

25 Years After 9/11 First Responder Accounts Recorded Within Days of the Attacks Preserve the Human Story of Ground Zero

911 First Responders at Ground Zero, published just 2 months after September 11, preserves firsthand testimony from rescue workers during the key first 24 hours

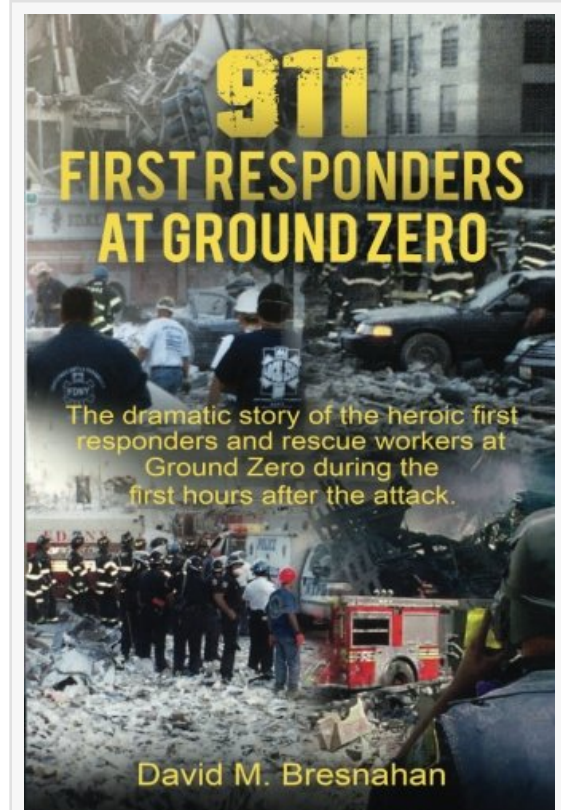
NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, September 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the nation approaches the 25th anniversary of the September 11, 2001, attacks, a book based on interviews conducted within days of the disaster offers a contemporaneous record of what first responders experienced during the first critical hours at Ground Zero.

Author and journalist David Bresnahan began locating and interviewing first responders by telephone within days of 9/11. Those interviews became the basis of 911 First Responders at Ground Zero, a nonfiction account originally published only two months after the attacks.

Rather than reconstructing the events years later, Bresnahan sought to preserve what responders remembered while the experience was still immediate—what they saw, heard, felt, and believed was happening around them during the first 24 hours at Ground Zero.

The book includes the account of George Sleigh, who was working on the 91st floor of the North Tower and saw American Airlines Flight 11 approaching immediately before it struck the floors above him. During his long descent down the stairs, Sleigh passed firefighters carrying heavy equipment upward into the tower. Only later did he comprehend that many of the young firefighters he remembered seeing probably never came back down.

Other accounts document police officers, firefighters, emergency personnel, and volunteers converging on Lower Manhattan from surrounding states, often without waiting to be asked.



911 First Responders at Ground Zero: (Back and White Photos) by David M Bresnahan

One police officer summarized the response simply: "However you could get there, you got there."

Among the most hopeful episodes in the book is the rescue of a police officer who had been trapped in the debris through the night. Doctors treated him while rescue workers painstakingly removed twisted wreckage. When he was finally carried out through a human chain of responders, he removed his oxygen mask to thank the men helping him. Cheers erupted and spread among workers who were overjoyed that someone had been found alive.

Responders described grieving family members carrying photographs of missing loved ones and asking for help to find them, as well as the frustration of searching unstable debris fields to find survivors.

Bresnahan deliberately allowed the responders to tell their stories from their own perspectives rather than rewriting their memories with information learned later. The result preserves not only what happened to them, but also the uncertainty and limited knowledge they experienced while the disaster was still unfolding.

The original edition of 911 First Responders at Ground Zero was published approximately two months after the attacks, and the first printing sold out. Bresnahan later made the book available again so the accounts could remain accessible to future generations.

Twenty-five years later, that goal has renewed significance. Millions of Americans now know September 11 only as history. The testimony in 911 First Responders at Ground Zero gives younger readers access to voices recorded when the event was still immediate and helps preserve the human experience behind one of the defining events of modern American history.

Bresnahan is available for television, radio, podcast, print, and online interviews concerning the book, the process of locating and interviewing responders immediately after 9/11, and the firsthand stories they shared with him.

Book: 911 First Responders at Ground Zero

Author: David M. Bresnahan

Book information: <https://a.co/d/09GwWHjv>

For review copies, interview requests, or additional information, please contact:

David M. Bresnahan

BrightKey PR

dave@bresnahan.org

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/938811479>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something

we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.