

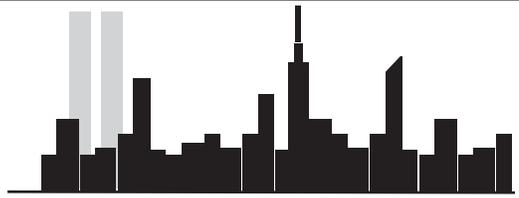
OCTOBER 2008

VIEW
P O I N T



metro Tech

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT



New FDOC Unit to Keep All Members Safer

Command Tactical Unit Launched

You could call it the FDNY's Operations Center on wheels.

After years of development, the Department's new Command Tactical Unit (CTU) went into service this September.

The unit was created as part of Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano's initiative to increase communications between the incident commander (IC) and members in the FDNY Operations Center (FDOC). It allows for documents, visual images and other information to be sent wirelessly between members at the scene and in the FDOC, helping everyone make more educated decisions about their course of action at an incident.

"Since Sept. 11, increasing situational awareness has been a priority for the Department," said Commissioner Scoppetta. "The ability for our members to gather more information about an incident, more quickly, will translate to more educated decisions. Very simply, this means increased safety and more lives saved."

Chief Cassano added, "This is exactly what our officers need in the field. If an IC knows immediate details about how a fire is developing or unique features of



The new Command Tactical Unit rig

the building structure, the better equipped he or she will be to determine how the members' actions will impact their objectives. There is no doubt that in this job, the more you know, the better decisions you will make."

CTU is staffed 24-hours a day by one officer and one firefighter per tour. They respond to incidents that reach a second alarm or higher and other unusual incidents.

Upon arrival, the members set up wireless cameras and computer networks in hard-wearing protective cases (known as Tactical Access Points) around the perimeter and activate a tower camera located on the roof of their vehicle. Video footage collected from these cameras then is fed back to computer screens in the CTU rig as well as in the FDOC.

Members in both locations can use controls to change the camera angles up

to 180 degrees and zoom the lenses, ensuring they get optimal views.

"This is cutting edge technology," Deputy Assistant Chief Joseph Pfeifer of the Counterterrorism and Emergency Preparedness Unit said. "This drives interoperability and situational awareness at any job."

The CTU firefighter monitors the camera feeds from the rig and organizes the documents received from the FDOC, including floor plans, locations of gas lines and building code violations. He or she also records the video and can burn this footage to a DVD for the incident commander immediately after a job for a post-operational critique.

Once the video feed is streaming, the CTU officer takes tablet computers to the command post for the IC, EMS officer, Safety Command officer and anyone else

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Command Tactical Unit Will Enhance Safety

When terrorists attacked the World Trade Center, a lack of situational awareness among the incident commanders (IC) and all members on scene was a tremendous obstacle for the Department's operations. In the last seven years we have continued to learn how important it is for our members to have timely, detailed information to ensure the safest, most effective operational response. Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and I have supported an effort by the Center for Terrorism and Disaster Preparedness and the Imaging Technology Unit to find technologically-advanced information-sharing tools to increase situational awareness, and as a result, the new Command Tactical Unit (CTU) was created as part of the FDNY Operations Center (FDOC).

The CTU will function as the eyes and ears of the FDOC at any emergency. It is capable of gathering and sharing real-time operational video and photographs with the Incident Commander (IC) and members in the FDOC. It also can gather information from the scene and share it with



members in the FDOC; and it can receive documents from the FDOC, which can be shared with the IC.

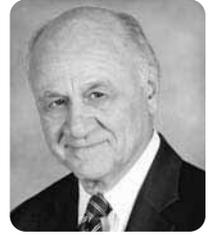
So if you are operating at the scene of a partial building collapse in the rear of a two-story building, the CTU will be able to provide the IC and FDOC with video footage of the collapsed area – giving all parties access to areas that could not be seen from the street. Also the FDOC will be able to transmit floor plans and other critical building information to the IC via the CTU computers, and the IC will be able to update FDOC commanders about their progress.

In the case of a major incident or disaster, this groundbreaking unit also can feed live video to the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) National Operations Center in Washington, DC, and via DHS to the White House Situation Room.

The bottom line is that the CTU will provide all our members – from chiefs to firefighters – with enhanced safety. And the information shared will exponentially increase situational awareness, which will ultimately save lives.

Another major benefit of the CTU is its use as a training tool. After operations are complete, the IC can request the video footage or photographs from the members of the CTU for review at the firehouse. Having the ability to provide this post-event analysis will make our officers and firefighters even more prepared to face the next emergency.

Whether our members are fighting a three-alarm warehouse fire in Brooklyn or a building explosion in the Bronx, the CTU will facilitate the critical exchange of information that will increase safety for generations. This groundbreaking technology is what put the FDNY at the forefront of disaster preparedness worldwide and I am certain this technology will be valued for years to come.



Commissioner's
Message

Richard Scoppa

Heroes Remembered

Plaques dedicated honoring Lt. Graffagnino and FF Beddia



FDNY Chaplain Msgr. John Delendick (far right) blesses the plaques for Lt. Joseph Graffagnino and Firefighter Robert Beddia, flanked by honor guards from E-24/L-5. (L to R) Firefighter Beddia's brother, Ed Carman, and sister, Susan Beddia Olson; Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano; Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta; Lt. Graffagnino's wife, Linda; Mayor Michael Bloomberg; and Lt. Graffagnino's father, Joseph Graffagnino.

Plaques were dedicated in honor of Lieutenant Joseph Graffagnino of Ladder 5 and Firefighter Robert Beddia of Engine 24 on August 18, the one year anniversary of the devastating seven-alarm fire at the former Deutsche Bank building that took their lives.

"These two men led by example and gave the job everything they had," said Mayor Michael Bloomberg. "For them it was more than a job, it was a calling."

Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta added, "They were pillars of strength in this house. They honored us by the way they lived their lives and they made the world better simply by living in it."

Lt. Graffagnino and Firefighter Beddia were among the 275 firefighters and 70 units that responded to the high-rise fire at 130 Liberty St. on August 18, 2007. They became trapped on the 14th floor of the building, which was undergoing demolition.

Hundreds of FDNY members filled the apparatus floor of Engine 24/Ladder 5 and poured out into Sixth Avenue in Man-

hattan's Greenwich Village as two bronze plaques were unveiled in their honor.

"These are two firefighters that will inspire future firefighters for years to come," said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano.

Lt. Graffagnino was an eight-year veteran of the FDNY who was remembered for his love of his family, including his wife, Linda, and their children, Mia, 5, and Joseph, 21 months, as well as his parents, Joseph and Rosemarie, and sisters, Maria Breen and Theresa Spoto.

He began his career at Engine 24 in 1999. He later worked at Engine 284, near his childhood home in Brooklyn, before transferring to Ladder 5 in December 2006. He was promoted posthumously to the rank of lieutenant on June 19, 2008.

Fellow firefighters remembered his "legendary" cooking at the firehouse and his incredible character.

"There are many qualities that make up a great firefighter – courage, compassion and a sense of humor," said Captain Patrick McNally of Ladder 5. "To say Joey possessed these qualities is an understatement. He possessed enough of these

qualities for himself and everyone here."

Firefighter Beddia, a 23-year veteran of the FDNY, was remembered as a mentor in the firehouse who loved golf and playing cards.

"Bobby was a born leader, he led by example and set high standards," said Battalion Chief Neil Cronin, who formerly served as captain of Engine 24. "I promise I will never forget his sacrifice."

Firefighter Beddia was appointed to the Department in 1983 and spent his entire career at Engine 24, receiving three citations for bravery. He is survived by his brothers, Edward Carman and James Beddia, and his sisters, Barbara Crocco and Susan Olson.

"Although we at the Department always say that [the Graffagnino and Beddia families] are part of our family, you always remind us that we are part of yours as well, and for that we are grateful," said Chief Cassano.

Lt. Graffagnino and Firefighter Beddia were the 1,136th and 1,137th members of the New York City Fire Department to make the Supreme Sacrifice in the Department's 144-year history.

Brave EMT Remembered

Hundreds Pay Tribute to EMT Jason Ruiz



Funeral procession for EMT Jason Ruiz.

Remembered as a funny, kind-hearted, family man, EMT Jason Ruiz of Station 35 was laid to rest on Sept. 18, after a funeral service at St. Michaels Roman Catholic Church in Brooklyn.

Hundreds of FDNY members gathered to pay their respects to the hero EMT, who was stabbed to death on Sept. 14.

"You always knew you could count on him," said Lt. Lori Page, who worked with EMT Ruiz at Station 35. "Keep holding his memory close to your heart."

She described him as someone who could always make her laugh, but who also was dedicated to his job.

After joining the FDNY in 2004, EMT Ruiz, 30, received two Department medals for life-saving rescues in 2006 and 2007.

He also was applauded for his bravery in July, after he and his partner, EMT Jose Rios, jumped onto electrified subway tracks in Brooklyn to rescue a woman who suffered a seizure.

"He was willing to sacrifice his own life for another person," said FDNY Chaplain Monsignor John Delendick. "Follow Jason's example of love. Let his example shine through all of us."

EMT Ruiz's brother, Adam, is also

an FDNY EMT at Station 38.

"In this day in age, we need more men like him," his relative, Lillian Becker, said. "Let's not mourn his death, but embrace his life and its impact on all of ours."

From the August 2008 Viewpoint Newsletter: EMTs Jason Ruiz and Juan Rios Save Woman Who Fell on 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, 2008. The EMTs responded to a call for a victim on the G train's Myrtle and Willoughby Aves. station. There they found a woman face down on the tracks, covered in dirt. Witnesses said she had suffered a seizure before falling. Without knowing if the trains were stopped or the electricity was turned off, the EMTs jumped onto the tracks to begin treatment. They said she was semi-conscious and talking, but disoriented. She was transported in stable condition. "We just tried to stay away from the third rail," said EMT Ruiz. "You don't think about the risks until afterwards."



EMT Jason Ruiz (left) with his partner, EMT Juan Rios, spoke to the media after their daring rescue from the subway tracks in Brooklyn this July.

Keeping the City Safer

Ambulance Newly Assigned to Roosevelt Island

Roosevelt Island was assigned its first full-time ambulance on Oct. 1.

“This is historic for the people of Roosevelt Island,” said Chief of EMS John Peruggia. “This is reducing response times and making the area safer for all residents.”

The Basic Life Support (BLS) unit, which is assigned to Station 49 at Mt. Sinai Hospital of Queens, will be stationed at the Island’s bus depot. It will respond to calls on Roosevelt Island as well as some in Queens, when necessary.

“We’re finding ways to get resources on the Island faster than in the past,” said Division Chief Robert Browne, who handles ambulance resources in Queens. He noted that call volume has increased for residents of Queens and Roosevelt Island by four to six percent in the past year.

Within hours of going into service, the unit, staffed by EMTs Jacqueline Summerford and Mike Triolo, received a call for someone who was having difficulty breathing. They were able to arrive on the scene



(L to R) Division Chief Robert Browne, EMT Mike Triolo, EMT Jacqueline Summerford and Chief of EMS John Peruggia stand in front of the ambulance now stationed on Roosevelt Island.

and treat the patient within four minutes.

“To get to any emergency faster is always important to us,” said EMT Triolo.

EMT Summerford, added, “The faster we can get to any emergency, the better it is for everyone.”

Home Sweet New Home

New Quarters for Marine Company 3 Opened in Brooklyn

With clear skies above and the stirring sound of the Emerald Society’s Pipes and Drums in the background, members of Marine Company 3 were welcomed into their new waterfront quarters at Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn.

“The new quarters are a benefit to the whole city,” Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scopetta said at the Sept. 18 ceremony. “Not only does the public now have a well-housed marine unit where it really needs one, but we are sharing space with another great city institution, and that kind of consolidation is a very efficient way of doing business.”

The enhanced facility will include 24-hour security, a new kitchen and bathroom, and a state-of-the-art floating concrete dock.

“We would like to welcome the Fire Department and Marine Company 3 to the



(L to R) Stu Suss, Provost, Kingsborough Community College; William Keller, Vice President and Head of Facilities, Kingsborough Community College; Patrick McNally, FDNY Chief of Operations; Dr. Regina Peruggi, President, Kingsborough Community College; Nicholas Scopetta, Fire Commissioner; Salvatore Cassano, FDNY Chief of Department; and John Benanti, Deputy Fire Commissioner Bureau of Technology and Support Services.

Kingsborough Community College family,” said Regina Peruggi, President of Kingsborough Community College. “We are delighted to have you here and know

you will continue to make a huge impact not only on our local waters, but also within our close knit community.”

Members of the Fire Department’s Marine Division also will be granted access to Kingsborough Community Colleges’ Maritime Technology Program, a high-tech sailing simulator that puts students at the helm of various vessels to prepare them for careers on the water.

“Since we started the small boat program, we’ve been able to respond to water-related emergencies even faster and more effectively than any other time in the Department’s history,” Chief Cassano said. “Today will only continue to help us fulfill our goal of providing safety on the city’s waterways, just as we do every day, in every neighborhood throughout the city.”

Everlasting Remembrance

Firefighter Stephen Siller and Sept. 11 Memorial Statue Unveiled

The Fire Department unveiled a bronze statue of Firefighter Stephen Siller on Sept. 17, honoring all FDNY members who lost their lives on Sept. 11, 2001.

“Stephen Siller put duty to his fellow members over his own safety,” Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said during the unveiling ceremony at the FDNY Training Academy. “This statue commemorates the extraordinary bravery of Stephen and all those who responded that day.”

The sculpture by artist Gregory Perillo depicts Firefighter Siller as he ran through the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel to respond to the World Trade Center attacks seven years ago. It includes placards listing all 343 names of FDNY members who made the Supreme Sacrifice on Sept. 11.

“This represents not just Stephen’s legacy, but all the 343 FDNY members who died that day,” said George Siller, Firefighter Siller’s brother.

In attendance for the unveiling was Firefighter Siller’s family, including his wife,



The family of Firefighter Stephen Siller joins artist Gregory Perillo as they unveil a statue in the firefighter’s likeness that includes the name of all 343 FDNY members who died on Sept. 11.

Sally, and children, Katie, Olivia, Genevieve, Jake and Stephen.

“This will always remind us of what happened on 9/11,” said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano. “The dedication, bravery and commitment it takes to be an FDNY firefighter. And it will serve as a

motivator here at the Fire Academy.”

The sculpture took 2,500 hours to make over 16 months. It will be kept on display at the Fire Academy.

“I hope this will keep the memory alive of the 343 who perished,” said Mr. Perillo.

Sacred Visit

Relics of St. Barbara, Patron Saint of Firefighters, at World Trade Center Site

A special ceremony was held on Sept. 10 at Engine 10/Ladder 10 – across the street from the World Trade Center site – to welcome the delegation of St. Barbara, patron saint of firefighters.

St. Barbara’s remains were brought to New York from Italy to mark the seventh anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.

“It means a great deal to our firefighters that their sacrifices are still remembered and honored by friends like you,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, who greeted the delegation in Italian.

Dozens of dignitaries from Italy, members of the Italian Navy and firefighters from across Italy attended the ceremony honoring the lives lost on Sept. 11.

It was noted that Italy generously provided emotional and financial support to the New York City Fire Department and New York City in the days following the



Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano welcome the delegation of St. Barbara in front of Engine 10/Ladder 10.

tragedy.

“I want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all you have done for us over the past seven years,” said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano.

Francesco Talo, the Italian Consul General, told the crowd, “Memory is what this

is all about. I want to thank all those [firefighters] who protect us every day, they are like our angels.”

Also attending the ceremony were retired Firefighter Vincent Tummino, Founder and President of the FDNY’s Columbia Association; Mauro Boscolo Bisto, President of Venice Province Council; and Luciano Boscolo Cucco of the Italian Delegation.

Former Chief of Department and Executive Director of the International Columbia Association Daniel Nigro emceed the event and said, “This gesture can bring us comfort at a time and place it is deeply needed.”

It is said that St. Barbara was killed by her father because she became a Christian, and he was subsequently struck by lightning. Christians began to pray for Barbara’s protection from fires and lightning.

John Jay College Center Named in Honor of 9/11 Firefighter

As the FDNY remembers the seventh anniversary of the Sept. 11 tragedy, the lives lost that day continue to inspire community action.

Jeremy Travis, President of John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY), launched the Christian Regenhard Center for Emergency Response Studies on Sept. 4, honoring FDNY Probationary Firefighter Regenhard, who died in the World Trade Center collapse at the age of 28.

The Regenhard family, community supporters and faculty from the College joined President Travis for the Center's unveiling.

Students and faculty at the new applied research center will study emergency responses to large-scale disasters, with a goal of promoting best practices. Associ-

ate Professor Charles Jennings will be its first director and Associate Professor Glenn Corbett will chair the advisory board.

Firefighter Regenhard's mother, Sally, worked with Congressman Jerry Nadler to obtain a grant from Congress to open the honorary center.

Officials added that the Center also will honor the more than 60 John Jay alumni, faculty and students who were killed on Sept. 11, 2001.



Jeremy Travis, President of John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY) and Firefighter Regenhard's mother, Sally, announce the opening of the Christian Regenhard Center for Emergency Response Studies on Sept. 4.

Family Values

21 paramedics and 101 EMTs graduate from EMS Academy

Just days after the seventh anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, 21 paramedics and 101 EMTs – including several with relatives that died on that tragic day – had reason to smile, crossing the stage at LaGuardia Community College in Queens as the newest members of the FDNY's EMS Command.

"To be a paramedic or EMT means that you are on the front lines of the City," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta during the ceremony on Sept. 15. "It's a hard job, but anyone who has done it knows that it is a rewarding job, because you will end each day knowing you made a difference."

Chief of Department Salvatore Casano added, "Your knowledge and effort make a difference for every patient you encounter, no matter how large or small the emergency."

Among the graduates were five military veterans, including EMT Kathleen Santora and EMT Mathew Hannon, both of whom served in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

EMT Santora – whose father is retired Deputy Chief Alexander Santora and brother was Firefighter Christopher Santora of Engine 54, who was killed on



Paramedics and EMTs graduated from the EMS Academy on Sept. 15.

Sept. 11, 2001 – was commended for helping save a victim of cardiac arrest on her first day in the field.

She said the rescue reminded her of her brother, who "always finds ways to let me know he's still with me."

Other Department legacies who graduated during the ceremony included EMT Craig Wells, son of retired EMS Division Chief Charles Wells and nephew of Lt. Robert Regan of Ladder 118, who died in the line of duty on Sept. 11. EMT Kristine Werner is the daughter of Captain Denise Werner; EMT Robert Scanlon is the cousin of Lt. Stacy Scanlon; EMT Amber

Olmo-Avalos is the sister of Sabrina Olmo, who is currently training to be a firefighter at Randalls Island; and EMT Tanya Porazzo's uncle is Battalion Chief Robert Hemsworth and her cousin is Battalion Chief Ronnie Porazzo.

Additionally, Paramedic Aaron Aguirre is married to EMT Samantha Aguirre, and Paramedic Richard Salmoiraght is married to EMT Rudaina Ramos.

The class valedictorians were Paramedic Todd Laracuenta, EMT Stephen McNamara and EMT James Pione.

"We care for people and we save lives – 100 percent of the time, every day," said Chief of EMS John Perugia. "Thank you for committing yourselves to protecting the citizens of this great city."

Many of the graduates said they joined the EMS Command to be able to help others.

"I did it to give back, for the humanity of it," said Paramedic Christian Garcia. "I'm ready to give back to the community and give back to New York."

More than 10 languages are spoken by the graduates, including Spanish, French, Creole, Polish, Russian, Italian, Cantonese, Greek and German.

FDNY REMEMBERS SEPT. 11, 2001



(Above) Firefighters, EMS members, family and friends gathered at the World Trade Center site for the seventh annual ceremony honoring the nearly 3,000 people who died on Sept. 11, 2001, including 343 FDNY members.

Seven years later, the Department paid tribute to the 343 FDNY members lost on Sept. 11, 2001, as well as the nearly 3,000 others who perished that tragic day.

A ceremony was held at the site of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan, as well as at the Firefighter's Memorial on Riverside Drive; the EMS Memorial Wall in Fort Totten, Queens; at FDNY Headquarters in Brooklyn; and at firehouses and EMS stations throughout the City.



(Above) FDNY bugler, Lt. Joe Minogtie, performs taps at the conclusion of the name-reading ceremony, as Mayor Michael Bloomberg looks on.



(Left) A memorial was held at the EMS Academy's 9/11 Memorial in Fort Totten, Queens. The memorial wall includes the names of all uniformed members who made the Supreme Sacrifice on Sept. 11, 2001.



(Left) Hundreds of firefighters attended the memorial service at the Firefighters' Memorial on Riverside Drive in Manhattan, honoring the FDNY members who lost their lives seven years ago. Early that morning, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and Chief of Operations Patrick McNally placed a wreath at the Memorial.



(Right) Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano placed a wreath at the 9/11 memorial at the New York City Fire Museum in SoHo.



(Left) In the afternoon, a ceremony was held at FDNY Headquarters honoring members assigned to Headquarters who responded to the World Trade Center attack, including Chief of Department Peter Ganci, Jr., First Deputy Commissioner William Feehan, and Citywide Tour Commanders, Assistant Chief Gerard Barbara and Assistant Chief Donald Burns. Wreaths were placed in the lobby to honor them and all FDNY members who made the Supreme Sacrifice at the World Trade Center.

New Day, New Role

One battalion chief and 15 lieutenants promoted

As the packed crowd cheered and waved banners of congratulations, one battalion chief and 15 lieutenants were promoted on Sept. 24, during a ceremony at FDNY Headquarters.

"This is an important step on your career ladder, one that takes dedication and sacrifice," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. "Today you are becoming part of the legacy that was bequeathed to you."

Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano applauded the members' hard work that earned them their promotions.

"Obviously you have dedication and commitment to this job, or you wouldn't be here today," he said.

Newly promoted Lt. Robert Dereskewicz, from Ladder 11, noted that "studying for the exam was like working a second job."

He said he was "overwhelmed" to be promoted and "this will be a big change, but I'm anxious to get started."



Lt. Patrick Depierro (third from left) at his promotion ceremony with and his mother and father, Firefighter John Depierro, and Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano, Deputy Assistant Chief Raymond Goldbach.

Also among the members promoted to lieutenant was Patrick Depierro of Ladder 136, who praised his fellow members for pushing him to be a better firefighter: "There are a lot of great guys in the firehouse whom I have had the honor to learn from each day."

He added that he comes from a long line of firefighters who inspired him to

join the Department – his father, John, has worked at Engine 305 for nearly 40 years and his great-grandfather also was a member of the FDNY.

"I'm honoring [my father] by being here today," said the six-year veteran. "Being around the firehouse as a kid you never want to leave. I want to keep doing this for another 25 years."

Leading the Way

34 Fire and EMS Members Promoted

A new batch of bright and enthusiastic leaders of the fire and EMS service were promoted at the Fire Academy on August 13.

"Everything you have learned over the years has brought you to this moment," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. "You are the Department's legacy and its future. It takes a special kind of person to step up and do the work that you do each day."

In all, one member was elevated to the rank of EMS division chief, five to the rank of fire battalion chief, two to the rank of EMS deputy chief, 10 to the rank of fire captain, one to the rank of supervising fire marshal and 15 to the rank of fire lieutenant.

"You are our future leaders and I look



Joint fire and EMS promotions at the Fire Academy on Randall's Island.

forward to seeing you move this Department forward," said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano. "All of you have taken a big step today in helping the FDNY

meet any challenge it may face."

Among those being promoted is EMS Division Chief Ann Fitton, a 24-year veteran of the EMS Command who will now be the chief in charge of the EMS Training Academy at Ft. Totten.

"I'm excited," said Chief Fitton. "I'm honored that they trust me in this position. This is an exciting time to be with EMS."

She also has family who has served with the FDNY, including her husband, retired-EMS Captain Neil Fitton, and brother-in-law, EMS Division Chief Michael Fitton.

Chief Michael Fitton only had compliments for his newly promoted sister-in-law, "This is well deserved. She'll do a lot for the Academy."

In His Memory

Thomas Brick Scholarships awarded to seven FDNY firefighters

Seven scholarships were presented to active FDNY fire officers and firefighters on August 14 in the memory of Firefighter Thomas Brick of Ladder 36.

They are funded each year by Salvatore Bommarito and his family in appreciation for the courageous public service provided by all FDNY firefighters.

"Each of today's recipients are the kind of people who want to be challenged, want to move forward, want to learn," said Commissioner Scoppetta during the presentation at FDNY Headquarters. "These scholarships carry on the spirit of Firefighter Thomas Brick."

The recipients included Battalion Chief Brendan McSweeney from Battalion 15; Captains Brian Boll from Engine 314 and Michael Callan from Division 6; Lt. James Lynch from Engine 92; and Firefighters David Abreu, assigned to Squad 288 and working in Squad 61; Tim Duggan from Ladder 24; and Steven Tagliani from Engine 168.

This is the fifth scholarship award ceremony honoring Firefighter Brick, who made the Supreme Sacrifice on December 16, 2003, while operating at a four-alarm fire at a furniture and mattress warehouse in upper Manhattan.

"I enjoy coming here because it's sim-



Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and Chief of Operations Patrick McNally join the Brick family and the seven scholarship recipients.

ply a happy event," said Mr. Bommarito, who has funded 25 Firefighter Brick scholarships in the last five years. "We took a tragedy and turned it into something wonderful."

He called the \$2,500 scholarships a "modest effort," and said he hopes they will "catapult members of the FDNY to a better position, sooner."

Thomas Brick, Sr., who attended the presentation with his wife, Margaret, said he was honored to have a scholarship named for his son.

"This is an important, wonderful event," he said. "These are young, ambitious, ded-

icated young men who can further their careers with this. And having any connection with my son is great."

One of the scholarship recipients, Firefighter Duggan, attended the Fire Academy with Firefighter Brick.

He said he plans to use the scholarship for classes in fire science at John Jay College.

Describing Firefighter Brick as "eager and intense," he said receiving the scholarship "was especially poignant because we studied together. It's a blessing and a huge responsibility."

Right Place, Right Time

Marine Company 1 Rescues Pregnant Woman in Hudson River

Three members of Marine Company 1 were hailed as heroes after rescuing a 7-months pregnant woman in the waters off Battery Park City on Sept. 16.

"She was 30 seconds away from death," said Lt. Michael Finer. "She was as lucky as can be."

At 10:53 p.m., Lt. Finer said he was doing paperwork when he learned that a woman was spotted in the water around the South Cove near Battery Park City.

Lt. Finer got into a safe boat with Firefighters Michael Lambert and Timothy Moynihan, pulled up along the shoreline in the area of the sighting within two minutes.

"The woman was about 100 yards off shore, so locating her was like finding a needle in haystack," said Lt. Finer.

As Firefighter Lambert steered the boat, Lt. Finer scanned the water with a spotlight



(L to R) Firefighter Michael Lambert, Firefighter Timothy Moynihan and Lt. Michael Finer of Marine Company 1.

and called out for her. She must have heard his calls, he said, because her arm reached out of the water just before she went under again.

Dressed in an ice rescue suit, but without time to tether off for safety, Firefighter Moynihan jumped into the water and reached her as she sank below the surface of the rough waters.

He said he quickly grabbed her by her hair and pulled her head above water. Then he swam with her in tow to the boat, where the two other members pulled her aboard and began CPR.

"It was like you were looking at a dead person," said Firefighter Moynihan, describing the 21-year-old woman's gray pallor. "I wasn't sure how long she was going to be with us. She was about as close to losing her life as possible."

After taking her to shore and strapping her to a backboard, they were met by EMS members who transported her to St. Vincent's Medical Center. She was expected to make a full recovery.

Milestone Birthday

Members of Engine 271/Ladder 124 Celebrate 100 Years of Service

It was a birthday party 100 years in the making.

Members of Engine 271 and Ladder 124 celebrated their firehouse centennial on Sept. 20 with dozens of past and present firefighters, friends and family members in Brooklyn.

"This is a premier company and its history is ingrained in all of us here today," said Brooklyn Borough Commander Edward Kilduff, who worked as a covering lieutenant at the company in the late 1980s.

"The depth of knowledge and experience I received here was overwhelming. Thank you all for your professionalism, dedication and commitment."

Engine 171 and Ladder 62 (re-designated as Engine 271 and Ladder 124 in 1913) were established in 1908, to meet the demands of the growing Bushwick neighborhood.

Their firehouse on Himrod Street, with an attachment in the rear to house the horses that pulled their apparatus, was purchased for \$60,000. At the time, probationary firefighters earned \$800 per year and first-grade firefighters made \$1,400 per year.

And in the firehouse's first year of service, the firefighters made 300 runs.

As the neighborhood continued to grow through both World Wars and into the 1950s and 60s, so did the workload – and Engine 271 and Ladder 124 become two of the City's busiest companies in the 1970s. In fact, in the early 1970s they moved the kitchen from the third floor to the first, so they could get to the apparatus more quickly and did not have to climb the stairs after each run.

Throughout their 100 years, the members of Engine 271 and Ladder 124 operated at many memorable fires, including the 10-alarm warehouse fire at Knickerbocker Ave. and Bleeker St. in July 1977 (a fire so intense it burned through hose line and cracked apparatus windows) and the six-alarm fire at a mattress factory on DeKalb Ave. in July 2005.

"This has always been a hard-working, can-do company," said Capt. Joseph Bachety of Ladder 124, who has worked



The centennial plaque is dedicated at Engine 271 and Ladder 124.



Many present and former members, family and friends gathered for the centennial ceremony.

for the firehouse several times throughout his 30-year career. "I have learned from the best officers and firefighters here, and I continue to learn from the best."

Among the many notable firefighters who have served Engine 271 and Ladder 124 was Chief of Department Peter Ganci, who was killed on Sept. 11, 2001. His family, including two firefighter sons, attended the centennial celebration.

Dozens of former members who served with Chief Ganci also were in attendance, including Firefighter Peter McCarthy, who retired from Ladder 124 after 20 years of service in 1987.

He said he loved coming to the firehouse to be with his colleagues -- both

past and present. "They are tremendous people and I owe them a lot," he said.

And the newest generation of firefighters appears to be following in the brave footsteps of their predecessors. A member from Engine 271 recently returned from a tour of duty in Afghanistan with the Army Special Forces, and a firefighter from Ladder 124 will be deployed in October with the U.S. Navy.

"The firefighters who work at this company are an elite group. They are willing to give up their lives to save another," Capt. Bruce Barvels of Engine 271. "Walk tall and be proud because you are part of the FDNY, the greatest fire department in the world."

Heroes' Feast

Engine 302/Ladder 155 Hosts Dinner for Wounded Warriors



Members from Engine 302 and Ladder 155 hosted a special dinner to thank 25 wounded warriors.

It was a way for firefighters to say 'thank you' to some of the nation's bravest.

Firefighters from Engine 302/Ladder 155 hosted a special Italian dinner for 25 wounded warriors on Sept. 9 at their firehouse in Jamaica, Queens.

"Tonight is a feast," said Firefighter Gene Johnston of Engine 302, one of the dinner's organizers. "None of us are in it for the fanfare, we just want these guys to get everything they deserve. Help them out a little, make them happy."

In June, the firefighters hosted a fundraiser in Suffolk County to support the Wounded Warrior Project and Hope

for the Warriors featuring bands and an auction/raffle.

To their surprise, 450 people attended and they raised more than \$12,000 for the two charities.

Hope for the Warriors told the firefighters they can spend the money on anything they wish, so in addition to the dinner, Firefighter Johnston said that they would use the funds to take wounded soldiers to a West Point football game in October. He also said they would support a group of volunteer firefighters on Long Island who help renovate houses – free of charge – for wounded veterans among other related donations.

"We're trying to do what we can when we can," said Firefighter Johnston, an 18-year veteran of the FDNY. "There's a whole menu of choices."

He said firefighters from Engine 302/Ladder 155 were thrilled to be able to host the veterans at their firehouse, especially after Tina Atherall, Vice President of Hope for the Warriors, told them many of the wounded soldiers look upon FDNY firehouse visits as the highlight of their trip to New York.

"If we can help them, even a little, we're happy to do it," Firefighter Johnston said.



Boxing boost: The New York City Fire Department and the FDNY Boxing Team joined on August 28 to donate \$10,000 to the Wounded Warriors Project, which supports men and women of the U.S. Military. The Wounded Warriors Project supports all military veterans who have been severely injured during the conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and other locations around the world. The Bravest Boxing Team so far has donated more than \$27,500 to the cause.

Finding Hope in Tragedy

Firefighters Reunited with Family Rescued from 2007 Gas Explosion

Three colorful thank you cards were given to firefighters on August 20 with six words printed in a child's handwriting: "Thank you for saving my life."

Duaa Al Ghaithi, 6, wrote them to the men who rescued her in October 2007, after a gas explosion tore through her family's Harlem apartment. She received internal and external burns covering 60 percent of her body and lost three fingers in the blast, forcing her to spend 10 months in the hospital and undergo grueling physical therapy and several surgeries.

Her sister Lina, 3, was blinded in the explosion and received serious burns, as did her sisters Twka, 5, and Afaf, 1. Her mother, Alouf Hassan, tragically lost her life in the blast.

"Last time I saw you, you were wearing a hat and mask," Duaa said to her rescuer, Firefighter John Jacovina from Ladder 14. He was among the many firefighters who reunited with her and her family outside their temporary home at the Convent Avenue Family Shelter in Harlem.

She and her sisters, each still wearing nylon compression garments to protect their skin, showered them with hugs, kisses, high-fives and deep-hearted thanks.

"This is the best thing anyone has ever done for me," the girls' father, Rassas Al Ghaithi, said through a translator, giving each firefighter a long embrace. "I know the work of firefighters is risky, but you should know that you have done something special. You saved my family."

Firefighters from Ladder 14 also handed him an envelope containing a substantial donation from all the company's members.

"We can go to 100 jobs and not get to see how things work out," said Battalion Chief Stephen Deloughry of Battalion 12. "It's wonderful to see them all here, yet they still have a struggle ahead of them."

All of the firefighters said they vividly remembered the scene of the explosion at 10 W. 119th St. on October 6, 2007 – each noting that the area was eerily quiet when they arrived and from the street they



Members of Ladder 14 are reunited with Rassas Al Ghaithi and his four daughters in Harlem. Firefighter John Jacovina (seated) sits beside Duaa (seated, center), whom he rescued after the explosion.

could not tell where the blast occurred.

The tenants were self evacuating, and as firefighters reached the rear of the building, they found tenants helping two of the girls and their mother, who told them the other two girls were inside.

Firefighter Jacovina and Lt. Thomas Keery (who was promoted in December 2007) found the girls in the rear of the apartment, standing in a void under a piece of sheet rock.

"They didn't cry, they just stood there with their arms open," said Firefighter Jacovina, who rescued Duaa.

Other firefighters said they were just as surprised the girls were quiet as they were pulled from the building.

"They were tiny, burned from head to toe, but they weren't crying or screaming," said Jermaine Martin of Engine 35. "It's so good to see they're doing better now."

As the girls took turns whispering to Firefighter Jacovina and sitting on his lap, he said, "I always wanted to see them

again, see what happened."

Yet they all noted that they wanted to spread the word about this family so that someone might help them get back on their feet.

"They are so grateful. We just wanted to give them a little attention so they could get the help they needed," said Firefighter Chris Fenyo from Ladder 14, who coordinated the reunion. "They don't need things, they need financial help."

Capt. Stephen Marsar of Division 3 added, "We never get to see this part, we always see them at their worst, when they've lost everything. I just hope someone will be able to help them."

As the girls went back inside and Mr. Al Ghaithi said his goodbyes he noted, "Whenever I see my daughters I will remember you."

Donations to the Al Ghaithi family can be made to the Accident Victims Relief Fund: Al Ghaithi Family, 143 Willis Ave., Mineola, NY 11501.

Gulf Support Group

Two FDNY teams deployed to Gulf region in response to Hurricane Gustav

Forty members of the FDNY's Incident Management Team (IMT) and 35 members of the Urban Search and Rescue Team (USAR) - New York Task Force-1 (NY-TF 1) were deployed in anticipation of Hurricane Gustav this summer.

The USAR team was deployed on August 30 and the IMT was deployed on Aug. 31 and Sept. 1 to assist with the recovery effort following the Category 2 hurricane.

The USAR team includes members of the FDNY's fire and EMS service as well as New York City Police Department and OEM. Each member has extensive training and experience in structural collapses and confined space rescues.

Officials from the Louisiana Fire Marshal's office requested the IMT, which includes fire and EMS members who are specially trained by the federal government to manage the logistics, operations, planning, safety and command efforts for large-scale, long-duration disasters.

Both teams provided support needed in response to the harsh conditions caused by Hurricane Gustav.

In 2005, both teams were deployed to the Gulf states to support local emergency services following Hurricane Katrina. The USAR team was deployed to Gulfport, Miss., for rescue and recovery, while the IMT was sent to New Orleans to oversee and manage fire and emergency response operations.



(Above) Members of the USAR team prepare for deployment.



(Right) The FDNY's IMTs gather in Baton Rouge to plan for their logistics, operations, planning, safety and command efforts for Hurricane Gustav.



Safety Education:

Director FDNY Fire Safety Education Unit Lt. Anthony Mancuso on Sept. 19 teaches school children fire safety, just before he, Chief of Training Thomas Galvin and Executive Director of the FDNY Foundation Jean O'Shea graciously accepted a \$25,000 grant from members of the Allstate Insurance Company at Ladder 3 in Manhattan. The funds will be used to purchase new fire safety education kits for every firehouse in New York City. The kits include coloring books, fire safety literature, smoke alarms, extension cords, butane lighters and other items to teach children how to be fire safe. On Sept. 30 the Unit received another \$6,200 grant from Wells Fargo Insurance Services and the Fireman's Fund Insurance Company for the purchase of a new Hazard House, a state-of-the-art educational model that can be used to teach children how to keep their homes fire safe.

New FDOC Unit

(Continued from page 1)

who might require this information, enabling everyone to make more informed decisions about the incident.

“CTU’s main purpose is to save lives and prevent injuries,” said Supervising Fire Marshal Ralph Bernard, director of imaging technology, who helped develop the unit. “It’s an information collecting and distribution hub, the liaison between the scene and the Operations Center. The more information the IC has, the better equipped he or she will be to mitigate the incident.”

The Department initially received \$115,000 in funding from the Department of Homeland Security and another \$4,000 from the Honorary Fire Officers’ Association for the project, which helped the unit take shape.

The FDNY Assistant Commissioner of Fleet and Technical Services James Basile and his team helped build it, installing the electronic system that powers the unit, assembling the video tower, and creating brackets and racks for its antennas and cameras.

“It’s improving safety, giving the command chief a clear picture of what is happening at a job,” said Capt. Peter Carino,

who supervises the unit. “And instead of just getting reports at the FDOC, members will be able to see images of the fire from many different points of view. They can monitor a fire’s progress as if they were there and provide the IC with any other resources or tactical information they need.”

Following a second-alarm fire at a Staten Island furniture store on Sept. 21, Deputy Assistant Chief John Sudnik said the information he received from the CTU was beneficial.

When fire was blowing out the rear windows of the first floor of the three-story building at 530 Bay St., he said he usually relies only on members’ reports regarding the status of the fire. But the images he received from the CTU cameras gave him “a picture to put with the reports I was getting. And that’s exactly what you want when you’re the incident commander standing in front of the building.”



The computer system inside the new CTU vehicle.

“It’s a great tool,” he added. “Any time you can take advantage of technology in this day in age it makes the job easier and our members safer.”

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Saying Thank You: Thirty FDNY members were among the 300 who traveled with The New York Says Thank You Foundation to Greensburg, Kansas, in September to help rebuild the 4-H Center County Fairground Pavillion. Each year, the foundation sends FDNY members, many of them survivors of the World Trade Center attacks, to help rebuild communities around the U.S. affected by disaster. For more information, visit newyorksaysthankeyou.org



VIEW

POINT

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NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT

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A 144 YEAR HISTORY
OF COMMITMENT, COURAGE & COMPASSION