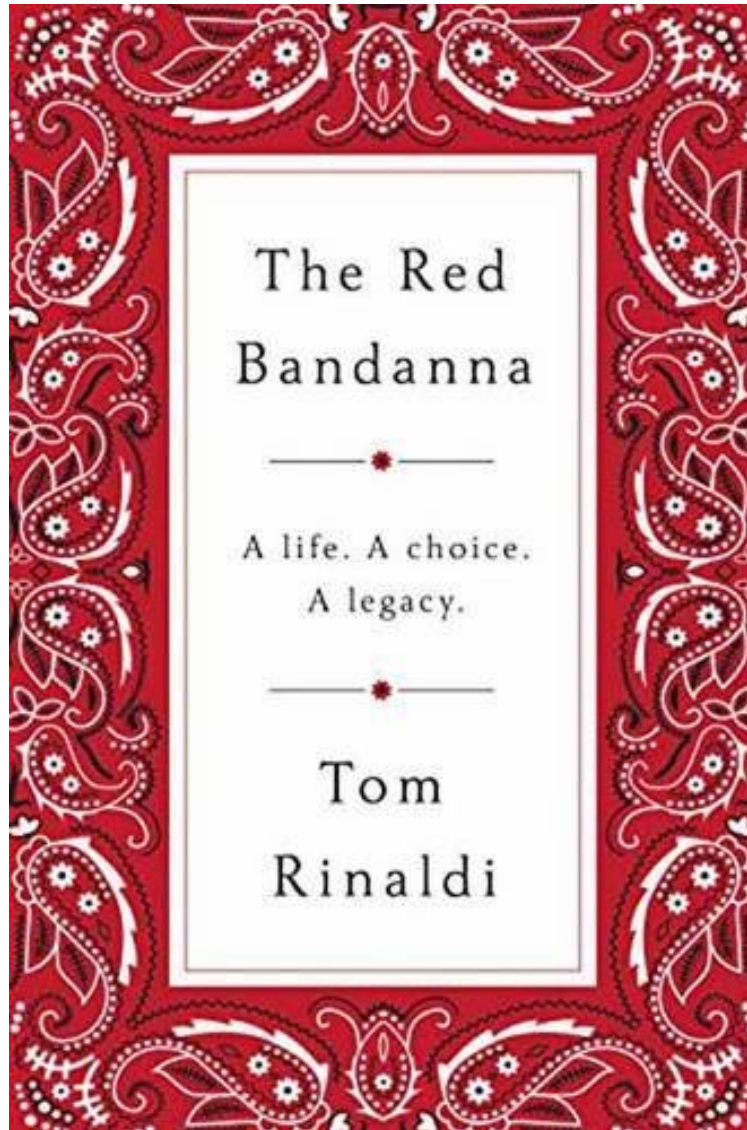


(Download ebook) The Red Bandanna: A life, A Choice, A Legacy

The Red Bandanna: A life, A Choice, A Legacy

Tom Rinaldi

*audiobook / *ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#31033 in Books 2016-09-06 2016-09-06 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.56 x .75 x 5.821, .62 #File Name: 1594206775224 pages | File size: 35.Mb

Tom Rinaldi : The Red Bandanna: A life, A Choice, A Legacy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Red Bandanna: A life, A Choice, A Legacy:

40 of 41 people found the following review helpful. The difference one life can make...By FanI vaguely remember hearing the story of "the guy with the red bandanna" in the aftermath of the events of 9/11 and again when a relative ran in the Red Bandanna 5k at Boston College a few years ago. But beyond the cursory details, I knew very little about Welles Crowther and his heroism while working in the South Tower of the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001. Written by Emmy Award-winning ESPN correspondent Tom Rinaldi, The Red Bandanna is the story of

Crowther, from his childhood growing up in the suburbs of New York City through his years as a student and athlete at Boston College and his transition to adulthood with his first job on Wall Street. Using his training as a volunteer firefighter, Crowther led many to safety amid the chaos after the twin towers were hit. Despite having every opportunity to get himself to safety, he instead remained inside the building rescuing as many as possible before the building collapsed. He was just 24 when he died. It would take months for his remains to be found and longer before the details of his actions that day would get pieced together. Rinaldi interviews some of the survivors that Crowther saved as well as many of his childhood friends. He details the history of Crowther's red bandanna - a gift from his father when he was a child - to the movement and symbol it has now become. Rinaldi especially captures the heartbreaking loss still felt by Crowther's parents Jeff and Alison. As the 15th anniversary of 9/11 approaches, the Red Bandanna is a nice tribute to one of the many stories of heroism that emerged that day and a reminder that one life really can make a difference.

28 of 29 people found the following review helpful. Heroism on a horrific day By N. B. Kennedy Tom Rinaldi tells the story of Welles Crowther, a man who was in the Twin Towers when they were attacked. Because of a lifelong habit of carrying a red bandanna in his back pocket, several people came forward after 9/11 to talk about the hero with the red handkerchief, and how he led others to safety, losing his own life in doing so. Mr. Rinaldi tells the backstory of Welles' life, and how he had been in the process of applying to become a NYC firefighter and volunteered his time in that job in his own hometown. I was too close to the events of 9/11 to ever be able to read about it afterward. I saw the column of black smoke rising, I followed e-mails throughout the day from colleagues, friends and my church family, asking after the safety of those known to be in the Towers. In some cases, I didn't know for weeks the fate of colleagues I knew from my freelance work with several companies housed in the Towers. I just couldn't bear to read anything about the attacks, whether graphic accounts of the day or heartwarming stories such as the New York Times series on the individual victims. Lately, I've been trying to read accounts of the day, hoping that the distance of time and the support of context would get me through. This was a good book to start with. It is heartwarming, though heart-breaking, to hear of the actions of people like Welles Crowther. The author reports several times how Mr. Crowther carried a woman over his shoulders to a certain floor and then went back up the stairwell to help others. While his determination to help others is certainly admirable, I would have found him no less admirable if he were to have carried just that one woman to safety. (I assume she perished, as the author notes that she didn't have the strength to continue down the stairs. My thought is that Mr. Crowther might have made a triage decision that he couldn't carry her down 60 or 70 more flights of stairs, so he decided he needed to help others instead.) This account does tip over into hagiography at times, and the prose is purple in many spots, but overall, the book is saved by the candid interviews of people who knew Welles and by the author's exhaustive reportage.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An Inspiring Book....he went up when others went down. By JOANN STITES If you enjoy reading human interest stories, I highly recommend this book. Welles Crowther from an early age talked about someday being a hero. In many ways he lived his young life in preparation for the day he would be called upon to act. Little did he know on September 11, 2001 as he left his home to go to his job in Tower 2 of the World Trade Center the day had arrived and the hour was close at hand for fulfilling his premonition.

A New York Times bestseller What would you do in the last hour of your life? The story of Welles Crowther, whose actions on 9/11 offer a lasting lesson on character, calling and courage One Sunday morning before church, when Welles Crowther was a young boy, his father gave him a red handkerchief for his back pocket. Welles kept it with him that day, and just about every day to come; it became a fixture and his signature. A standout athlete growing up in Upper Nyack, NY, Welles was also a volunteer at the local fire department, along with his father. He cherished the necessity and the camaraderie, the meaning of the role. Fresh from college, he took a Wall Street job on the 104th floor of the South Tower of the World Trade Center, but the dream of becoming a firefighter with the FDNY remained. When the Twin Towers fell, Welles' parents had no idea what happened to him. In the unbearable days that followed, they came to accept that he would never come home. But the mystery of his final hours persisted. Eight months after the attacks, however, Welles' mother read a news account from several survivors, badly hurt on the 78th floor of the South Tower, who said they and others had been led to safety by a stranger, carrying a woman on his back, down nearly twenty flights of stairs. After leading them down, the young man turned around. I'm going back up, was all he said. The survivors didn't know his name, but despite the smoke and panic, one of them remembered a single detail clearly: the man was wearing a red bandanna. Tom Rinaldi's *The Red Bandanna* is about a fearless choice, about a crucible of terror and the indomitable spirit to answer it. Examining one decision in the gravest situation, it celebrates the difference one life can make.

[A] lovely book... People see the fallen, beat-up world around them and ask: What can I do? Maybe: Be like Welles Crowther. Take your bandanna, change the world. Peggy Noonan, *The Wall Street Journal* Amid the myriad stories of Sept. 11, there are many moments of heroism. This book tells one of the most memorable. Rinaldi's reconstruction of that final morning is gripping. His recounting of how Crowther's family slowly learned of his valor and of how many now honor him, is deeply moving. The payoff comes when President Obama tells Crowther's mother after the death of

Osama bin Laden, I know about your son. For her, he autographs a red bandanna and adds the message, We wont forget Welles. The New York Times Book A beautiful book Through one hero of that day, Rinaldi really tells the story of all of them, all those who saved others and couldn't save themselves. I tell you about a lot of books. Buy this one. In the spirit of all the ones who kept going back up the stairs. Mike Lupica, NY Daily News How often does a book make you feel so deeply you need to just stop and breathe?...Rinaldi is a masterful storyteller. Sure, the obvious time to have reviewed this gem of a book about a gem of a man would have been on Sept. 11. Yet the obvious time to donate to food pantries is Thanksgiving. The need for both, however, is all year. a must read. Newark Star Ledger Rinaldi writes a memorable and compelling account of the classic American hero. For those looking for an inspiring modern-day narrative, herein a young man goes beyond himself to help others and makes the ultimate sacrifice. Library Journal A meticulous and vivid portrait Publishers Weekly The inspirational story of a modern-day hero who escorted dozens to safety during the 9/11 attacks Rinaldi captures the compelling urgency of the indelible event and fondly tips his hat to Crowther, an exemplary embodiment of human compassion and selflessness. A moving, deeply felt tribute to a courageous individual who sacrificed his life to save others. Kirkus sTom Rinaldis The Red Bandanna could very well become one of those classic books that are handed down through generations, for more than any book I have read in a very long time it convincingly tells the story of how great men and women become great how cultural, community, and spiritual drives can develop that inner character that will make the world a better place. It is all found here in these pages - the intellectual and moral strength of a close and loving family, determination, guts, and the sense of service that brings alive this memorable and beautifully written story of the 9/11 death of Welles Crowther. This book will always be set aside in my house to illustrate the art of writing, but mostly to honor the life of this courageous man a volunteer firefighter, champion athlete, well positioned stock trader a true friend and loyal son whose inner inspiration was to become a New York City firefighter. Every first responder will want to read this book, every high school and college English teacher will want to assign it, and every thoughtful reader will give it to someone they love. Dennis Smith, retired FDNY firefighter and author of Report from Engine Co. 82 About the Author Tom Rinaldi has been a national correspondent at ESPN since 2002. Among other honors, he has won fifteen national Sports Emmy Awards and six national Edward R. Murrow Awards. Born in Brooklyn, New York, he is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. He lives in New Jersey, with his wife, Dianne, their son, Jack, and daughter, Tessa. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. I TAKE A MOMENT. Take it out. Unfold it. Press your hand down upon it and flatten it, into the surface of your desk, or the edge of the bed, or along the line of your leg. Twenty-two inches along any side, four ounces in your hand, barely enough weight to notice. Polyester and cotton, dyed and printed, cut and packaged, folded and shipped, to reach you, one way or another, and land in your palm. Pick it up. Look at it. What do you see there, in the red, white, and black? Is there something in the ancient pattern and the Persian fig shape, the paisley teardrop and the flat pointed stars? A childs thing, a trifle, a rag? What do you carry, what truth could it possibly contain? What meaning could it hold? Fear and strength. Smoke and blood. Doubt and faith. Terror and valor. The dead and the maimed. The way out and the walk down. The sacrifice given, and the salvation granted. Living. Dying. Its all in there, the father says. Its all in that bandanna. They searched for the right name. He was their first, and they felt the weight of the decision. A name is the label for a life, the first thing youre given upon entering the world, and the heading for all you leave behind when youre gone. Should they look to their lineage, to honor their bloodlines, or pick a name that would be free of the past, to accrue its own meaning over time? In the end, history won, as it usually does. On May 17, 1977, in New York City, the first child of Alison and Jeff Crowther was born: Welles Remy Crowther. The boy was named after a man his parents never met. Henry Spalding Welles was Alisons great-uncle in several senses of the word, a figure shrouded in stories and tales, legends shed heard about since childhood. A favorite of Alisons father, Frank, Uncle Henry led an outsized life, certainly by the family telling. Despite living in Manhattan, he was an accomplished professional sportsman, working as a hired shot and public marksman, for Remington, Americas oldest gun maker. As legend had it, Uncle Henry once hit two hundred clays in succession in competition, a display to prove the accuracy and effectiveness of Remingtons newest shotgun. He also worked for True Temper, a manufacturer of fishing rods and reels, and was accomplished as a fly fisherman. Uncle Henry invented and held a patent for a diving plug, a wooden lure carved and weighted to penetrate the surface of the water, to help catch fish in any type of water, any time of day. For Alison, it wasnt so much the tales as the way they were told, the spark that came into her fathers voice when he spoke about Henry Spalding Welles, the look that crossed his face. I thought, what could be a better name? Alison recalled. There was just this magic about Uncle Henry. The stories about the man, the ones her family loved to tell with laughter and pride and wonder about beating Annie Oakley in a shooting competition, about sailing wooden boats across the ponds of Central Park, about President Eisenhower using his trout fishing flies all shared the theme of taking a bold and unpredicted line through life. It was a name they hoped their son would make his own. Alison Remy's own line was a gentle loop, from the suburbs of Westchester to a campus in New England, then back south to Manhattan. She grew up in the house where her father did, the house her grandfather built on Shawnee Road in the wealthy village of Scarsdale, north of Manhattan. Her grandfather and father, Frank Remy Sr. and Frank Remy Jr., shared more than the family home; both were graduates of New York University, both were dentists, and both were athletes. When

Alison graduated from Scarsdale High School in 1966, she didn't follow the family path to NYU. Instead, she enrolled in Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts. Founded as a female seminary in 1834, Wheaton was one of the oldest colleges for women in America. There were antiwar protests during her time there, but the small school was far from an epicenter of the countercultural unrest exploding across American campuses in the late 1960s, and the academic environment was serious and challenging. The student body, twelve hundred women by the time Alison graduated, was expected to be diligent, studious, and involved. That worked for Alison, who was a dedicated student with a passion for environmental studies. She headed the first Earth Day celebration on campus. The summer before her junior year, she went on a blind date set up by another couple. Alison got the call only after the woman originally scheduled for the date had to cancel and the matchmakers didn't want to stand the suitor up or hurt his feelings. When Jeff Crowther walked into the room, Alison had a completely novel reaction: It was love at first sight, she recalled. It really was. For Jeff Crowther, the fact that his first date had canceled, upsetting the night's original plans, fit his own line well enough. If there was a prescribed path, odds were he wasn't following it. Jeff had grown up in White Plains, a larger, more diverse city just north of Scarsdale. His family had its roots in Maryland, but his father's work brought them to New York. Bosley Crowther, a New York Times reporter, writer, and critic, spent forty years with the paper. As a student at Princeton, he entered a current events contest cosponsored by the Times and a new weekly magazine called Time. His essay, on why the Calvin Coolidge administration should withdraw its forces in Nicaragua, won first place. The prize? A five-hundred-dollar check and a job offer with the New York Times. Starting as a cub reporter in 1928, Crowther worked his way up to general reporter, rewrite man, feature writer, and then, in 1940, the paper's chief movie critic. He held the position for twenty-seven years, becoming an institution. Bosley's reviews held extraordinary weight, often setting up films for success or failure. Though his father and grandfather had attended Princeton, Jeff went in a different direction. At his mother's suggestion, he headed to Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, a respected academic institution, though not overly challenging for him, at least not at first. He sailed through freshman year without developing any impulse to study, or even to attend classes regularly. By the end of his sophomore year, after spending his time betting on horses at a local track, playing pool in the basement of his dormitory, and impressing buddies as the social director for his fraternity, he was summoned by the dean and told he needed a break, to refocus. I got thrown out is how he characterized it. Without telling his parents he had been suspended, Jeff took a step few saw coming: in the summer of 1965, he joined the navy, and was stationed in San Diego for his two years of service. By the time he returned east, he held a different, wiser view toward his college opportunity. He met Alison Remy just as he was getting ready to resume life as an undergrad, this time at NYU. That first date was a smashing success. Alison returned home that night, found her father still up working in his office, and declared: Dad, I think I've met the man I want to marry. Her father was considerably less moved. Don't be silly was his reply. A few miles north, Jeff told his mother the very same thing that night. Alison had an intuition, a burgeoning feeling, about the night, about all connected to the man she'd met, the feelings he sparked, the summer fading and the autumn approaching. Even about the date itself. I will never forget thinking, she recalled more than four decades later, this day, its going to have a special meaning for us. I had a powerful sense about it, not only that we just met on this date, but there was something else that was going to make this an important day for our family... Her voice trailed off. The year was 1968. The date was September 11. She graduated in 1970 with a degree in biology and landed a job in medical research at one of the most prestigious addresses for research in the country, Rockefeller University. Alison was going back to New York. At Rockefeller, she was assigned to help with lab work on a project led by Dr. Vincent Dole and his wife, Dr. Marie Nyswander, who were pioneering the use of a new treatment for heroin addiction. The couple had developed a synthetic medication, methadone, to reduce the intensely painful symptoms of withdrawal that so many addicts experienced in trying to get clean. At the time, addiction was widely seen as something other than a medical problem, viewed through a moral lens, as a defect of character. The doctors rejected that notion and pioneered the use of methadone to help addicts wean themselves from heroin. For his work, Dole would receive the Lasker Award, one of the greatest prizes in American medicine. Alison was working on lab experiments with mice and rats, injecting the rodents with radioactive methadone to track the effects over a span of months. She was also dating. And on a ferry ride to Marthas Vineyard in the fall of 1970, Jeff proposed. The wedding was the first day of May 1971. They moved to an apartment in Hastings-on-Hudson, a quaint village in Westchester, and began a life together, Jeff as a banker and Alison continuing as a research assistant. They wanted to start a family, but it took awhile to happen. Alison stopped working at Rockefeller in 1976, to avoid any further exposure to the radioactivity in her lab. Later that year, she and Jeff told the family the news. Alison was expecting. The slide show still plays in the father's head, a perpetual reel. No conscious decision clicks its carousel to life or chooses the sequence; there's no beam to ignite the dust floating between lens and screen. There is no screen at all, no place outside his head to play the slides. The pictures explode across the sides of his mind, sometimes with enough force to tighten his chest and steal his breath. Every frame contains his son. A boy blossoming, awkward and beautiful, unfolding into his own life. Rarely are the portraits from milestones, from the passages through the razor wire of adolescence, the first Communion and junior proms, the formal poses and family events, the birthday parties and holiday dinners. Those have moved to the background somehow. The father can't stop the show, even if he wants to. He knows he won't ever keep them away. The visions

come, uninvited and beyond any governing, a tax on his sorrow. The pictures thrill and sear him, comfort and afflict him. The picture just now is the first frame in a short movie. The son is just a toddler, not even three years old. He is down on the floor in the living room, playing with the family dog. The two wrestle over a toy, which is the dogs property, the dog biting and the boy pulling, each holding on with all his might. The dog is bigger, stronger. From room to room, the father watches as the dog drags his son around, both wild with delight, neither willing to let go. They play until each is exhausted. At times when the boys grip weakens, his balance falters, and he slides into furniture and crashes into walls. But in the picture in the fathers head, the boy wont stop, or cry, or look for help. In his tiny movie, flashing frame by frame, his son goes right back at the dog, until the dog is too tired to keep fighting. The game always ends the same way, with the toy in the boys hands. He knew what he wanted to do, and to be. From the time Welles was in preschool, when he was asked about his future, he had an immediate and confident answer: he would be a fireman. Not like the ones in childrens books, but like the people who shared his name and his house. From the time he was a tyke, both his grandfathers would take him to the firehouses in their respective cities. Alisons father, Frank, to the red-tiled, brick-faced, double-doored Fire Station No. 2 in Hartsdale; Jeffs father, Bosley (whom the grandchildren called Geeps), to the firehouse in White Plains, just a few blocks from his house. They made the visits not because they were volunteers themselves; they saw the shine in their grandsons eyes, and fed his wonder. Welles also liked to spend time with Geeps in his home office, playing business, as the boy called it, hiking himself up behind his grandfathers enormous desk in the sunroom, where Bosley would spend time writing. The interest in business would also last through most of his life. But it was an interest. Something to do. Not something to be. It wasnt firefighting. The firemans ideal was a magnet for Welles, as it is for so many boys of a certain age. The jubilant blast of the siren, the unpredictable call in the night, the monstrous gleam of the ladder truck, the fearsome power of the hose guns, the boots and turnouts and helmets, and the real and irresistible pull of fireits brilliance and drama and danger. A living thing, a real and attacking beast. The appeal lay in all of it, and something more, the chance to live out and execute an edict every child is taught but most forget fast: to help. Christmas 1981, when Welles was four, his grandparents had a special gift for him, a blazing red ride-on fire truck. Upon first seeing it, Welles, who was formally dressed for the holiday in his little Eton suit, stood back for a few moments, as if uncertain how to proceed. He was afraid to go near it, Alison said, picturing the scene. He couldnt believe it was real. He was just so in awe of his firetruck. Maybe he was trying to figure out how they shrunk the truck down. So Welles simply stared at the small metal engine, with its black wheels and bright chrome and beckoning seat behind the steering wheel. How did Santa get it down the chimney? Eventually, he walked toward it, sat down in it, and attempted to maneuver it around the room. He climbed in and tried to pedal it, Alison said. It was not easy to pedal. The pedals were indeed difficult to crank, and soon the gleaming red sides wore a coat of dust. Even though Welles would ride it at times down the sloped driveway, screaming with joy, wild to the world, he outgrew its small frame soon enough, and the toy went downstairs in a corner of the house somewhere, ignored and unused. But the memory of the day, of the gift beside the tree and Welles under its spell, remains.