

November 8, 2008

Chief William Metcalf  
North County Fire Protection  
District 315 East Ivy Street  
Fallbrook, CA 92028-2138



Dear Chief Metcalf,

The reason I'm writing this letter is to convey the extraordinary actions of one of your Firefighters, Steve Cate and his son Troy. On Monday, October 13, 2008, my late brother-in-law [*name withheld*] was fishing out of Seaforth Landing in San Diego with a couple of his friends. That morning, my brother-in-law suffered a fatal arrhythmia and simultaneously fell overboard. Steve and Troy, who did not know my brother-in-law but were out fishing on the same boat, without delay, jumped into the water and dove a substantial distance to retrieve him. Once Steve and Troy found my brother-in-law, they brought him to the surface and with the help of the crew and my brother-in-law's friends, got him back on the boat and then immediately administered CPR for over 2 hours until relieved by paramedics at San Diego Harbor.

As a retired LA City Firefighter and fishermen, I would like to express some of my thoughts about what Steve and Troy did. In my opinion, most people view "fishing" as more or less a rather benign pastime although it can be far from that at times. Besides being beautiful, the ocean can also be dangerous and when things go wrong, it can do so rapidly and be unforgiving. There's a risk involved in diving under a large drifting boat, yet Steve and Troy didn't hesitate in their attempt to save a fellow fisherman.

As a former Firefighter, I have administered CPR hundreds of times yet it's difficult for me to imagine performing CPR with limited resources for over 2 hours. Although unsuccessful, I view it as an accomplishment and a testimony not only to their fitness and endurance, but their compassion for others. That afternoon, when I first received the news of my brother-in-law's death, I felt tremendous loss and sadness but when I learned that a Brother Firefighter and his son had tried to intercede, I felt a sense of renewed faith and admiration for the bonds that those of us in the Fire Service share.

In closing, on behalf of my brother-in-law's wife and the [*name withheld*] families, I would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for the actions of Steve and Troy Cate. Our families will always remember how Steve and Troy tried to help my brother-in-law. Steve and Troy Cate truly exemplify the professionalism and dedication of the North County Fire District Firefighters and their families.

Sincerely,

*Identity Edited for Privacy Purposes*