, lives with her husband, Chris, in California.

A reception for Friends of the Middle School Library recognized three organizations for their generous donations as part of National Libraries Week. They are the Pelham Education Foundation, The Joseph Leavey Foundation and the Pelham Middle School PTA which each donated \$10,000 towards the purchase of books. In addition, parents and residents who made individual donations were asked to select books with their name cards.

The library is a popular place for Middle School students. In addition to whole classes using the library's print and electronic resources throughout the day, on average 100 students make use of this facility during lunch, study hall and before and after school each day. Librarian Anne Calacci says the students like the fast computers, resources not available at home, and the availability of help.