



**MEDIA RELEASE - PAIHIA
APRIL 2009**

**PAIHIA VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE TO DEFEND THEIR TITLE AS TOP
FUNDRAISER**

For the past three years the Paihia Volunteer Fire Brigade has lead the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge by raising the most money for the Leukaemia & Blood Foundation (LBF).

This year they must defend that fundraising title. According to firefighter Rex Wilson, in addition to garage sales and selling firewood to raise funds, the brigade hosted their annual "funny money" casino night on Friday 24 April.

The brigade received more than twenty auction prizes for their fundraiser and support from some respected organisations in the community including Air New Zealand, Wilson commented.

On Saturday 23 May 2009, 280 firefighters will fight their way to the top of Auckland's 1,029 Sky Tower steps during the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge, a cardio competition not for couch potatoes.

The Paihia brigade will also attempt to win the physical portion of the challenge. "The firefighters have been training hard," Wilson remarked. Some have been running the stairs at Opuia; others are at the gym three days a week.

In its sixth year, the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge has become a New Zealand tradition. In 2008, 58 fire brigades participated and raised a record \$94,000. The courageous fire brigades from around New Zealand will compete in a race up the 47 flights wearing full firefighting kit weighing 25kg. They will be joined by two overseas brigades from Australia and the United States.

Pru Etcheverry, Executive Director of the LBF, says the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge is a fantastic event and each year the LBF are overwhelmed by the amazing enthusiasm and generosity of the firefighters.

"They balance hectic work and life schedules, months of mental and physical training and still manage to find time to fundraise for the 6 New Zealanders who are diagnosed everyday with leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma and related blood cancers. They are truly our heroes and remarkable members of their communities.

"In this changing economy we are ever appreciative for SKYCITY and Auckland Airport's support of the event and of the 280 fabulous firefighters who are up for this challenge. We hugely thank firefighter, and Firefighter SKY Tower Challenge organiser, Tony Scott for every year coming out with a great level of enthusiasm and energy to make this event a success."



SKYCITY Chief Executive Officer, Nigel Morrison, says SKYCITY is proud to support the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge.

"SKYCITY is privileged to be involved in a large number of events that really make a difference in our community and we look forward to welcoming hardworking and courageous fire-fighters from all over New Zealand and overseas to the tallest building in the Southern Hemisphere."

"There is a level of admiration of those who compete in the challenge. We are happy to support the community and patients and families who live with leukaemia and related blood conditions through this incredible fundraising partnership."

The Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge numbers:

- **6** children and adults in New Zealand everyday are diagnosed with leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma or a related blood condition
- More than **500** contacts with patients and general enquiries every month is managed by the LBF Patient Support Services team
- **10,000** people are living with leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma or a related blood condition in New Zealand
- Over **\$1,000** each day is the cost of providing LBF's Support Services
- **47** flights of stairs in the Firefighters Sky Tower Challenge
- **1,029** individual steps
- **\$94,000** was raised for LBF in the 2008 Firefighters Sky Tower Challenge
- **280** firefighters representing fire brigades from around New Zealand are competing in the 2009 Challenge
- At **328** metres the Sky Tower is the tallest building in the southern hemisphere

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More Information:

Event Details - 2009 Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge

Date: Saturday 23 May 2009

Time: 7am - 1pm

Venue: Sky Tower, SKYCITY, Federal Street, Auckland Central

Leukaemia & Blood Foundation

The LBF is the only organisation in New Zealand dedicated to supporting patients and their families living with leukaemia, myeloma, lymphoma and related blood conditions.

Every day 6 children and adults in New Zealand are diagnosed with leukaemia, lymphoma, myeloma or a related blood condition, the equivalent of around 2200 New Zealanders a year.



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The funds raised go towards the LBF's Support Services Programme to provide core services – patient support, information & education, awareness, advocacy and research.

The following Fire Brigades and Volunteer Fire Brigades are taking part in the 2009 Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge:

Brigade

- | | |
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| Auckland Airport Rescue Fire | Muriwai Rural |
| Auckland City Central | Napier Volunteers |
| Bethells Valley Rural Fire Force | New Plymouth West |
| CHB Tikokino | Okaiawa |
| CHB Waipawa | Onerahi |
| CHB Waipukurau | Paihia |
| Christchurch | Paraparaumu |
| Cooks Beach | Patutahi |
| Cromwell | Plimmerton |
| East Coast Bays | Pukekohe Volunteer Fire Brigade |
| Edgecumbe | Queenstown |
| Gisbourne/Juken NZ Industrial | RNZAF Whenuapai |
| Gisbourne/Kotemaori VRRF | Silverdale |
| Gisbourne | South Auckland |
| Hamilton Airport Rescue Fire | South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service |
| Henderson Fire brigade | Stratford |
| Hikurangi | Tairua |
| Hutt City | Tawa |
| Kaikohē | Te Atatu |
| Kamo | Te Awamutu |
| Linton Army | Te Kuiti |
| Manly | Titirangi |
| Manunui | Tokomary Volunteer Fire Brigade |
| Mercer | Waihi Beach |
| Morrinsville | Waitakere Rural |
| Mt. Wellington | Waitemata |
| Mt. Maunganui | Wellington Airport Fire Service |



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For further information contact:

Leola Abraham
Communications & Marketing Manager
Leukaemia & Blood Foundation
Phone: 09 638 3556
Mobile: 021 523 172

Connie Sprague
Media Relations Manager
SKYCITY ENTERTAINMENT GROUP
Phone: 09 363 6409
Mobile: 021 515 638