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Union head calls for change after AC fire

Ducktown company would have responded faster, he claims

JOHN O'CONNOR & NICHOLAS HUBA
Staff Writers

ATLANTIC CITY — The president of the local firefighter union is calling on the city and the state to bring back Engine Co. 4, which served the Ducktown neighbor-



Varallo

hood, in the wake of a fire that left more than 70 people displaced Thursday.

"Yesterday's fire at 28 S. Georgia Ave. offers tangible data regarding ACFD staffing and responses," said John Varallo Jr., president of Professional Firefighters NJ FMBA Local 8, in a

statement on Facebook. "Had Engine 4 been operational yesterday a fully staffed engine company would (have) responded to the fire on 28 South Georgia which had trapped and fleeing occupants from a mere 3 blocks away!"

The company closed about five years ago because of budget cuts, officials said.

Fire Chief Scott Evans did not immediately return a request for comment.

"The taxpayers and visitors of Atlantic City need to know their safety is in good hands with the current layout of the Atlantic City Fire Department, with nine stations open and 198 staff members, something Mayor Small fought hard to make happen over the course of many meetings with the State," the city said in a statement. "The fire department also currently has more apparatus than under any other admin-

istration thanks to Mayor Small. In a dream world, we'd have an engine company on every corner of the City, but that's not conducive from a fiscal perspective. Our nine fire houses are strategically located to best serve every block within the City of Atlantic City."

Five people were injured and 76 displaced by the five-alarm apartment fire Thursday morning.

Please see **FIRE**, Page A6

AC: NO EVENTS, NO PROBLEM



MATTHEW STRABUK, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The 2024 Atlantic City Airshow was canceled this week due to one of the bigger performers pulling out of the event.

Summer is peak season with or without airshow, beach concerts, experts say

MICHELLE BRUNETTI POST
Staff Writer

ATLANTIC CITY — With no Atlantic City Airshow this August for the first time in 21 years — other than skipping 2020 due to COVID-19 — don't expect the city to feel empty, tourism experts say.

"Casinos always do a great job attracting visitors in summer. There are tons of things to do ... with or

without the airshow," said Mark Giannantonio, president of the Casino Association of New Jersey and president and CEO of Resorts Casino Hotel.

What will be lost is the opportunity to show the city as something more than just a gaming destination, he said, and the city needs to develop a broader image for long-term success.

"We have to figure this out," Giannantonio said. "This has to be recurring every year."

Please see **CANCELED**, Page A6

VIEW: For photos of Peach at the Beach setup, point your smartphone camera at the QR code, then tap the link. [NEWSVU](#)



Menendez jury begins deliberating.

LOCAL, A3

Wildwood officials to be tried separately

BILL BARLOW
Staff Writer

WILDWOOD — Judge Bernard DeLury on Friday granted a motion that will allow separate trials for two city officials and a former official in a case related to state health benefits.

Mayor Ernie Troiano Jr., Commissioner Steve Mikulski and former Mayor Pete Byron



Troiano



Mikulski



Byron

their acceptance of health benefits to which the state alleges they were not entitled.

Attorneys for Troiano and Mikulski have both requested that the matters be tried separately. Byron's attorney

would have preferred to see the matters combined in a single trial.

The state Attorney General's Office had sought a single trial as well, with attorneys arguing that the three held the same elected positions in the same municipality.

Please see **OFFICIALS**, Page A6



Biden visits Michigan to make case for candidacy.

360, C3

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Weather

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