

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 107TH CONGRESS

**IN HONOR OF THE
FIREFIGHTING VESSEL
JOHN J. HARVEY**

**HON. CAROLYN B.
MALONEY**
OF NEW YORK IN THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. MALONEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to John J. Harvey, the oldest and, now, most famous firefighting vessel on the Hudson River. On September 11, 2001, the crew of John J. Harvey demonstrated exceeding valor in aiding the rescue efforts of the New York City Fire Department.

John J. Harvey was built seventy years ago in order to update and improve the New York City Fire Department's aging fleet of steam-powered fireboats. The boat was the first vessel of its kind with internal combustion engines, a feature that gave John J. Harvey the capacity to pump 18,000 gallons of water a minute—twenty fire engines' worth—in streams up to twenty-five stories high.

John J. Harvey served in New York Harbor until 1995, when it was taken out of service for budgetary reasons. During her years of outstanding service, she participated in some of the most memorable fire rescue missions in New York Harbor. She fought the inferno that destroyed the ocean liner *Normandie* and doused the flames on a sinking munitions boat. As part of the annual Fourth of July celebration, John J. Harvey shoots gushing streams of water high into the sky, forming an arc through which passing ships can speed. As a result of her past deeds, she was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000.

Prior to the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center, John J. Harvey had been operated by her owners as a working fireboat museum

giving free trips and educational tours up and down the Hudson River and at Pier 63 Maritime. As news of the disaster at the World Trade Center spread, the crew of John J. Harvey began racing towards Pier 63 Maritime from all parts of New York. They recognized that the fireboat was uniquely suited to provide invaluable help to the FDNY and NYPD at this time of crisis.

Once it arrived at the scene of the attack, John J. Harvey immediately began ferrying ash-caked survivors away from the collapsed buildings. A member of the crew later recalled how roughly 150 people hurled themselves over the gunwales, some leaving their shoes behind, in order to escape. As John J. Harvey was rescuing these people, a call came in from the Fire Department: They desperately needed water pressure.

Upon hearing this request, the crew dropped off the survivors in safety at pier 40 and rushed John J. Harvey to the sea wall at the World Financial Center. As they started to rev up the water pumps on the boat, the crew recognized that they had a serious problem. Harvey's 3-inch manifold valves, designed for providing water to hoses on deck, were of a different diameter to the modern 2-½ inch hose being used by FDNY. Nobody had any adapters. Tim Ivory, the boat's chief engineer, was under intense pressure knowing that many lives were dependant on Harvey to provide water quickly. He remembered that some of the water guns, designed for shooting water into the air, had nozzles that were 2-½ inches in diameter. He cleverly improvised by taking a sledgehammer and jamming soda bottles and wood into the nozzles, so as to redirect the water into the hoses from the guns.

John J. Harvey spent the next 80 hours pumping water to firefighters working in the wreckage. Since all of the fire hydrants west of the disaster site were not operational, John J. Harvey, along with the city's two remaining large fireboats, *Fire-Fighter* and *McKean*,

provided much of the necessary water to fight the fires that continued to burn at the site of the World Trade Center.

I particularly want to recognize the brave crew members of John J. Harvey. On the day of the attack, the following people rushed to the rescue: Chase B. Welles (who quickly recognized the need to be of service), Huntley Gill (who piloted the boat on 9/11), Tim Ivory (whose ingenuity saved the day), Tomas J. Cavallaro (who worked tirelessly to supply the crew) and Andrew Furber (Assistant Engineer, who helped rescue workers extract bodies and clear debris as a welder). Later that day they were joined by John Doswell, Jean Preece and Pamela Hepburn who helped rescue workers. The following morning Captain Robert Lenney (who spent 16 years as pilot of John J. Harvey when it served the FDNY and returned to service to help fight the fires at the World Trade Center for days on end) and Jessica DuLong (Assistant Engineer, who ensured constant smooth running of the engines) lent their valuable assistance to the effort. Throughout the 4 days, they were supported by Darren Vigilant of tugboat *Bertha*, (who ferried supplies from Pier 63 Maritime) and by John Krevey and his team at Pier 63 Maritime (who provided an unending supply of provisions).

John J. Harvey is once again docked at Pier 63 Maritime where visitors to New York can learn more about this heroic tale of a once scrap yard-destined firefighting vessel that came back to help save New York City.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly salute the firefighting vessel John J. Harvey and her crew. May they be forever remembered for their courageous efforts on September 11, 2001.

