LOST IN A BLAZE OF GLORY

By Andrew Holden

DARIAN – Not a dry eye was in attendance at yesterday’s memorial service held in honor of the lives lost in last week’s Baker Street Apartment fire. Honored were the 17 residents and two brave heroes whose lives were snuffed out in the flames that night. The memorial service took place on Port Street, on the steps of City Hall.

Mayor-Elect Wilson gave a moving eulogy for the victims of this tragedy. The focus of his message was the heroism of the residents in the building and their ill-fated rescuers. “In the last year, the United States has been the target of several malicious attacks by those with no intention other than to murder our citizens. Darian has now joined the ranks of cities such as New York, Metropolis, and Washington, DC. Each city has suffered and each city has persevered.”

“We should follow the example of our fellow Darianites. Jill Welch, resident of apartment 404, after escaping the burning building, returned to the inferno when she realized that her neighbor, Colleen Hughes, an 87-year old widower had not made it out. Both women stand here with me today.”

“We should follow the example set by Acting Fire Marshal Chip Reilly. Chip valiantly searched floor-by-floor for residents in need of assistance. Endowed with no special powers, other than his indomitable courage, he fought the being responsible for this heinous act at the side of the Challengers. Chip was one of the casualties of the blaze and he was a hero. Chip is survived by his wife and son who also stand among us today.”

“Lastly, we should follow the example of a man only known to us as ‘Pyramid’. He was a visitor to our city, yet he came to our aid and rescued over 20 residents trapped on the roof. Afterward, he fought to a standstill the monster that caused this terrible tragedy. Pyramid gave his life to stop the so-called ‘Prophet’, and the city of Darian owes him and the Challengers our gratitude.”

“As we heal our wounds, as we mourn our dead, let us remember that Darian will go on. Darian will go on thanks to the inspiration of her people.”

Emergency Services Return In Drovers

DARIAN – After the tragic events of last week, Firefighters and other emergency service employees have been returning to work in vast numbers. Many of the workers that have returned are guilt-ridden by their absence during last week’s emergency. Most feel that if their departments had been fully staffed, more lives could have been saved.

Mayor-elect Wilson has applauded those that have returned and has promised to address their salary concerns as quickly as possible. Only the most hardened of protestors have refused to return to work. Wilson hopes that his resolution will please even those stubborn individuals.

Today – Partly Cloudy – High 74 – Low 49
A NIGHT IN HELL

By Ronald Methvin

DARIAN - An inferno; the Twin Towers on 9-11; Hell ... Those were a few of the descriptions of the scene at 324 Baker Street in the Nelson Bayside district of Darian last Thursday night. At approximately 8:35 P.M., an explosion ripped through the 10th floor of the 16-story building. Over 175 people called it home. Now, at least 17 are confirmed dead, and with over 10 people still missing, the number of dead is feared to rise even higher. The death count surely would have been much higher if not for the valiant efforts of Darian's resident heroes, The Challengers. This time, they truly were there to help.

Even before some of the few non-striking firefighters arrived on the scene, The Challengers known as Alley Cat and Mila had already entered the building to battle the flames that began to consume the building. At first, the hero known as Conduet remained outside and began triaging those who had already exited the building. Once medical teams arrived, Conduet entered the burning building, as well.

With the rest of his crew battling the blaze outside, Acting Fire Marshal Chip Reilly charged into the heart of the building alongside the Challengers. It was about this time when two new heroes appeared on the scene. They have now been identified as the Jester and the now-late Pyramid.

After already saving dozens of lives, the Challengers, aided by the Jester and Pyramid, encountered and fought the being that presumably caused the fire. The man was a previously unknown super-villain, whom Conduet later referred to as the Prophet of Vulcan. Tragically, during the fight, Acting Fire Marshal Chip Reilly and Pyramid were killed. A memorial fund has been set up for the family of Chip Reilly and the other victims of this disaster.

"The only true hero here died tonight. His name was Chip Reilly," said Alley Cat of the Challengers.

14th Annual Darian Daily Fun Day

Join the Darian Daily newspaper staff this coming Sunday at Friendship Park to help celebrate Fun Day! Fun Day was a celebration started 14 years ago to raise money for underprivileged children in Darian. Over the years we’ve been successful in raising thousands of dollars for children that would otherwise go without.

The streets of Darian are full of children with no roof over their head, no money for food, little or no responsible supervision.

Your participation at this event can make a difference in a child’s life. Please join us in making Darian a better city to live for everyone.
WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT, HELP ARRIVES

By James Dalemore

DARIAN – The Challengers have faced a rough few months. They’ve struggled to keep the city safe from numerous crimes, they lost two of their early acquaintances to brutal attacks (heroes apparently codenamed Angelus and Junk), one of their founders has been unavailable to assist for almost a month, and finally a devastating battle with an otherworldly madman. Will they ever get a break?

Well, things must finally be looking up for Darian’s home team! During a recent press conference, Felix Flynn, Press Agent for the Challengers, revealed that the Challengers have recruited three new members. The first new face on the team is Father Joseph. He seems to be well traveled and a devote follower of Christian beliefs. We haven’t been informed of his powers yet, but we’re sure he’ll jump at the chance to put down some criminals.

The second new member of the team has previously appeared in these pages, Carlton Minno, a.k.a. Top Hat the Extraordinary. I’ve personally witnessed Top Hat perform numerous sleight-of-hand tricks and a levitation illusion that left me breathless.

Finally, the Challengers have recruited the Jester. The Jester has only made himself available to the press during potentially embarrassing situations for the reporters. For example, the Jester requested an interview with Trisha Yamaguchi of WDRN ABC channel 2. He showed up one hour early for the interview, waited patiently and politely, and the moment the cameras began rolling he threw a glowing green pie in Trisha’s face and exclaimed, “Classic!” He then immediately disappeared in a blinding flash of green light. Needless to say, the press will be watching the Jester closely.

Though they have yet to prove themselves as heroes, these three brave men have been given a chance at greatness. Citizens of Darian, please welcome the newest Challengers!
Darin Destroyers NFL quarterback Lewis “Lightning” Unger was hospitalized this morning after a strenuous practice. His doctors report he’s doing much better and was just suffering from mild exhaustion.

The trial continues for the suspected murderers of local minister John Smith. District Attorney David Anthony is still confident that there is enough evidence to convict the two suspects. However, sources close to the defendant’s team suggest that the prosecution has yet to establish a motive for the murder.

Virtual Living, Inc. unveiled their newest product for this year, the Virtua-Skin-Simulator. Virtual Living, Inc. CEO Allison Killington gave a brief press conference about the attributes of this new product. They believe it will provide great benefits to helping children with damaged nerves relearn how to utilize those portions of their body. The Governor of North Carolina was on hand for the demonstration, and after a brief tour of the facility, he endorsed this new product whole-heartedly.

**Danger Man finds Danger in San Fran**

SAN FRANCISCO – Darian’s own Danger Man, Jack Steelgrave II, found himself playing hero again last week. This time it was for the citizens of San Francisco. Steelgrave has been in the “City By The Bay” for several weeks now negotiating contracts for his father’s company, Steelgrave Industries.

While taking in the sites one early morning last week, Steelgrave became aware of an enormous creature rising from the bay. At its full height, the monster rose over 350 feet above the waterline of the bay. According to sources with the San Francisco Aquatic Institute, it is believed that the creature has been slumbering on the bottom of the ocean for thousands of years. Recent submarine activity in its vicinity most likely had awoken it.

The creature chose to attack the city of San Francisco most likely out of confusion and disorientation. Steelgrave, in his Danger Man persona leapt into action. The monster’s raw strength and size proved to be impossible for Danger Man to defeat alone. Lucky for him, San Francisco is not without her own superhero protectors. Also responding to the emergency were Johnny Law (physically enhanced police officer with the power of invisibility), Mr. Dapper and Jeeves the Robot, (super strong British sophisticate with his robot-of-all-trades sidekick), Squall (Asian dynamo with the power to control air currents), Electrolyte (Australian shocker with the power of flight), and finally Citizen Cronus (an apparent resident of the planet Saturn).

Though never working together before, this multinational group of heroes quickly learned to play off of one another’s strengths. Electrolyte helped transport Danger Man and Mr. Dapper closer to the creatures so they could dish out some damage up close. Meanwhile, Johnny Law used his invisibility and agility to distract and frustrate the creature. Jeeves the Robot and Citizen Cronus launched distance attacks and helped to rescue citizens in harms way. This allowed Squall the time necessary to generate a tremendous air mass that eventually forced the creature back out to sea.

Thanks to their teamwork, the group was tremendously successful in repelling the creature’s attack. The following day there was an appreciation ceremony in which the mayor of San Francisco formally presented each hero with a key to the city. Also each hero was offered the right to operate within San Francisco as sanctioned law enforcement officials.