

Lower Twp. honors officer for life-saving actions

Cpl. Scheck cited for 'risking his own life selflessly to save the lives of others'

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — A police officer is always an officer no matter where they may be, and Lower Township police Cpl. Jonathan Scheck proved that last month

when he was on vacation. On Aug. 5, Police Chief Kevin Lewis and Lower Township Council presented Scheck with a Distinguished Service Award for Lifesaving for rendering help following a severe motor vehicle accident.

Lewis said Scheck was on vacation July 16 in Florida when he jumped into action after the vehicle behind his was struck by a drunken driver.

"Both vehicles caught fire with the drivers and passengers still inside," Lewis said. "Cpl. Scheck immediately began extracting the drivers from the burning vehicles, risking his own life selflessly to save the lives of others."

He said Scheck assisted responding EMS and fire personnel in controlling the scene and ensuring the safety of others as the vehicles burned.

"Without the brave actions by Cpl. Scheck, more lives would have been lost to this tragedy," Lewis said.

Lower Township Mayor Frank Sippel presented a proclamation to Scheck on behalf of council.

"You're a great asset to the township," Sippel said.



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Lower Township Mayor Frank Sippel congratulates Cpl. Jonathan Scheck on Aug. 5 for pulling people from burning cars following an accident July 16 while vacationing in Florida.

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Geography ideal for mosquitoes

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water seems to rise, those areas on the salt marsh are the first to be impacted."

A shift in species will ultimately result in different viruses emerging, which is why the department is constantly monitoring species variability.

"People talk about the variability with rainfall a lot," Diem said. "The highs and lows have increased and that's something that I hear mentioned at the state climatology level."

Diem explained that this past March was recorded as the rainiest since 1995.

Rain becomes a problem because it turns dry landscapes into wet ones.

"It's when things dry down completely and they're barren and then fill up again," Diem said. "That's perfect mosquito habitat, and you definitely see more of that when the weather's more variable."

According to Diem and Simone, population levels have stayed constant over the past decade and do not seem to be changing rapidly. Both were unsure about climate change's overall effect on mosquitoes but recognized the effect different temperatures and precipitations have had and will continue to have.

"The main ones that we're focusing on as far as our virus vectors, and the ones that we trap and test, those have been pretty consistent," Diem said. "It's probably going to be continually changing where we'll always be packing on a few new species here and there."

The department alters its regimens to control these spreads and is tasked with creating treatment plans.

"In the past year, two years, there are products that came on the market that are labeled as organic and are used as barrier sprays," Diem said. "You

can treat an area with a repellent effect, so you don't have to kill everything in the air."

Both men explained that their main goal is to be as least invasive as possible. Instead of chemicals, the barrier sprays use natural oils.

"The main ingredients are a kind of mint and clove," Diem said. "Mosquitoes hate anything with spearmint. Peppermint is a big deterrent to mosquitoes."

The department prioritizes the county's safety. Its strategies not only aim to maintain virus spread but to preserve the county's natural landscapes.

"Sometimes mosquito control gets a bad rap because we're very visual, like you think of trucks, spraying neighborhoods and helicopters spraying over fields," Simone said. "We spray ounces, and sometimes, the typical flow rate for something we're putting out is half an ounce in an entire acre."

City Hall to get lightning arrester

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claim for damages to the Joint Insurance Fund (JIF) was approaching \$200,000.

"What really put us up high was the solar system on the roof here. That was \$125,000 portion of the claim," he said.

Dietrich said he and Fashaw reached out to

professionals for guidance. New grounding was installed on the radio tower, Dietrich said.

"We're going to spend around \$51,500 to do protective work," he said.

A contractor will install lightning rods and ground wires, which will rim the roof with connections to the ground. Utility connections to the building

will also be grounded, Dietrich said.

He said network cables and wires from the radio tower will receive "double grounding."

"Lightning is probably going to strike in this area a third time, but I think we'll be much better protected within City Hall," Dietrich said.

He said the final claims will be submitted to the JIF later this month and expects them to be processed in September for reimbursement.

Council approved an emergency appropriation of \$200,000 for replacement or repair of damaged equipment and surge protection devices last month.

Fashaw said the day of the lightning strike, City Clerk Erin Burke and Deputy Clerk Brian Turner cleared everyone out of City Hall.

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