

REPORT OF MERITORIOUS ACT

John Rizzo

Name of Member

07/18/2008

Date of Act

8. NAME(S) OF TWO MEMBERS WHO ACUALLY WITNESSED ACT(IF AVAILABLE)
RANK NAME UNIT

Lieutenant FF	Thomas Nealon Paul Ruckdeschel	Marine 6 (cov.) Marine 1
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9. NAME(S) OF TWO CIVILIANS WHO ACUALLY WITNESSED ACT(IF AVAILABLE)
NAME ADDRESS

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10. WAS VICTIM REMOVED FROM: Immediate fire area Directly above fire

Other area (specify in detail):

From field of pilings in North River.

11. DESCRIPTION OF ACT:

At 12:48 on July 18, 2008 Marine 1a was dispatched to Manhattan Box 0304 the Hudson River at Watts Street and West Street for a report of a person in the water. Upon arrival Marine 1a found that there was a person swimming in the river near an area that was full of wooden pilings from a derelict pier. FF Rizzo, who had already donned an immersion suit, established contact with the person who was apparently emotionally disturbed. FF Rizzo identified himself as a New York City Firefighter and informed him that swimming was not permitted in the area, that he was in danger and that he should come on board of Marine 1a immediately. The patient's response was to swim into the area of pilings placing himself into greater danger of injury. The patient suffered several head injuries from being thrown against the pilings by the action of the water which was very choppy due to the wind and the wakes from numerous vessels on the busy waterway. FF Rizzo entered the water with a life saving buoy and a tether. He swam into the pilings and ordered the patient to take hold of the life saving buoy. FF Rizzo then took hold of both the patient and the buoy. Because of FF Rizzo's quick action without regard for his own safety this person was saved from serious injury and quite possibly from drowning.

