

# Remembering Three Heroes

*Plaque dedications honor three firefighters killed on January 23, 2005*

One year after the tragic events of January 23, 2005, the Department honored the memory of three brave firefighters who lost their lives, in two separate incidents, on that dark day.

A plaque dedication ceremony was held in honor of Lieutenants Curtis Meyran of Battalion 26 and John Bellew of Ladder 27 in the Bronx on January 23. And another ceremony was held on January 24 remembering Firefighter Richard Sclafani of Ladder 103 at his firehouse in Brooklyn.

At both ceremonies, hundreds of family members, friends and fellow firefighters came from across the City to celebrate the lives of the three heroes.

“The plaque dedication is a Department tradition; a way we pay respect to our lost firefighters,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. “It is the Department’s way of reaffirming the promise each and every firefighter makes to his fellow firefighter. It is another way of saying we will never forget. It is our job today, and in the days to come, to ensure that they are not forgotten – to continue the work of these men.”

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Tears, heartfelt poems, a touching video and the hum of bagpipes paid tribute to Lieutenants Curtis Meyran and John Bellew during their plaque dedication ceremony at Ladder 27.



*(Top) Mayor Michael Bloomberg joins Eileen Bellew and her four children in the unveiling of a plaque dedicated to her husband, Lieutenant John Bellew, at Ladder 27.*

*(Bottom) Angela Meyran reads a poem she wrote honoring her father, Lieutenant Curtis Meyran, during his plaque dedication ceremony on January 23.*



“Lieutenants John Bellew and Curtis Meyran are the definition of courage,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.

Hundreds of firefighters stood in the rain to attend the tribute. Many shared stories and laughs as they remembered the spirited lives of the two brave men.

“They gave great dignity to their lives and to what firefighters do every day,” Chief of Department Peter Hayden said. “We will keep them alive in our hearts.”

The two were tragically killed while battling a third-alarm fire in an apartment building at 236 East 178<sup>th</sup> Street in the

Mount Hope section of the Bronx. While searching for trapped occupants, Lieutenants Meyran and Bellew, as well as Lieutenant Joseph DiBernardo, and Firefighters Jeff Cool, Eugene Stolowski and

*(Continued on page 10)*



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# State of the Department

Looking back over the past year, we are again reminded of our members' skill and unparalleled service to the city we serve. Firefighters and EMS personnel responded effectively to a large-scale disaster (Hurricane Katrina), and we developed and began distributing a life-saving Personal Safety System. In addition, civilian fire fatalities dropped to record lows, declining to levels not seen since the Department first started keeping statistics in 1916. And these numbers come as Department members are responding to more incidents than ever before. In 2005, firefighters responded to 485,702 incidents, and EMS personnel responded to 1.14 million.

Yet as we mark the year's accomplishments, we cannot forget that 2005 began in tragedy, with the deaths of Lieutenants Curtis Meyran and John Bellew, and Firefighter Richard Scalfani. We continue to reflect on the lives of these brave firefighters and keep their families in our thoughts and prayers.

Now, as we look ahead to 2006, we anticipate the launch of a number of initiatives that we plan to implement in the coming months, with a focus on training, technology and diversity. We hope that these new programs will enable the FDNY to remember 2006 as another successful year.

## Training

We hope to secure a \$10.4 million grant from the Department for Homeland Security that would provide for Emergency Response and Prevention training for all Fire, EMS and Bureau of Fire Investigation personnel. Our plan is to offer a 10-hour training session to all members that would provide the knowledge, skills and practical tools needed to respond to hazardous materials releases. The course, "Emergency Response and Prevention: Hazardous Materials and Terrorism," will focus on how to recognize, identify and prevent acts of terrorism.

The Department has already received \$2.7 million in federal funds to provide HazMat training for all EMS members. This 16-hour training session will enable all EMTs, paramedics and officers to be trained at the HazMat Operational level, providing for a more highly trained, better protected EMS workforce that can safely perform life-saving work in various, major HazMat incidents.

## Technology

We are developing Electronic Command Boards for better management of large-scale incidents. These Boards will enable officers to send information wirelessly to the Fire Department Operation Center (FDOC) from anywhere in the City. The FDNY

will be the first fire department in the nation to use this type of wireless technology. Currently, we are running a pilot program in a few Manhattan battalions, and we anticipate a Department-wide roll out this summer.

The FDOC is also undergoing some significant upgrades. The new \$17 million center located at 9 Metrotech will provide the Department with a state-of-the-art emergency command facility and space for Incident Management Teams. The first phase of the project is already completed and we anticipate the entire project will be completed this June.

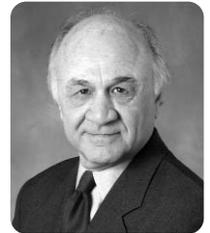
Additionally, we are working on the installation of Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) Systems on all ambulances by the end of 2006. The \$40 million initiative will use global positioning systems (GPS) to improve emergency response times and will significantly enhance our dispatching capabilities. The system has already been tested on more than 80 ambulances in EMS Division 5 (Staten Island and southern Brooklyn). We have found the program to be a huge success, with a drop in response times for those areas.

## Diversity

Diversity is a priority for the FDNY. This year we are ready to launch a major diversity/recruitment campaign in advance of the December firefighter exam. One major initiative will be to send 12 full-time members of both Fire and EMS to recruitment events throughout the City. Our goal is to make the Department reflective of the City's diverse populations and communities. In the past five years we have been successful in tripling the number of minorities in the ranks, and we hope that in the next five years, our numbers will increase even further.

These are but a few of the significant initiatives we will launch this year to further improve our ability to better train, equip and protect the men and women who, everyday, do an outstanding job for the people of our city.

I wish to thank you all for contributing to the Department's success in 2005. Your dedication and commitment to the Department will help make 2006 our most successful year yet.



**Commissioner's  
Message**

*Nicholas Scoppa*

# Preparing for the Unexpected

## EMS gets \$2.7 million for HazMat training from the feds

In December, FDNY Emergency Medical Service was awarded a healthy holiday bonus – a \$2.7 million federal grant to provide HazMat training to all EMTs, paramedics and EMS officers.

“Our members’ advanced skills can be the difference between life and death,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. “This grant will better protect our EMTs and paramedics, and they – in turn – will be more prepared to protect the public.”

Issued through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s 2005 Assistance to Firefighter Grant Program, this grant will allow all EMS members to respond more effectively to complex and mass casualty incidents.

This is the first time a grant has been issued to provide HazMat training for the FDNY EMS Command. This is also the first year the grant’s \$750,000 cap has been lifted, enabling the Department to develop the training program to its full extent.

“This is a significant improvement for the Department, enabling us to expand hazardous materials training for all first responders,” Chief of Department Peter Hayden said. “The Fire Department recognizes our new responsibilities, and that includes the need for everyone on the front lines to be better trained and prepared.”

Sessions are expected to begin in July. They will include 16 hours (overtime) of instruction – over two days – for all EMS personnel, and an additional advanced training session for 50 Hazardous Material Unit (HazTac) paramedics.

The training, which will take a year to complete, will consist of classroom and hands-on instruction with new equipment.

All EMTs, paramedics and officers will be certified at the HazMat Operations level; in the past, all EMS members were trained to the Awareness level.

Additional advanced training will be provided to paramedics to learn skills necessary to provide medical care to confined space victims before they are extracted. This training will satisfy some of the requirements necessary for participation in the New York Task Force 1, Urban Search and Rescue Team (NYTF-1 USAR).

This grant also allows for the purchase of communications equipment for EMS members. The new technology will enable commanders and dispatchers to reach mutual aid partners – including private ambulance companies – to assist in response and provide more coverage for the City’s five boroughs.

“Our members will now be part of an elite group that have this advanced level of

knowledge,” Chief of EMS John Peruggia said.

The Assistance to Firefighter Grant program provides funds for operations, safety and vehicle acquisition to Fire Departments nationwide. The FDNY applied for the grant last spring and was among the more than 20,000 applications received from both paid and volunteer departments under the federal program.

“We are pleased that the Department of Homeland Security was able to increase our funding for this valuable training,” said Irene Sullivan, Director of Grant Development for the Department. “This funding is important for EMS, the Department and the City overall.”

The FDNY’s grant includes \$2,238,718 in federal monies and \$559,680 in matching funds from the City of New York.

In the past, monies were distributed almost exclusively to the fire service. And to date, the largest award has been given to Broward County, Florida.

In 2003 and 2004, the FDNY also received federal fire grants to implement a video-conferencing distance-learning program.

## Fire Marshals Apprehend Shoplifter/Arsonist

On January 25, two quick responding fire marshals apprehended a shoplifter who had a unique way of escaping stores with bags of merchandise – she set racks of clothes on fire.

“Obviously these fires are dangerous because you have a store full of people,” said Chief Fire Marshal Louis Garcia. “For her it is all about getting away, but for us, we have the factor of human life. These are dangerous fires.”

For months, fire marshals were hot on her trail.

They closely watched a Harlem H&M clothing store’s surveillance tape recorded last April, which caught her lighting a rack of lingerie on fire with a cigarette lighter. Fire marshals captured her photo from the tape and distributed fliers with the picture to local retail outlets.

And this January, Fire Marshal Andrew DiFusco and his partner, Frank

Heffel, were able to arrest Savanna Johnson at the same H&M store after a security guard recognized her from her photo.

After Fire Marshals DiFusco and Heffel questioned the woman, they said she admitted to lighting the fire at H&M as well as another, set four days later, at an Old Navy clothing store in the same neighborhood.

She was charged with arson in the second degree, reckless endangerment in the second degree, possession of stolen property, petit larceny and criminal possession of a controlled substance in the seventh degree.

Chief Garcia added that Johnson had been arrested 59 times in the past for crimes committed throughout the country, including shoplifting, drug possession, petit larceny, prostitution and burglary.



At a press conference on January 20, Chief Garcia holds up a flier that fire marshals distributed to clothing stores in Harlem last April. The information and photographs helped lead to the arrest of shoplifter and arsonist Savanna Johnson. Joining the Chief behind the podium are (L to R) H&M security guard Jermaine Stevens, SFM Robert Burns and FM Andrew DiFusco.

## EMS Promotions Go Global

*Via satellite from Iraq, Paramedic Patricia Foley is promoted to Lieutenant*

She said she was excited, and a little nervous, but Paramedic Patricia Foley stood proudly as she was sworn in as an EMS lieutenant – from nearly 6,000 miles away.

Lieutenant Foley is currently serving the U.S. Army's 30<sup>th</sup> Medical Command Division at the Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq. And via satellite broadcast to Randall's Island, she took the oath along with 24 other EMS officers at a promotions ceremony on January 20.

"It is clear to me that this class of promotees embody the qualities the FDNY looks to in its leadership – a commitment to service in whatever form it may take, proven experience and the support of family," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said. "Every one of us knows that we can do more good together than alone."

The promoted members included one deputy chief, four captains and 19 lieutenants. And the Commissioner noted that they are all bringing a breadth of knowledge to their new posts.

Deputy Chief Michael Fitton brings 22 years of experience to his new position. Additionally, the four new captains – Eric Fay, Felipe Periu, Steven Quirindongo and Robert Rousso – bring with them a collective 50 years of supervisory experience.



*Via satellite broadcast from Iraq, Paramedic Patricia Foley is sworn in as a lieutenant at EMS Promotions. (Inset photo) Paramedic Lieutenant Patricia Foley.*

"Certainly you have all demonstrated that you are motivated and dedicated members of this Department," said Chief of Department Peter Hayden. "Today you are taking on more responsibility. By your work ethic, you have shown you are more

than ready to take on these new roles."

Also among those promoted to lieutenant was Paramedic Catherine Abramshe. Her mother, EMT Linda Abramshe, has been on the job for nearly 20 years. The new lieutenant said she knew she would "love the job just by watching my mom work."

Lieutenant Abramshe also served with her brother, Firefighter Eugene Abramshe of Ladder 146, in Iraq for a year with the 389<sup>th</sup> Operations.

Paramedic Michael Glenn was also among those promoted to lieutenant during the ceremony. He served for six months north of Baghdad, Iraq in the 404<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion – Special Operations.

"As we prepare to move forward with initiatives to improve our capabilities and preparedness and strive to enhance the delivery of pre-hospital care to the citizens and visitors of New York City, I am proud to have the opportunity to work with such a committed, dedicated and professional team," said Chief of EMS John Peruggia.

And as the ceremony concluded, Commissioner Scoppetta told the newly promoted EMS officers, "You are uniquely qualified to lead. Lead responsibly and lead well."



*Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta presided over the graduation of 90 EMS members on December 16 at the Training Academy on Randall's Island. Fifteen paramedics and 75 EMTs were among the graduates who will be assigned to units throughout the City.*

## All in the Family

### *A Class of Department legacies, minorities graduates from the Rock*

Members of the last proby class to graduate from the Fire Academy in 2005 filled the Brooklyn College auditorium with big smiles on December 30.

"Most institutions have a ceremony when their members are getting ready to leave. In the Fire Department, we hold a graduation because we want everyone to know that you have finally arrived," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said. "Today each of you becomes an important part of New York City's identity."

Family and friends of the 210 graduates cheered as each new firefighter took to the stage to accept his and her new positions.

Many of the probies said they decided to join the Department after watching family members on the job.

"He made up his mind that he wanted to be a firefighter and he did everything he had to do to be here today," said retired Firefighter Winston Lawrence, a 29-year veteran, whose son, Trevor, was in the graduating class. "I am very proud of him. And I know he'll love the job."

Other Department legacies included Probationary Firefighters Michael Marshall, Jr., Eric Walker, Terrence Felder and Andrew Sheirer. Also graduating was Probationary Firefighter Christian Minara, son of Firefighter Robert Minara of Ladder 25, who made the Supreme Sacrifice on September 11, 2001.

This proby class was also recognized for its diversity. Three women were among the graduates and more than 25 percent of the class represented the African American, Hispanic and Asian communities.

"We are all thrilled to come together today, to join the best Fire Department in the world," said class Valedictorian, Probationary Firefighter Richard Sak. He was joined on stage with class Salutatorian, Probationary Firefighter Joseph Esquivias, and the Physical Fitness Award winner, Probationary Firefighter Marc Maresca.



*Two hundred and ten probies packed the Brooklyn College auditorium for their graduation ceremony on December 30.*

The class also included six members who previously served in the military in Iraq, including Probationary Firefighters Justin Bales (USMC), Timothy O'Neill (USMC), Joshua Wiener (USMC), Daniel Hansen Jr. (USMC), Cesar Perez (Army) and Anthony Delgado (Army).

"On behalf of eight million New Yorkers, I want to say thank you for answering the call to keep us safe," Mayor Bloomberg said.

Yet the ceremony was bittersweet, as the probies recalled the accident that critically injured Firefighter Matthew Long

of Ladder 43, a Fitness Instructor at the Fire Academy. The tri-athlete was struck by a charter bus in Manhattan as he was biking to the Rock during the transit strike.

The class collected \$1,000 to be donated to the Fire Family Transport Foundation in Firefighter Long's name. Each graduate also signed an oversized card that many said they hoped would inspire the injured firefighter to make a quick recovery.

"He's a real fighter and I know all our prayers are with him," Mayor Bloomberg said. "We are all in this together. There are no one-man bands."

Yet before the probies were sent off to their assigned units, Chief of Department Peter Hayden offered the class some advice. He told them to honor those who came before them and pave the way for those who will follow in their footsteps.

"When you come to work have your head in the game, know your job and follow your training," Chief Hayden said. "There are no off tours for us. And I am sure you will be up to the challenge."



*The proby class was filled with graduates who were following a family tradition of service to the Fire Department. (L to R) FF Terrence Felder, retired FF John Felder, FF Michael Marshall, Jr., Lt. Michael Marshall, FF Gary Felder, FF Trevor Lawrence, retired FF Winston Lawrence, FF Eric Walker and retired FF Frederick Walker.*

## Gearing up for Gold

### The FDNY gets ready to help host the World Police and Fire Games in 2011

It's not the Olympics, but it's pretty close.

On January 17, the FDNY joined the NYPD and PAPD at the First Responders Benefit Dinner, celebrating the announcement that the 2011 World Police and Fire Games will be held in New York City.

"The World Police and Fire Games will be a celebration of teamwork and hard work," Mayor Michael Bloomberg said. "We are the perfect choice for these Games because no one hosts events like the Big Apple can."

The dinner at the Marriott Marquis in Times Square was the first step in securing funds and awareness for the Games. It was attended by more than 400 friends of the City's fire and police departments, and included remarks by Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) as well as an auction led by actor Tony Lo Bianco.

"These games will continue the tradition of putting competition where it belongs – on the sporting field," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said. "They will strengthen the bond between all first responders, both fire and law enforcement personnel."

Police Commissioner Ray Kelly agreed, adding "this will allow our police officers and firefighters to show their dedication and heroism."

Retired Firefighter Jim Carney and Lieutenant Bill Miccio of Ladder 48



*Retired firefighter Jim Carney speaks at the First Responders Benefit Dinner. The dinner was geared to raise awareness and funds for the 2011 World Police and Fire Games, which will be held in New York City. Carney and Lieutenant Bill Miccio campaigned for months to bring the event to the City.*

worked for months to bring the event to New York. And now the duo act as President/CEO and Vice President/COO, respectively, for the Games.

"We are all part of a team," Carney said. "The Fire Department and Police Department deserve the respect and consideration of the world for years to come."

The World Police and Fire Games are the world's second largest sporting event, behind the summer Olympics. The 10-day,

biennial competition hosts nearly 20,000 firefighters and police officers from more than 70 countries. The men and women participate in more than 60 sporting events that range from archery and basketball to stair races and the "Ultimate Firefighter" competition.

"I can't think of a more appropriate way to thank our firefighters and police officers than to have the opportunity to host these Games," Senator Clinton said.

Many also noted the poignancy of the Games occurring on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks.

"The prestige for the 2011 Games will be in the opportunity to honor the 2,749 people who perished on September 11, 2001 and the opportunity to thank our First Responders," Commissioner Scoppetta said.

The Californian Police Athletics Federation established the Games in 1985. Since then, the events have been hosted by cities as diverse as Stockholm, Sweden; Barcelona, Spain; and Memphis, Tennessee. The 2007 Games will be held in Adelaide, South Australia and the 2009 events will be hosted by British Columbia, Canada.

And as the crowd celebrated New York's opportunity to host the Games for the first time in the sporting event's history, Commissioner Scoppetta cheered, "Let the Games begin!"



*(Left) In December, four firefighters traveled to Slidell, Louisiana with the New York Says Thank You Foundation, to help rebuild the home of a 6-year-old boy with leukemia. The family's home, and the boy's beloved fishing docks, was severely damaged by the high winds and rain of Hurricane Katrina. (Left to right) Firefighters Ismael Bruno, Nick Lobosco, William Ehni and Jeffrey Schroeder join the boy's aunt on the newly constructed docks.*

*(Right) Six-year-old Tony Nata, Jr. enjoys fishing off the new docks built by FDNY members.*



## The Gift of Life

### Second Annual Honor Roll of Life pairs firefighter blood marrow donors with recipients

“He is my hero,” said Brooke Williams as she clutched the hand of Firefighter John Jensen of Ladder 174.

Balancing on crutches and filled with emotion, 27-year-old Williams embraced Firefighter Jensen and thanked him for saving her life two years ago.

But the five-year veteran of the Department did not pluck her from a burning building or rescue her from a car accident; he saved her from leukemia.

On January 19 the Department celebrated the second annual Honor Roll of Life. Sponsored by the New York Blood Center (NYBC), the event connects FDNY bone marrow donors with the recipient whose life was saved by the transplant.

“Today we celebrate another way in which members of this Department go beyond their chosen duty and give back,” Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said. “I am proud of our firefighters and officers for many reasons. Reasons I don’t have the opportunity to speak about much—the many contributions they make outside of the Department.”

Firefighter Jensen met Williams, a mother from Gouverneur, New York, for the first time at the event.

He said he joined the Bone Marrow Program at a recruitment drive at the Training Academy when he was a proby.

And although he said the donation process was extensive and days of flu-like symptoms accompanied the procedure, he says he never questioned being a donor.

“There was never a second thought in my mind,” he said. “I think I was as happy as she was when I was told I was a match. I definitely felt a deep sense of satisfaction.”

Commissioner Scoppetta also inducted former firefighter Joe Kazlauskas, who is now a Nassau County police officer, into the Honor Roll of Life during the ceremony.

Kazlauskas’s recipient was 66-year-old Glenn Hale of Phoenix, Arizona. After unsuccessful tests for a match from his four siblings, including his twin, doctors found the former firefighter to be a perfect match.



(Top) Firefighter John Jensen (left) and former firefighter Joe Kazlauskas are honored at the second-annual Honor Roll of Life, which pays tribute to FDNY bone marrow donors. The men stand behind their transplant recipients, Brooke Williams and Glenn Hale.

(Right) Firefighter John Jensen meets his bone marrow transplant recipient, Brooke Williams, for the first time at the ceremony. Williams is continuing her recovery from leukemia.



“I joined the Fire Department because I wanted to help people out,” said Kazlauskas. “I can see what a positive impact this program has on people’s lives.”

The FDNY is one of the leading bone marrow donor groups nationwide. More than 8,000 Department members are registered with the program.

The NYBC reports that more than 35,000 Americans are in need of marrow or blood cell transplants each year. And since 1991, 72 firefighters have been honored as donors, helping patients with a wide range of life-threatening illnesses, including leukemia and Hodgkin’s disease.

“I wish to thank Commissioner Scoppetta and New York’s Bravest for selfless sacrifices they have made to those in need, both on and off-duty,” said Dr. Robert L. Jones, NYBC president.

### A HISTORY OF HELPING OTHERS

The FDNY and NYBC joined forces in 1989, when retired Firefighter Mark Kwalwasser from Engine 43 and his brother, Robert, created the Elaine Diedrich Memorial Donor Program. The program promoted bone marrow donation and was named in honor of their sister, who lost her fight against leukemia.

Later it became known as the Elaine Diedrich/Terrence Farrell Memorial Donor Program, honoring Firefighter Farrell from Rescue 4, a bone marrow donor who died on September 11, 2001.

# In the Borough:

## FDNY and Corrections Dept. Hold Joint Training

*Interagency effort enhances safety and effectiveness of FFs and COs*

*By Battalion Chief Jerry Tracy,  
Battalion 49*

Queens Battalion 49 has adopted a practice of ongoing analysis of target hazards to provide improved delivery of service in the boundaries of their district. This is to verify that we are providing a timely response of professional service and care to our citizens, while ensuring the efficiency of our operations and the safety of our members.

As Battalion 49 protects a predominately residential community, it also includes a myriad of target hazards such as power generating stations, waste treatment facilities, numerous manufacturing processes including hazardous materials, LaGuardia Airport and the Rikers Island Correctional Facility.

In 2004, I alerted Queens Borough Commander Assistant Chief Robert Sweeney and members of Division 14 of the security and safety risk to which members of the FDNY would be exposed within a prison facility while mitigating an event either minor or major in scope. The objective was to improve our inter-agency relationship with the Department of Corrections, and prepare an organized plan for joint operations and training.

We wanted our plan of operations to complement the CIMS protocols and improve each agency's understanding of operational procedures involving accidental fires, emergencies or the occurrence of pandemonium and riot. This plan would also assure that during operations, the safety and security of each agency's members was paramount.

I contacted Chief of Department Edward Reilly of the Emergency Service Unit at Rikers Island, and outlined a pre-plan of response, operations and training that would be compliant with CIMS. The plan defined the individual roles and responsibilities of each responder, from Incident Commander to entry officer and



*Battalion Chief Jerry Tracy*

firefighter. Also included are the resources required of information, communications and common terminology shared to coordinate efficient operations, safety, security and accountability for all members including inmates.

Assistant Chief Sweeney, with the approval from Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and direction from our Assistant Chief of Training Thomas Galvin, organized a training curriculum prepared by Battalion Chief Stephen Geraghty. Members of our Tactical Training Unit then presented the training program

to the Department of Corrections (DOC).

The program would involve joint operations between members of the DOC's ESU teams with that of the FDNY. These ESU teams, 60 members in all, would be trained in the basics of fire behavior, SCBA confidence in fire and smoke, search with thermal imaging equipment, ropes and victim removal.

The training culminated with an exercise of joint entry into a live fire and smoke situation (building # 5 at Randall's Island) where three mannequins depicting two inmates and one correction officer were unaccounted for in the building.

The exercise proved successful. Both agencies gained the experience of operating within CIMS and learned from the simulated drill. Most importantly, they learned coordination, control and accountability in a situation representative of the anxiety and chaos while operating in conditions of live fire and smoke.

In February of 2006 both agencies are scheduling a second series of the training session to hone our efficiency of operations and enhance our relationship.

The Tactical Training Unit of the FDNY made this all possible by presenting this training with a high level of skill and professionalism.

The success of this plan has resulted in the consideration of expanding the training to other Battalions and New York City DOC facilities in the Department's efforts to enhance our efficiency, safety and relations with other agencies.



*Chief Tracy, along with other members of Queens Battalion 49, organized a joint training session with members of the ESU at Rikers Island.*

# Queens

## Cooking for a Cause

### Queens firefighters raise \$1,000 for fire charities in Chili Cook-off

If you think chili is just a mediocre menu item, you have not met the cooks from Engine 275/Ladder 133.

They ran away with first prize – and \$1,000 – for their winning recipe in a Jamaica, Queens sponsored firehouse Chili Cook-off. And this December, the firefighters donated their winnings to the Fire Fighters Burn Center Foundation and the Fire Safety Education Fund.

The first-place recipe, Merrick Magic's Magic Chili, remains a well-kept secret, but the simmering flavor bowled over the judges and those in the crowd who got a chance to sample the fare.

Mary Reda, who chaired the event for the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation, said that the Merrick Magic had the winning combination, hands down.

"It was the most delicious and it had the most kick," Reda said.

Six firehouse teams from Queens participated in the cook-off, including Engine 302/Ladder 155, Engine 315/Ladder 125, Engine 308/Ladder 125, Engine 303/Ladder 126 and Engine 298/Ladder

127.

"It is gratifying that so many of the guys helped make this day a success by showcasing their skills in the kitchen," said Queens Borough Commander, Assistant Chief Robert Sweeney.

He also congratulated all the companies for helping raise money for two important causes.

"Chili is a routine meal in the firehouse," said Firefighter Bobby Irving, who helped coordinate the competition. "So there is no problem getting firefighters to step up."

The competition was a highlight of the fifth annual Harvest Festival held in Queens this fall. The daylong event included music from a steel band, trolley



Members from Engine 275/Ladder 133 receive checks for winning first prize in a Chili Cook-Off. The funds were donated to the Fire Fighters Burn Center Foundation and Fire Safety Education Fund.

tours of the neighborhood, hayrides and visits from clowns.

Reda said the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation plans to hold the event again next year and hopes that even more firehouse cooks will step up to the challenge.

## This Month in FDNY History

### Remembering the 1968 Sanitation Strike

During December's transit strike, traffic congestion and uncertainty made things challenging for all first responders. Yet in the socially turbulent 1960's, record-breaking low temperatures and a citywide sanitation strike made things especially taxing for firefighters.

And at the time, the City was without a Contingency Plan to ensure that fire protection would not be compromised during the walkout. Yet one notorious fire in Queens helped launch a city-wide emergency plan.

On February 2, 1968, the sanitation strike was announced, and thousands of tons of uncollected refuse began to pile up in alleys and streets. Rubbish was stacked

high near occupied dwellings and other structures, and even obscured fire hydrants from view.

Just two days later, a fire started in the piles of garbage at a three-story, wooden row frame dwelling in Astoria.

Flames raced up the inside wall and then into the cockloft. Five alarms were transmitted before firefighters contained the spreading flames nearly two hours after the first company arrived on the scene.

When it was done, four buildings were damaged severely and the original fire building collapsed. Two firefighters were injured in the collapse and two others were overcome with smoke. The fire also routed more than 24 families from their homes.

Following this blaze, Department members began patrolling the streets. They advised landlords and superintendents to keep hallways, cellars and other outside areas clear, and worked to keep the growing mounds of garbage away from buildings. Firefighters also coordinated trash burnings throughout the City, where garbage could be disposed in a controlled setting.

Six days after the strike began, 888 rubbish fires were extinguished by firefighters throughout the five boroughs. And all major newspapers reported that it was luck and the cleverness of the City's firefighters that prevented any real tragedy at that time.

# A New Face for Families in Need

## Dr. Suzanne Sebert named as new Assistant Commissioner for the FAU

Assistant Commissioner Suzanne Sebert wants her phone number to be on your speed dial.

The new Commissioner of the Family Assistance Unit (FAU) wants to spread the word that FDNY members and their loved ones can call her office whenever they need help.

"We are the first phone number families can call for assistance," she said. "This unit has a strong reputation for helping the members of the Department whenever they are in need."

After taking the helm of the unit in December, Assistant Commissioner Sebert said she has made visits to hospitals and support groups, to see firsthand the stress FDNY families experience as a result of an illness or death.

"Everything said about the Fire Department being family-oriented is true," she said. "It's even more true when tragedy strikes."

Before she even had the chance to settle in her new position, Assistant Commissioner Sebert began helping distribute the \$10.5 million collected by the U.S. Postal Service for the families of those lost on September 11, 2001. She has also started preparations for the fifth anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks.

The job is stressful, but, she said, she



Assistant Commissioner  
Suzanne Sebert

knew immediately that she would love it.

"I just looked at the job description and thought the job and me have a lot in common," she said.

Before coming to the FDNY, the Assistant Commissioner worked for Project Orbis International's DC-10 Flying Eye Hospital Program, providing medical treatment and eye surgery for people fac-

ing blindness in the developing world.

Prior to that she worked for AFS Intercultural Programs and served for more than 15 years as the Director of Community Services in Knox County, Tennessee. She also taught undergraduate and graduate courses in political science and government relations at the University of Maryland, University of Minnesota and University of Tennessee.

She said the position as Assistant Commissioner of the FAU appealed to her because it would enable her to support individuals whom she "deeply respects and admires."

Assistant Commissioner Sebert holds a Ph.D. and Master's degree in Social Research and Political Science, as well as a Bachelor's degree in Political Science, from the University of Michigan.

The Family Assistance Unit (FAU) provides transportation, counseling and referrals for all FDNY families in need. Members of the Unit are available between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for anyone who needs help. They can be reached at (718) 999-1473 or [familyassistance@fdny.nyc.gov](mailto:familyassistance@fdny.nyc.gov).

## Remembering Three Heroes

(Continued from page 1)

Brendan Cawley, became trapped above the fire, and were forced to jump from the fourth-floor window.

Lieutenant Meyran was remembered as a skilled officer who had a passion for the job. The 15-year veteran of the FDNY was cited twice for bravery during his career.

"In the Fire Department, the officers are on the fire floor with their company," Commissioner Scoppetta said. "They are first in and last out. Curt Meyran was a good officer and a good man. That's why he found himself on the top floor of that Bronx tenement."

Jeanette Meyran, Lieutenant Meyran's wife, spoke lovingly of her husband and

the life they shared with their three children, Dennis, Danine and Angela.

She recalled his penchant for nicknames, his love of practical jokes and his passion for firefighting.

"Every day was an adventure with Curt so I am not here to eulogize him; I am here to celebrate him," she said.

Lieutenant Meyran's 11-year-old daughter, Angela, read a poem she wrote to honor her father's memory.

"I knew when the people had trouble, Dad was there to lend a hand," she read.

Similarly, Eileen Bellew, the widow of Lieutenant John Bellew, said she was saddened by the milestones her husband missed over the past year; yet she knew he was in heaven, smiling down on his four children: Brielle, Jack, Katreana and Kieran.

She noted that he, too, loved being a firefighter.

He joined the Department 10 years ago following a successful career on Wall Street. At the time of his death, the firefighter was 24 names away from being promoted to lieutenant. Commissioner Scoppetta posthumously promoted him in April last year.

"[Lieutenant Bellew] loved being a firefighter," the Commissioner noted. "The strength, the commitment and the respect between firefighters was one of the principal reasons John loved this job."

Terry Bellew, the firefighter's brother, agreed, "These men were doing what they loved when they met their fate."

The family then played a video show-

(Continued on page 12)

## Moving Up

### *Division Chief James Manahan promoted to Deputy Assistant Chief*

**I**t was a day hundreds came out to celebrate strong leadership.

Fire Promotions on December 19 marked the advancement of one deputy assistant chief, seven captains and 25 lieutenants at the Fire Academy on Randall's Island.

"With these promotions, each of you takes your place among the ranks of a select few, among the men and women who lead our efforts to protect the largest and most complex city in the world," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said. "This means helping the firefighters you work with find their place within the Department, keeping them safe when operating on the fireground, showing them how to respect this Department's traditions, its rules and its regulations, and holding yourself to a higher standard, so you can lead by example."

The crowd roared as each member was called to the stage to accept his and her new positions. Many said they were particularly happy to see the promotion of Deputy Assistant Chief James Manahan, a 27-year veteran of the Department.

"He has distinguished himself at every assignment and at every rank with his intelligence and his commitment to excellence," Commissioner Scoppetta said. "Chief Manahan is a credit to the Department and a credit to his family."

DAC Manahan said he always worked hard to make his father, a former Battalion Chief, proud.

He added that he had to think hard about leaving "the best job in the FDNY" for his new post. However, he chose to move up in the ranks because he said, "I have a such a strong commitment to this Department."

Also promoted was Lieutenant Louis Mancuso, son of former UFA President Nick Mancuso, and Lieutenant Michael Francese, son of retired Battalion Chief John Francese, who served as Chief of Personnel for more than 10 years.

Lieutenant Adrienne Walsh was also promoted during the ceremony. She said she was thrilled to be moving up in the ranks, and thanked her friends and family for all the support they have given her.



*On December 19, 33 members of the Department were promoted in a ceremony at the FDNY Training Academy on Randall's Island.*

"It's an amazing feeling to have so many people here cheering me on," she said.

Chief of Department Peter Hayden made sure to leave the newly promoted members with a little advice before they took their new posts: "Whatever your position is, you should strive for excellence. And always do the right thing. It may not be the most popular thing; but if you do the right thing, you'll always do well."

## New York's Shield of Protection

### *Bureau of Fire Prevention Graduates 20 Inspectors*

**O**n December 29, a new group of Fire Protection Inspectors were sworn in and assigned a daunting job: to protect all New Yorkers.

"You know that most fires are preventable. So, being a Fire Protection Inspector will put you at the very front of our fire prevention efforts," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said to the 20 graduates. "It has been said time and again that the best way to fight fires is to prevent them, and as Fire Protection Inspectors in our Bureau of Fire Prevention, you are ideally situated to turn that idea into a reality."

The ceremony at Fire Headquarters was filled with family and friends who cheered and held up large signs congratulating the graduates.

Fire Protection Inspectors examine

commercial occupancies throughout the five boroughs. These men and women are assigned to different divisions, and take on distinctive roles, such as boiler and range hood inspectors. All inspectors check for permits and can issue violations.

In 2005, Fire Protection Inspectors conducted more than 219,000 total inspections and test witnesses, and issued nearly 45,000 enforcement actions (not including summonses). This generated more than \$50 million in fines, fees and penalties.

"The mission of the Fire Department is to prevent loss of life and property," Chief of Department Peter Hayden said. "And that really starts with preventing fires from happening. What you do is important to protecting the people of this City and our members."

And this class of Inspectors was described as unique. They hailed from seven different countries and had widely diverse career histories. But, as class Valedictorian Richard Mattaliano said, they all had a common goal: "We all wanted to be Fire Inspectors because we want to protect people. And I'm determined to make the most of this appointment."

And as each Inspector received his and her certificates, they were reminded of the importance of the work they do every day.

"You are dedicated professionals who act as our eyes and ears on the ground, conducting inspections and enforcing compliance," Commissioner Scoppetta said. "That is the essence of Fire Prevention and a critical part of what we do here at the Fire Department."

## Remembering Three Heroes

(Continued from page 10)

casing smiling photos of John Bellew with his family and friends.

"Remember to take the time to hug, kiss and smile at the ones you love," Eileen Bellew added.

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Firefighter Richard Sclafani was remembered as a go-getter who was always willing to go the extra mile. During his plaque dedication ceremony, hundreds paid tribute to the man known as "a tough guy with a teddy-bear personality."

The streets outside Ladder 103 in East New York, Brooklyn were lined with firefighters who came to celebrate the life of their comrade.

Surrounded by dozens of photographs of Firefighter Sclafani on the job, Commissioner Scoppetta said, "He will be forever remembered for his selfless courage and commitment to protect and save the lives of others."

While searching for victims at the scene of a fire at 577 Jerome Street, Firefighter Sclafani became separated from his crew. He was found unconscious and in respiratory arrest on the cellar staircase, and died a short time later.

Dozens of family members attended the emotional ceremony, remembering his enthusiasm and the joy he brought to those around him.

"I have always felt the strength of my brother," said his sister, Joanne Sclafani-



Joanne Sclafani-Asch (far right) and her mom, Joan, remember Firefighter Richard Sclafani, who made the Supreme Sacrifice on January 23, 2005. Moments later, a plaque bearing his name was unveiled in the quarters of Ladder 103 in East New York.

Asch. "We will always love him and we will never forget."

Mayor Michael Bloomberg held hands with Firefighter Sclafani's mother, Joan, during the emotional tribute to her son.

Commissioner Scoppetta said that while Firefighter Sclafani was "first and foremost a son and a brother, he also chose to become a member of a second family – the New York City Fire Department."

The firefighter began his career with the FDNY in October 1994. And Captain Casey Politi of Ladder 103 said he was "an asset to this company and to the Department."

Describing him as an overachiever who was always willing to pitch in, he added, "I was always pleased to see his name on

the riding list when I came to work. It was always an honor and a pleasure to work with him."

And as the tearful ceremony came to a close, Mayor Bloomberg noted, "Every day, firefighters risk their lives for people they've never met. January 23<sup>rd</sup> was no different. These men will always be remembered as heroes."

## PHOTO OF THE MONTH



**Queens Box 7850, January 16, 2006:** Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and Roosevelt Avenue. A gasoline tanker carrying 800 gallons of gasoline overturned on the BQE and burst into flames. It took firefighters nearly four hours to bring it under control. The fire shut down the Queens portion of the highway, in both directions, for most of the day. The driver of the truck escaped without injury.



# VIEW

POINT

FEBRUARY 2006

NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT

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**FDNY**  
1865-2006

**A 141 YEAR HISTORY  
OF COMMITMENT, COURAGE & COMPASSION**