

On the night of August 11th at 11:32pm station tones alerted a call of a structure fire at Sol Vista & Point House Trail. Prior to the tones at approximately 11:30pm the duty phone rang. When the call was answered the call dropped and the phone went blank. There is no explanation for this malfunction. Our crew responded to the tones. When they went to get their gear they were met by a resident who told them of a fire by Barnacles restaurant. Our three main apparatus rolled out, FF John Pinto with our Engine (on loan from San Carlos FD), FF Ernie Williams with our multi-purpose truck Brush192 and Captain Dave Tyrrell with our Tanker191. This procedure placed 3500 gallons of water on scene as quickly as 11:37pm. The crew rolled up on a fully involve structure fire. FF Pinto transmitted an initial size up and called for assistance. He had an issue with making the turn at Sol Vista to access the east side of the fire, repositioned the truck and began immediately to set up a defensive operation in an attempt to save the exposure at the north side of the primary fire. FF Williams initially went to the north side of the fire from Seair Lane to assess the extent of the fire. He then went back to Point House trail where he had to cut his way through the mangroves to deploy a hand line to protect the exposure. Captain Tyrrell put out a call for a third alarm requesting more manpower, hose and pumps. Tyrrell assisted with the hand lines to protect the exposure. Finding the water supply access blocked by lumber, FF Pinto attempted to set up the Turbo Draft water supply but the dock was missing planks and he was unable to access the water. There was a low tide at the time. Due to the intense heat and restricted access this operation was performed from Point House Trail as close to the fire as was safely feasible.

Due to a delay in an alert I (Chief Kinniry) was notified at 11:47pm, went in route, and arrived on scene with our Utility192 and our high volume Pump192 at approximately 12:00am. I initially went to the north end of Sol Vista by driving on the beach to perform a size up of the situation. I found a large propane tank venting flames and determined that it was unsafe to be there and proceeded to relocate to Point House Trail to set up a water supply for the operation at a draft location located on the harbor side of the structure. Upon arriving at the site I was confronted with access being blocked by a banded stack of 2x10 lengths of lumber preventing setting up a water supply.

The LCSO arrived with 2 firefighters from Captiva FD at 12:05am. They checked the area for anyone being in the surrounding houses and began assisting with the operation. LCSO deputy assisted with the water supply operation. The Captiva FD firefighters assisted with hand lines to protect exposure 1 and it was showing signs of heat from heat of the fire and the venting of the propane tank close to the exposure.

Responding MERT unit M231 arrive approximately 12:06am and set up a water supply. Marine 171 arrived on scene at 12:35am. Exposure 1 was now on fire. Cape Marine 7, Cape Marine 1, Iona Marine 70, and Charlotte County Marine Unit arrived at approximately 1:00am.

At 12:39am officers John Cook, Mack McMullen and Ron Givens arrived on scene with task force leader, Bayshore Fire Chief Larry Nisbet by using our crew boat M192. Upon arrival the primary structure had collapsed and the exposure was fully involved. Captain John Cook assumed command while Captain McMullen assumed operations and Captain Givens assumed accountability. The strike teams arriving by Island Girl Charters proceeded to extinguish the primary and exposure fires and

protecting other existing exposures. Island Girl continued to transport manpower and supplies throughout the event.

The fire was called under control at 1:32am. The propane tank continued off gassing and a hose stream was continued until all gas was expelled. After the fire was out the strike teams began returning to the mainland. There were also EMS teams set up for rehab of personnel.

Mop up operations continued into the day of the 12th. Our incoming staff worked the mop up with extra manpower supplied by Fort Myers FD, Cape Coral FD, and Estero FD with a South Trail FD fire investigator. Portable pump P192 was used to supply continuous water to cool hot spots and overhaul operations. The engine, T191 and B192 were placed back into service.

Note:

I measure success in the fact that no one was injured and no equipment was lost. The structure being fully involved and the amount of fuel burning on arrival were incredible. Because of the amount of fuel involved, this was an extremely large and hotter than average fire and our firefighters did an amazing job of containing it until back-up arrived. Every fire has unique conditions. We identified many issues but we learned many things as well. We will be working on making improvements in training and equipment needed to continue serving the island with the lessons learned from this event.

Submitted By

Chief Kinniry