

Remembering



Christian
Michael
Otto
Regenhard

October 26, 2001


A passion for life...

Christian Michael Otto Regenhard was born on August 25, 1973. He was raised in Co-op City, Bronx, New York, and received his elementary education there. One of his earliest aspirations was to become a fire dog or a fire horse when he grew up, so the family was relieved when, in the 2nd grade, his IQ was tested, and he scored a 146. After this, he was enrolled in a special program for Talented and Gifted children. Despite his natural abilities, he managed to graduate from The Bronx High School of Science by the skin of his teeth, having spent a large percentage of his time in Harris Field.

Shortly after graduation in 1991, he and close friend Kyre Osborn embarked upon a three-month journey to Mexico and Central America. This was the beginning of a decade-long passion for Latin America's people, culture and language. One year later Christian surprised family and friends when he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps for five years.



Christian and sister Christina at his graduation from the Fire Academy on July 27, 2001.



Throughout his career in the Marines, Christian distinguished himself by excelling in everything that he undertook. He mastered a dozen specialized training courses and was the recipient of twelve medals and awards for excellence. His continuing travels took him from California to the Middle East, Africa, South East Asia, China and Japan. He made a point of visiting the historical sites, zoos and museums of each country, and often brought back beautiful artwork, jewelry or stones for himself as well as family and friends.

After having attained the rank of Sergeant, Christian was discharged from the U.S.M.C. in August, 1997 after five years of honorable service. He then moved to San Francisco, and attended San Francisco State University. During this time, he studied art, language and writing, both in school and independently. While pursuing his love of rock climbing, he traveled throughout the United States as well as to South America, France and Spain.

During his extensive travels and adventures in 22 countries around the world, Christian encountered many brushes with catastrophes, including tornadoes, blizzards, and hostile situations. During it all, he remained invincible.

He returned to NYC many times to visit family and friends and to take the New York City Fire Department test. This seemed to be the perfect job for Christian, where he could use his brains, brawn, love of adventure and commitment to helping people. His family and friends truly never saw him happier. When you asked him if he liked the F.D.N.Y. he couldn't disguise that elusive smile that came over his face.

Once again, he was in love.



U. S. M. C.

Christian joined the United States Marine Corps on his 19th birthday, on August 25, 1992.

During the next five years, he developed an outstanding and distinguished record of service and achievement. He excelled in a variety of skills and courses including: Assault Climbers Course, Marine Combat Safety Swimmer Course, Combat Skills, Amphibious Reconnaissance, Airborne Course, USMC Combatant Diver, Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape Course, Basis Reconnaissance Course and Drug Control Enlisted Course.

Christian excelled in

all of his endeavors and was the recipient of numerous awards during his career including: Rifle Expert Badge, Pistol Expert Badge, The



Christian with his father Al Regenhard.

National Defense Service Medal, Certificate of
Achievement Awards, Sea Service Deployment

Ribbon
with one
star,
Meritorious
Mast
Awards,
Good
Conduct
Medal,
Armed
Forces



Christian aboard ship in the USMC

Expeditionary
Medal and the
Navy Achievement
Medal. Sgt.
Regenhard received
an honorable
discharge from the
U.S.M.C. in August,
1997.



Desiderata

Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble, it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be



cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to



Christian in Puerto Natales, Chile, January 2001.

shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of

life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

(Max Ehrman, 1927.)

Gracias A La Vida

Giving Thanks To Life

I give thanks to life for giving me so much
It has given me sight so that when I open
my eyes

I perfectly discern between black and
white.

I can see at night with skies full of stars
I can see in the multitude, the one I love.

I give thanks to life, for giving me so much
For giving me the sky, and its great
horizon

I witness day and night, crickets, birds,
Hammers, turbines, bricks
And the tender voices of the ones I love.

I give thanks to life for giving me so much
It has given me sounds and words
With which I can enunciate my thoughts
and statements,

Mother, friend, sister, and the light that is
brightly
Shining upon my loved ones' souls.

I give thanks to life, for giving me so much
It has given me steps for my tired feet to
march on,
With them I trekked cities and puddles,
Beaches and deserts, mountains and plains
My neighborhood, my street and my
home.

I give thanks to life, for giving me so much
It has given me the heart that beats on
your hand,
When I see the fruit of the human mind,



Christian visited South America many times to pursue his great passion for rock climbing. While there he became fluent in Spanish. He returned from Patagonia shortly before being appointed to the F.D.N.Y. on January 31, 2001, the same day that his father, Al, retired from the N.Y.P.D. after 39 years of service.

When I see goodness surpassing evil
When I look at the deepness of your
clear eyes.

I give thanks to life, for giving me so
much,
It has given me laughter and given
me sorrows
So that I can distinguish between
happiness and pain
The elements that make up my
song...

(Words and music by Violeta Parra, Chilean poet and songwriter.)

(Lovingly translated by Regenhard family friends Rudy and Virginia C. Morales.)

E-mail from Christian,
September 10, 2001...

Hey Tobias,

This cold smell in the air takes me back to Yosemite with fierce nostalgia, and those last warm days before we went down into the desert; the air I'm breathing in this city has passed through the trees and mountains of places I'd rather be.

As for me, I'm still looking for an apartment in Brooklyn, work is good, but I'm still hurting for money. How are you doing pal? Hey, can you pack up my climbing gear and send it to me? I'll send you the money what ever it costs, just let me know. I might get a couple of days in before the weather turns and in particular, there is a rock here in the city I want to mess around on. See you soon, Christian



An Ode to Christian, October 5, 2001...

There is an ancient wind that blows across a thousand seas; it crosses even the most secret places, it sucks through the teeth of the timber wolf and snaps off the wings of the condor. It blew through the garments of Jesus Christ and cooled the brow of Buddha. Upon its airy breath it bears the souls of those who sought its company. Do not look for this wind in the humdrum of life; it does not exist there. Go to the mountain; place your hand on its cold, granite skin. Squint your eye to the polar sun and shake the sea salt from your hair.

Howl at the midnight moon and allow the wild to creep into your heart and course through your veins, and say hello to Christian...his soul is on this wind.

From: Tobias



Angels Seen In Engine's Lights

When a man becomes a fireman,
He joins the proud and few
A brave man learns the brother-
hood,
That those before him knew.
He eats and laughs, and lives and
sleeps,
With men as brave as him
And where flames endanger anyone,
These brothers rush right in.

When a fireman falls in heat and
smoke,
And climbs to heaven's gates
He joins the heroes past who share
A fireman's worst fate.
He trades his smoky coat and boots,
For halo and for wings,
And takes in every run with those
Who heed alarm bell rings.

Every time a pole is slid
And turnout gear is donned
And sirens wail and people pray
Their loved ones are not harmed
These angels seen in engine's lights,
Will crawl with brothers living
And bring the brothers safely home
With inspiration they're giving.



*Dedicated to Firefighter
Christian Regenbard, a poet
at heart with a warrior spirit.*

*And to all the lost members of
engine 279, F.D.N.Y.:
F.F. Ronald Henderson
F.F. Michael Ragusa
F.F. Anthony Rodriguez and
Lt. Anthony Jovic.*

*By F.F. Andrew Serra ,
Ladder 131 Engine 279
9/11/01*

A Message From the Regenhard Family

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all people who have helped us, prayed with and for us, and expressed words of caring and comfort during this profoundly devastating time. We thank our family, friends, neighbors, the Co-op City Community

and Rev. William Luciano, Pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Church, Fr. Ambrose and soloist Anthony Daino. We thank the Cathedral of St. Patrick, the U.S.M.C., and all who contributed to honoring Christian Regenhard on this day. Finally, we are grateful to the City of New York, the F.D.N.Y. and especially Firefighter Andrew Serra whose compassion and devotion to us will never be forgotten. We salute all the Rescue Workers, Firefighters, Police, Iron Workers and Construction Workers, members of the Red Hook Firehouse and the American Red Cross as well as Christian's friends who searched so long and so valiantly for him.



*Christian at his graduation from the Fire Academy,
July 27, 2001.*

At this time, we are unable to accept or comprehend the reality of our unrelenting grief. It is inconceivable to us that we and this world will be deprived of someone so young, so outstanding, so passionate, so intelligent, so capable, so beautiful in body, mind and spirit. Christian is an intense light in a world that is often dark and cold. His life of creativity, intellect, passion and compassion has touched legions of people. He is an artist, writer, athlete, environmentalist and humanitarian, treasured son, brother and friend, greatly beloved by all who know him. Christian, you are with us.



*Half Dome,
Yosemite
National Park.*

*Christian scaled
the 2000 foot
sheer rock face
in 1999.*

The Art of Christian Regenhard

There will be an exhibition of the Charcoals, Jewelry, Prose and Photographs of Christian Regenhard to be held on Sunday, October 28, 2001 at the Ruby Gallery, 516 Court Street, Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn, NY from 12 noon to 6 pm. Special thanks to the J.K. Dineen Family for making it possible to honor Christian's work in this way.

The Christian Michael Otto Regenhard Fund for Justice, Humanity and the Environment

In response to many inquiries, The Regenhard Family is creating a fund to support and promote causes and interests which Christian believed in. His sister, Christina Regenhard, will be administering this fund. For further information, please contact the Regenhard family.

Sincere Thanks

To Kyre Osborn and Ellen Hobbs for sharing their website, www.clicheideas.com/christian.htm, with Christian.

To Cathy Aison, and to Tedd Shapiro, Sandy Vallo and Joy Mattera for their kind assistance and support.