

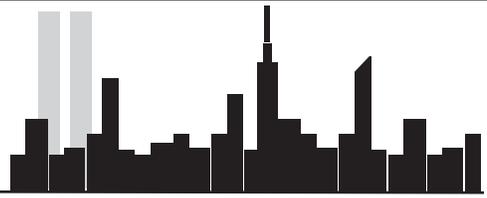
NOVEMBER 2007

VIEW
P O I N T



metro Tech

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT



DAY TO REMEMBER

Thousands attend 100th Annual Memorial Day service to remember lost members



Thousands gather at the Firefighter's Memorial on Riverside Drive in Manhattan to honor and remember active FDNY members who have died in the past year.

The rain on October 10 did not stop thousands of FDNY members from attending the 100th Annual Memorial Service at the Firefighters Memorial

Monument in Manhattan's Riverside Park.

The service honored all active FDNY members who have died in the past year.

"Their job was more than a profession, it was a calling," said Mayor Michael Bloomberg. "Each exhibited a fearless dedication to his duty and an allegiance to New York City."

Firefighters Daniel Pujdak, Robert Beddia and Joseph Graffagnino, who died in the line of duty this year, were honored during the solemn ceremony. Also remembered were Captain Francis T. Keane, Lieutenant Joseph P. Colleluori Jr. and Firefighters Christopher M. Logan, David Minerly, William R. St. George,

and, EMT Lawrence E. Marx and Dr. Joseph Cole, MD, all of whom died in the last year.

"These men take their place among our honored dead," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. "We will never forget them, or the countless others we have lost, whether in the line-of-duty or not. We will never forget their families, who bravely carry on without them. And we will never forget the work that all of our firefighters and fire officers do every day to keep us all safe."

Firefighter Pujdak of Ladder 146 died in the line of duty while operating at an all-hands fire at 83 Meserole Street in

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Enhancements to our Building Inspection Program



Commissioner's
— Message

Since the tragic loss of Firefighters Joseph Graffagnino and Robert Beddia in a fire at 130 Liberty Street on August 18, we have taken a comprehensive look at our Apparatus Field Inspection Duty (AFID) program. The purpose of this review - which is ongoing - is to strengthen and improve the quality and frequency of our inspections, and ensure accountability at all levels. We previously announced adding oversight by our Borough Commands to the program, and now we are making additional changes that will enhance not only public safety - but the safety of firefighters.

Several initiatives are underway to upgrade the technology the Department uses to track and manage our inspections. We have already developed and implemented a new computer program for reporting inspections of buildings over 75 feet that are under construction or demolition. The user-friendly interface allows company officers to see the status of their inspections, including any that are coming due or overdue. We are working with the city's Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DOiTT) to analyze and procure the tools we need to better integrate all of our inspection information, and ensure integration with - and access to - useful information maintained by the Department of Buildings (DOB) and other City agencies.

We are also broadening our partnership with DOB on a number of initiatives, including the imminent expansion to other boroughs of our successful Fast-Track Pilot Program, which was conducted in the 6th and 7th Divisions in the Bronx. The program enables deputy chiefs to enter critical information about buildings directly into DOB's Business Information System, drastically reducing notification and action time required for DOB officials to address structural hazards that could endanger FDNY members and the public. Also, DOB now notifies the

Department when permits are issued for the purpose of construction, renovation or demolition. This information will automatically be relayed to field units.

INCREASED TRAINING

We are providing fire personnel with more training on fire prevention issues. With the expansion of proby training to 23 weeks, additional material on fire prevention and inspections has been added to the curriculum. Newly promoted officers at every level are receiving additional training in their promotional courses, and a new course is being developed for fire prevention coordinators.

We are also increasing our field inspection time by adding an additional inspection period each week. Until now, fire companies have conducted building inspections twice a week, in two 3-hour intervals each day. This is valuable time spent not only checking for hazards, issuing violations or obtaining information that requires a referral to DOB. It also serves as critical time spent learning about the buildings in your area to which you may have to respond in an emergency. This time is the best opportunity you have to prevent a fire from occurring, and to gain knowledge about conditions in the building that could prove critical in the event of a serious fire or other emergency.

Through the use of technology, information-sharing, effective programs like Fast-Track and by increasing our field inspection time, we will strengthen our inspection program and make this city safer not only for the people who live and work here - but for our firefighters, too.

Keeping New Yorkers Fire Safe

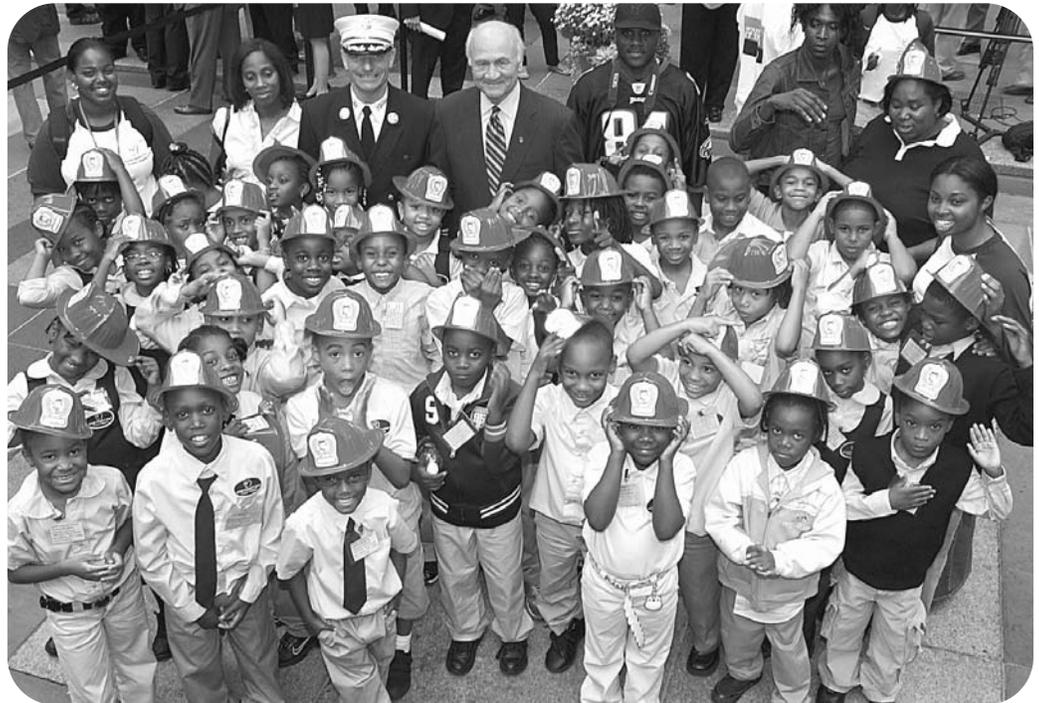
**Fire Prevention Week kicks off with events held throughout the city;
DHS announces fire safety grant for FDNY**

The FDNY descended upon Rockefeller Center in Manhattan on October 9 to honor Fire Prevention Week.

During the event Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta also joined U.S. Fire Administrator Gregory B. Cade from the Department of Homeland Security to announce that the FDNY Foundation, the non-profit arm of the FDNY, will receive a \$900,000 federal grant to create and develop an innovative educational fire safety campaign targeting the millions of people who live and work in New York City.

"This will be a tremendous help to get our message out about fire safety," said Commissioner Scoppetta. "We've had many bad fires in New York City and the worst part is that most of them were preventable."

The ceremony featured FDNY members demonstrating a vehicle extraction, hazardous materials emergency simulation and high-angle rescue in an effort to teach New Yorkers how to stay fire safe.



Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano join second graders from Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School in Rockefeller Center to celebrate Fire Prevention Week.

Second graders from Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School in Brooklyn also were sworn in as junior

firefighters and EMTs by Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano, taking a pledge to teach others about fire safety.



Keeping New York Safe: The FDNY's Bureau of Fire Prevention swore in 16 new fire protection inspectors and honored 17 veteran inspectors for outstanding service during a ceremony at FDNY Headquarters on October 11. Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano called the inspectors the FDNY's first line of defense. "The importance of the work you do cannot be overemphasized," said Commissioner Scoppetta. Chief of Fire Prevention Thomas Jensen added, "I continue to be impressed by the people and work done here. Preventing fires is far more efficient than fighting fires."

Standing Proud

Two EMS Unit of the Month awards with unique stories

— July 2007 Unit of the Month —

The July honors were presented to crew 44A3 of Station 39 – EMTs Jonathon Marino, Leon Michel and Edward Gerber – on October 16.

Captain Bruce Medjuck said they demonstrated “extreme enthusiasm and eagerness to learn.”

He added that in July, during a day of 90 degree heat and extreme humidity,

EMT Michel, with the help of EMT Marino, performed one rescuer CPR on a shooting victim in cardiac arrest to the hospital. The job was so strenuous that EMT Michel fell ill and was admitted to the hospital for two days.

— August 2007 Unit of the Month —

The honors for August 2007 were presented on October 19 to crew 49R3 of Station 46 – Paramedics Mario Ramirez,

Kimberly Marshall and Hugo Canedo.

The paramedics were praised by Captain John O’Loughlin for being “on top of their game, providing compassionate, competent care to the community.”

He said they distinguished themselves in August by resuscitating a patient who had been electrocuted. Later that month, they responded to a call of a patient that had been bitten by a poisonous lionfish.



July 2007 Unit of the Month honors were awarded to (L to R, holding awards) EMTs Jonathon Marino, Leon Michel and Edward Gerber. They were congratulated by (L to R) Christopher Byron, EMS Captain Bruce Medjuck, Chief of EMS John Peruggia and Joseph Pahlow. Byron and Pahlow are from Laerdal Medical, a company which donates cash prizes to the winners.



August 2007 Unit of the Month winners Paramedics Hugo Canedo, Kimberly Marshall and Mario Ramirez.

Down the River

Firefighters rescue woman in the Hudson

It was a good thing Firefighter David Cirillo of Engine 10 was working on October 2.

The firefighter, and former varsity swimmer, dove in and saved a distressed woman about 300 feet off shore in the Hudson River.

“We were just doing our job,” Firefighter Cirillo said. “I was concentrating on just getting her out of there. I was glad it turned out the way it did.”

At 2:54 a.m. firefighters from Engine 10/Ladder 10 were called to Battery Place and West Street in Manhattan.

Firefighter Cirillo immediately strapped on a life vest and jumped in the water.

It was very dark outside, so he said he depended on his company members on

the pier to guide him to the victim, who was picked up by the fast-moving current and moved from 150 feet to more than 300 feet off shore before he reached her.

Once he reached the victim, Firefighter Cirillo said he kept her calm until Marine Company 1 could pull them both from the water.

The victim was transported to New York Downtown Hospital in stable condition.

Lieutenant Michael Kaeser praised the firefighter for his actions: “Not many people can swim like that – he did a terrific job.”



Firefighter David Cirillo (fourth from the right) from Engine 10 dove in and saved a woman about 300 feet off shore in the Hudson River. He was guided to the victim by other members of Engine 10/Ladder 10.

Big Fall, Big Rescue

Firefighters save construction worker who fell more than 25 feet

It was the kind of rescue firefighters train to do, but it was anything but routine.

Firefighters from Engine 8, Ladder 2, Rescue 1 and Squad 18 rescued a worker who fell more than 25 feet into a construction site at Madison Avenue and 53rd Street in Manhattan on October 12.

The worker was walking around the perimeter of the site at around 7:45 a.m. when he fell into a crater dug for a new high-rise building.

Firefighters from Engine 8 and Ladder 2 were the first to arrive and began preparing the victim for removal.

Since the only means of egress from the hole were winding scaffolding steps, firefighters from Rescue 1 placed him on their stokes basket and ran their high angle ropes through the rungs of Ladder 2's aerial.

They then positioned the ladder over the hole and the victim was lifted from the hole to the street. Firefighter Thomas Gayron from Rescue 1 was lifted from



Firefighters and EMS members help a worker who fell more than 25 feet at a construction site in Midtown Manhattan on October 12. Photo courtesy of Captain Jeffrey Race

the hole with the victim for support.

Once they reached street level, an FDNY ambulance transported the victim to Bellevue Hospital.

"Everyone involved did an excellent

job," said Lt. Tony Tarabocchia from Rescue 1. "We train to do this, so when it happens, we're ready."

Saving the Day

Firefighters rescue choking victim

One of the best parts of a firefighter's job is the ability to save lives.

The members of Engine 59 proved it on October 15 when they resuscitated a 64-year-old Harlem man who was choking.

Captain Patrick Cleary and Firefighters Joseph Parmentier, Michael Trahan, Jr., John Moran and Patrick Cullingford rushed to 4 West 125th Street at around 1 p.m.

When they arrived, a woman was frantically waving them into the basement of the building.

"We could tell the urgency of the situation right away," Firefighter Parmentier said.

They found the victim limp, unconscious and turning blue in the bathroom.

Immediately Firefighter Parmentier

performed the Heimlich maneuver as Firefighter Trahan and the other members of the company held the victim. After several tries, the firefighters dislodged the obstruction and the man began breathing again.

To the surprise of the rescue workers, the victim was almost immediately able to answer questions.

"When we arrived the victim was lifeless, there was nothing positive about the situation," said Captain Cleary. "He was dead for sure if [the firefighters] didn't do their job. It doesn't normally work out

this well."

Firefighters added that they could not have done their job so well if it were not for the responding FDNY EMS members who helped stabilize the patient and transport him to North General Hospital.



Firefighters from Engine 59 save a 64-year-old Harlem man who was choking on October 15.

DAY TO REMEMBER

(Continued from page 1)

East Williamsburg, Brooklyn on June 21. He sustained critical injuries when he fell from the roof of a four-story building.

Firefighters Beddia of Engine 24 and Graffagnino of Ladder 5 made the Supreme Sacrifice while battling a high-rise fire at the former Deutsche Bank building at 130 Liberty Street in lower Manhattan. They suffered severe smoke inhalation and later succumbed to their injuries.

"Today we confront the reality of the job – that it is a dangerous one," said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano. "The truth of the job is that any firefighter is willing to risk his or her life on to save another firefighter or a complete stranger."

Commissioner Scoppetta presented the families of Firefighters Pujdak, Beddia and Graffagnino with an FDNY flag and Medal of Valor. The Uniformed Fire Officers Association and Uniformed Firefighters Association also presented them with a Medal of Supreme Sacrifice.

A total of 1,137 members of the FDNY have made the Supreme Sacrifice in the Department's 143-year history.



Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and UFA President Steve Cassidy present Firefighter Daniel Pujdak's family with an FDNY flag, Medal of Valor and Medal of Supreme Sacrifice during Memorial Day services. The families of Firefighters Robert Beddia and Joseph Graffagnino also received the honorable tribute as the Department remembered the 10 active members who have died in the last year.



Remembering the 23rd Street Fire: Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano, firefighters from Engine 18/Ladder 7 and other FDNY members on October 17 paid tribute to the 12 firefighters who died in the line of duty in the 23rd Street Fire on October 17, 1966. Members of every rank made the Supreme Sacrifice when the floor of the Wonder Drug store at 23rd Street and Broadway in Manhattan collapsed into the cellar during a five-alarm fire. It was the largest single loss of FDNY firefighters before September 11, 2001 and is remembered each year in a wreath laying

Sharing Intelligence

FDNY and DHS host national conference on information sharing with fire service agencies across the US

It's not often that top fire officials from across the country get together with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

But that's just what happened on September 7 as the FDNY and DHS hosted the inaugural Fire Service Intelligence Enterprise (FSIE) conference in Manhattan to discuss a collaborative, communicative effort among the country's major fire departments to formalize the fire service's ability to gather, receive and analyze intelligence.

"The bottom line is that the fire service needs the intelligence community, and the intelligence community needs the fire service," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. "Real-time intelligence and information leads to a heightened state of situational awareness. And situational awareness is key to saving lives."

Commissioner Scoppetta, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and other FDNY officials attended the conference, as well as Department of Homeland Security

Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis Charles Allen and other DHS representatives.

Among the 80 fire and security officials who attended the conference were chief officers from 15 major fire departments, including Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles and Washington D.C.

"You are truly at the front line – at the vanguard of all relief efforts," said Assistant Secretary Allen. "Our partnership is critical and should be sustained."

Acting FDNY Chief of Counterterrorism and Preparedness Michael Puzifferri said officials that attended the conference now are working to create a network that can increase the values of each department by opening up communication and utilizing the information technology that has been provided by DHS.

"This [FSIE] meeting was a great first step," he said.

Another meeting, similar to this one, of officials from major fire departments will be hosted by DHS in San Francisco in March 2008.



Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta speaks at the inaugural Fire Service Intelligence Enterprise in Manhattan, which was attended by officials from the Department of Homeland Security and members of fire departments across the country.

A Step Up

15 promoted to fire lieutenant in small ceremony

For 15 new fire lieutenants, it was a day they will never forget.

Dozens of friends and family cheered and hung banners around the Fire Academy's auditorium on Randall's Island on September 19 to celebrate 15 firefighters who were promoted to the rank of lieutenant.

"The transition from firefighter to lieutenant is, perhaps, the most challenging of a firefighter's career," said Commissioner Scoppetta. "Not only are you leaving your company, but you are assuming a new level of responsibility."

The new lieutenants will be assigned to units throughout the five boroughs.

"It is a difficult adjustment – you must now lead and set the tone for the group," said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano. "We know you will do an outstanding job and I look forward to seeing you in the field."



Fifteen firefighters were promoted to the rank of lieutenant in a ceremony at the Fire Academy on September 19.

Code Consequences

Fire Marshals and DOI arrest 35 for failing to appear on outstanding fire code violations

As the Department kicked off Fire Prevention Week, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta joined Department of Investigation (DOI) Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn on October 10 to announce the arrest of 35 business owners, employees and building owners on warrants for allegedly failing to appear before New York City Criminal Courts on outstanding criminal summonses issued for various fire code violations.

They were arrested during a citywide sweep by FDNY fire marshals and DOI officials that began in July 2007.

“This partnership between DOI and FDNY has made our City safer for those who live and work here,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. “Business and building owners who think they can ignore fire safety rules had better think twice – because we will hold them accountable under the law.”

Those arrested have been issued a



criminal summons by an FDNY fire inspector for various fire code violations and/or failure to comply with the Fire Commissioner’s order to correct fire code violations.

These individuals then allegedly failed to appear before the court to answer the summonses, which are unclassified misdemeanors. An arrest warrant was issued

by a judge for failure to appear.

As a result, FDNY fire marshals and DOI officials arrested these individuals on arrest warrants and returned them to the courts to face fire code violations.

Those arrested face fines for allegedly violating the fire code on a range of activities, including dispensing fuel without a FDNY Certificate of Fitness; out-of-order fire alarm/sprinkler systems; operating an auto body/mechanic shop without a FDNY permit; operating an unlicensed cabaret and operating air compressors without a permit.

So far, fines levied against those arrested range between \$100 and \$3,500, and 12 individuals have been fined a total of \$9,850 in connection with fire code violations.

The New York City Law Department is handling the prosecution of these cases in the criminal courts.

Skillful Sleuths

Fire Marshals Arrest Brooklyn Arsonist

It was a story that is often saved for a television crime drama, but on September 18 fire marshals arrested a 52-year-old man on charges he set a fire inside a Brooklyn brownstone after his live-in girlfriend ended their relationship and asked him to leave.

Charles Norbert was taken into custody in connection with an early-morning, all-hands fire at 744 Lafayette Ave on September 17.

Mr. Norbert’s ex-girlfriend escaped the fire but suffered second-degree burns over 35 percent of her body. The 52-year-old woman is currently in stable condition at New York Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center.

Three firefighters who fought the blaze also were injured.

“This suspect showed absolutely no regard for public safety and placed so



many lives at risk with a twisted plot for revenge,” said Commissioner Scoppetta. “I applaud the members of our Bureau of Fire Investigation who worked hard to take him off the City’s streets, and I hope that his victim makes a full and complete recovery.”

An investigation by fire marshals determined that Mr. Norbert used a flammable liquid to start multiple fires on the first floor of the three-story occupied building.

Fire marshals also determined that prior to the fire, Mr. Norbert made violent threats to his ex-girlfriend and other building tenants after the end of the couple’s relationship.

Hours after the fire, fire marshals located Mr. Norbert at a nearby friend’s house in Brooklyn and placed him under arrest with assistance from the NYPD, including members of the Emergency Service Unit.

Mr. Norbert suffered burns while setting the fire and was transported to Staten Island University Hospital for treatment before being processed by the criminal justice system..

The Go-To-Guy

FF Berkhout overcomes serious injuries and remains an active member of his firehouse

If you ever need an example of someone who has overcome all odds, Firefighter Richard J. Berkhout of Engine 298 is your guy.

On September 11, 2006, Firefighter Berkhout and his wife, Margaret, were walking back to their Mastic Beach home after a 9/11 memorial service when three men in a passing car stopped and severely beat Firefighter Berkhout, knocking him unconscious.

He suffered six skull fractures, brain hemorrhage, temporary facial paralysis and hearing loss in one ear.

As a result, he has undergone physical therapy, balance therapy and cognitive therapy, and continues to visit his doctor at least twice a week.

Yet despite his injuries and continued recovery, Firefighter Berkhout remains as involved as ever in his firehouse.

"I'm still doing everything I used to with the firehouse ... and more," he said. "They can't get rid of me that easy."

As the senior firefighter in his firehouse (with 14 years on the job), Firefighter Berkhout helped organize the company's centennial celebration in June.

During the ceremony, Fire Commis-



Firefighter Richard Berkhout

sioner Nicholas Scoppetta said: "One member deserves a special mention today – Firefighter Richie Berkhout. I wish you the best with your recovery. And I'm sure the guys in the house are anxious for you to get back to work too – they describe you as the backbone of the company."

But Firefighter Berkhout has always been known for his forward thinking and compassionate nature. After the line-of-duty deaths of Lieutenant John M. Clancy of Battalion 50 in 1995 and Firefighter James J. O'Shea of Ladder 27 in 2003, Firefighter Berkhout set up a support network for the grieving families.

When Lt. Clancy died, members of Engine 298, Ladder 127 and Battalion 50 sold t-shirts to raise money for his family,

but his widow, Dawn, graciously refused the donation. So Firefighter Berkhout thought up a plan to use the money to establish a lottery scholarship for college-bound children of company members.

In the beginning, five scholarships of \$1,000 were awarded each year – now ten scholarships are given every school year in memory of Lt. Clancy and Firefighter O'Shea.

To date, the scholarship has provided \$40,000 in tuition funds

to students and has donated \$20,000 to line-of-duty families, the Burn Center and Fire Family Transport.

"We really take care of our own more than any job in the world," he said.

After his attack last year, Firefighter Berkhout said he and his family (including sons Richie and Matthew) were grateful to receive the same support from the Department.

Although he is still recovering, Firefighter Berkhout said he is looking forward to getting back to the firehouse.

"This is the first time since I was six years old that I haven't been able to play sports," he said with a laugh. "I'm ready to get back into things."

And the firefighters at Engine 298/Ladder 127 couldn't agree more.

"I'm going to be thrilled when he comes back," said Firefighter Andrew Radziewicz of Ladder 127. "It's definitely not the same without him."

Taste of the Town

FDNY chefs cook up big to support the Fire Museum

Big appetites and generous supporters came out to support the 20th Anniversary of the FDNY Fire Museum in Manhattan with a Firehouse Tasting and Auction on October 24.

Twenty firefighters from across the city cooked-up their firehouse favorites for a hungry crowd of around 175 supporters, raising more than \$10,000 for the Museum.

"There are many traditions in the Fire

Department – and one of those traditions is food," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. "It is wonderful that they are able to use their extraordinary culinary skills to support this great cause."

The culinary selections included white bean and sausage soup, crab cakes and barbecued pulled pork.

The Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Daisy Martinez, the star of PBS's "Daisy Cooks!"

DO YOU HAVE A GREAT STORY TO SHARE?

HOW ABOUT
AN UPCOMING EVENT?
EMAIL THE VIEWPOINT AT
RAHIMIE@FDNY.NYC.GOV.

Marathon Swim

Lt. Lance Ogren swims to NJ for a good cause

Imagine swimming in what feels like a huge washing machine for six hours and 54 minutes as you try to dodge numerous obstacles (namely, cargo ships).

Sound impossible?

Well it is just what Lieutenant Lance Ogren of Ladder 25 did on October 6 as he participated in the 2nd Annual Manhattan Island Foundation's Ederle Swim from Battery Park in Manhattan to Sandy Hook, NJ, in memory of his twin brother, Firefighter Joseph Ogren, who died on September 11.

But he didn't just complete the 17.5 mile swim challenge – he also raised more than \$3,000 for the World Trade Center Memorial in conjunction with a Cobblestone Campaign that brought in more than \$32,000 (his campaign collects donations for cobblestones that will line the WTC Memorial Plaza).

"It was exhausting," said Lt. Ogren just days after the race. "But it was great. It was such a special thing for me."

It was a challenge that seemed to be created for the 11-year veteran of the FDNY.

The swim kicked off just steps from the tragic World Trade Center site. Lt. Ogren then had to swim under the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge – that he used to take all the time growing up on Staten Island – and past the house in which his grandmother once lived, ending in Sandy Hook, NJ, where he and his brother used to lifeguard as kids.

"I felt like [the Swim] was meant to be," said Lt. Ogren. "To do this and raise money for the Trade Center ... it was too perfect. People just came and helped me out along the way, it was amazing."

Lt. Ogren has been swimming all his life. He and Joseph swam competitively in high school and both won swim scholarships at St. John's University. He also was part of the NYPD scuba team before joining the Department in 1996.

When he first became a firefighter, he read about Captain Thomas Dolan's (Ladder 175) swim around Manhattan and said, "It planted the seed. I thought,



Lieutenant Lance Ogren

'someday I'll do it,' and 11 years later, here I am."

To qualify for the Ederle Swim, Lt. Ogren had to swim for three hours in water that was 63 degrees or colder.

He trained for more than nine months – at Chelsea Piers on weekdays and in the waters off Coney Island on the weekend – for up to three hours a day, six days a week.

The Hudson River was 69 degrees on the day of the challenge, and because of fog, the start was postponed for three hours.

Once it got underway, Lt. Ogren was followed by a boat, carrying his coach and his sister, as well as a kayaker, who would feed and give him water along the way. He said they were also there to keep him on course – the current was strong and since the waterways remained open, he often had to swim around large cargo

ships.

Yet, he said, the most difficult part of the swim came once he passed the Verrazano-Narrows. Besides dealing with the turbulent water, he also lost any landmarks that would indicate his progress.

"In between hours five and six, I was pretty happy I'd done the prep work," he said with a smile. "I didn't think I was ever going to get there."

When he finished, he said everyone expected he would never want to swim such a distance again.

"They think I'll be able to turn it off, but it's way too rewarding," he said, adding that he was looking forward to his next swim.

And what would his brother have said about his accomplishment?

"I think he would say, 'I could do that. It's not that special,'" he said laughing. "And there's no doubt he could have."

To donate to Lt. Lance Ogren's Cobblestone Campaign visit
<http://www.buildthememorial.org/site/PageServer?pagename=swim>

Healing Hands, Inspirational Mission

One firefighter spends vacation abroad helping people in need

Less than 24 hours before his flight takes off for his 10 day trip to Ecuador, Firefighter Kevin Duggan of Engine 263 is still packing his suitcases.

He is filling one with comfortable clothes for the country's summer climate (including firehouse t-shirts) and red plastic fire helmets for the native children. The other is filled with medical supplies.

Firefighter Duggan flew to Guayaquil, Ecuador, on September 28 as part of a humanitarian mission with Healing the Children. The nonprofit organization provides free medical care to children and families in need around the world.

"It was such an adrenaline rush," Firefighter Duggan, a registered nurse, said after returning home. "We did so much more than we anticipated."

Working 16 hour days, he and a team of more than 40 medical professionals – including surgeons, pediatricians and anesthesiologists – performed more than 200 surgeries on 180 patients at a military hospital.

The mission was publicized in the local media prior to the team's arrival and many of the patients traveled more than 17 hours just for a consultation with doctors.

The medical team often performed three surgeries in the same operating room, just to keep up with the demand, including cleft palate surgeries, hysterectomies and even removal of a 28-pound tumor from a woman's abdomen.

Firefighter Duggan said they tried to help as many people as they could.

"We needed to be on our toes and use every last piece of equipment we had," he said.

Yet he added that many patients still need follow up care and the medical team continues to gather resources to fly some of the patients to the United States for additional treatments.

Firefighter Duggan said he was struck by the appreciation and kindness of all the Ecuadorians he met.

"They were so grateful for everything," he said. "There were points where



(Above) Firefighter Kevin Duggan (right) assists during an operation in Ecuador.

(Right) Firefighter Duggan hugs a local girl wearing one of the FDNY hats he brought for his trip with Healing the Children.



I just had to stop and say wow. These people were so poor, yet so happy."

Before joining the Department in 2004, Firefighter Duggan said he had worked with several of his fellow medical team members at John T. Mather Memorial Hospital in Port Jefferson, NY, including the team leader, Nurse Anesthetist Galo Burbano.

Before the trip, Burbano noted that the firefighter's skills "would be a great contribution to the success of our mission."

Firefighter Duggan said he enjoyed the trip so much he is already planning to travel with the group to Peru next year.

"I enjoy helping people, that's why I became a nurse and a firefighter," said Firefighter Duggan.

Healing the Children foundation has served more than 75,000 patients from around the world. Their work depends mainly on donations.

To learn more or to donate, visit

www.htcne.org or

www.blancashouse.com.

You can designate your donation to support Burbano's Team.



Never forget: (Top) Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and Chief of Operations Patrick McNally lay a wreath at the Firefighter's Memorial on Riverside Drive to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11.

(Bottom) The Annual Tunnel to Towers Run honored the life and legacy of Firefighter Stephen Siller on September 30. Top finishers included Firefighters Kieran O'Neill, Ken Bohan, Denis Sweeney, Joshua Procida and Marc Maresca.



VIEW

POINT

NOVEMBER 2007

NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT

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