

FEATURED LETTER**Millville and county can be proud of emergency services**

On Wednesday July 29, the Millville Fire Department was alerted to a fire at 19 N. High St. around 5 p.m. While responding a column of smoke could be seen from several blocks away. A second alarm was called, which brought back the MFD's off-duty career staff. Engine 34 arrived on location and initiated an interior fire attack. Engine 34's crew was met with zero visibility and high heat while trying to find the fire on the first floor.

The building was built prior to 1900. Over the years it has undergone renovations as different businesses have come and gone. The original ceilings consisted of tongue and groove wood covered by tin paneling. The floors, especially on the second and third floors, had two layers of hardwood flooring. This type of construction, coupled with the masonry exterior walls and few windows, traps a lot of the heat and smoke inside the building. The sturdy construction combined with the hot and humid weather (the heat index was well over 100 degrees) made for a long and manpower intensive firefight.

The third alarm was called for at 5:30 p.m. and brought Vineland Fire Station 2 and the Rosenhayn Fire Co. to the scene with Gouldtown Fire Co. to cover the city of Millville. The subsequent fourth alarm was dispatched at 6:23 p.m. with Bridgeton Fire Department, Vineland Fire Station 1, and the covering Gouldtown Fire Engine to the scene. Cumberland Fire Co. responded to MFD's station to cover the city. As the heat and the extensive overhaul began to take a toll on the men and women on location, four other departments were called and dispatched to help rotate crews through: Port Norris, Cedarville, Heislerville and another engine from Rosenhayn.

The health and wellness of all the personnel on location is always a high priority, especially when dealing with the heat and humidity to that extreme. The Salvation Army was on location to provide cold water, sports drinks and food. The Millville Rescue Squad set up two rehab areas to check vital signs of the firefighters to prevent over exertion and possible heat exhaustion. Many citizens stopped to offer assistance, including some who donated cases of water to drink.

Through everyone's hard work, the heavy fire damage was held to the first floor with some extension to the second and third floors.

Also on location that night were the Millville Police Department, Millville Office of Emergency Management, Cumberland County Fire Coordinator and the Cumberland County Fire Police.

As chief of the Millville Fire Department, I would like to thank the more than 90 personnel, the majority of them volunteers, who responded and worked diligently in the adverse conditions to prevent what could have been a much bigger incident.

I would also like to thank those citizens who donated water and offered words of encouragement throughout the long evening and night.

Millville and Cumberland County can be proud of their dedicated police, fire, EMS and emergency services agencies.

Chief Michael Lippincott

MILLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT



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