



sanitation news

DS 653 (2-03)

Vol. 1 No. 3

www.nyc.gov/sanitation

February, 2003

BLIZZARD EDITION



Quite a Winter; Snow Fooling

After several winters where snow seemed to fall everywhere but in New York City, we got socked by the Presidents' Day Blizzard of 2003. And the rest is now history. The storm, considered to be the fourth worst snowstorm in the City's history, dumped two feet of snow across the city, burying cars, lawn furniture and just about anything else in its path...except New York's City's 6,300 miles of roadways. We kept them open! And we gave every city street a pass of a plow in record time.

So well did we perform that Mayor Bloomberg repeatedly praised the Department's dedicated men and women for keeping the city open under some of the most challenging conditions. And Borough Presidents around the City also called to say "thanks for a fabulous job."

How did we do it? After a fairly busy winter, the Department knew to get its 350 salt spreaders onto the mains at the first sign of flurries. Collection trucks and other available equipment were dressed with plows and dispatched across the city to dig New Yorkers out of the mountains of accumulating snow.

I was with Mayor Bloomberg at the Gansevoort Street Salt Facility and garage. He was extremely impressed by the precision with which our front-end loaders filled up the huge salt spreading and smaller haulster vehicles while a battery of television cameras filmed the grueling work. He later marveled at the huge snow melters we used to recycle snow into water by draining it down the sewer system.

I took numerous drives around the city during the week to watch the work of our crews and at every stop along the way I was impressed with this Department's dedication to duty. We even allowed a few reporters to ride along with some spreader operators and the sometimes-cynical writers came away equally impressed.

Perhaps it's all about dedication to the job. I think it is! This Department always rises to the occasion. The plow drivers, mechanics, snow clerks, supervisors...everyone. It's what makes us special. It's why New Yorkers depend upon us. It's tradition. And I thank you for your efforts.

Now, let's bring on the warmer weather.





The “Girl” Who’s Writing the Book

It started because she wanted to better understand what it takes to keep New York City clean—or as she puts it, what it takes to keep the city alive. “If Sanitation isn’t out there every day,” she says firmly, “nobody else can be out there, because the city becomes uninhabitable.”

Meet Dr. Robin Nagle, a professor of anthropology at New York University, better known out in the field as “the girl who’s writing the book.” Since last fall, she has been accompanying different Sanitation crews on their rounds. The workers thought she would ask questions and take notes, which she does, but many were surprised that she also picks up garbage side-by-side with them. “You can’t understand the work just by watching,” she explains. “It’s in the back, in the legs. And it’s a lot tougher than it looks.”

She started out of Manhattan 7. After the super’s clerk learned that she was actually flinging trash, he put her name on the board. “That was a proud day for me,” she recalls with a smile. Commissioner Doherty and Local 831 President Harry Nespoli have each met with Nagle and have offered their support.

“It’s amazing what the job takes,” Nagle says. “Some crews look like they’re choreographed. Their movements are graceful and quick, they anticipate each other, and they have a rhythm.” She’s equally impressed with the officers. “The public doesn’t really know how complex this job is. It calls for constantly making quick, critical decisions, dealing with weather conditions, getting tangled up in traffic, taking care of special events, haggling over truck allocations, being ready to deal with all kinds of different personalities. It’s a combination of military strategy and a high-stakes chess game.”

In trying to learn as much of the job as possible, Nagle observed the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade clean-up, accompanied a mechanical broom operator for the New Year’s Eve Times Square clean-up, and has been out with plows and spreaders during this winter’s many snow storms. But the heart of the work, she feels, is on the street, doing collection.

“When the book is finished,” she explains, “I hope readers will better appreciate the key role of Sanitation in the World Trade Center recovery. But it’s even more important that they understand the vital importance of the commitment and work that the men and women of the department do day in and day out.”

The book has no title yet; Nagle welcomes suggestions. Give her a call at **1-646-489-3019**.



DSNY “Elves” Shanel Thompson and Taryn Duckett sort gifts for the “Billy Fund,” Toy Drive.

“Sanit” Claus — New York Style

Through donations made to its “New York City Strongest/Billy Fund” toy drive, Sanitation employees department-wide, collected funds and toys to lift children’s holiday spirits. The toys were distributed to hospital pediatric wards, city shelters, after-school centers and youth programs citywide. For the 2002 holiday season, the Department distributed more than 2,300 “toys for tots.” Last year, the Department distributed 1,600 toys to children in the five boroughs.

This year, the Sanitation Department joined with the Jacobi Medical Center to bring holiday joy to hospitalized children. Santa and a Department magician cheered up the patients. Jacobi Medical Center is one of the largest member hospitals of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation and has earned international recognition for its Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Its Emergency Department was identified by New York Magazine as one of the four best pediatric ERs in New York City.



Sanitation Chief James Sims receives Proclamation from Community Mayors

Safety and Training Chief James Sims received a proclamation at the recent African-American Benevolent Society Dinner-Dance in recognition of his charitable work with disabled children. The Community Mayors, Inc., an organization dedicated to providing outings and special events for the children, made the presentation. Representing the Community Mayors, Inc. were Joseph Sturtz, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Community Mayor of East Flatbush, left, and Joseph Troisi, Deputy Chief Mayor, Community Mayor of East 17th Street, Brooklyn, right.

DSNY on View at NYS Museum

The New York State Museum in Albany opened its Recovery and Response phase two World Trade Center exhibition on February 1st featuring a major collection of objects, architectural elements, rare images, video and sound that chronicle this chapter of the nation's worst terrorist attacks. When the first phase opened last September, it was the nation's first permanent museum exhibition of artifacts documenting the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center. The second phase of the exhibition tells the rest of the story of what happened in the months following September 11th, both at Ground Zero and at Fresh Kills. The exhibition shines a light on the many unsung heroes who worked endlessly at both sites, shows some of what they recovered and offers a close-up view of the incredible memorials that appeared across the nation as a sign of the public's unparalleled support.

A large new exhibition section tells the story of the massive evidence recovery operation at Fresh Kills through hundreds of images, photomurals, and many recovered rare objects from Ground Zero. A computer program is installed where visitors see a visual inventory of the State Museum's World Trade Center collection and an FBI video of the Fresh Kills recovery operations.

Chief Martin Bellew, Director, Bureau of Waste Disposal, was among a number of speakers at the opening ceremony.



Shown Left to Right, Dean Petrelis, Deputy Director of Fresh Kills; Dennis Diggins, Director of Fresh Kills Landfill; Martin Bellew, Director, Bureau of Waste Disposal; and Michael Mucci, Deputy Director of Waste Disposal standing under an American flag from the World Trade Center that was recovered by the New York State Police at Ground Zero.



Running a Heroic Race

The Annual Verizon Millrose Games is regarded as the nation's greatest indoor track meet. This year, heroes from the Ground Zero Recovery Operation participated in a special event called the Heroes 4x400 Relay. Congratulations to Sanitation's own stars, who placed third in this event. Team Captain James McFarlane, Queens 5; Jackie Saunders, Brooklyn 3; David Babb, Sanitation Police, and Rob Jackson, Brooklyn 2, you made the Department proud! Thanks.



Sanitation Awards Employees' Suggestions

The Department awarded \$1,290 in cash prizes and Certificates of Merit to 13 employees whose ideas and innovations were recognized at DSNY's Annual Employee's Suggestion Program Awards Ceremony. Among the winners were **Frederick G. Vogel, Supervisor -BCC; Joseph Calvacca, Sanitation Worker - BCC; Paul Neis, Auto Mechanic - BME; Salvatore DiVigilio, Supervisor - BCC; Alfred Stasio, Auto Mechanic - BME; Martin P. Murray, Blacksmith - BME; Daniel J. O'Hare, Blacksmith - BME; Michael Graff, Auto Mechanic - BME; William Surace, Supervisor (ME) - BME; Robert Scacciaferro, Auto Mechanic - BME; Antonio Ambroselli, Blacksmith - BME; Robert Eckert, Welder - BME and David O'Neal, Supervisor of Mechanics - BME.** Congratulations on a job well done! Keep those ideas coming in!

Sanitation's Funny Lady

Janice Thomas, a DSNY Mechanical Broom Operator in Brooklyn, made her comical television debut on Comedy Central's "Insomniac" with David Attell on February 6th. She was "a natural" adding witty humor to the demanding job of a Sanitation Worker. Good job Janice! The City now knows we are NYC's Strongest and Funniest.



Congrats, Harry:

Harry Nespoli was sworn in as President of the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association, Local 831, by Governor George Pataki, as Harry's wife, Florence, looked on. Congratulations on your achievements, Harry.

(Photo by Joseph



Energy Conservation Award

The Department recently received a check for \$54,800 from the New York Power Authority's (NYPA) Peak Load Management program, recognizing the DSNY's efforts in reducing power in three major locations during the scorching summer months of 2002. The Power Authority presented program participants with more than \$1.43 million for reducing power use, by turning off discretionary equipment or turning on their own sources of locally generated power. NYPA acknowledged that the DSNY savings helped prevent potential city-wide brownouts. DSNY established a plan to shut down air conditioning units at the Central Repair Shop in Woodside, Queens, reduced office cooling by nine degrees and cut back on lighting about 20 percent at several facilities.

Sanitation Export Model Up for Award

DSNY's unique Transportation Model that evaluates bids for both refuse and recycling exports is currently being considered for the prestigious Citizens Budget Commission Award. The Model is among eight finalists contending for the 2002 award.

The Transportation Model was also one of 100 finalists selected out of thousands competing for Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government "Innovations in American Government" Award. DSNY can be proud to be among these finalists.

The creation of the model arose from DSNY's need to evaluate bidders in a constantly changing export environment so that the least costly bidders were chosen at huge savings for the City. The model awarded over \$250 million in Export Contracts that were required in order to close the Fresh Kills Landfill on schedule.

The Operations Management Division developed the Transportation Model under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Lorenzo Cipollina, Chief Dave Nati and his Deputy Director Joanann Chimes. Over the years, the model evolved from linked spreadsheets to a formal program that was updated several times. During those years, Chief Anthony Etergineoso laid the groundwork for future growth by overseeing the model.

Collector's Items

Job Well Done. . . Kudos to **Cris Gonzales**, Director of Internal Audits, on successfully completing the Certified Government Auditing Professional examination. Certified Government Auditing Professionals are members of a growing professional group who have distinguished themselves through specialized certification and are ready to handle the unique challenges of auditing in the public sector.

Look out. . . The DSNY Emerald Pipe and Drum Band will be strutting their stuff up 5th Ave at the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 17th. The band is also scheduled for parades on March 1st in Rockaway Beach, Queens; March 2nd in East Islip L.I.; March 15th in Scranton, PA; March 16th in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn; March 23rd in Pearl River, NY; and March 30th in Bay Ridge again. Good luck!

Congrats. . . to **Lorenzo Cipollina**, newly promoted Deputy Commissioner for Financial Management and Administration, and **Michael Ebert**, Director of Planning and Budget. **Holiday Happenings.** . . Sanitation workers and officers of Manhattan 7 have upheld a 17-year tradition of hosting a holiday party for neighborhood children with mental and physical disabilities. What began with a few dozen children has now grown to 300, plus a group of unwed mothers and their newborn babies. Everyone was treated to dinner, a show, and a gift from Santa. The garage looks forward to the next holiday season in hopes of having even more children in attendance.

sanitation news

is a publication of the Bureau of Public Information and Community Affairs, 125 Worth Street, Room 714

Vito A. Turso
Deputy Commissioner

Contributors:

Kathy Dawkins,
Director, Public Information
Ana Lafe,
Director of Special Projects,
Community Affairs
Taryn Duckett,
Intern, Public Information
Photos by Alan Harris, Keith W. Mellis,
Mike Castellano, Spencer A. Burnett
Graphics Assistance by Louis Seeley,
Richard Ariya