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Claymont opens new fire station

Hundreds of residents tour \$5.6 million building, which allows for expanded service

By RICARDO LOPEZ
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Claymont Fire Company opened its new fire station Sunday, expanding emergency and response services for its 15,000 residents. The \$5.6 million, state-of-the-art station has eight vehicle bays, housing for volunteer firefighters and amenities including a game room, kitchen and administrative offices.

Hundreds of residents toured the new station, at 3223 Philadelphia Pike, after a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and Claymont Fire Company personnel answered residents' questions during Sunday's open house.

"The station is beautiful," said John Leonard, a member of the Claymont fire police. "It really outdid itself."

Ron Callueng, 36, of North Graylyn Crest, brought his 4-year-old son, Colton, a fan of firetrucks, to the opening and helped his son climb into the driver's seat of the fire engines.

"It's great that they're expanding the services," Callueng said. "The station has a lot of amenities to help get the firefighters' minds off the stress."

The station replaced a 53-year-old firehouse that was demolished in January 2007. The old station had five vehicle bays.

Public information officer John Fannin IV said the station will encourage more members to stay on-site and noted that response times to calls have been "optimal."

Each year, the company gets about 1,200 fire calls and 2,500 emergency medical service calls.

Funding for the new station is a combination of state, county, federal and community money, said Fannin.

Federal grants helped pay for specific emergency equipment, and through the fire company's fundraising efforts, the community also contributed.

The volunteer fire company has more than 100 members, and of those, 63 are emergency response personnel.

The Claymont Fire Company also has a substation at Naamans and Marsh Roads.

Photos: The News Journal/TYLER ORSBURN



"I remember the old wooden fire station we used to have," said Ralph Crozier, of Claymont, Sunday afternoon during company's new fire house inauguration. Crozier has been a firefighter for 55 years.



President Tom DiCristofaro of Fire House 13 in Claymont gives opening remarks Sunday afternoon during the fire company's new building inauguration.



Firefighters of Claymont's Fire House 13 cut the red ribbon Sunday afternoon during company's new building inauguration.



Fire Chief Mark Harris, left; President of the Lady's Auxiliary Nancy Handline, center; and President of Claymont's Fire House 13 Tom DiCristofaro cut the red ribbon Sunday afternoon during company's new building inauguration.



Chaplain John Jayton of Claymont's Fire House 13 blesses the crowd Sunday afternoon during company's new building inauguration.



Chaplain John Jayton of Claymont's Fire House 13 addresses the crowd Sunday afternoon during company's new building inauguration.