Chairperson’s Message

NYC Council members have been very responsive to letters we have written them asking for meetings to discuss the state of EMS in the city. District 4 officers have already met this month with several council members and meetings are in the process of being scheduled with other members as well as with a representative of the mayor’s office. Those members that do have independent VACs, VFDs and first responder organizations in their districts are genuinely unaware that the volunteer sector is not integrated at all into meeting day-to-day EMS needs. For the others its truly an educational experience as most only have some vague awareness of the CERT teams controlled by NYC OEM as available volunteer emergency responders and then only during a disaster. District 4 officers would be happy to attend any meetings individual squads arrange with their local council members or Community Boards. We have a wealth of information - lists, maps, reports, etc. - on how the volunteer EMS sector can contribute to meeting community needs and expectations for ambulance service.

Is it money or control – why is the city at odds with volunteers providing essential services?

With FDNY’s budget being cut 2.5% this fiscal year and 7% next year it is looking to get funds wherever it can. The federal government’s economic stimulus spending may obviate the need for some of these cuts but nothing is certain. Currently some feel the department and or city officials are trying to grab the $2 million in federal and state funding allocated for Broad Channel VFD’s proposed new fire and EMS station. Also, FDNY found that billing for ambulance service is a money maker and Commissioner Scoppetta indicated to the NYC Council a need to raise the charge for ambulance service. Could the desire to bill for calls be trumping getting the nearest ambulance, be it FDNY or a mutual aid volunteer unit, to a patient in need?

Independent volunteer EMS agencies are not being singled out in NYC’s attempt to control more facets of services. Recently, homeless centers run by volunteers at churches and synagogues that existed for decades were first told no persons in need would be referred if they did not operate 5 nights resulting in the closing of 20 shelters. Now there are new requirements that hot dinners as well as transportation be provided. The NY Times reports that a coalition of roughly 100 churches and synagogues are protesting the city’s moves, arguing that the rules are not only dispiriting, but imprudent at a time when the sinking economy could increase the numbers of homeless people seeking shelter. The coalition has met with city officials, and members have testified at a City Council hearing. Sound familiar to what happened to EMS mutual aid with requirements such as guaranteed
hours and the need to purchase $20,000 to $25,000 worth of radios, MDT and GPS equipment in order to handle
delayed calls for assistance from our communities?

Bureaucrats do not like their actions questioned or examined but the current national economic situation
affecting city and state finances should cause second thoughts about limiting vital services provided by
volunteers in their communities. The best way to fight these money grabs and needless requirements is to keep
up our contacts with NYC Council members, Community Board members and the media.

Ryan

VICE CHAIRPERSON’S MESSAGE

As you all know, the Fire Department has brought up the possibility of integrating the
Volunteer Ambulance Corps into the New York City 911 system. At the last REMSCO
Ambulance Committee meeting, Chief Peruggia proposed to have us enter into a contract with
the Fire Department, similar to the voluntary hospitals. This would put us under contract with a
minimum commitment of some number of hours a week. We are awaiting formal a written
proposal from the Chief. We would also have to purchase MDTs and radios at a cost of
$18,000.00 per ambulance. As part of the contract, we would have to follow similar rules and
regulation as that of the voluntary hospitals such as having to undergo random drug testing of
our members, etc. At our Squad Presidents’ Meeting in January, which was very well
attended, the consensus was to try to negotiate an agreement similar to the Mutual Aid Agreement squads had with
the NYC Health and Hospital Corporation.

We need to show the Fire Department, that as professionals, we are up to the task. And which ever way we
go, as Mutual Aid or as a contracted ambulance service, we can work within the system. People who have been in
the voluntary community for many years, as few as ten years ago, would have jumped on this offer. But,
understandably, due to the costs, we have to be cautious in our decisions. Ryan and I are continuing our talks with
the Fire Department as well as the squads to start putting this concept into effect.

In recent months, I introduced the concept of a Citywide Mutual Aid Agreement between all the volunteer
ambulance services in the city. The idea is that we would all eventually share communications, assist in special
events, MCI’s and in area exchanges. I strongly believe that we all can and need to work as one entity, instead as
many separate groups. By doing so, we show the City Council, Fire Department, REMSCO, NYS DOD and others that
we are working together as one community and speaking with one voice. To do this, we must put disagreements
and misunderstandings aside and begin to build relationships with our fellow squads. At the next District 4 meeting
we will have a draft of a proposed Citywide Mutual Aid Agreement.

I hope that during this year, we can come to a new promising and productive beginning for the volunteer
ambulance corps.

Martin

REGIONAL EMS COUNCIL OF NYC

Regional Notification Plan was activated three times in during the December-January period for two mobilizations and one
non-mobilization

(1) On Friday 12/19/08 about 16:00 hours during a snow and freezing rain storm condition a request went out to all ambulance
services in the city from FDNY EMS for 10 units to supplement Manhattan coverage and 10 units to supplement
Bronx coverage to due to high call volume. At 17:52 a follow-up notification went out advising that if not assigned to a
mobilization point no further resources were needed. At about 18:14 a Queens 911 unit was reassigned to the Bronx.
Richmond County Ambulance, Little-Neck Douglaston, Medical Express Ambulance (2 Units) & Corona VAC (2 units)
responded to the request with ambulances which were assigned into the 911 system.

(2) On Thursday 1/15/09 at 16:56 REMSCO issued a phone notification indicating it had been advised by FDNY that all 151
[final count = 155] passengers from US Airways flight 1549 from LaGuardia to Charlotte that ditched in the Hudson
River at 15:30 had been safely evacuated and no mutual aid had been requested. Just minutes earlier, FDNY EMS
was giving the patient count as 1 Yellow and 70 Green tags. In addition to the NYC count at the time, an unknown
number of patients were transported by NY Waterways ferries to Weehawken, NJ. At 17:30 NYC REMSCO sent
both voice and e-mail messages again advising all passengers were evacuated from the plane and no mutual aid had
been requested. A normal response to a 10-40 Aircraft Incident would be 6 BLS and 4 ALS units, 1 HazTac
ambulance, 1 rescue ambulance, 1 MERV, 1 MRTU, 2 LSUs plus a contingent of supervisors. An article in the NY
Times the next day indicated that FDNY EMS Chief John Peruggia responding from Queens ordered 35 ambulances
(25 BLS and 10 ALS) to a mobilization point in Manhattan. The final patient count on the NYC side of the Hudson was 88 with 20 of those transported to hospitals mainly for hypothermia. The three most serious conditions involved a flight crew member with leg fractures and two passengers who had been in the water. A number of additional ambulances were on-scene through apparent glitches in the notification system. Forest Hills VAC called the FDNY Operations Center and was told to respond. SeniorCare Ambulance received a recorded phone message indicating mutual aid had been initiated and to call the FDNY Operations Center but no one at FDNY answered the number indicated. With SeniorCare personnel in the area advising of the plane going down, additional company resources were sent to the scene. On checking in with an FDNY EMS Deputy Chief they were sent to a staging location but the info was not communicated to the main Medical Branch Command.

(3) Mobilization notifications were sent out Tuesday morning 1/20/09. The first voice and e-mail notifications at about 10:07 AM and 10:20 AM were duplications of the 1/15/07 US Airways Flight 1549 notices. Subsequent voice notifications starting about 10:57 AM indicated FDNY EMS was asking for 10 ambulance units for an 8 hour tour to cover a backlog of 911 calls in Brooklyn while e-mail notices advised the notification was activated and keep communication line open:

10:07 E-mail - Flight 1549 no Mutual Aid needed
10:07 Voice - Flight 1549 no Mutual Aid needed
10:20 E-mail - Flight 1549 no Mutual Aid needed
10:20 Voice - Flight 1549 no Mutual Aid needed
10:45 E-mail - The REMSCO emergency notification system has been activated. Please keep emergency communication lines open to receive important information.
10:56 E-mail - The REMSCO emergency notification system has been activated. Please keep emergency communication lines open to receive important information.
10:56 Voice - 10 ambulances needed for Mutual Aid for Brooklyn
13:01 E-mail - The REMSCO emergency notification system has been activated. Please keep emergency communication lines open to receive important information.
13:02 Voice - 10 ambulances needed for Mutual Aid for Brooklyn
13:12 Voice - 10 ambulances needed for Mutual Aid for Brooklyn
13:12 E-mail - The REMSCO emergency notification system has been activated. Please keep emergency communication lines open to receive important information.
13:13 Voice - 10 ambulances needed for Mutual Aid for Brooklyn

When called, NYC REMSCO attributed the initial erroneous and duplicate messages to FDNY EMS personnel not being familiar with operation of the notification system. At 16:47 an e-mail message from NYC REMSCO indicated “As you are aware, earlier this morning FDNY attempted to send out a mutual aid request utilizing the REMSCO Dialogics Emergency Notification System. Due to an error with the remote activation system, many individuals received an old message regarding Fridays’ Hudson crash landing. Thanks to some agency representatives quickly notifying us of the problem we were quickly able to stop the notification and resend the notice with the correct information. We have since worked diligently with the DCC Corporation that hosts the system to make system modifications to ensure that future notifications will be sent out with the correct information. I would like to take this opportunity to apologize for any confusion that may have been caused by the faulty messages and thank you for your patience as we work to make the system better. If you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact me.”

TransCare Ambulance wound up providing 10 ambulances and Park Slope VAC also had two of their ambulances handling 911 calls while the third covered their community.

Michelle Klemm resigned her staff position effective 12/31/08 due to an upcoming maternity. Dinna Tan will handle REMAC Paramedic Cards and On-Line Medical Control Certifications and Joseph Raneri will handle all Ambulance Security Sticker applications. Both can be reached at (212) 870-2301 ext. 4.

Al Villacara, DDS, the NYC OEM alternate delegate to REMSCO has taken a position as the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for NY Presbyterian Hospital. OEM has designated Nicholas Lobel-Weiss as replacement.

AMBULANCE COMMITTEE
FDNY EMS was to bring an outline or draft of a 911 Participant Agreement for volunteer squads to the 2/24/09 meeting but did not.
Distribution of elevator keys to volunteer units has been held up by FDNY Legal Affairs. No indication of the specific issues was indicated.

REMAC
Paramedics taking the NYC regional oral and written exam for the first time will be charged $100, up from $50, for exams after 5/1/09. There is no charge for regional re-certification exams.

TRAINING & EDUCATION COMMITTEE
The committee has been working on developing standards for a regional "Educational Centers of Excellence" program. Participation in the program by Training Centers in the region would be voluntary but those who meet the standards would receive recognition on the Council’s web site. Also, information based on any reviews conducted would enable the Training and Education Committee to better comment on renewal applications submitted by course sponsors. Three draft documents were distributed at the 1/27/09 and 2/24/09 Council meetings:
- Criteria for REMSCO Recommendation for Course Sponsors
- Code of Ethics and Conduct for EMS Educators
- Course Sponsor Facility Site Evaluation

The committee is continuing to develop a Student Bill of Rights document. The committee also believes a follow-up component should be instituted to identify if students are working/volunteering after certification and the satisfaction level of the agencies they go to.

A letter was sent to NYC REMSCO indicating at least three paramedic training centers who have gone through a nation certification program have objected to the proposed local program. Further consideration by REMSCO was tabled at the 2/24 meeting until the letter is reviewed by the T&E Committee and NYC REMAC.

**FDNY NEWS**

An on-line Patient Satisfaction Survey has been established in support of the mayor's initiative to create citywide customer service standards that agencies are required to meet. Accessible through the FDNY, the 11 question survey gives patients and their families the opportunity to provide feedback to the FDNY on the service provided by EMS and the ambulances dispatched through the City's 911 system. The survey is anonymous and the results will be used to improve the quality of EMS patient service. Ambulance patients can go to [http://www.nyc.gov/fdnyemssurvey](http://www.nyc.gov/fdnyemssurvey) to participate in survey.

FDNY EMS Battalion 16 at Harlem Hospital had to discard at least 20 vials each of morphine, Valium and midazolam after a NYS DOH inspector found temperatures inside the station’s drug cabinet exceeded manufacturers' recommendations. Room temperature was 92 degrees and the metal drug cabinet was next to a radiator that likely drove the internal temperature higher. The meds start to lose their potency and run the risk of altering their chemical compositions when temperatures top 86 degrees, according to the manufacturers' guidelines. NYS DOH Policy Statements 00-14 and 00-15 indicate pre-hospital medications and IV fluids must be stored at temperatures that range from 59 to 77 F. Individual medications may have different temperature ranges. All ALS ambulances from the station were taken out of service on Thursday morning 1/8 and sent to a neighboring station to replenish their meds. The NY Post reported that personnel have been complaining for years about the ancient heating system at Station 16 in Harlem Hospital and how it routinely bakes the facility and the drug cabinet during the winter.

12 hour tours were implemented at eight FDNY Battalion Stations in Division 3 Brooklyn covering 55 units. In addition, 14 voluntary hospitals with 35 units implemented 12 hours tours. The change was effective Sunday 3/1/09. Units starting between 0500 to 1000 are designated Tour 2 and units starting 1700 to 2200 are Tour 3. All Tour 1 designations for the units are discontinued.

Graduation ceremonies were held on 12/11/08 at NY Technical College in Brooklyn for 80 EMTs and 47 paramedics.

HAzTac EMS supervisor is being assigned a 2008 Ford F-450 with a utility body.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8 hour tours by NYC 911 system ambulances – includes both FDNY EMS and voluntary hospitals:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearly average daily tour totals: 2005 = 934.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Citywide 911 System EMS response times:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>1-8</th>
<th># Runs</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>1-8</th>
<th># Runs</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>5:25</td>
<td>6:48</td>
<td>8:32</td>
<td>117,483</td>
<td>5:01</td>
<td>6:37</td>
<td>8:12</td>
<td>114,179</td>
<td>Lower Y to Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>5:05</td>
<td>6:39</td>
<td>8:28</td>
<td>121,015</td>
<td>5:03</td>
<td>6:40</td>
<td>8:23</td>
<td>120,366</td>
<td>Lower Y to Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>5:09</td>
<td>6:35</td>
<td>8:10</td>
<td>116,635</td>
<td>5:13</td>
<td>6:55</td>
<td>8:58</td>
<td>123,389</td>
<td>Higher Y to Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>5:06</td>
<td>6:34</td>
<td>7:58</td>
<td>117,191</td>
<td>4:57</td>
<td>6:33</td>
<td>8:09</td>
<td>122,453</td>
<td>Higher Y to Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>5:13</td>
<td>6:38</td>
<td>8:17</td>
<td>113,689</td>
<td>5:10</td>
<td>6:41</td>
<td>8:19</td>
<td>113,518</td>
<td>Lower Y to Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>5:12</td>
<td>6:40</td>
<td>8:17</td>
<td>109,187</td>
<td>5:09</td>
<td>6:36</td>
<td>7:58</td>
<td>107,583</td>
<td>Lower Y to Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>5:14</td>
<td>6:40</td>
<td>8:17</td>
<td>113,457</td>
<td>5:09</td>
<td>6:47</td>
<td>8:21</td>
<td>115,387</td>
<td>Higher Y to Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FDNY LIASION COMMITTEE

The March quarterly meeting was cancelled due to a snow storm. The meeting has not been rescheduled.

HOSPITAL NEWS

CARITAS HEALTH CARE’s two hospitals, MARY IMMACULATE (H36) and ST. JOHN’S QUEENS (H39), filed for bankruptcy on 2/5/09, stopped accepting ambulance patients 2/13/09 and closed completely at midnight 2/28/09. Together, the hospitals had 455 beds and over 2,500 employees. The hospitals were losing money at the rate of $4 to $5 million per month and had survived on over $56 million in loans from New York State. Continued support, however, was not possible with tax and fee revenues down due to the recession. Wyckoff Heights Medical Center (H58) set up Caritas to take over and manage the hospitals when it acquired them in 2006 from bankrupt Saint Vincent Catholic Medical Centers. Crains’ NY Business reported in November 2008 that Caritas agreed to negotiate exclusively with North Shore-LIJ Health System (NS-LIJ) about forming a strategic partnership, rejecting overtures from Mount Sinai, Medisys Health Network (Jamaica-Brookdale-Flushing Hospitals) and Parkway Hospital (which closed down in December). The article indicated Caritas and NS-LIJ would spend the next months creating joint planning committees to analyze a configuration that makes sense and hammering out a workable proposal. Several scenarios were indicated. NS-LIJ could take over St. John’s, which it would either remodel, or raze and rebuild after it shuts down its own Forest Hills Hospital (H79). In that case, NS-LIJ would not move ahead with the certificate of need it filed in October 2008 to rebuild Forest Hills at a cost of $225 million. In a second scenario, MIH and Wyckoff Heights could affiliate with NS-LIJ but remain independent. A third scenario indicates NS-LIJ could take over all three hospitals. Another local paper indicated NS-LIJ proposed tearing down MIH & St. John’s and building a new 400 bed facility to serve central Queens but would want state assistance. The hospitals were working in a difficult environment as their catchment areas included many residents with no medical insurance or just Medicaid. What happens now that the hospitals actually closed is anyone guess. In the NYC 911 EMS system MIH operated 2 BLS and 4 ALS ambulances while St. John’s operated 3 BLS and 2 ALS units. Now 14 ambulances are stored in a lot on 88 Avenue awaiting disposition, stripped of their 911 Participating Ambulance door decals and license plates.

On 2/17/09 NYS DOH announced grants to the following to hospitals to expand inpatient capacity and emergency room services:

- NYC HHC Elmhurst & Queens Hospital Center - $3.6 million
- Medisys Flushing and Jamaica Hospitals - $4.5 million
- NS-LIJ Forest Hills and Franklin Hospitals - $3.5 million
- Wyckoff Heights Medical Center - $2.7 million

INTERFAITH MEDICAL CENTER (H55) on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn had a fire on Saturday night 1/24/09 about 21:45 hours. The 1 alarm fire was in the Psychiatric Unit on the 8th floor. 29 patients were temporarily relocated from the 8th to the 6th floor but were returned to the unit after the fire was put out. There were no patients due to the fire and no evacuations from the hospital.

LONG ISLAND COLLEGE HOSPITAL (H49) and Continuum Health Partners were denied permission by the NYS DOH in November to end obstetrics, neonatal and pediatric services. Citing Brooklyn’s shortage of maternity beds and pediatric
care the DOH approved a $3 million loan to the hospital, money available for hospitals that want to restructure to meet the mandates of the Berger Commission, the Pataki administration panel that targeted hospitals for downsizings, closures and mergers. Brooklyn hospitals reportedly lose up to $4,000 on each OB case due to malpractice insurance rates. Victory Memorial’s (H94) maternity services shut down in 12/07, Brooklyn Hospital’s (H95) maternity service is at capacity, Methodist (H54) is being swamped with extra OB patients and Maimonides (H53) is already the state’s busiest birthing center.

MT. SINAI MEDICAL CENTER (H13) in Manhattan was the scene of a 3rd alarm fire on Wednesday evening 1/21/09. The fire started about 18:30 hours and was contained in a 2nd floor mechanical room reportedly full of paint and cardboard but resulting in a heavy smoke condition in the hospital’s east wing building. The Emergency Department on the 1st floor was closed and 600 patients from it and floors 3 through 11 were relocated to other buildings in the complex. NYPD called a level 1 mobilization closing Madison from 96 to 101 Streets and the MTA sent 4 buses in case of need. By 22:47 all floors were cleared for re-occupancy and patients were being returned to the building. EMS treated six firefighters.

NORTH SHORE-LONG ISLAND JEWISH HEALTH SYSTEM
The organization was listed as an investor in a private company, Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities, that failed in December with massive losses. The Washington Post reported NS-LIJ admitted losing $5.7 million which may be replaced by the benefactor who directed the original donation be placed with the Madoff company. Another investor listed as losing money is Saul Katz, Chairman of NS-LIJ Health System and a major contributor involved with the Katz Women’s Hospital under construction on the LIJ campus. Katz is President of Sterling Equities which may have lost $300 million according to a news report. There is no indication that funding for the Katz hospital is affected. However, as reported in the December PULSE newsletter, the new pediatric emergency department and ambulance bay at Schneider Children’s Hospital also on the LIJ campus has been delayed by the national financial situation. NY-LIJ Health System is the nation’s third largest non-profit, secular healthcare system with annual revenue exceeding $4 billion. Regionally, a number of charities and foundations are suffering the loss of a major fundraisers and contributors who lost money in the failure.

Two NS-LIJ system hospitals are adding private maternity suites to stay ahead of competition. 88 single suites are planned for Long Island Jewish and 73 such rooms at North Shore-Manhasset. Each 200 square foot room will have a pullout sleeper sofa, 42-inch flat-screen television, wireless Internet connection, refrigerator, safe, private bathroom, simulated hardwood floors and other amenities. LIJ costs are incorporated in the new $250 million Katz Women’s Hospital while North Shore-Manhasset’s costs are $40 million. Despite the sums poured into private maternity accommodations, the hospitals will charge the standard rate for a single postpartum room, officials said but did not explain how the extras were incorporated in NS-LIJ’s cost structure. Another official said that evidence shows that a positive maternity experience can instill a patient’s long-lasting allegiance to a hospital, potentially keeping a family loyal for a lifetime. While single patient rooms do have health benefits in reducing infections and are becoming common in new construction, semi-private accommodations are the local norm. In contrast to NS-LIJ, in Brooklyn Maimonides Medical Center officials complain that the hospital is losing money with their maternity ward and Long Island College Hospital closed their maternity ward for this reason.

NEWS ABOUT NYC EMERGENCY SERVICE PROVIDERS
With FDNY under a mayoral mandate to cut its budget this year and next plus the closing of two Queens Hospitals and the ambulances they operated, several voluntary hospitals offered to increase their participation in the NYC EMS 911 system adding ambulances and crews. Crain’s NY Business said the hospitals portray their offers as mainly altruistic, but it is commonly accepted that hospital ambulance crews tend to take a higher number of patients to their own facilities. EMS also generates money from insurance reimbursements, a line of revenue the city has been working to increase. Budget cuts are hampering that effort, even while the volume of ambulance calls continues to increase from year to year. FDNY sources say the department is eliminating two EMS training classes in 2009, one for EMTs and another for paramedics. To cover staff shortages, the city has been mandating overtime for its own ambulance crews. A Greater NY Hospital Association spokesman confirmed to Crain’s that several hospitals are willing to add ambulances to the 911 system “to better serve their communities in light of the current economic environment” but he would not discuss details. Subsequently, a number of hospital units or additional tours for existing units were added to the 911 system by Flushing Hospital, New York Hospital-Queens, NS-LIJ Health System and Wyckoff Hospital. NS-LIJ, depending on the source, hired from 15 to 35 additional staff.

Voluntary hospitals running 911 ambulances have been notified that the Motorola model MW800 MDT computer has been discontinued by the manufacturer and replaced by model MW810. The two models, although compatible, are not interchangeable. Pricing on the new model has not been finalized due to configuration issues but is expected to be in the range of the older model which went for $2,700 in 2003. A full MDT setup including monitor, software, keyboard, mounts, etc costs over $8,300 per vehicle. Motorola’s local representative for FDNY and a number of city agencies is Altech Electronics on McDonald Avenue in Brooklyn.
BROAD CHANNEL VFD & AMBULANCE is being blocked by the NYC bureaucracy in getting final approval for construction of their new multi million dollar, two story, 10,000 square foot firehouse on Cross Bay Boulevard. The only remaining agency required to give an OK in the form of a Transportation Improvement Plan seemed to be the NYC Department of Transportation which indicated it has concerns about the project. Councilman Joseph Addabbo had been trying for months to set up a meeting between the BCVFD/VAC and NYC DOT officials. A September letter to the mayor’s office went unanswered. Speculation quoted in a local newspaper indicated a squad official saying “First, we heard that they [NYC DOT] didn’t want to be involved with the project because they were afraid of cost overruns and they didn’t want to be responsible for any money. But we had all the money.” “Then, we heard that the fire department decided that it didn’t want us to have a new firehouse. Now, we’re hearing that there is a vendetta between Mayor Mike Bloomberg and Anthony Weiner over the election and Bloomberg doesn’t want Weiner to get any credit for the new facility. We may never know what the real story is.” In mid January a spokesperson for Mayor Bloomberg indicated to another local newspaper that accepting federal money would commit the city to being responsible for the building for its lifetime including any shortfalls in the NYC estimated $5.9 million cost plus maintenance, preventing misuse, etc. Two independent firehouse architects indicated this may be a more accurate estimate than the $2.6 million cost BCVFD/VAC was using. An FDNY spokesman is quoted in the same paper saying they have eight fire companies in the immediate vicinity of the BCVFD firehouse and “if there were funds available to support more services it would be best if they were applied to the FDNY”. None of these municipal fire companies are on Broad Channel Island but are over bridges in Howard Beach and Rockaway. Also, any 911 EMS response would have to come from further distances. There is real concern that funding grants for the new firehouse may expire before construction can be started. The property on the west side of Cross Bay Boulevard was purchased from the city at auction 12 years ago. US Senator Hilary Clinton visited Broad Channel in June 2004 for an American Legion parade and spent more than an hour with BCVFD members. They explained that the present firehouse is a two story, two bay wood structure constructed over 100 years ago and some of the department’s apparatus is parked on the street or in a nearby storage yard. She subsequently pushed for federal funding to construct a new firehouse. $1 million was included in the $286.4 billion Transportation Equity Act signed into law by President Bush on 8/10/05. The allocation was one of 6,371 local highway and bridge projects, rail and bus facilities, bike paths and recreational trail projects covered by the bill with the item listed as “Improve Traffic Flow on Noel Road between Church and Cross Bay Boulevard Including Work Necessary to Demolish and Reconstruct the Firehouse Facility in Broad Channel.” In signing the bill President Bush is quoted as saying “…you can’t expect your farmers to be able to get goods to market if we don’t have a good road system,” – and that is why they call such bills “pork barrel” legislation. In the House the funding was pushed by Representative Anthony Weiner who provided another $800,000 for the new firehouse project. Additional funding was raised by the squad including $100,000 from NYS Assemblywoman Audrey Pheffer and $100,000 from NYS Senator Shirley Huntley. The NYS Emergency Services Revolving Loan Fund provided a low interest $200,000 loan. In addition to housing emergency service vehicles the facility would be used for senior activities, classes and if necessary as an evacuation center for the low lying community. Setting apart the building is its planned use of geothermal and solar heating.

On 1/23/09 BCVFD/VAC officers finally met with representatives from Mayor Bloomberg’s office, NYC Department of Design and Construction and NYC Department of Transportation and were formally told the city would not approve the project citing two reasons – (1) the city does not have funds to cover the costs over and above the funds already raised by Broad Channel and (2) the city does not want to be Broad Channel’s landlord as it doesn’t need any more assets and can’t afford to administer them anyway. The volunteers would not want this latter situation anyway.

Broad Channel has contacted Senator Charles Schumer who indicated it was a Hillary Clinton project implying she should be contacted. Representative Anthony Weiner was also a sponsor and has written a few letters but nothing has come of them. BCVFD/VAC officers are continuing to push their elected representatives at the city, state and federal level to find a way around the NYC position and get the funds released.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS (CERT) had 168 new members graduate at a ceremony held 2/24/09 at 1 Police Plaza. These new members make up teams within Bronx Community Boards 1, 2, 3, 7, and 12, Brooklyn Community Board 5 and Manhattan Community Board 5. The city’s CERT program was begun 6 years ago and is under the control of the NYC Office of Emergency Management. Volunteers participate in an 11-week training program in disaster preparedness and basic emergency response skills that includes lessons in fire safety, search and rescue and disaster medical operations taught by active and retired personnel from the NYPD and FDNY. Teams are now active in
46 of the city’s 59 Community Board areas. Equipment, resources and the capabilities of individual teams above the basic training provided by the city vary greatly and some are more active than others.

CORONA COMMUNITY VAC’s officers for 2009 are: President: David Moretti, Vice-President: Jose A. Pelaez, Chief of Operations & Treasurer: Daniel Dominguez, Secretary: Diana Conforti, Parliamentarian: Camilo Benitez and Sergeant-at-Arms: Howie Moi.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESCUE OF NYC was the medical standby at the Times Square ESPN Zone Ultimate Couch Potato Competition on New Years’ Day. The winner, for a 2nd year in a row, was Stan Friedman who lasted 18 hours, 48 minutes and 17 seconds of continuous sports watching time.

GLEN OAKS VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS officers for 2009: President - Ted Rabinowitz, 1st Vice President - Henry Ehrhardt, 2nd Vice President - Robert Dorries, Recording Secretary - Elan Weiner, Treasurer - Nancy Ehrhardt, Corresponding Secretary - Karen Malone and Assistant Treasurer - Kathy Sexton.

HATZALAH ROCKAWAY-LAWRENCE DIVISION has announced plans to build a new ambulance garage and training room in Woodmere, Nassau County. The two story, two bay, four vehicle facility is to be constructed on a property that has been purchased at West Broadway and Grant Avenue, near the Cedarhurst-Woodmere border. The new facility has been designed to blend into a residential area. The squad already has a 10 year old two story three bay garage at 62 Beach 9th Street in Far Rockaway which it has overgrown and presently keeps two ambulances on the street at Congregation Bais Tefilah, on Peninsula Boulevard and Edward Avenue.


LITTLE NECK-DOUGLASTON VAC elected Paul Kelly as President for 2009.

ROCKAWAY POINT VFD & RESCUE’s Chief Edward K. Valentine received an award for Outstanding Public Safety and Community Service. The honor was presented by the Good Government Regular Democratic Club at its 21st anniversary dinner. RPVFD operates 2 engines, 2 ambulances and a water rescue support unit in one of the more isolated communities in the city. All vehicles have four wheel drive for operating on beaches and the numerous sand streets in the organization’s service area.

ROOSEVELT ISLAND SEARCH AND RESCUE has been issued a BLS-FR Agency Code from the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services. Before beginning operations a response agreement must be finalized with Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation’s Public Safety Department.

ST LUKE’S-ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL EMS has taken delivery of a new Ford F-550/Frazer Type I ambulance. In addition to the hospital’s distinctive orange body with red beltline and top striping the vehicle has an extended “Super Cab” and LED lighting package. As is normal with Frazer ambulances, a separate generator powers the patient compartment. Lenox Hill Hospital EMS also operates a Frazer ambulance. For pictures of the St Luke’s ambulance go to http://www.frazerbilt.com/flash.php and click on New Deliveries and then St. Luke’s Roosevelt Hospital.

WEST HAMILTON BEACH VFD & AMBULANCE representatives attended NYS Senator Serphin Maltese’s 21st annual gala birthday party in December at the Roma View Caterers in Howard Beach. Shown in the picture are Senator Maltese on the left and Chief Jonah Cohen on the right. Prominently displayed on the rear of the department’s recently delivered new ambulance is the wording “Purchased through the efforts of Senator Serphin Maltese and the Howard Beach Community”.

WOOD-HEIGHTS VAC was the subject of a short NY1 video news article on 12/15/08. Squad President Marc Mastros indicated they hope to be serving the Woodside and Jackson Heights areas in Queens by late 2009. Before that could happen, an application for a Certificate of Need and supporting documentation has to be filed with the Regional EMS Council of NYC which would conduct a public hearing before making a decision which would then go to the NYS DOH for a final
decision on whether or not to grant the squad an Ambulance Operating Certificate. In the past, Woodside VAC and Jackson Heights-Elmhurst VAC served the areas but disbanded in the 1980s for various reasons. To view the NY1 segment go to http://www.ny1.com/content/top_stories/90720/ambulance-coverage-to-expand/Default.aspx

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

GREATER WESTCHESTER 2ND ANNUAL EMS CONFERENCE
Saturday, 4/18/09 at the Royal Regency Hotel and Conference Center, Yonkers, NY. National and regional faculty and industry displays. For information go to www.ems-conference.com

2009 NYC VOLUNTEER EMS RECOGNITION DINNER
The District 4 and 18 annual Volunteer EMS Recognition Dinner will be held on Tuesday evening, May 12, 2009 at Russo’s On-The-Bay in Howard Beach, Queens. Discounted tables for 10 are available to volunteer squads for $450 through 3/31/09. For information go to www.emsdinner.com/vac.htm or contact Martin Grillo at (718) 474-0680 or info@emsdinner.com.

NATIONAL EMS WEEK DATES AND LOGO ANNOUNCED FOR 2009
National Emergency Medical Services Week brings together local communities and medical personnel to publicize safety and honor the dedication of those who provide the day-to-day lifesaving services of medicine’s “front line.” This information can be used throughout the year for public education and safety programs. The dates for the 2009 National EMS Week are May 17-23, 2009. Please contact Denise Fechner at the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) office to order your 2009 EMS Week kit. She can be reached by e-mail at dfechner@acep.org or by phone at (800) 798-1822 ext. 3261.

NYC REGIONAL EMS COUNCIL CELEBRATES EMS WEEK
On Monday evening 5/18/09 from 6:00 to 9:00 PM the NYC Regional EMS Council will have its annual EMS Recognition and Awards Ceremony. The event will be held on the ground floor at 475 Riverside Drive in Manhattan. All EMS providers - volunteer, municipal, private, hospital, public agency, etc. – and their families are invited. Food and refreshments will be served and there is free parking in the building garage. This year’s event activities include:

- EMS Provider Awards
- EMS skills competition
- Children of EMS Drawing Contest. Topic is “My EMS Superhero”. This is open to students in elementary school through high school and submission deadline is 5/11/09.
- Door prizes for all attendees
- Silent auction for gift cards, products and electronics
- Free acupuncture and massage treatment booths

RSVP is requested. Contact Joseph Raneri at (212) 870-2301 option 4 or jraneri@nycremsco.org

PULSE CHECK 2009, the 54th Annual Educational Conference & Trade Show of the NYS Volunteer Ambulance & Rescue Association, will be held Thursday evening October 1, 2008 to Sunday morning October 4, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Albany on Wolf Road. Event features seminars and trade show on Friday and Saturday, statewide Adult and Youth EMS team skills drill on Friday evening and ambulance drill on Saturday morning plus the annual memorial service and awards dinner on Saturday evening. Information will posted on the Association's web site at www.nysvara.org covering conference registration, room reservations, list of seminars, Drill application, trophy donations, golf outing and Journal ads. There will also be information on the web site about nominations for the Association’s annual awards and scholarships.

The hotel has an attractive room rate plan and, for those who wish, a meal plan as well. Preliminary indications are that rooms will be priced at $130 per night for single or double occupancy, $150 for triple and $160 for four in a room. Meal packages would be additional but there are numerous alternative eating establishments along Wolf Road.

Conference registration with Saturday evening banquet included would cost $100 while conference alone would be $80 and banquet alone would be $25.

The association is pleased to announce that Mike McEvoy, PhD, RN, CCRN, REMT-P, Rich Beebe, MEd, RN, NREMT-P, and Jon Politis, MPA, NREMT-P will be serving as the conference Education Coordinators.

NYSVA&RA President Mike Mastrianni, Jr. will be serving as the Pulse Check 2009 Convention Committee Chair. If more information is needed before the web site is updated call (877) NYSVARA or e-mail pulsecheck@NYSVARA.org
March 2009

The Pulse

District 4, NYC Region

When life is on the line, trust nothing less than LaGuardia.

LaGuardia’s Paramedic Program

Leadership, expertise, service, professionalism...RESULTS

Take advantage of the college that sets the standard for EMS education for New York City and beyond...

100% pass rate on the State Certification Exam for 10 years

Call: (718) 482-5327

It's time to be the medic
not just call for medics!

Paradigm

Laguardia Community College

Paramedic Program

New York, New York

Call: (718) 482-5327

www.lagcc.cuny.edu/paramedic

Now!