



Melville Fire Department

Office of the Chief

531 Sweet Hollow Road
Melville, New York 11747
Phone: 631-423-2635 • Ext. 130
Fax: 631-427-4121
www.melvillefd.org

Dave Kaplan, Chief
William Schmitt, 1st. Assistant
Jason Bernfeld, 2nd Assistant
Donald Barclay, 3rd Assistant

Dear Fellow Members:

It has certainly been a tough few months for us as an organization.

Little did I know, when I began my second term as Chief of Department, that spring would bring us a virus that would threaten the health of mankind and cripple the global economy. COVID-19 is proving to be the greatest challenge many of us will face in our lifetimes - and it is taking a particularly heavy toll on front line workers, including first responders. Yet, we have risen to the challenge as an organization. Day in and day out, I have watched the members of this department work side by side with each other and the District employees to combat this threat and support the community by providing the lifesaving care it needs. I have personally witnessed many of you don Personal Protective Equipment without hesitation and enter the home of COVID-positive residents. And I am humbled by and deeply grateful for your bravery, your compassion and your dedication to something so much bigger than any one of us. These past few weeks, I have been reminded time and time again why I am so proud to be Chief of the Melville Fire Department.

We suffered the loss of one of our own this week to this insidious disease. It is the ultimate loss for an organization like ours, and a sober reminder of our new, grim reality. But even in this age of social distancing and a moratorium on funerals, our membership came together to plan and execute a flawless and truly meaningful send-off for our fallen brother. It was an honor to lead the procession, and I was profoundly moved by the sight of our members, standing together as one. This is what we are all about. Brotherhood. Sisterhood. Unity.

Thank you all for your commitment to the Department, particularly during these grueling and perilous times. I wish you and your families good health and safety in the weeks and months to come. And always remember, we can accomplish anything when we are united as one.

Firematically yours,

David Kaplan
Chief of Department