

# Firefighters who battled N.J. warehouse blaze to get dinner



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**HILLSBOROUGH** — A thank-you dinner for all those who helped fight the huge warehouse fire on Feb. 11 is coming together.

Five hundred firefighters spent over 24 hours battling the warehouse blaze, which was investigated by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The bureau's National Response Team couldn't determine how the fire started, but said there was no indication it was intentionally set.

Charity Events Group, started by Manville resident Derek Basista, is organizing the community dinner to honor crews from more than 90 fire companies in five counties.



Warehouse blaze by the numbers

"We will never have all the words to say 'thank you' but we hope in some way by bringing in the countless people who helped keep this fire under control, we can share a night of great food, music, and friendships," Basista said on the [GoFundMe site](#) he's started to help finance the evening.

The event will be at Thomas J. Kavanaugh VFW Post 2290 in Manville on Saturday, April 2, 6-10 p.m. The post is at 600 Washington Ave.

Invitations to all the firefighters involved are in the mail, and Basista says he's lined up Hillsborough Township's support.

The band **Heritage 3** will donate its talents for the evening. The three-piece acoustic rock band from Manville covers songs from the 1960s to modern day.



Blaze caused millions in damages

Basista said attendees will also hear from Millstone Mayor Raymond Heck, Manville Mayor Richard Onderko and state Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker, who has told Basista he'll be issuing resolutions to each fire station.

The menu will include "everything from chicken to roast beef, and all the sides," Basista said. Hillsborough ShopRite's donating to the event, and Basista said Friday he's raised \$2,120 via GoFundMe and another \$250 in cash donations.

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