

raising \$200,000 in cash, the group, Favor, made sure every family received overflowing gift baskets to mark Thanksgiving, Christmas, the depths of winter and the beginning of summer.

In June, the group decided it had done its job, and announced that it would disband. Several of the organizers, who set aside work and the demands of family, said it was time to return to their former lives. But Favor will not be fading away any time soon. The renewed flood of news media attention that began in recent weeks has sparked a fresh round of philanthropy, including that of a Texas millionaire who has offered scholarships to the 61 children who lost a parent last September.

At the very least, Allyson Gilbert, the group's executive director, said she and others have decided to put together one more gift basket, something small and simple, perhaps a tray of home-baked cookies crowned by a teddy bear. The baskets, she said, will probably arrive a week or two after Sept. 11, when the commemorative events and televised anniversary specials are through.

"They don't need us to deliver these huge food baskets or big checks anymore," she said. "I think they just need a reminder that we're thinking about them, that we have not forgotten, and that we're not going to go away."

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 464. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress on the anniversary of the terrorist attacks launched against the United States on September 11, 2001.

CONGRESS MUST CREATE SINGLE, UNIFIED AUTHORIZATION AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEES FOR NEW DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO BE SUCCESSFUL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLAKE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I take this time to reflect on the incidents of the past year and to discuss the next phase of our war against terrorism and our war for homeland security.

Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago on this day at 8:30 in the morning I was on the third floor of this building in the press gallery beginning a press conference with our colleagues from both sides of the aisle. We had assembled before the national media to call for support of a bill that I was introducing that day asking for an additional \$6 billion of defense spending. That defense spending was to go specifically for readiness for our troops, for homeland security, and for the war against terrorism.

The first plane hit; the second plane hit. The media had to stop the press conference, and by 9 o'clock we real-

ized that we were going to have to vacate the building. The Sergeant at Arms called for vacating the Capitol, and we began the orderly process of descending from the third floor of this building to the parking lot.

On the way out, I talked to our Sergeant at Arms. I said, What is happening? He said, There are at least two more planes in the air, and we feel one of them may be headed for the Capitol building. By the time we got to the parking lot and looked across Washington, off in the distance we could see the black smoke rising from the Pentagon.

There was total chaos on Capitol Hill that day, Mr. Speaker, because no one had anticipated that kind of action against us, in spite of the calls for America to be secure that had been made by many Members of this body on numerous occasions prior to 9-11.

We wandered on the Hill as they evacuated the office buildings, and moved down toward the Capitol Hill police station. Near the train station we would get our first briefing. About 120 of us got that briefing. I came back out and walked back toward the Capitol when my cell phone rang, and I got a call that was extremely disturbing and very emotional for me. I learned from my friends in the New York City Fire Department that one of my good friends was missing with the collapse of the two World Trade Center buildings.

See, what was so tragically emotional for me was that individual had taken me through the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993. As many of our colleagues know, Mr. Speaker, I would not be in this body were it not for my work in the fire service. Having grown up in a fire service family and becoming chief of my own local department, a fire instructor, and going back to school for a degree in that area, I have been identified with those brave individuals since I first came to this body 16 years ago.

So in my capacity as a Member of Congress and the founder of the Congressional Fire and Emergency Services Caucus for the past 16 years, I have made it my business to attend every disaster we have had, from the Murrah Building bombing in Oklahoma City to the wildlands fires in the West to Hurricane Andrew and Hugo in the South to the Mid Western floods to the Loma Prieta and Northridge earthquakes and the World Trade Center bombing in 1993.

It was in 1993 when I went up as a guest of Commissioner Howard Safir that I first met a brave young firefighter in New York who would later become the chief of all special forces and rescue in that department. He and members of the New York City Fire Department took me through the bombed-out parking garage in the Trade Center in 1993, where I saw the terrible, horrible devastation caused by bin Laden the first time he hit America.

He and I became friends. We traveled around the country and spoke at many events together on the need to prepare for homeland security and our common defense. In fact, it was the suggestion of a commission that came from some of the recommendations he gave me that resulted in legislation I introduced 4 years ago to create a commission chaired by former Governor Jim Gilmore of Virginia called the Gilmore Commission.

My friend, Ray Downey, was a member of that commission. The Gilmore Commission's purpose was to make recommendations to the Congress and the White House about how we could better prepare for what none of us wanted to think about: the ultimate tragedy against our country. Four years ago, no one was thinking that could be a reality, but the Gilmore Commission in fact three times issued reports before 9-11 with specific recommendations that we in the Congress and the White House should follow.

Ray Downey was a member of that commission. Ray Downey was the incident command officer on the scene in New York at Ground Zero directing the bulk of those 343 firefighters who were killed as they went up into the stairwells of those buildings to bring people down. In fact, when I went to the Trade Center Ground Zero site 2 days later, not as a Member of Congress but as a member of the fire service, I spent the day with the New York City firefighters.

The day that I arrived, unfortunately, the tragedy was that Ray Downey's two sons, who were both New York City firefighters, one a captain and one a lieutenant, were looking for the remains of their dad. How terribly tragic it was to be asked by the firefighters union in the city to go back to the Javits Center to greet the families of those that were going to visit with President Bush that night, the families of those that were missing.

I did that, and I saw our President for 2½ hours meet privately with the families of those victims who were tragically taken in the course of the rescue, in the course of the firefighting, in response to the World Trade Center disaster.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor for two specific reasons. One is to first of all talk about the next phase of where we have to go. It is extremely important that this body understand that even though we passed the Homeland Security Act creating a new Federal department, and we did a good job in that process, and the gentleman from Texas (Speaker ARMEY) and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are deserving of credit for the outstanding piece of legislation that we finished very early in the morning hours of August, the other body will shortly complete their version of that bill; and by the end of this month we will send to the President a piece of legislation that creates a brand-new large agency in fact consolidating 22