

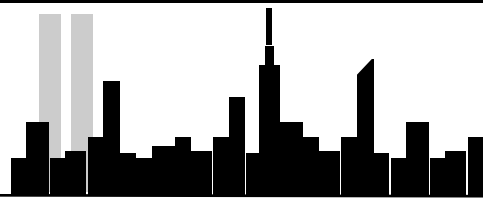
AUGUST 2008

VIEW
P O I N T



metro Tech

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT



FDNY Remembers: 30th Anniversary of the Tragic Waldbaum's Fire

FDNY members gathered in Brooklyn on August 2 to remember six firefighters who died in the Waldbaum's fire 30 years before.

More than 200 people, including the victims' families and firefighters who responded to the fire that day, made the solemn walk from the quarters of Engine 276/Ladder 156 to the Church of St. Brendan's in Gravesend, for a poignant memorial service.

"These were brave, great men," said retired Lt. Tom Higgins, who was a probationary firefighter at Ladder 156 when he responded to the Waldbaum's fire. "I'm happy I can be here."

Retired Firefighter Gene Bruno, who was a member of Ladder 156 at the time of the fire, remembered the six members as "good friends," adding "every year I come to this service, I'm here for the families."

The fire began on August 2, 1978, in a hallway near the compressor room as crews were renovating the Brooklyn supermarket, and quickly escalated to a fourth-alarm. Less than an hour after the fire was first reported, nearly 20 firefighters were on the roof when the central portion gave way, plunging 12 into the



flames.

Six firefighters were killed, including Lt. James E. Cutillo, Battalion 33; Firefighter Charles S. Bouton, Ladder Company 156; Firefighter Harold F. Hastings, Battalion 42; Firefighter James P. McManus, Ladder Company 153; Firefighter William O'Connor, Ladder Company 156; and Firefighter George S. Rice, Ladder Company 153.

Additionally, 34 firefighters, one emergency medical technician and one Emergency Services police officer were injured in the fire.

The tragedy is remembered as one of the worst disasters in the New York City Fire Department's 143-year history.

"This service has been held for the 30



(Top) The Honor Guard leads the walk from the quarters of Engine 276/Ladder 156 to the Church of St. Brennan's for a ceremony remembering the six firefighters who died in the Waldbaum's fire 30 years ago.

(Bottom) Retired Firefighter Tom Higgins (far right) was a proby at Ladder 156 when he responded to the Waldbaum's fire.

years since the tragedy and I hope it will continue for the next 30 years," said Msgr. John Delendick. "The memory of this fire should never die, the memory of these six men should never be forgotten."



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Mayor and FDNY Announce Changes to Strengthen Safety, Oversight and Regulation of Construction, Demolition and Abatement Operations in New York City

A series of changes in the way demolition and abatement operations are regulated and carried out in New York City were announced on July 16 and outlined in a new report entitled, *Strengthening the Safety, Oversight and Regulation of Demolition and Abatement Operations*. The release of this report carries special significance to the FDNY, because it was created in response to the deaths of two brave FDNY members – Lt. Joseph Graffagnino and Firefighter Robert Beddia – at the Deutsche Bank fire a year ago this month.

The report details 33 specific recommendations for the Department of Buildings, Department of Environmental Protection and FDNY to coordinate and strengthen the practices of City agencies, improve notifications between agencies, add new oversight, and ensure that the inspection and permitting process make fire safety a priority.

In the wake of the tragedy at 130 Liberty St., a workgroup was appointed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg to conduct a comprehensive review of city policies, inspections requirements and procedures relating to oversight and responsibility at sites where construction demolition and abatement work were being done. The workgroup was chaired by Deputy Mayor Ed Skyler and the FDNY played an active part as a member of the workgroup.

We came up with these 33 recommendations to encourage enforcement efforts focusing on common fire- and life-safety concerns – regardless of which agency is working at a site – creating a fully coordinated, systematic approach to improve overall safety at all these sites.

And already 31 of the 33 recommendations have been implemented or are underway.

Immediately following the fire, we conducted our own internal review of the uniformed inspection program and made a number of significant enhancements to the program, which has increased the timely inspections of high-rise construction and demolition sites.

This report recommends additional changes, including the FDNY's development of an automated, computer-based system that facilitates the sharing of inspection data throughout the agency, as well as with DOB and DEP.

We are already redesigning these inspection systems to create a single, comprehensive database containing all FDNY-related information about every building in New York City. This new Business Intelligence System being developed by IBM will incorporate historical data, and replace some current data storage and tracking systems that were created at different times to collect information for different purposes.

This plan has all the right elements – enhanced information sharing, cross-training, new technology to improve accountability, and new protocols and regulations to improve safety. The Department will implement these recommendations and continue to do everything possible to help ensure that a tragedy like 130 Liberty St. never happens again and that Lt. Graffagnino and Firefighter Beddia did not die in vain.

Fire Department staff who were part of the report's workgroup included Legal Affairs Deputy Commissioner Don Shacknai, Strategic Planning and Policy Deputy Commissioner Bill Eimicke, Chief of Operations Patrick McNally, Assistant Chief of Fire Prevention Richard Tobin and Intergovernmental Affairs Associate Commissioner Caroline Kretz.

You can read the report in its entirety at www.nyc.gov.



Commissioner's
— Message

Remembering a Hero

Plaque Dedication and Street Renaming Honoring Firefighter Daniel Pujdak

It was a ceremony to celebrate the life of a firefighter who was the definition of a hero and loved by all who knew him.

A plaque dedication and street renaming ceremony honoring Firefighter Daniel F. Pujdak of Ladder 146 was held at the quarters of Engine 229/Ladder 146 on June 22. Firefighter Pujdak made the Supreme Sacrifice while operating at an all-hands fire in Brooklyn on June 21, 2007.

“We are proud to have known Danny, honored to have worked with him and heartbroken to have lost him,” said Captain Jerry Horton of Ladder 146.

He described the firefighter as “hard working, brave, polite and responsible,” adding that “he always took that extra step and never was one to back down from a challenge.”

During the emotional ceremony a plaque was dedicated in Firefighter Pujdak's honor, which will be hung on the wall of the apparatus floor of his firehouse. A street sign bearing his name also was unveiled on the corner of Richardson and Leonard Streets.

“You have lived through all of us who you have touched so deeply,” said Leo Pujdak, the firefighter's father, who was joined at the ceremony by his mother, Christina, brothers, Matthew and David, and girlfriend, Vanessa Pschirrer. “Daniel gifted me, making me a better person giving me golden insights that will take a lifetime to absorb – not because he died, but because of how he lived.”

Leo Pujdak thanked the members of Engine 229/Ladder 146 for nodding or waving as they passed by his family over the last year: “You did so much more with those gestures than you could imagine. You honored Daniel and comforted us.”

Matthew Pujdak, who became a firefighter in August 2007, said he always carries his brother's badge with him.

“He's my hero,” he said. “I carry him in my heart.”

His mother added, “He was a great kid and a hard worker, who loved being a firefighter.”



(Top) Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano join the Pujdak family - including his parents, Leo and Christina, and brothers, Matthew and David - as a plaque is unveiled in the Firefighter Daniel Pujdak's honor at the quarters of Engine 229/Ladder 146 in Brooklyn.

(Bottom) The corner of Richardson and Leonard Streets in Brooklyn is renamed Firefighter Daniel F. Pujdak Street.

During the ceremony, the family played a song by Ronan Tynan (who was in attendance) entitled, *Into the Fire*.

“He put himself in harms way so that others might live,” said Mayor Michael Bloomberg. “The Department, this community and this city will always remember Daniel Pujdak with gratitude and pride.”

Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta echoed the sentiments, saying, “The name Daniel Pujdak will take its place on this wall so that generations of firefighters will hear this story and remember this great man.”

Firefighter Pujdak joined the FDNY in September 2005.

“Thank you to the members of Engine 229/Ladder 146 for living up to the Department's promise that we will always be there for the Pujdak family,” Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano said.

Firefighters said that they always will tell others of Firefighter Pujdak's heroism and generosity.

“Danny's image represents that of a great firefighter,” said Firefighter Gene Shramm of Ladder 146. “Strength, courage and respect for the people he worked with, his community and his family.”

Mayor Announces New Response Protocol for Sexual Assault Victims

New procedure will help EMS provide optimal care to victims

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta formally announced on July 14 a new ambulance response protocol in which EMS members will give victims of sexual assault the option of being transported to one of 19 hospitals offering specialized care and counseling.

The new protocol was announced at a press conference at North Central Hospital in the Bronx where the Mayor was joined by Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and Chief of EMS John Perugia.

The Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) Programs are operated 24-hours a day and include comprehensive medical management for the victims of sexual

assault, as well as forensic examinations for evidence collection and expert testimony.

These centers also offer specialized equipment to detect and document injury, dedicated examination and shower rooms, trained advocates, and full-time social workers for follow-up counseling services and emotional support.

In the year prior to the program implementation (June 1, 2007 to May 31, 2008) 48 percent of the sexual assault victims transported by the FDNY EMS Command went to SAFE Centers.

The new protocol now will be offered by all ambulance service providers in the City's 911 system to patients age 12 and older, who are stable and identify them-

selves as victims of sexual assault.

"The Fire Department in recent years has introduced a number of new ambulance response protocols aimed at improving our EMS system by transporting patients to designated hospitals that offer advanced services for specific types of medical emergencies," said FDNY Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano. "This new program will ensure that sexual assault victims now receive enhanced new services and care at designated facilities, and we are proud to partner with the Mayor's office, participating hospitals and the advocacy groups who have worked so hard to make this new program a reality."

FDNY Honored by International Code Council for New Fire Code

Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and members of the FDNY Law Department received a proclamation from the International Code Council (ICC) on July 31, commending the work they have done to change the New York City Fire Code.

"It is truly an honor that you have come out today to acknowledge this important project," said Commissioner Scoppetta. "These changes were long overdue and will be a legacy for this administration."

Among the FDNY members commended were Counsel to the Department Julian Bazel and Director of the Code Revision James Hansen, both of whom spearheaded the project.

"We admire your commitment to public and firefighter safety in the City of New York," said Vice President of Fire Service Activities for the ICC Jim Tidwell, who was joined at the event by Fire Service Activities Regional Manager Bruce Johnson.

The new Fire Code for New York City was approved by the City Council on May 28, replacing a code that had been in operation for more than 100 years.



Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano receive a proclamation from the International Code Council's Vice President of Fire Service Activities Jim Tidwell, commending the work the FDNY has done to change the New York City Fire Code.

The Code is based on the International Fire Code with amendments to address New York's urban needs. Among the many changes is a requirement that the

code be reviewed every three years, to ensure amendments will be made when necessary.

Heroes Welcome

276 probationary firefighters graduate from Academy

The FDNY celebrated a long tradition of courage and pride on June 30 as 276 probationary firefighters graduated from the Fire Academy.

"You are each making a commitment to this city that goes above and beyond the call of duty and I think it speaks to the future of New York," said Mayor Michael Bloomberg during the ceremony at Queens College. "These are the people who really are the best of the best and the bravest of the Bravest."

Among the graduates were 35 members of the U.S. armed forces, including Probationary Firefighter Christopher Little, who is currently serving a tour of duty with the U.S. Marine Corps in Iraq.

His family, Mike and Pat, as well as his girlfriend, Tricia, attended the ceremony in his absence. All of the dignitaries and graduates wore yellow ribbons and a seat was left empty in his honor.

The class also included two sets of brothers – Probationary Firefighters Eduardo and Hugo Diaz and Thomas and Gerard Sheehan. Another class member, Probationary Firefighter Matthew Sweeney, is the brother of Firefighter Brian Sweeney of Rescue 1, who died in the line of duty on September 11, 2001.

"Today you join the best and most highly regarded fire service there is, bar none," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. "Today you pledge to protect the millions of people who live and work in one of the greatest cities in the world. It is a day to be proud and to look toward the future with hope and resolve."

This is the second class to receive the expanded 23-week training program at the Department's Fire Academy located on Randalls Island.

With 10 weeks of training added to the previous 13-week program, the probationary firefighters learn a variety of firefighting techniques aimed at increasing firefighter safety, including hazardous materials training.

And the class already has put their skills to the test. Fire units praised Probationary Firefighter Taylor Murphy for helping at the scene of a serious accident



(Above)
Probationary firefighters give the Count on Deck.

(Right)
The 276 new probationary firefighters were one of the first classes to receive 23-weeks of training at the Fire Academy.



that he witnessed while driving home from work, stabilizing the victims and assisting the responding units.

"You have all worked hard to get here and you have so much more to learn," said Chief of Department Salvatore Casano. "All the lessons and procedures you have been taught need to now become second nature to you for you to succeed."

The class also was hailed for its generosity. They raised money for the Charleston Fire Department, which lost nine firefighters in 2007, and Army Ranger Corporal Chris Levy, who lost both legs while serving in Iraq.

They also assembled care packages and phone cards to send to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, and volunteered for events such as the Special Olympics and a

memorial at the Brooklyn Wall of Remembrance.

Probationary Firefighter Shaun Scheurer was named valedictorian, Probationary Firefighter Gerard Reilly was salutatorian and the Physical Fitness Award was given to Probationary Firefighter Joseph Fronio.

"What makes this the best job in the world is being able to help people," said Probationary Firefighter Scheurer.

He thanked his instructors at the Academy for motivating him and his classmates, joking as he addressed the crowd of hundreds, "it is because of all of them that I would feel more comfortable in a burning building than I do here and now."

Safer City

Seven Community Emergency Response Teams Graduate

Seven Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs), including 159 volunteers hailing from all five boroughs, graduated during a ceremony at FDNY Headquarters on July 24.

The federal program trains community members to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies in their neighborhoods.

“I know the excellent work you do, because I have seen you out there responding to real emergencies,” said Deputy Mayor Ed Skyler, who noted he has seen CERTs assisting at the Upper East Side crane collapse and the blackout in Queens.

Numerous fire and EMS officers serve as instructors for the 11-week program, which teaches volunteers about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations.

CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

“As you know, this city is unpredictable and ever-changing, so your



Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta addresses seven graduating Community Emergency Response Teams.

preparation and knowledge is critical – not only in responding to emergencies, but also in helping prevent them in the first place,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.

CERTs were first organized in New York City five years ago by the Office of

Emergency Management (OEM). Today the city has 63 teams, with more than 1,000 members.

“All of us, and the people of this great city, appreciate what you do,” said OEM Commissioner Joseph Bruno.

Military Training: West Point Cadets Shadow

Thirty eight West Point Military Academy cadets shadowed FDNY EMS members on July 14 and 15 as part of the prestigious university’s new Cadet Medial Intensive Training (CMIT) program.

The summer elective program includes certification as a nationally registered EMT and military certification as a Combat Life Saver – which is military level medical training.

“For a lot of us, our job will involve combat arms, so it’s important for us to know how to treat a soldier that’s injured,” said Cadet Ty Lin, a senior from San Francisco, Calif.

He shadowed EMTs Kevin Stringfield

and Erik Korzeniewski from Station 10.

“All the cadets were very motivated,” said EMT Stringfield, a 19-year veteran of the Command. “I wish we could keep [Cadet Lin]. The three of us would be unstoppable.”

EMT Bruny Ortega from Station 10 said she and her partner, EMT Alexander Martin, had Cadet Bryan Lee taking vitals and performing basic tasks while out on a medical run.

“He did really well, it was great to have an extra set of hands on the ambu-



West Point Cadet Ty Lin (center) shadowed FDNY EMTs Kevin Stringfield (left) and Erik Korzeniewski from Station 10.

ulance and it’s a great learning experience for him,” said EMT Martin, who has nearly 20 years on the job.

Celebrating Heroes

FDNY hosts joint EMS promotion and graduation ceremony

Three EMS members were promoted to the rank of captain and 50 paramedics graduated from the EMS Academy during a ceremony at PolyTech University in Brooklyn on July 2.

"You are about to embark on what might be the most exciting and challenging period of your professional lives," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.

Chief of Department Salvatore Casano added: "The service you provide allows the Department to say it is second to none when it comes to keeping citizens and our firefighters safe."

The three captains represent a combined 50 years of service to the city.

"In New York City our EMS Command saves lives and we help people – that's what we do 100 percent of the time," said Chief of EMS John Peruggia.

Among the graduates were five who made pre-hospital cardiac saves prior to their graduation – Paramedics Man Wai Law, Josette Esquivas, Joshua Frumer, Katlyn Kang and Brendan Konrad – and one – Paramedic Andrew Clute – who delivered a baby while on duty.

Paramedic Law said his outstanding training was the reason he was able to save the life of a victim who went into



FDNY EMS members take the Oath of Geneva during a joint graduation and promotion ceremony.

cardiac arrest while suffering an asthma attack.

"Without hesitation I knew exactly what to do," he said.

Paramedic Kang said she, too, was prepared to respond when one of her victims, suffering from multiple chronic ailments, went into cardiac arrest.

She said she was thrilled to learn her patient had survived, saying that with every one she treats, "I just hope this person comes back with a pulse and is able to walk out of the hospital."

Also graduating were two veterans of the U.S. Military, Paramedics Jasmin Scott (Army) and Latoya Darden (Air Force).

As the pair celebrated their graduation, they said they found the training challenging, but Paramedic Scott noted that it was all worth it.

"When you get a patient to the hospital, and you know [his or her] condition is improving, it's the most amazing feeling," she said.

The new paramedics speak more than 11 languages, including Cantonese, French, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hebrew,

Korean, Mandarin, Polish, Russian and Spanish.

Four members have relatives who have served with the FDNY, including Paramedic Michael Toomey whose father, Firefighter John Toomey of Ladder 123, was killed in the line of duty.

The class valedictorian was Paramedic Josh Garber and class speaker was Paramedic William Rich, who asked his classmates to join him in giving their family, friends and instructors, "the loudest, proudest, most thunderous cheer" for all of their support.

FDNY EMTs

Cadet Lee, a junior from Anaheim, Calif., said he was thrilled to have the opportunity to follow the professionals.

"There's only so much you can learn from lectures and handling dummies," he said.

Cadet Jody Chapman, a senior from Fayetteville, N.C., agreed: "People don't have the opportunity to train like this, in a concrete jungle as opposed to a classroom."

He shadowed Paramedics Daniel Mboh and Brian Murphy from Station 10, who praised his skills in the field.

Paramedic Mboh added, "If they ever need to implement what they learned [in the CMIT course], this experience will help them a lot."

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Seeing Life Through Someone Else's Eyes

Two Firefighters Accompany Visually Impaired Athletes During the NYC Triathlon

It may have been 93 degrees with 60 percent humidity on July 20, but Firefighters Kevin White and Jeff Pellis never noticed ... they were more concerned with jellyfish, potholes and tandem bicycles.

The firefighters each led a visually-impaired athlete in the 2008 New York City Triathlon.

"It was one of the most rewarding things I've ever done," said Firefighter White, who works at the Fitness Unit at the Fire Academy.

Firefighter White led Charles Plaskon, 65, from Moriches, Long Island, and Firefighter Pellis accompanied 15-year-old Jacob Goldberg from Boca Raton, Fl., in the challenging competition.

Each found their partner through the C Different Foundation, which creates opportunities for visually-impaired athletes to participate in sporting events.

"I wasn't sure to expect, but it worked out really well," said Firefighter Pellis from Ladder 25. "[Jacob] was a great kid."

The race began at W. 98th St. in Manhattan at the Hudson River, with the 1,500 meter swim.

Firefighter White was tethered to Plaskon, who is blind, by a four-foot bungee cord, swimming a short distance behind him to make sure the athlete remained safe and clear of the many swimmers and jellyfish in the water.

Since Goldberg is visually-impaired, Firefighter Pellis just swam alongside him to ensure he stayed on course.

When they exited the River at W. 79th St., they began the 40 kilometer bike ride that took them north on the Henry Hudson Highway to the Mosholu Parkway and back. For safety, both firefighters led the way on a tandem bike.

Then they did the 10 kilometer run across W. 72nd St. and into Central Park.

Again Firefighter White and Plaskon were tethered with a bungee cord, the firefighter running just behind the extraordinary athlete.

"If there was a step or a person coming I'd just say 'a little to the left or right,'" Firefighter White said. "I had to watch



(Left) Firefighter Jeff Pellis steers a tandem bike with visually-impaired competitor Jacob Goldberg and (right) Firefighter Kevin White runs while tethered to blind athlete Charles Plaskon during the New York City Triathlon.

carefully."

Firefighter Pellis ran alongside Goldberg, letting him know about the water stations and major obstacles ahead.

"He would tell me how he felt throughout the race," he said. "And he was having a great time."

Yet neither the firefighters, nor the visually-impaired athletes, are strangers to physically difficult competitions.

At just 15-years old, Goldberg already has run several Olympic distance races and half marathons, and placed first among the visually-impaired male athletes at the Triathlon.

"You see someone that young and you don't know how much he'd be able to do," said Firefighter Pellis, who has run more than 10 triathlons himself. "But he already had so many races under his belt and came here with a lot of confidence."

Similarly, Plaskon has completed eight marathons and placed third among the Triathlon's visually-impaired athletes.

Firefighter White, who counted this as his third triathlon, joked: "He kept saying the six mile run was nothing, he was ready to do another 20 miles."

Firefighter White said he learned about

the C Different Foundation in February, when he and several other FDNY members competed in a half marathon against the Broward County Fire Department in a Ft. Lauderdale, Fl.

He said he was inspired as he watched several visually-impaired athletes competing in the race and began speaking with C Different's founder, Matt Miller.

After learning that the organization was bringing athletes to New York City for the Triathlon, Firefighter White found numerous FDNY firefighters interested in volunteering.

Among them was Firefighter Pellis, who said he jumped at the chance because his brother is visually impaired.

Both firefighters said they cannot wait to partner with the C Different Foundation again. And although only two FDNY volunteers were needed for this race, they said there will be many other opportunities for members to participate in the future.

"These athletes are such an inspiration," said Firefighter White. "Being up close with these incredible people, who can't see but are still able to bike and run in this race – well, you have no excuse for staying on the couch after seeing them."

Higher Education

FDNY Members Volunteer to Teach Emergency Safety Day

Twenty paramedics, EMTs and firefighters descended upon PS 177 on July 23, but they were not there to tend to an injured student or extinguish a dangerous fire.

In fact, there was no emergency at all.

The FDNY members were there as volunteers for Emergency Safety Day, a fun-filled educational event designed to teach blind, visually-impaired, deaf or hearing-impaired children what to do in case of a medical or fire emergency.

“This was something we needed to do,” said EMS Lt. Maria Garcia of Station 20, the event organizer who also serves as President of Parents of Blind Children of New York. “This population of children was being overlooked.”

More than 150 children visited five educational stations during the all-day event in Fresh Meadows, Queens. They learned about the work of paramedics, EMTs and firefighters and the equipment they use; toured an ambulance, fire truck and an EMS Major Emergency Response Vehicle; practiced fire evacuation techniques in the FDNY’s Fire Safety House; and learned what to do when there was any emergency in their home – including how to call 9-1-1.

The event was the brainchild of Lt. Garcia, a 17-year veteran of the EMS Command, who said she realized her 12-year-old, legally-blind daughter, Elora, had never been taught what to do in an emergency.

After launching similar classes in other states and cities, Lt. Garcia integrated the Fire Safety Education program currently offered by the FDNY with health safety information to create the FDNY’s first Emergency Safety Day.

“Most people don’t put a lot of thought into how these kids can help in an emergency situation,” said EMS Lt. Lisa Freitag of Station 39, whose 20-month old daughter, Kailee Rose, is legally blind.

While fire units taught groups of children the difference between an engine and a ladder company, paramedics and EMTs taught them how to determine if someone is in need of medical assistance and how

to get help.

“We’re trying to teach children about the kinds of vehicles we have and how to access the 9-1-1 system,” said Paramedic Dave Gell from the EMS Academy.

And it seems to be working.

“I learned how to check someone’s pulse by feeling their wrist,” said 12-year-old Emmanuel Armstrong from IS 448, demonstrating his new skill.

Chalique Lewis, 12, from IS 448 said his favorite part of the day was touring an ambulance and looking through an EMS medical bag.

Kynasia Russell, 14, also of IS 448 added: “In the case of an emergency I can call 9-1-1 now.”

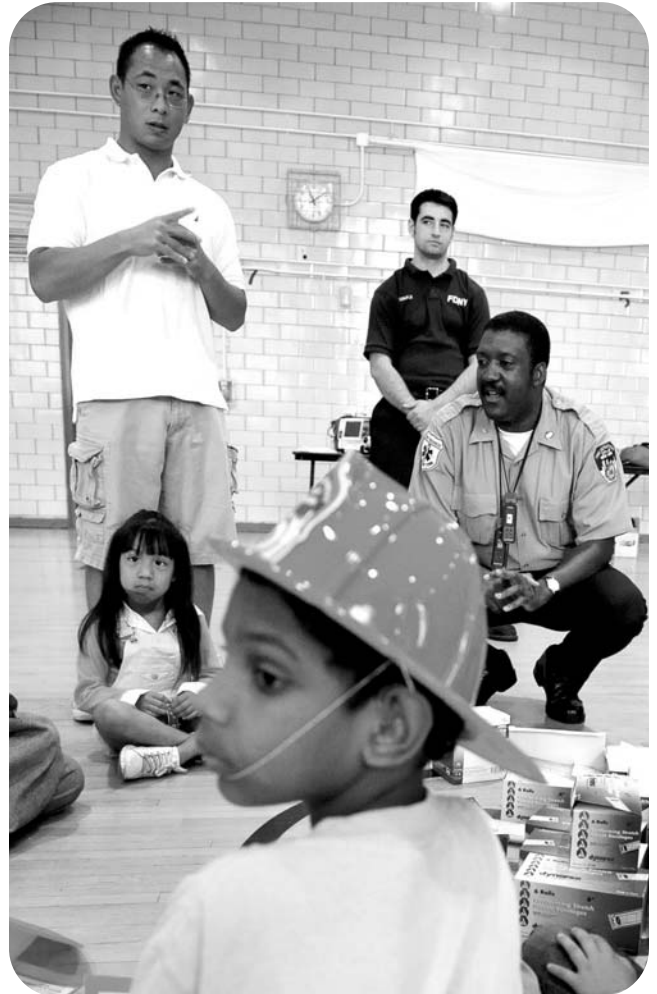
Every FDNY member at the event was a volunteer, with many needing to go straight to work afterward.

Yet Paramedic Daniel Bellingham of Station 39, who has volunteered to teach CPR classes for blind adults in the past, said it was well worth the commitment.

“It is cool working with kids, you can teach them new things and they always have a great time,” he said smiling.

Lt. Garcia added, “We often find that our members get more out of this than the kids do.”

Read more about Emergency Safety Day coordinator Lt. Maria Garcia on page 15.



(Top) Paramedics and EMTs show students, parents and teachers the tools they carry in their trauma bags.

(Bottom) Paramedic Dave Gill teaches children how to call 9-1-1.

Fond Farewell

Smoke II Retires from FDNY Marine Fleet

A 50-year-old member of the FDNY retired on July 15, to start a new career ... as an artificial reef off the coast of New Jersey.

The Smoke II, an FDNY Marine Unit fireboat, was towed from the Brooklyn Navy Yard to great fanfare as members of the unit remembered the boat's rich history.

"This was a great boat and served the division well," said Chief of Marine Operations James Dalton. "Now it will serve the public well in its new resting ground."

The Smoke II was built in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1958. It was 52 feet in length, pumped 2,000 gallons per minute and was equipped with two monitors (water nozzles).

The fireboat was commissioned to be used as the chief's tender for all marine operations and served as a command post. Later it was used as a backup for Marine Unit 6, the Kevin Kane.

After September 11, 2001, the Smoke II pumped water to the World Trade Center site following the attacks. The boat also transported Fire Capt. Al Fuentes from the site to a trauma center in New



Smoke II (left) is towed from the Brooklyn Navy Yard as Marine Unit 6, the Kevin Kane, provides a farewell water display.

Jersey after he was rescued from the rubble.

The Smoke II now will be cleaned according to the guidelines of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission – including having its engines, floatable materials and electronics removed –

before it is sunk in the Sea Girt Reef, 3.8 nautical miles northeast of the Manasquan Inlet.

She will be sunk in 80 feet of water, and will be used as a dive site and to support native marine life.

Retired Firefighter, Handball Champion Dies

Retired Firefighter Vic Hershkowitz, known as the Department's most accomplished athlete, died at a Florida hospital in late June at the age of 89.

Hershkowitz joined the FDNY in April 1950, assigned to Engine 327, after serving as a New York City police officer.

During his 23 years as an FDNY firefighter, he worked out of Engine Companies 9, 246 and 319. He also spent several years on Ambulance #2 and #3, a special transport unit that drove injured firefighters, before retiring in July 1973.

Yet even before joining the Department, Hershkowitz was a legendary handball player, with many describing him as the "Babe Ruth of handball."

He learned the game on the playgrounds of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, often playing with the future Hall of Fame basketball coach Red

Auerbach and boxing promoter Jimmy Jacobs. In 1994 he told a reporter from the South Florida Sun-Sentinel he began playing handball because it was the only sport he could afford – only needing a black Spalding ball, a pair of inside-out dress gloves and a concrete wall.

In his time off from the firehouse he went on to become a handball superstar.

He won 23 singles and doubles handball championships and 12 national Masters titles from 1942 to 1961, including a record nine consecutive three-wall singles championships from 1950 to 1958.

He was inducted into the United States Handball Association Hall of Fame in 1957.

Hershkowitz is survived by his wife, Jennie Tartaglia, two children and two step children, as well as many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Big-Hearted Honor

Lt. Christopher DiBiase Honored for his Charity Work

Who says good guys always finish last?

One big-hearted FDNY hero was honored for his charity work on July 22 by Yankees pitcher Joba Chamberlain and representatives from Dunkin Donuts.

Lt. Christopher DiBiase of Battalion 19 was awarded two tickets to the final game at Yankee Stadium and free Dunkin Donuts iced coffee for a year for his dedicated service to the Leary Firefighters Foundation.

For several years he has helped the organization raise millions of dollars through various fundraising events.

"This is a little surprising and a real honor," said a smiling Lt. DiBiase during the event at Engine 16/Ladder 7, noting that he once worked at Ladder 55, located 10 blocks from Yankee Stadium.



(L to R) Yankees pitcher Joba Chamberlain, Lt. Christopher DiBiase, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and Chief of Operations Patrick McNally share a joke as the generous Lieutenant is honored for his charity work.

Technology Upgrade

Engine 65 Receives Grant for New Equipment

Members of Engine 65 received a \$25,000 grant on July 17 from Kornreich-NIA and Fireman's Fund Insurance Company for the purchase of new firefighting, training and exercise equipment.

"We have an obligation to our friends and family to return home with our health after every tour," Lt. Thomas Byrne of Engine 65 said during the announcement at his firehouse. "This [grant] will help us achieve that goal. It will help us do our job."

The money is earmarked for the purchase of tools that will help keep the firefighters safe, including a technology training package that will enable them to study high-profile locations in their area and an elliptical exercise machine that will keep them healthy.

Located in the heart of Midtown Manhattan, the firehouse responds to more than 5,000 calls each year, often to land-



Members of Engine 65 received the \$25,000 grant from representatives from Kornreich-NIA and Fireman's Fund Insurance Company for the purchase of new firefighting, training and exercise equipment.

marks like Times Square.

"You can't help but feel like a little kid in a firehouse," said Executive Vice President Steve Parnes of Kornreich-NIA. "But the work firefighters do is serious,

not fun and games. We all respect and admire you, and we are grateful to be able to help you."

The grant package is part of a nationwide program called Fireman's Fund Heritage®, which is funded by Fireman's Fund Insurance Company. The program is designed to provide needed equipment, training and educational tools to local fire departments.

Since 2004, Fireman's Fund has issued grants to hundreds of different departments totaling more than \$17 million, including more than \$200,000 to the FDNY.

"Giving back to our community is important to us," said Terry McCormick, Fireman's Fund Relationship Manager. "This is more than a check writing campaign, it's building relationships with fire departments across the country."

FDNY Firefighters and EMS Members Save Woman in Cardiac Arrest

FDNY firefighters, paramedics and EMTs worked together on July 18 to save the life of a 31-year old woman in cardiac arrest.

"It's great for all of us to have the chance to save someone so young," said Fire Lt. Andrew Serra of Engine 231.

A call was received at 1:44 p.m. for a woman in cardiac arrest at 1709 East New York Ave.

Firefighters from Engine 231 were the first to arrive on the scene and were met by nervous neighbors who said the victim was diabetic and had suffered a seizure in their second-floor apartment.

They quickly rushed to her aid and found her face down on the living room floor, without a pulse.

Firefighter Chris Corbett, a former paramedic, immediately started cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Firefighters Ryan McNamara and James Denn (detailed from Engine 332) assisted with chest compressions and rescue breathing as Firefighter Brendan Mooney hooked up the automated external defibrillator (AED).

The firefighters gave her two shocks with the AED to restore her heart rhythm and continued administering CPR.

Moments later, EMTs Peter Bilardello and Jean Mary Baptiste from Station 44 arrived and rushed to transport her to their



Firefighters from Engine 231, paramedics from Station 39 and EMTs from Station 44 worked together on July 18 to save the life of a young woman in cardiac arrest.

awaiting ambulance.

EMT Bilardello said they continued doing rescue breathing and chest compressions on the way out, and had to shock her again with the AED.

As they loaded her into the ambulance, they were met by Paramedics Brendan Konrad and Ajay Sharma, from Station 39, who then intubated her. Paramedic Konrad said she had a slow ventricular rate as they rushed her to Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center, and had to shock her two more times.

By the time they arrived at the hospital,

she had a steady pulse. And she was healthy enough to be released from the medical center on July 22.

"Everyone worked so well together at this job," said Konrad, who was promoted to the rank of paramedic on July 8. He said this was his first cardiac save since being promoted.

EMT Bilardello said this, too, was his first save since graduating from the EMS Academy in April, "I'm happy I could make a difference. It feels really good to know she'll be OK."

Firefighters Rescue Girl Who Fell 15 Stories

A 12-year old girl who survived a 15-story fall down a chimney is expected to make a full recovery after firefighters rescued her on July 31.

Although it's unclear why the girl was playing on the roof-top of the historic Westbeth Building at 55 Bethune St. in Greenwich Village, firefighters said they were amazed to find the girl only had sustained two broken legs and minor head trauma when they responded at around 10:30 p.m.

A build-up of soot is credited for cushioning her fall, and ultimately saving her life.

"I was very surprised when her hand came out from the access door of the chimney – I jumped back two feet," said Lt. Simon Ressler of Ladder 12, who made the initial contact with the girl. "She was

covered in soot, all you could see were her eyes, and she was visibly shaken-up, but we told her we were going to get her out."

Firefighters immediately worked to stabilize the girl and remove her from the narrow shaft.

"The teamwork amongst everyone on-scene was great, whatever we needed it was right there," recalled Firefighter John Taliencio of Ladder 12 during a press conference at Engine 3/Ladder 12 on August 1.

He said he put a collar around the girl's neck before she was removed and transported by EMS to Bellevue Hospital Cen-



Lt. Simon Ressler of Ladder 12 describes how he and other members of Engine 3/Ladder 12 rescued a girl who survived a 15-story fall in Manhattan.

ter in stable condition.

"It's miraculous, I just hope she gets better," said Lt. Ressler, looking back on an outcome that could have been much worse. "It's a great feeling to know she survived."

FDNY EMTs Save Woman Who Fell onto Subway Tracks

FDNY EMTs Jason Ruiz and Juan Rios risked their lives to save a 31-year-old woman who fell onto the subway tracks in Brooklyn on July 15.

At 4 p.m., the EMTs received a call for a victim at the G train's Myrtle and Willoughby Aves. station.

When they entered at Myrtle and Marcy Aves., they found a woman face down on the tracks, covered in dirt. Witnesses said she had suffered a seizure before falling onto the tracks and off-duty Firefighter Tim Hogan, of Engine 216, had jumped down to immobilize her head.

Without knowing if the trains were stopped or the electricity was turned off, the EMTs jumped onto the tracks to begin treatment.

"We just tried to stay away from the third rail," said EMT Ruiz. "You don't think about the risks until afterwards."

They used a neck brace and a long board to keep her from sustaining further injury, and lifted her to the train platform where they gave her oxygen. The EMTs said she was semi-conscious and talking, but a little disoriented.



EMTs Jason Ruiz and Juan Rios saved a woman who fell on the subway tracks in Brooklyn.

They transported her to Woodhull Medical and Mental Health Center in stable condition.

"We just jumped in and did what we had to do," said EMT Rios. "We didn't think about our safety – just her."

Firefighters Pull Man from Queens Apartment Fire

Firefighters from Engine 287/Ladder 136 saved an unconscious man from a smoky apartment fire in on July 27.

"Here's one case where not knowing that someone was trapped, but still entering the apartment and taking that risk really paid off, and we were able to save this guy's life," said Lt. Tim Keenan of Battalion 46 working at Ladder 136.

Firefighters received the call for a fire at 961-15 97th Street at 8:50 p.m.

Although there were no reports of trapped victims, members of Ladder 136 found a chain lock was used on the door of the fire apartment, indicating someone was inside.

After forcing open the door, firefighters saw the smoke was down to the floor. It was dangerous to enter the apartment without the protection of a hoseline, but the firefighters knew that they needed to reach the victim quickly, so they put on breathing apparatus and began their



Firefighter Ron Soltysik describes to the media how he and other members from Engine 287/Ladder 136 saved a man from an apartment fire.

search.

Firefighter Ron Soltysik found an unconscious man face down in a tight hallway between the bedroom and the bathroom.

"Any victim that is unconscious is difficult to remove," said Firefighter Soltysik.

So he turned the victim onto his back and placed a firefighter tool called webbing around the man's chest to help them pull him to the door.

There they were met by firefighters from Engine 287, who helped quickly carry him to an awaiting ambulance.

Yet even though fire was entering the hallway in which they were operating, firefighters said they knew the victim was going to be removed swiftly.

"There was never a moment when we thought we wouldn't get him out, and we were going to do whatever it would take to get him out," said Lt. Keenan. "The quick thinking of Firefighter Soltysik and the use of the webbing harness really enhanced our ability to remove him before it was too

late."

FDNY EMS transported the victim to North Shore – Forrest Hills Hospital in stable condition. He suffered smoke inhalation, but is expected to make a full recovery.

Fire marshals determined the fire to be electrical.

"They did a tremendous job," Battalion Chief Robert McBride of Battalion 46 said. "They definitely saved his life with their actions."

Firefighters Rescue Family from Brooklyn Fire

It was the FDNY at its best.

Firefighters rescued six people from a second-alarm apartment fire in Ditmas Park, Brooklyn, on July 1.

“This is an outstanding job – we couldn’t have done better,” Lt. Victor Spadaro of Ladder 157 said.

Dispatchers began receiving calls at 2:19 a.m. for a fire at 1001 Ocean Ave., with multiple callers indicating people were trapped.

Firefighters said when they arrived, they found a heavy volume of fire coming from a second floor apartment of the four-story, brick building.

They saw a man hanging off a child gate and were told a woman had already jumped out a window. The firefighters also learned more people were trapped in the apartment, so they quickly grabbed their tools and entered the building.

When they reached the second floor landing, they said they saw fire shooting out the apartment door’s peep hole and around the frame.

They forced open the door and were met by a heavy volume of fire and smoke



Lt. Victor Spadaro of Ladder 157 tells the media how his company rescued a family from a Brooklyn Apartment fire.

that poured into the hallway.

“Literally the whole apartment was on fire,” said Lt. Spadaro.

Lt. Paul Driscoll of Engine 255 said that he and his team – Firefighters Christopher Corrar, Damian Salatino, Thomas McNicholas, Brendan Ielpi (of Ladder 157) and Stephen Laurenco (of Engine 248) – made an aggressive push into the apartment to extinguish the fire as quickly as possible.

At the same time, members from Ladder 157 – including Firefighters Chris

Ganci, Chris Neilson, Keith Berowski, Matt McDonald and Mike Ryszetyk – began to search for victims.

Three young boys were saved by Lt. Spadaro, Firefighter Ganci and Firefighter Neilson inside the apartment, and Firefighter Berowski used a portable ladder to rescue a pregnant woman from a window.

Firefighters from Ladder 113 also were able to rescue two other children from the fire escape connected to the apartment.

“This was the best rescue effort I’ve ever witnessed in person,” said Lt. Driscoll.

Firefighter Corrar, who was among the three firefighters injured in the fire, said “we had a job to do and we did the best we could.”

Firefighter Ganci (whose father, Chief of Department Peter Ganci, was killed on 9/11) agreed, saying, “We got great direction and I was just following their lead. I was just hoping to make a difference.”

FDNY EMTs Rescue Man Who Fell Through Subway Grate

FDNY EMTs Glenn Steinle and Josphmir Rodriguez have only been with the Department a year and a half and four months respectively, but on August 8 they performed a unique rescue like seasoned veterans.

They saved a man in his 20s who had fallen through a subway grate at Marcy and Willoughby Avenues in Brooklyn.

“We knew we had to get down there, get him out and get him to the hospital right away,” said EMT Steinle. “We have received excellent training that allowed us to do that quickly and efficiently.”

The victim was walking to the subway to go to work at around 8:50 a.m. when the grate gave way and he fell 10 feet into the hole.

The EMTs arrived less than three minutes after the call was received and found a police officer sitting with the victim. The young man was lying on his left side atop the metal grate.

They said they grabbed a backboard

and jumped into the hole, assessing his condition and putting him in a neck brace.

He was a little shaken and had minor abrasions, neck pain and possible rib fractures, but he was in otherwise good condition.

“It seemed like he was really lucky and fell just the right way [to avoid serious injury],” said EMT Rodriguez.

Since he was approximately 6-feet tall, they said it was difficult to remove him from the tight space, but managed to pull him out quickly with the help of responding firefighters.



FDNY EMTs Glenn Steinle and Josphmir Rodriguez saved a man who fell through a subway grating in Brooklyn.

He was transported to Kings County Hospital in stable condition.

Lt. Maria Garcia, Educating Special Children

When EMS Lt. Maria Garcia's father fell ill in 2000, she would often walk to his house with her legally-blind daughter, Elora, to care for him, sometimes leaving the young girl with him while she left to do errands.

Yet she realized that if something were to happen to her father while she was away, Elora would not know how to react.

"Would she know how to call 9-1-1, would she know what to say? No," said Lt. Garcia of Station 20, who organized Emergency Safety Day on July 23 for more than 150 blind, visually-impaired, deaf and hearing-impaired children. "This population of children was being overlooked. They were not being taught this in school."

So she began investigating emergency preparation for visually-impaired and blind children. She helped organize several safety education classes out of state, and began to develop a program that the FDNY could use.

"It would simply be adding medical training to fire safety education," she said.

While at a conference for the Parents of Blind Children of New York, she met EMS Lt. Lisa Freitag of Station 39, whose daughter, 20-month old Kailee Rose, is legally blind.

They joke that they have each worked for the Department for years – Lt. Garcia



Lt. Maria Garcia

for more than 17 years and Lt. Freitag for more than 18 – but met through their children. The two became fast friends.

"It's so wonderful that there are people like her out there who want to help kids with disabilities," said Lt. Freitag as she pushed her sleeping daughter in a stroller during Emergency Safety Day.

Lt. Garcia has held multiple positions that support these special children.

In 2004 she was honored with a community service award by the Cosmopolitan Lions club in NYC, elected to the

board of the National Organization of Parents of Blind Children and asked to join the advisory board of Blind Line a telephone and internet service that provides information regarding resources for the blind in NYS. Then a year later she was appointed by Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum to the Citywide Council on Special Education.

She also has served as President of Parents of Blind Children of New York since 2003. It is in partnership with this organization that she started the FDNY's Emergency Safety Day with two sessions in July.

She was able to rally 20 EMS and fire volunteers to help with the program and said she looks forward to conducting more of these classes.

"This is something we can use as a template for the future," she said, surveying the crowd of fascinated students on July 23.

Among the children involved in the education day was Elora, Lt. Garcia's now 12-year-old daughter, who was quick to help other students learn about how to stay safe. She now knows exactly what to do when someone is unconscious (try to wake him or her and call 9-1-1) and how to wrap a bandage.

And Lt. Garcia hopes that every child in New York will be able to do the same.



Homerun!: FDNY members, friends and family celebrated FDNY Night at a Brooklyn Cyclones game on July 25. Chief of Operations Patrick McNally threw the first pitch - kicking off a great game in which the Cyclones defeated the Staten Island Yankees with a score 5-2. The eighth annual event at KeySpan Park also included a memorial ceremony at the Brooklyn Wall of Remembrance, a fire-boat water display, a performance by the FDNY Pipes and Drums band and fire safety education demonstrations. Children of FDNY members stood on the field next to Cyclone players during the singing of the National Anthem by Firefighter Regina Wilson of Engine 219. Proceeds from the night's ticket sales support the Uniformed Firefighters Association Scholarship Fund, which gives the families of active and deceased firefighters the opportunity to receive higher education.

Upcoming Fundraisers Benefitting FDNY-Related Charities

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL MICHAEL J. OTTEN MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING AND DINNER
Host: Michael J. Otten Memorial Scholarship Fund and Charity (FF Otten made the Supreme Sacrifice on September 11)
When: September 22, 2008
Where: Swan Lake Golf Club, Manorville, NY
Supports: College scholarships for graduates of East Islip and Deer Park high schools, as well as charities aiding children and community enrichment programs
More info: www.michaelotten.org or email rotten@michaelotten.org or mrandazzo@michaelotten.org

BACK IN THE DAY DOO WOP FUNDRAISER HONORING FF MICHAEL KIEFER
Host: Bud Kiefer
When: October 12, 2008
Where: Plattdeutsche Park Restaurant, 1132 Hempstead Turnpike, Franklin Square, NY
Supports: FDNY Family Transport Foundation and the FDNY Firefighters Burn Center Foundation
More info: Bud Kiefer at (516) 485-5021

TWENTY THIRD ANNUAL BENEFIT DINNER
Host: New York Police & Fire Widows and Children's Benefit Fund
When: September 23, 2008
Where: Hilton New York City Hotel, 1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY
Supports: The families of New York City's firefighters, EMS members and police officers
Honorees: Charles A. Davis, CEO of Stone Point Capital, LLC; Mark Messier, six-time Stanley Cup winner and member of the NHL Hall of Fame; Harrison Ford, actor will receive the first J. Patrick 'Paddy' Burns Award
More info: <https://www.answerthecall.org/events/fundinvite.html>

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Fire in the Bronx: Fire was reported at 550 E. 180 St. at 11:09 p.m. on August 6. The fire was in the cockloft of a one-story, 150x175 taxpayer building and quickly grew to a fifth-alarm. A partial roof collapse occurred as a result of the fire before it was brought under control at 12:52 a.m. EMS transported 15 firefighters and five civilians with minor injuries and one civilian in serious condition to local hospitals.



VIEW

POINT

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