

**Gramercy Park Block Association Members Event  
at the National Arts Club - 6/9/16  
Remarks by GPBA President Arlene Harrison**

Welcome Friends, Neighbors, members of our NYPD family, and family members and representatives of Det. Randolph Holder, Det. Joseph Lemm and Police Officer David Hofer.

First a thank you to the National Arts Club for sponsoring this event and especially John Eramo, Phillip Spradley, Fran Vallone and Nick George.

We're happy to have Gramercy Park Assistant Alex Nguyen and his quartet playing tonight.

For more than two decades our community has enjoyed a close partnership with the NYPD. In 1993, my son Tim was brutally beaten by a random roving gang outside our home on Gramercy Park. As a result, the GPBA was organized to protect the safety and security of the neighborhood. Since that time, we have worked closely with the 13th Precinct, Emergency Service Truck 1, and the Manhattan Detective Bureau. The work of this partnership is detailed in our GPBA website's NYPD section.

During the 2001 attack on the World Trade Center, it was our first responders who paid the ultimate sacrifice when they raced into the burning buildings while thousands fled. For many months following 9/11, GPBA's Neighbors Helping Neighbors organized a round-the-clock relief effort at the 13th Precinct, where we served thousands of meals, and distributed critical supplies to emergency units. Since 9/11, the bonds we formed with the NYPD have become permanent and their family has become our family, not only here but throughout their department, and when they mourn an NYPD family member, our community family mourns with them. We promised the families then

that we would never forget, and 15 years later, we continue to remember their sacrifice.

As part of our pledge to “never forget”, each year at a GPBA event we remember NYPD officers who were killed in the line of duty the previous year. At last year’s event, we remembered Detectives Rafael Ramos, Wenjian Liu and Brian Moore. And now sadly, this year, our community and police family join together to honor the memory of three more murdered Police Officers, Det. Randolph Holder, Det. Joseph Lemm and Police Officer David Hofer.

**Det. Randolph Holder** worked with the Housing Bureau PSA 5, and was assigned to the Anti-Crime Unit. Det. Holder, a third-generation Police Officer from Guyana, was fatally shot by an armed robbery suspect in East Harlem on October 20th last year. He was 33 years old.

**Det. Joseph Lemm** worked at the 50th Precinct as part of the Bronx Warrant Squad and was a 15-year veteran of the NYPD. His bravery and size -- he stood about six-foot-four -- earned him his nickname: “Superman”. On December 21<sup>st</sup> of last year, Det. Lemm was killed by a suicide bomber in Afghanistan while serving in the 105th Airlift Wing of the New York Air National Guard. He was 45 years old.

**Police Officer David Hofer** worked at the 9th Precinct in the East Village from 2009-2014, when he left to join the Euless, Texas Police Department. He was killed in an ambush on March 1st this year. He was 29 years old.

In honor of these officers, I’d like to read a memorial poem to slain policemen called “Part of America Died,” and dedicate the poem to police officers everywhere.

Somebody killed a policeman today,  
and a part of America died.

A piece of our country he swore to protect,  
will be buried with him at his side.

The suspect that shot him will stand up in court,  
with counsel demanding his rights.  
While a young widowed mother must work for her kids,  
and spend many long, lonely nights.

The beat that he walked was a battle field too,  
just as if he'd gone off to war.  
Though the flag of our nation won't fly at half mast,  
to his name they will add a gold star.

Yes, somebody killed a policeman today,  
in your town or mine.  
While we slept in comfort behind our locked doors,  
a cop put his life on the line.

Now his ghost walks a beat on a dark city street,  
and he stands at each new rookie's side.  
He answered the call, of himself gave his all,  
and a part of America died.

Now I'd like to ask members of the NYPD who are here to honor the memory of Detective Holder, Detective Lemm and Police Officer Hofer, to come forward as I call your names.

- **Chief William Aubry - Commanding Officer, Detective Borough Manhattan South**
- **Chief Salvatore Comodo - Executive Officer of Patrol Borough Manhattan South**

- **Inspector Carlos Ortiz - Commanding Officer, Manhattan South Detectives Operations**
- **Lieutenant John Meier - Detective Borough Manhattan South**
- **Lieutenant Luis Columbie - Detective Borough Manhattan South and others from Detective Borough Manhattan South.**
- **Sergeant Sharon Brooks -Manhattan South Homicide Squad, Sgt Joseph Lattuga, Det. Alfred Titus, and others from the Manhattan South Homicide Squad.**
- **Det. Samuel Miller - DEA Union Representative**
- **13th Precinct Detective Squad - Det. Christopher Rickford, Det. Wanda Figueroa, Det. Delwyn Davis, Det. Richard Dixon, and others from the 13th Precinct Detective Squad.**
- **Emergency Service Truck 1 – Det. Pete Quinn and others from ESU Truck 1.**
- **13th Precinct Executive Officer Captain Christopher Zaffiro**
- **13th Precinct Community Affairs Detective Ray Dorrian, Police Officer John Considine, and any others from the 13th Precinct.**
- **Sergeant Joseph Imperatrice - 9th Precinct Detective Squad**
- **Sergeant Michael Seiling - 9th Precinct Detective Squad and others from the 9th Precinct.**

- **68th Precinct - Police Officers Michael Pascale and Anthony Gaglione**
- **76th Precinct - Police Officer Jean Simmons**

On behalf of the Gramercy Park community, I'd like to single out Homicide Detective Sgt. Sharon Brooks and Community Affairs Det. Ray Dorrian, who have been our great friends who for many years and are always there when we need them. They are always there to help bring our community family together with our NYPD family, and were both essential, along with 9th Precinct Sgt. Joseph Imperatrice in organizing this event.

**And to all of our NYPD here today**, we want you to know that every day you come to work and put your lives on the line to keep us safe, you are our heroes. We can think of no other job where you wear bulletproof vests and your families wonder whether you are coming home at night. When you are not safe, we are not safe. When you are in danger, we are in danger. We want to thank you, applaud you, and tell you that you will always be our heroes. Let's applaud them.

Now I'd like to ask 9th Precinct Detective Sgt. Joseph Imperatrice to please come forward. Sgt. Imperatrice is President of Blue Lives Matter, a non-profit organization formed in 2014 by a group of law enforcement officers, in the wake of the killings of officers Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu. It is now a nationwide movement to offer comfort and support to Law Enforcement Officers and their families during their times of need.

Now I'd like to ask the families and representatives of the Officers we are honoring tonight, to please come forward as I call your names.

**From the family of Det. Randolph Holder**

His father Mr. Randolph Holder, Sr.

and other members or representatives of the Holder family

**From the family of Police Officer David Hofer**

His mother Sonja Hofer

His sister Meret Hofer

And other members or representatives of the Hofer family

Although we know words and flowers can never be enough to ease your pain, our deepest and sincerest condolences go to you for the devastating loss of your loved ones, who paid the ultimate sacrifice while protecting us. We want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for their service, and we can only promise you that they will always be loved by many and never forgotten.

Now may we please have a moment of silence to remember Detective Holder, Detective Lemm and Police Officer Hoffer, as well as all Officers nationwide killed in the line of duty, followed by Taps.