



EMS Week Highlights ‘Best of the Best’

Paramedics, EMTs honored in annual celebration

It’s a week to celebrate skill, courage and quick thinking and to honor the ‘best of the Best.’

Annual EMS Week gives the Department the opportunity to thank New York’s paramedics and EMTs for the life-saving work they do each day.

“This is a week that celebrates the members of EMS and their outstanding contribution to the City,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. “It is important that we pause and give thanks to these heroes – men and women who truly are New York’s Best.”

Each day EMS personnel respond to more than 3,000 calls – that’s more than 1.2 million runs each year.

“This is a difficult and demanding job, but it’s a great job,” said Chief of the EMS Command John Peruggia. “It’s sometimes stressful, but it’s always challenging and the rewards are tremendous.”

This year’s celebration kicked off on May 20, as EMS members peddled their bikes from Station 20 at Jacobi Medical Center in the Bronx to Roanoke, Va., as part of the Annual National EMS Memorial Weekend.

The week continued with events throughout the five boroughs.

Seventh Annual Paramedic/EMT Competition

As EMTs arrived at the scene of a car accident in Brooklyn on May 22, they found



EMS members take part in the annual EMS Competition on May 22. Thirteen teams had to respond to a simulated car accident during the skills test.

a woman staggering outside the vehicle, holding her head and moaning.

The driver was still sitting in the car. The windshield was shattered from the impact and beneath the front tires was a man who was mangled and unresponsive.

It’s a scenario that would make any EMS member’s adrenaline rush – and it was the mock scenario at the Seventh Annual Paramedic/EMT Competition outside FDNY Headquarters.

Thirteen teams representing units across the city competed against the clock for a chance to participate in the Bill Schearer International EMS Competition in Florida this summer.

This year’s winners also got the honor of accompanying Chief Peruggia to the New York Stock Exchange to ring the closing bell on May 23.

Students from the EMS Academy’s Vocational Training Center and fellow EMS personnel acted as victims while competitors demonstrated their

Advanced Life Support (ALS) or Basic Life Support (BLS) skills in two vehicle accident scenarios.

“Having the best of the Best compete against each other is an excellent way to demonstrate how terrific this group really is,” said Commissioner Scoppetta.

EMT Debra Torres, a 15-year-veteran from Station 23, said the scenario was realistic and challenging.

“Some of the victims were not cooperating,” she said. “That’s just what happens in real-life trauma situations when patients sometimes become combative. It was a great way to test our knowledge in a true-to-life setting.”

Paramedic Max Pena of Station 20 said that he enjoyed competing for the first time because “it keeps your skills sharp.”

Defending champions from the Bureau of Training, Paramedics James Fallar, Donald Hudson, Joseph Hudak and Peter Auricchio, took first place honors in the ALS

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EMS Week Celebrates the City's Best

Each year we celebrate the life-saving work of our paramedics and EMTs during EMS Week. It is a proud week for the Fire Department, and the city, as the life-saving work of the FDNY's EMS Command is celebrated in events throughout the five boroughs. Our paramedics and EMTs are on the front lines of every emergency in New York City, providing the most advanced pre-hospital medical care of any agency in the world and responding to more calls than ever before.

I was fortunate enough to attend this year's annual Second Chance Brunch – a highlight of the FDNY calendar each year – when survivors of cardiac arrest get the opportunity to meet their rescuers. This year's survivors were nurses, postal employees, waiters and musicians, all of whom are walking miracles – individuals who were given a second chance at life because of the hard work of our paramedics and EMTs. As I spoke with many of the survivors and their families, they became emotional as they praised the work of our members. These individuals can enjoy their retirement, watch their children grow or even grow up themselves because of the marvelous skills our members demonstrate every day.

Even more acts of heroism and achievement were demonstrated the following morning at EMS Medal Day. This year's top honor, the Christopher J. Prescott Medal,



Lieutenant Curven Williams receives the 2007 Jack Pintchik Medal from Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta during EMS Medal Day.

went to Paramedics Abraham Englard and Juan Henriquez, who struggled for more than an hour to save the lives of two firefighters who were gravely injured following a devastating fire and building collapse in the Bronx. The paramedics operated for nearly an hour and a half in the basement of the fire building, using their knowledge in collapse rescue to resuscitate the firefighters.

Although the two men later succumbed to their injuries, every member of this Department is grateful for the paramedics' incredible determination. The pair was humble about their effort, yet the act truly demonstrated how our work force operates as a family, with members willing to put their lives on the line to help one another.

These paramedics' perseverance overwhelmed me, as did that of the nine other medal winners. They each went above and beyond the call of duty and should be applauded for epitomizing the strength and character that represents the FDNY's Emergency Medical Service.

Finally, it would not be EMS Week without the EMS Competition, and I had the opportunity to watch as 13 teams battled for first place honors during the impressive annual event. All the competitors were quick on their feet and thoughtful in their execution of numerous, complicated tasks. The winning Advanced Life Support and Basic Life Support teams did an outstanding job and I wish them the best of luck in the Florida competition this summer. And although only two teams could be named contest winners, all of those competing deserve accolades for their exceptional performance.

EMS Week is just a snapshot of the life-saving work our paramedics and EMTs do each day. Thank you all for your outstanding work and for showing New York why you deserve to be called the city's Best.



**Commissioner's
Message**

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas Scoppetta".

EMS Week 2007

EMS COMPETITION WINNERS

ALS

1st place – Paramedics Joseph Hudak, Donald Hudson, James Fallar and Peter Auricchio, Bureau of Training

2nd place – Paramedics Hugo Cane-do, Andrew Dunn, Konstantinos Skama-los and Kimberly Marshall, Station 46

3rd place – Paramedics William O’Neill, Antonio Quinones and Carlos Lizcano, Station 32

BLS

1st place – EMTs Joseph Fortis, Richard Marrone, Ruben Barrios and Gilbert Ramos, Bureau of Training

2nd place – EMTs Andrew Desantis, Christopher Russo and Chad Ritoro, Sta-tion 43

3rd place – EMTs Kyra Arnold, Mar-tin Fernandez and Emilio Martinez, Sta-tion 10

ALS SKILLS WINNERS

Intubation -- Paramedic Joseph Hudak, Bureau of Training

Cardiac (tie) -- Paramedic James Fal-lar, Bureau of Training and Paramedic Christopher Mahoney, Station 54

Telemetry -- Paramedic Hugo Cane-do, Station 46

BLS SKILLS WINNERS

Traction Splint -- EMTs Ruben Bar-rios and Richard Marrone, Bureau of Training

Rapid Immobilization -- EMTs Joseph Fortis and Gilbert Ramos, Bureau of Training

Telemetry -- EMT Emilio Martinez, Station 10

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competition – their third consecutive win.

“It feels wonderful,” said Paramedic Fallar. “It’s quite an honor.”

This year’s BLS trophy also went to members assigned to the Bureau of Training: EMTs Joseph Fortis, Richard Mar-rone, Ruben Barrios and Gilbert Ramos.

“The competition gives the Department a chance to show what our EMS members do on a daily basis – they are the unsung heroes of the street,” said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano.

Thirteenth Annual Second Chance Brunch

The critical work of all first responders was brought to life at the 13th Annual Second Chance Brunch.



Chief of EMS John Peruggia, winners of the EMS Competition and other members of the EMS Command rang the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange on May 23. (L to R) Para. Donald Hudson, Para. Joseph Hudak, Para. James Fallar, EMT Rubin Berrios, Cathy McCrorie, Chief Peruggia, DVC Abdo Nahmod, EMT Joseph Fortis, EMT Gilberto Ramos, DAC John McFarland and EMT Emilio Perez.

The tearful reunion at the Academy on Randalls Island allowed 13 survivors of cardiac arrest (ranging in age from 7-months to 71-years-old) and their families the opportunity to thank the responders who saved their lives.

The survivors even included two of the Department’s own: FDNY Deputy Chief Patrick Savage and Paramedic Jeffrey Sanger.

“Each survivor has a different story to tell,” said Mayor Michael Bloomberg. “Yet all end with the same refrain – if it wasn’t for EMS I wouldn’t be here today.”

Among those in attendance were Justin and Jeanette Balcuinas, with their 7-month-old son, Blake.

Last October, two days after Blake was born, he stopped breathing at home. They dialed 911 and an EMS operator gave the nervous parents instructions in CPR, as

members of Engine 44 arrived on the scene. The firefighters continued performing CPR until paramedics arrived and administered emergency medications to restore his heart rhythm.

“Today, this is our happy ending,” said Justin Balcuinas, as he sat with his son’s rescuers and cradled his sleeping son. “The opportunity to thank the men and women who saved our baby’s life is priceless.”

Another survivor, Domenic Ciaramella, 71, said he was overwhelmed by the extraordinary care he received this January after his heart stopped while at home on Staten Island. FDNY Paramedics Jonathan Damato and John Rosati inserted a breathing tube seconds after they arrived, as members of Engine Company 167 shocked him with an automated external defibrillator. Then FDNY EMTs Philip Rivera and

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Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, First Deputy Commissioner Frank Cruthers, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and Chief of EMS John Peruggia joined 13 survivors of cardiac arrest during the Second Chance Brunch on May 23.

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Misotty Delgado continued treatment as he was rushed to the hospital.

"Life is good," Ciaramella said. "I am so grateful."

EMS Medal Day

They treated victims who were trapped under 15 feet of concrete; rescued and cared for the victim of a hostage situation; and wrestled a gun-wielding robbery suspect to the ground.

Valor was lauded during EMS Medal Day on May 24, as 11 paramedics and EMTs received medals and commendations for distinguished service in 2006.

"You all went above and beyond the requirements of the job," Commissioner Scoppetta said during the ceremony at Headquarters. "You are being honored because you really epitomize the best of what you are trained to do."

This year's prestigious Christopher J. Prescott Medal was presented to Paramedics Abraham Englard and Juan Henriquez, who treated Fire Lieutenant Howard Carpluk, Jr. of Engine 42 and Probationary Firefighter Michael Reilly of Engine 75 after a fire and building collapse in the Bronx last August.

Twenty-year veteran EMS Lieutenant Robert J. White received the Chief James Scullion Medal for treating a woman with multiple stabs during an ongoing hostage situation in Manhattan.

"Somebody had to tend to the patient and I'm just happy I could help," Lieutenant White said.

EMTs Jason Rosado and Michael Skody of Station 57 shared the Tracy Allen-Lee Medal for subduing an armed robbery suspect at a Brooklyn subway station.

As he recalled the incident, EMT Rosado said, "That certainly was a surprising way to start a shift."

And Paramedic William Simon received the Dr. John E. Sheridan Commendation for serving nearly 34 years with the EMS Command and responding to many significant events in New York City, including the commuter helicopter crash at the Pan Am building.

"I am flattered and humbled to receive this award," said Paramedic Simon. "Dr. Sheridan exemplified calm and professionalism. This is a true honor."

As each of the members was cheered for his and her accomplishments, Chief Perugia noted that, "these honorees are just a small representation of the 3,000 dedicated men and women who serve New York everyday."



Eleven members of the EMS Command were honored during the EMS Medal Day ceremony on May 24.

MEDAL DAY WINNERS

CHRISTOPHER J. PRESCOTT MEDAL

Paramedic Abraham B. Englard
Paramedic Juan L. Henriquez

TRACY ALLEN-LEE MEDAL

EMT Jason Rosado
EMT Michael Skody

CHIEF JAMES SCULLION MEDAL

Lieutenant Robert J. White

LIEUTENANT KIRBY

McELHEARN MEDAL

Paramedic Brian Frayne
Paramedic Joel D. Pierce

JACK PINTCHIK MEDAL

Lieutenant Curven Williams
Paramedic Walter Hochbrueckner

EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH

COMMENDATION
EMT Myrna Mendez

DR. JOHN E. SHERIDAN

COMMENDATION
Paramedic William R. Simon



VIEW POINT

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**A 143 YEAR HISTORY
OF COMMITMENT, COURAGE & COMPASSION**