

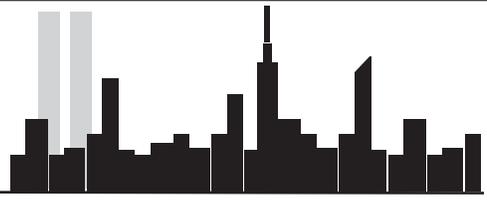
MARCH 2007

**VIEW**  
FROM  
P O I N T



**metro Tech**

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT



## Operation Fresh Battery

### Fire Safety campaign expanded in wake of fatal Bronx Fire

**I**t was one of the worst fires the Department has witnessed in nearly 40 years.

A three-alarm fire in a four-story private-dwelling in the Highbridge section of the Bronx killed 10 people on March 7, including nine children, and injured seven others.

"This is one of the most devastating fires in this city's history," said Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

In the wake of the devastation, fire marshals sadly determined the fire started and quickly spread because of a few fire safety mistakes. So the Fire Safety Education Unit and FDNY Foundation immediately launched a high-profile, citywide campaign, called Operation Fresh Battery, to inform New Yorkers about how to keep their homes fire safe.

The Fire Safety Education Unit kicked off the campaign on March 19 at the Islamic Cultural Center in the Bronx. They continued to visit other high-risk neighborhoods in each borough, handing out nearly 145,000 9-volt batteries and urging people to change the batteries in their smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors twice a year. They also gave away literature on winter safety, candle safety and smoking, as well as coloring books and magnets with kitchen fire safety tips.



Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta at the quarters of E-68/L-49 in the Bronx, announced that the FDNY will hand out thousands of batteries and fire safety education materials throughout New York in the wake of a fatal Bronx fire that killed 10 people. They were joined by (L to R) Chief of Operations Patrick McNally, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano, Commissioner of the Mayor's Community Assistance Unit Patrick Brennan and Chief Fire Marshal Louis Garcia.

"This tragedy reminds us of the brutal and heart-wrenching consequences of fire," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said. "Our aim is to reduce fire fatalities in the City by ensuring that as many people as possible learn about fire safety."

The fire appears to have been caused by an overheated appliance cord on a space heater in a first floor apartment. Also, fire marshals said an apartment door was left open, facilitating the spread of the fire into a shared hallway and up a staircase. Then, before calling 911, residents unsuccessfully attempted to extinguish the fire themselves.

Fire marshals also found two smoke detectors in the building, yet they did not have batteries.

"We remain committed to doing everything we can to prevent tragedies like this from occurring ever again," said Jocelyn Greenwood, acting executive director of the FDNY Foundation, which donated \$75,000 for the purchase of the batteries.

#### THE FIRE

The fire was reported at 11:08 p.m. in a four-story home at 1022 Woodycrest Avenue and 164<sup>th</sup> Street.

Firefighters from Engine 68 arrived in 3 minutes 23 seconds. Upon their arrival, they found heavy fire and smoke conditions on the first and second floors, including the staircase.

A second alarm was transmitted at 11:15 p.m. and a third was called at 11:46 p.m. The fire was deemed under control at 1:06 a.m.

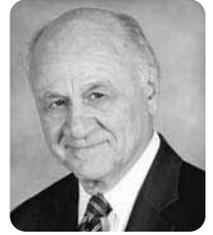
Seventeen people suffered injuries as a result of the fire. Ten people died as a result of their injuries, including boys ages 1, 3, 6, 7, 11 and 6-months; girls ages 3, 6 and 6-months; and a 42-year-old woman.

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## Making Firefighting Safer By Improving Personal Protective Equipment



Commissioner's  
— Message

The Department is constantly evaluating new ways to improve firefighters' first line of defense – their bunker gear. In a continuing effort to offer our members the best fire protection possible, the FDNY's Chief of Safety, Assistant Chief Allen Hay, and his team have been studying the durability and design of your gear and are working to improve its function so we can continue to reduce injuries and increase firefighter agility.

After years of use, a firefighter's bunker gear endures wear and tear, which is a badge of honor for most members. Yet the soon-to-be-released National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1851 requires that gear be replaced every 10 years because the moisture barrier usually does not provide suitable levels of protection after a decade of use. There are also issues with the layers of the thermal lining losing effectiveness over time due to it bunching and separating, the fabric of the outer shell weakening and becoming less resistant to cuts and tears, and the loss of seam strength.

To ensure that all members are properly equipped, we have decided to begin exchanging your gear immediately – even before the Standard is released. So if your bunker coat and pants are more than 10 years old, you will be issued new gear a few weeks after the old gear is sent out for cleaning.

This new gear will include a Drag Rescue Device (DRD), a Kevlar strap positioned just below the collar on the rear of the coat that, when released, enables a firefighter to be dragged without the coat pulling above his or her head. The DRD is deployed easily and is far superior to any other similar device used by departments throughout the world. This is a major advancement in firefighter safety that will no doubt keep you and your fellow firefighters safer in the many hazardous situations they encounter.

We also are looking into getting new gloves with an improved design that will reduce hand injuries while improving dexterity. We have been researching a three-dimensional model that creates a tube-like opening for the finger instead of the two flat surfaces of the current glove. This style also uses a thinner – yet more effective – thermal

layer to protect against heat and moisture. It would provide a more streamlined shape and improved range of motion, while offering higher levels of protection from burns and cuts.

The Safety Command also is looking for ways to reduce the number of lower leg injuries our members sustain each year.

Lower leg burns have been drastically reduced since bunker gear was first introduced in 1994, dropping from more than 500 aggregate burn injuries each year to less than 100. While most of these burns are minor, about 10 members a year need skin grafts at the Burn Center, and many others are put on medical leave.

The Safety Command continues to work with our gear supplier, Total Fire Group, to develop new ways to reduce the number of lower leg burns each year. Currently bunker pants include an Arashield (waterproof) liner on the front of the knee to reduce burns resulting from hot water being absorbed into the thermal liner. Yet some firefighters find this layer can constrict movement, so Safety is looking for another type of lower leg protective.

Several pilot programs have been developed to address the issue, including one in which bunker pants were lined with a waist-to-toe moisture barrier, removing the thermal liner and moisture barrier from inside the boot and attaching it to the bottom of the pant leg.

Evaluations from these pilot programs are being reviewed and we are continuing to explore other ways to reduce these types of injuries.

The purpose of all of this new gear is to ensure that our firefighters are more protected than ever before when responding to life threatening emergencies across the city. This development process takes time, but I am encouraged the Department is leading the way to increase the already high level of protection afforded our members.

## Gift of the Irish

### FDNY accepts Waterford Crystal Sculpture Honoring Members Lost on 9/11

Thereal, breathtaking and exceptional are three words that describe the sculpture given to the Department from Waterford Crystal on March 14.

They are also words used to describe the man it was created to honor.

Officials from the iconic Irish crystal company joined members of the FDNY to present the three-foot tall, 20-pound sculpture as a tribute to Department Chaplain Mychal Judge and the 342 other FDNY members who were killed on September 11, 2001.

“The sculpture is a beautiful piece of art and the sentiment behind it is greatly appreciated,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. “It is a wonderful memorial for Father Judge and to everyone who responded on 9/11.”

The dedication was held at the quarters of Engine 1/Ladder 24, where the piece will be housed. Father Judge called the firehouse his own and responded from there to the World Trade Center disaster.

“This beautiful crystal creation, gifted to the FDNY and the people of New York, is a testament to their courage, bravery and dignity following that dark day in September 2001,” said CEO of Waterford John Foley.

Yet the story of how the piece was created and donated is just as outstanding as the sculpture itself.

Master Waterford Engraver and Glasscutter Sean Egan was devastated following the attacks of 9/11 and searched for ways to pay tribute to the FDNY members who responded to the tragedy.

He said he was suddenly inspired by a piece of crystal he saw that reminded him of a church window and began creating the piece in his personal time – mostly lunch hours and weekends.

Firefighter Michael O’Rourke from Division 7 happened to be touring the Waterford factory last October when someone called his attention to the engraver who was referring to a clipped newspaper photo of Father Judge being carried from the wreckage.

The firefighter said he was overwhelmed by the concept and brought the project to the attention of officials from the



(Top) Master Engraver and Glasscutter Sean Egan (left) and Firefighter Michael O’Rourke stand beside the Waterford sculpture. Firefighter O’Rourke met Egan while on a tour of the Waterford factory.

(Bottom) The Waterford Crystal sculpture honoring Father Mychal Judge and other FDNY members killed on 9/11. It will be housed at Engine 1/Ladder 24 in Manhattan.

FDNY and Waterford.

Soon after, Waterford commissioned the piece to be made for the Department.

It took Egan about six months to create and is estimated to be worth more than \$75,000.

“It was really a labor of love,” Egan said. “I’m overwhelmed to be honest. My

thanks go to the Fire Department for accepting this piece for what it is and the story behind it. May you use it as a reminder that we haven’t forgotten about you.”

Among the honored guests at the dedication ceremony were Father Judge’s sister Dympna Jessi and Ireland’s Farm Minister Mary Coughlan.

# Reason to Celebrate

## Graduating proby class includes legacies, vets

The count on deck was 194 and all had a reason to celebrate.

The fourth probationary firefighter class of 2006 graduated from the Fire Academy on February 22, during an enthusiastic ceremony at Brooklyn College.

"The paths that led you to this day are different," Mayor Bloomberg said. "Thank you each for answering the call."

Among the graduates was Probationary Firefighter Steven Hay, son of Assistant Chief Allen Hay of the Safety Command who noted that he was "very, very proud" of his son.

Additionally, Probationary Firefighter Maura Fitzsimmons joined the ranks just days after her sister Michele was promoted to lieutenant (*see the story on page 10*).

Firefighter Christopher Schiotis also graduated during the ceremony. His late father James was a firefighter in Engine 280 and his brother Michael is a firefighter in Ladder 132.

"You are joining a truly special group of men and women from whom you will learn this job," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said.

Two of the probies said they were inspired to join the Department by their brave family members who made the Supreme Sacrifice on September 11, 2001 – Probationary Firefighter Luke Allen lost his brother Richard and Probationary



One of the 194 probationary firefighters graduates at Brooklyn College on February 22.

Firefighter Raymond Murphy Jr. lost his father Raymond in the tragedy.

Keeping with the tradition of family, the graduating class also included a pair of siblings. Brothers Gerard and Mark Mullaney were among the graduates crossing the stage to accept their framed certificates.

"This job attracts a unique group of people," said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano. "Individuals who are willing to put their lives on the line for a stranger. Firefighting isn't in your blood,

it's in your heart."

A special round of applause was given to the probationary firefighters who served in the armed services, 11 of whom did a tour of duty in Iraq. Among them were Probationary Firefighters Stephen Marley, Jr. and Eric D. Mussinan, both of whom earned the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

The class Valedictorian, Probationary Firefighter Kevin McCabe, said that proby training at Randall's Island yielded many lessons.

"These past 13 weeks were arduous to say the least," he said. "We learned to operate as members of a team to accomplish a common goal."

The class Salutatorian was Probationary Firefighter James V. Devito and the Physical Fitness Award recipient, Probationary Firefighter Thomas J. Bradley.

## Probie Makes His First Grab

Just days after graduating from the FDNY Training Academy, Probationary Firefighter Sean O'Grady of Ladder 147 helped save a mother and her two young sons from their burning apartment at 870 Coney Avenue in Ditmas Park, Brooklyn.

Firefighter O'Grady, Lieutenant Gerard Curran and Firefighters Chris Deszcz and Donald Wunderlich climbed four flights of stairs and forced their way into an apartment

where they were told a family was trapped.

With no visibility, Probationary Firefighter O'Grady used the extinguisher to beat back flames as the others searched for victims.

They located 38-year-old Asa Flores and her sons Abraham, 4, and Abdul, 2 in different rooms of the apartment and carried them to safety.

The fire, which marshals said was accidental, started in the kitchen.

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# A New Kind of Paramedic

*52 EMS members become certified rescue medics*

No space is too tight, too high or too arduous for a new highly-trained group of paramedics in the EMS Command.

Since January, 52 rescue medics trained in special operations have been saving lives like never before, by treating patients before extrication from confined spaces.

“In any job, seconds count,” said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano. “So the rescue medics’ highly-specialized training enables them to provide extraordinary care more quickly to victims and, therefore, save more lives.”

In January, a team of rescue medics were called to the Brooklyn Navy Yard when a ship worker fell into a hole on a fuel barge. The medics made contact with the victim and worked with SOC firefighters to perform a high-angle rescue in the 18-inch wide hole.

“Their skills were critical that day,” said Chief of EMS Command John Peruggia. “All these members are bringing pre-hospital care to the landscape of an urban battlefield.”

To be certified as a rescue paramedic, EMS members must complete nearly one month of training at the Fire Academy on Randall’s Island. This includes 40 hours studying collapse rescue, 40 hours of confined space rescue, 40 hours in combined trench and high angle procedures, and 24



*A rescue medic treats a man who fell into a hole on a fuel barge on January 23 at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.*



*Rescue medics spend nearly one month training at the Fire Academy on Randall’s Island. They study everything from collapse rescue to high angle procedures.*

hours studying ‘crush medicine.’ They also receive advanced Haz-Mat training.

Upon completion of their training, rescue paramedics are able to intubate a victim in a narrow crawl space, work in harnesses and protective masks, rappel from ropes and operate among debris.

“People think you run in a hole and pull someone out, yet it’s so much more complex than that,” said Rescue Paramedic Lenore O’Neill, a seven-year vet-

eran. “I always wanted to get involved in rescue operations. It feels good to make a difference.”

The first rescue paramedic class graduated in late 2006 and members began being dispatched earlier this year from EMS Stations 10, 20, 57, 46 and 23.

The training is funded through a grant provided by U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s 2005 Assistance to Fire-fighter Program.

# The Ultimate Gift

*Bone marrow donors meet their recipients at annual ceremony*

**F**irefighters Stephen Duffy of Ladder 16 and Robert O'Neill of Engine 304 each were honored on January 19 for saving a life.

Yet they did not carry these individuals out of burning buildings or pull them from a trapped elevator ... they gave them their bone marrow.

During the Honor Roll of Life ceremony at Fire Department Headquarters, sponsored by the New York Blood Center (NYBC), the firefighters met their bone marrow recipients for the first time.

"We're proud of their contributions and hope their example encourages others to give the gift of life," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.

During the ceremony, 18-year-old Samantha Alcazar from Guadalajara, Mexico finally got to thank the man who saved her life, Firefighter Duffy.

"I feel great," said Alcazar, shyly smiling. "I was scared until I met my angel."

Alcazar was diagnosed with Fanconi's Anemia, a rare blood disease, when she was 13. She was hospitalized in Texas where she received her bone marrow transplant in January 2004.

Firefighter Duffy said he was just as



*Samantha Alcazar flew to New York from Mexico to meet her bone marrow donor, Firefighter Stephen Duffy.*

happy to meet Alcazar.

"To see Samantha healthy is overwhelming," he said. "The odds of having a successful match are staggering. And so this is just wonderful."

Firefighter O'Neill's recipient, retired college professor John Deeney, 65, from Dover, Delaware, said he was filled with gratitude for his donor's selflessness.

Before his transplant, Deeney, a great-grandfather with leukemia, was given a slim chance for long-term survival. He had entered two clinical trials and a bone marrow transplant was his last resort.

"No words can describe how appreciative I am," he said.

Firefighter O'Neill said he had been called to donate four times and was disappointed that he was not able to donate every time.

"I was just thankful that I matched up with some-

*Continued on page 12*



*Captain William Connolly receives the first Kwalwasser Award for making three separate bone marrow donations since 1996. He received the award from Nancy Johnson, who was his first recipient more than a decade ago.*

## Honoring Selflessness: The Kwalwasser Award

**F**ire Captain William P. Connolly of Division 7 is well known as a hero on the fire ground. Yet it was a different kind of heroism that earned him a special award on January 19.

He was recognized for making three separate bone marrow donations since 1996.

Nancy Johnson, who received his life-saving bone marrow 11 years ago, presented him with the first-ever Kwalwasser Award during the Honor Roll of Life ceremony at FDNY Headquarters.

Captain Connolly said he was the potential donor for eight recipients over the last decade, and was honored to have been able to donate to three individuals.

The award is named in honor of retired Firefighter Mark Kwalwasser from Engine 43 and is dedicated to his sister, Elaine Diedrich, who lost her fight against leukemia before a suitable bone marrow match could be made.

In her memory, Kwalwasser created the FDNY program to encourage firefighters to register as bone marrow donors. He also established a recruitment drive at the Fire Academy for probies.



*Firefighter Robert O'Neill met his bone marrow recipient John Deeney for the first time during the ceremony.*

## Double the Joy

### Firefighters save twin girls in Harlem apartment fire

It was the kind of rescue you only see in the movies.

Members of Squad 41 and Ladder 14 plucked two-year-old twins Taylor and Talilah Davis from their cribs and carried them to safety on February 11, as heavy smoke engulfed their Harlem apartment and fire raged on the floors below.

The toddlers were discovered by Firefighters James Disciullo and Michael Linde in a rear bedroom during an interior search of the fifth floor of 110 Lenox Avenue.

They said after they took down the Davis's apartment door, the members had to crawl down a hallway with no visibility to get to the girls.

Once they reached them, the twins were passed out the window into the waiting arms of Firefighters Daniel Shaffer and George Baade who were in the bucket of the tower ladder.

Firefighter Shaffer said the twins were crying at first, but then became excited by the attention they were receiving.

The children then were handed off to EMT Kyra Arnold who treated them at the scene.



Members of Squad 41 and Ladder 14 rescued two toddlers from a three-alarm fire on February 11. (L to R) Lt. Michael Conboy (Sq-41), Firefighter Daniel Shaffer (L-14), Firefighter James Disciullo (Sq-1) and Firefighter George Baade (L-14).

Fire marshals determined the three-alarm fire was caused by a child playing with matches in a third floor apartment.

The fire was reported at 3:26 p.m. and was brought under control a little more than an hour later.

## Close to Home

### 49-year-old Victim Grabbed from Third-Floor Window

As he rode to a fire on February 3, Firefighter Victor Milukas of Ladder 142 was shocked to hear the address of the emergency.

"What was that address again?" he remembered asking. "I couldn't believe it."

The location was 95-86 113<sup>th</sup> Street in Jamaica, across the street from a connected row frame house where his mother lives and where he grew up.

"It gave me an extra adrenaline rush," he said.

The fire began around 1 p.m. and quickly engulfed the three-story residence. "We could see the column of smoke 10 blocks away," Firefighter

Milukas said.

Upon arrival, they learned that two women already had jumped out of windows, and there were reports of a man on the third floor.

"We knew there was someone definitely trapped," said Lieutenant Michael Stackpole. "There was an incredible sense of urgency and your training just takes over."

Approaching through a rear yard of a plumbing supply company, Firefighter Milukas, a 10-year veteran, jumped a fence and positioned the ladder against the building. He was accompanied by Firefighter William Hughes.

That is when he saw the right leg of the 49-year-old man at the window, directly

over the fire floor.

A charged line was directed on the second floor to create a water curtain that provided enough relief from the intense heat and flames for Firefighter Milukas to climb the ladder and enter the window.

Once inside he was met by Lieutenant Stackpole who had approached from interior with the assistance of Squad 27 and helped cleared a path for egress.

They placed the semi-conscious victim on an ironing board and were assisted with the removal from the top of the stairs by members of Rescue 4.

The victim was handed off to EMS and transported to New York-Presbyterian /Weill Cornell Medical Center.

# Thawing It Out

## Special Units Keep Hydrants Working Citywide in Chilly Temps

There's no question – it was a cold winter.

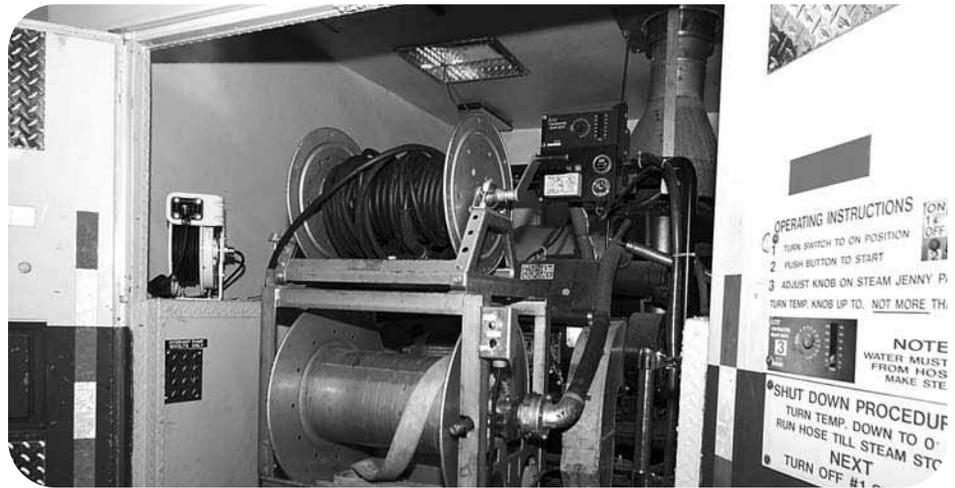
And sustained freezing weather meant firefighters faced unique challenges, including frozen hydrants and apparatus. So when temperatures dipped, members quartered in houses with special thawing apparatus get moving.

Specially built steam-generating trucks (one in each borough) were activated when the temperature dropped to 25 degrees or less for 24 hours or more. They work around the clock to defrost hundreds of hydrants a week and make sure equipment on the fire ground is free of ice.

“Our main job is to make sure water pressure is not compromised,” said Lieutenant Douglas Nixon of Engine 330. “Safety is paramount.”

Located in the quarters of Engine 76/Ladder 22, Engine 330/Ladder 172, Engine 151/Ladder 76, Engine 265 and Engine 97, the Department's thawing apparatus were used regularly this winter.

The rigs carry their own water supply – about 100 gallons – and use high-pressure steam to melt the ice that accumulates in the barrels of hydrants. Then an electric pump, similar to a swimming pool pump, is inserted into the hydrant and used to drain



Special thawing apparatus located at firehouses in every borough work to defrost hundreds of hydrants when temperatures dip below 25 degrees.

the water.

“If there is a leak or deposits in the barrel, water can build up repeatedly and sometimes we have to return several times to thaw it completely,” said Captain Thomas Smyth of Engine 97. “The colder the weather, the longer it takes.”

The thawing apparatus also is put in service during large-scale fires and other emergencies in freezing weather, to help do anything from remove ice from aerial lad-

ders and to ensure adequate water supply.

This winter the unit was critical to operations at numerous jobs, including at the 6-alarm fire on February 3 in Far Rockaway, Queens (see story on page 9).

“The apparatus is an important tool when climate conditions impede firefighting,” said Captain Gregory Gargiso of Engine 151.

# A Great Firefighter, A Great Gift

## Department receives grant in honor of 9/11 hero

First Deputy Commissioner Frank Cruthers and Chief of Operations Patrick McNally accepted a \$35,000 grant from Wells Fargo Insurance Services and Fireman's Fund Insurance Company on February 23 at Fire Headquarters.

The grant will help fund improvements to the Department's high-rise firefighting capabilities. It was made in honor of Firefighter Peter Vega of Ladder 118, who made the Supreme Sacrifice on 9/11.

“This grant will even further improve our operations and will enable us to fight high-rise fires better than ever before,” said Chief McNally.

The grant will fund the purchase of two



The Department received a grant, in memory of Firefighter Peter Vega, to help fund improvements to the FDNY's high-rise firefighting capabilities.

large ventilation fans for use in high-rise fires and a state-of-the-art computer training system to be set up at Firefighter Vega's firehouse – Engine 205/Ladder 118.

“Everyone will remember these tools were given to the Department in honor of this great individual,” said Captain Steven Olberding from Engine 205.

The grant package is part of a program, funded by the Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, which provides equipment, training and educational tools to fire departments nationwide.

“He was a bright, modest, open-minded, sensitive man who just wanted to do good in this world,” said Firefighter Vega's mother, Maureen Rosenberg. “I'm grateful and honored that he will forever be remembered as more than just a name on a list.”

## Sixth Alarm Scare

*Dispatchers, firefighters and EMS work together to save a woman and her two daughters*

A raging six-alarm fire spread quickly through a six-story apartment building in Far Rockaway, Queens on February 3.

The first call came in at 11:46 p.m. reporting a fire in a fifth floor apartment. Within minutes it had spread throughout the building and into the cockloft. The flames also extended to a neighboring building. The sixth alarm was transmitted at 1:29 a.m. (a seventh alarm was later called for relief purposes) and it was brought under control at 4:10 a.m.

Yet the harrowing story of this fire can best be told through the eyes of one of the building's residents, Christine McMillon.

This brave mother was awakened to the sound of her smoke detector.

She pulled back the sheet, which served as the door to her bedroom, and saw a wall of smoke filling her living room. She dialed 9-1-1 and spoke with Dispatcher Ben Vivona, who said he would help lead firefighters to her whereabouts.

Then -- just after hanging up the phone -- she said her lights went out and she became trapped in her apartment by the intense heat and smoke with her two young daughters, Chanise, 3 and Katie, 1.

Although her children were calm,



*Dispatcher Ben Vivona meets fire victim Christine McMillon and her daughter Katie on February 7. Just days earlier he helped keep the mother of two calm when she was trapped during a six-alarm fire in Far Rockaway, Queens.*

McMillon said she was not.

"I was really scared for my kids," she said. "There was so much smoke and I didn't know what was going on."

Moments later, Dispatcher Vivona called back to make sure she and her family were okay.

"I put myself in her spot," he said. "I couldn't let the call go, I had to help her. She was really scared."

He stayed on the phone with her for

several minutes as firefighters worked to contain the fire on the floor below.

The dispatcher remained calm and reassuring as he stayed on the line with McMillon. He comforted her and explained why she was hearing the sound of breaking glass and the buzz of the carbon monoxide detector. He also kept her from panicking as she attempted to open the window for air, which was stuck.

"When I heard the firefighters' Halligan tools hit her front door, I was so relieved," he said.

Firefighters led by Lieutenant Steven Sharp of Engine 265 broke down her door, covered their heads and led them down the staircase to the street.

"We had to move as quickly as possible to effectuate their removal," Lieutenant Sharp said.

Smoke had filled the room, breathing became difficult and there was no visibility.

Lieutenant Sharp carried Chanise out the window and she was later transported by EMS to St. John's Hospital.

In all, five civilians and 33 firefighters sustained minor injuries in the blaze.

The building was gutted and the roof burned away, causing nearly 200 residents to be displaced.



*Firefighters operate at the six-alarm fire in Far Rockaway, Queens on February 3*

## Lunch Hour Rescue

### *FDNY employee saves her co-worker from choking*

It wasn't a typical lunch hour. Staff Secretary Terri Bentsen from the Honor Emergency Fund was eating Chinese dumplings at FDNY Headquarters recently when a piece lodged in her throat.

She panicked.

"I couldn't get it up or down," she said. "I really started to worry."

Clerical Associate Joanne Roman, who sits in a nearby work cubicle on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, saw that Bentsen was unable to speak, turning purple and obviously in distress. She quickly administered the Heimlich maneuver, a technique she learned just a year ago.

Her quick thinking paid off. Bentsen started coughing and was able to breathe again.

And even though they were a little shaken, they went right back to work.

"Anybody in my position would have done the same," Roman said. "I'm just happy I was able to help."

Bentsen said she bought her co-worker a bouquet of flowers the next day in appreciation.

"I am so proud of her," said Deputy Director for Medical Systems Management Roz Servande, Roman's supervisor. "I am thrilled she is part of the FDNY family."



*Joanne Roman saved a coworker from choking at Headquarters*

## Tradition of Service

### *Fitzsimmons sisters follow their firefighting heritage*

When sisters Michele and Maura Fitzsimmons decided to become firefighters, they weren't just making a career decision, they were carrying on a family tradition that dates back nearly 100 years.

Their great-grandfather, Charles Roth, joined the Department in 1909 and was assigned to Ladder 20.

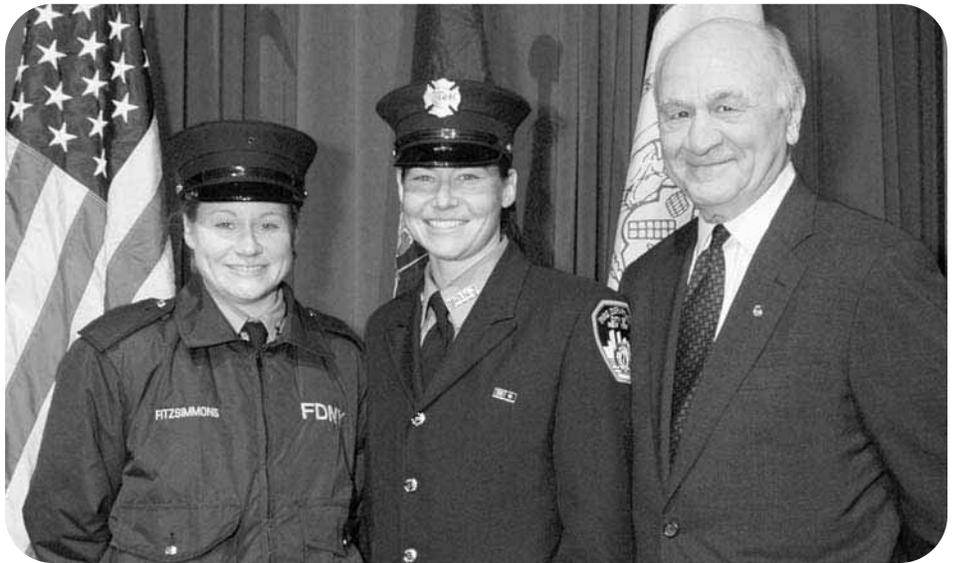
His daughter married Firefighter Michael Fitzsimmons, who joined the FDNY in 1932 and was assigned to the same company. Firefighter Fitzsimmons then rose through the ranks to battalion chief of Battalion 50 before retiring in 1968.

Lieutenant Michele Fitzsimmons joined the Department in 2001 and was promoted along with 45 other firefighters during a ceremony at LaGuardia Community College on February 16. Then less than a week later, her younger sister Maura graduated from proby school.

"Inspired by family history and a love of the job, these two sisters embody the greatest traditions of the FDNY," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.

The sisters agreed that firefighting is in their blood.

"I urged [my sister] to take the test,"



*Lt. Michele Fitzsimmons (center) is joined by her sister Probationary Firefighter Maura Fitzsimmons and Commissioner Scoppetta at her promotion ceremony on February 16.*

Lieutenant Fitzsimmons said. "It's a wonderful career."

And Probationary Firefighter Fitzsimmons said she could not agree more.

"I am following her lead," she said. "My sister gave me good advice and demonstrated the meaning of perseverance."

Probationary Firefighter Fitzsimmons was assigned to Engine 307 and said she was anxious to begin her career as her sister begins officer training.

And to continue the family tradition, Lieutenant Fitzsimmons said she will pass her grandfather's badge number on to her firefighter sister.

# A Legal Eagle

## Deputy Commissioner Daniel Shacknai to head Legal Affairs

He has never been one to sit back and watch things happen.

Daniel (Don) Shacknai, the FDNY's Deputy Commissioner for Intergovernmental Affairs and Management Initiatives, was named as the new Deputy Commissioner for Legal Affairs on January 29.

In his new position, Commissioner Shacknai will serve as the Department's internal counsel and offer advice to all bureaus and the Fire Commissioner. In addition to his new responsibilities, Commissioner Shacknai will continue to oversee the Intergovernmental Affairs Bureau.

"I hope to hit the ground running," he said. "And I'm very pleased to have this opportunity."

Commissioner Shacknai joined the FDNY five years ago to help secure grants and coordinate resources to help the Department rebuild after the devastating losses of 9/11. He also served on the steering committee for the McKinsey & Company study into FDNY operations, which put him in the forefront of terrorism preparedness.



Don Shacknai

"He has outstanding skills as a lawyer and a genuine commitment to public service," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.

Commissioner Shacknai was born and raised in Wayne, New Jersey and earned his undergraduate degree in English literature from Bucknell University.

Before going to law school, he said he decided to go into social work to "try to make a difference."

He got a job as a family counselor with Victims Services Agency, a non-profit social service agency in the Bronx. He also worked as researcher and advocate on civil rights issues.

"I was a pretty sheltered suburban boy," he said. "Those early work experiences were very formative."

He then went on to law school, graduating magna cum laude from Cornell University in 1993.

Soon after graduation he joined the law firm of Simpson, Thacher and Bartlett in Manhattan, where he worked as a litigation associate in the securities and insurance fields.

Although he enjoyed the position, he said he always wanted to return to work in public service.

So when the City's child welfare system was undergoing significant changes in its organizational structure in the late 1990s, he said he wrote a letter to Commissioner Scoppetta, who had been appointed by former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani to head the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), and asked if he could be of assistance.

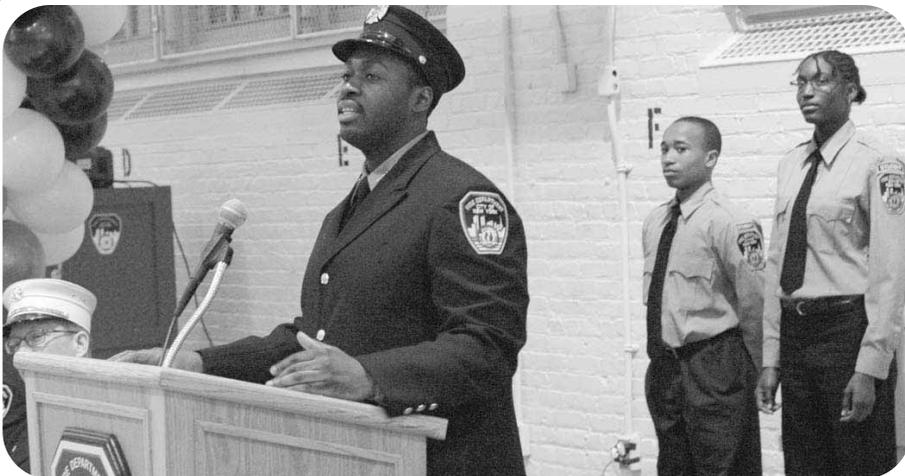
"I wanted to get involved even if it was on a pro bono basis," he said.

Commissioner Scoppetta invited him to join ACS, and he took a significant pay cut to first serve as the bureau's Associate General Counsel for Compliance and then Deputy General Counsel.

Commissioner Shacknai said he finds city service to be extremely rewarding and enjoys working for the FDNY.

"It's a premier agency in the city," he said. "It's the best place I have ever worked."

However, despite all of his prominent positions, Commissioner Shacknai said his favorite role is that of father. He and his wife, Eve, who is a children's television consultant, have a three-year-old son, Noah.



**Recognizing Heroism:** Firefighter Brian Pascascio of Engine 318 and EMT Daniel Fitzpatrick (not pictured) were honored for their acts of bravery during a ceremony at FDNY High School on February 28. Firefighter Pascascio was commended for rescuing an elderly woman from an apartment fire in August and EMT Fitzpatrick was praised for preventing a woman from being hit by a subway train in January. They each received a framed copy of the newspaper article written about each of their rescues. The ceremony also served as a dedication ceremony for classrooms at the high school, which were named to honor FDNY members who died on 9/11.



Eleven firefighters who donated bone marrow in 2006 were inducted into the NYBC's Honor Roll during the ceremony. Captain Connelly and Firefighters Duffy and O'Neill also were honored by Irish America Magazine as one of their "Top 100 People of the Year" in its April/May issue.

## The Ultimate Gift

Continued from page 6

one," said Firefighter O'Neill. "It's nice to be able to say I saved someone's life. It

was a blessing to have been able to give that sort of a gift."

Since the program's inception in 1990, 83 firefighters have donated bone marrow to help 91 patients with life-threatening

diseases, including cancers and blood disorders (some firefighters have donated multiple times). The FDNY is the largest single group registered with the NYBC, with more than 13,000 members.

To learn more about the program or to find out how you can be a bone marrow donor, visit [www.nybc.org](http://www.nybc.org).

## PHOTOS OF THE MONTH



**Pride of the Irish:** Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano, Chief of Operations Patrick McNally and former Governor George Pataki led several thousand firefighters and EMS members in the 246th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 17. Pipes and Drums bands from the Fire and EMS Command energized the crowd that lined Fifth Avenue in Manhattan for more than 40 blocks.



# VIEW

POINT

MARCH 2007

NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT

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## FDNY

1865-2007

A 143 YEAR HISTORY

OF COMMITMENT, COURAGE & COMPASSION