

January 9, 2012

Honorable Kate Supron
Board of Trustees
Village of Cayuga Heights

Monthly Report – December, 2011

We closed out the year with an epic month for the volunteers of Cayuga Heights. In December we ran 49 calls. We had 28 calls in the Village of Cayuga Heights, 14 in the Town of Ithaca and 7 mutual aid requests. We had 22 EMS calls and 27 fire calls. We closed 2011 with 602 calls, up 26 calls from 2010. As I said earlier, we had an epic month. On December 13th the Lansing Fire Department was dispatched to fire alarm activation at an industrial facility on Dutch Mill Road. Their first arriving Duty Chief arrived on scene to find a large manufacturing facility full of smoke. He immediately requested mutual aid from Cayuga Heights. E202 and L231 responded with full crews within minutes. We had the first apparatus on scene and Asst. Chief Openshaw and a crew of two CHFD firefighters immediately made entry through the front door and advanced to the second floor where discovered heavy smoke and heat. They were unable to advance further then the stairwell due to the intense heat. He called for roof ventilation to allow the heat and smoke to escape upward. L231 with a crew advanced to the roof on one side of the building and made a vent hole, the Ithaca Fire Department, also on scene, made a second vent hole on the other side of the roof line. This allowed the smoke and heat to escape and allowed the interior crew to attack the fire and quickly extinguish it. This call, in itself, would be one that we talked about for a long time but it was topped by a second mutual aid call two days later. On December 16th we were again requested mutual aid for an apartment fire with people trapped in the building on Graham Road in the Village of Lansing. Due to the nature of the call we were dispatched at the same time the Lansing Fire Department was. The initial report from the scene was that there was a first floor apartment fire with people unable to get down the common stairwell due to heavy smoke. We arrived to find the building charged with smoke. Lt. Waller took a team to the fire floor and made the attack on the fire. L231 arrived and placed its ladder up to the third floor apartment and took a family of three, including an infant, out the window and down the ladder. A second team of CHFD firefighters took a 24' extension ladder to the back of the building and removed another family of three from the third floor balcony. The fire was quickly extinguished and there were no civilian injuries. I have never been prouder of the actions of this department in the 10 years I have been a member. The quick response to both incidents and the actions of our officers and firefighters helped avoid disaster twice in one week. As I said, it was an epic month.

December is usually a slower month for training at the station due to the winter break. We still managed to squeeze in several. We did training on ropes and knots early in the month. Ropes and knots are tough skills to remember unless practiced with regularly. In the middle of the month we went to Cornell, to the Cornell Environmental Health and Safety Facility, to do training on fire alarm systems. Cornell has a great training room for fire alarm panels and the head of their testing crew gave us an overview on panels and alarm systems. This was very helpful. We had our annual firefighter trivia night right before the holiday. This is a fun training we do right before the holiday break every year. It is a Jeopardy style firefighting knowledge test. All of our EMS providers were required to do have their Continuing Medical Evaluation skills and hours done by the end of the year. We held several skills sessions to get this done. At the end of January, when everybody returns from break, we will hold our Annual OSHA refresher training. We do this training every year to cover all the OSHA topics we are required to train on each year. OSHA training takes up the morning and the afternoon session is CPR refresher.

We are unsure if we are going to hold a spring recruit training this year. If we do it will be a small class. It looks like all those in the fall class will make it through the checklist process. 2011 was a long year for training and we have not taken a break from recruit classes for several years. We will discuss the matter at the upcoming fire council meeting.

I was extremely pleased with the performance of this department in 2011. We did many good things at the station throughout the community last year. We look forward to a productive and safe 2012.

Sincerely,

George Tamborelle
Fire Chief/Fire Superintendent

