



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **May 10, 2024**

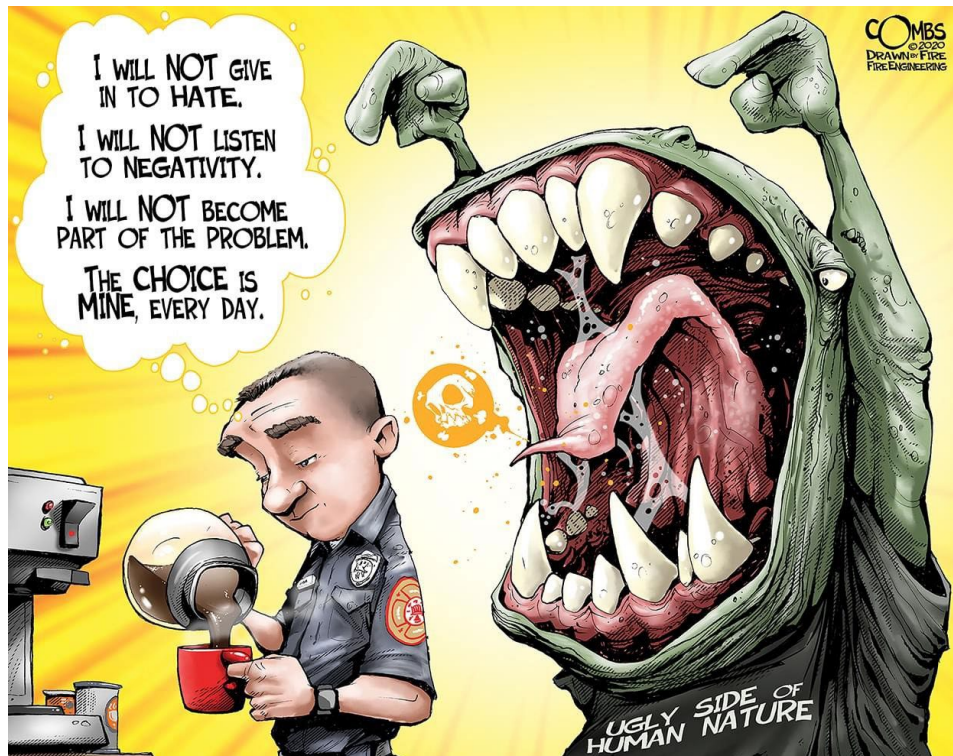
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"Talent might make you good, but it's your attitude and work-ethic that will make you great."

Allistair McCan

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The Chief's Desk

It's hard to believe that we're already nearing the middle of May. There's so much going on in our organization that time just seems to pass in an instant. Reflecting on this current fiscal year and the trials, tribulations, and yet amazing opportunities we've had, I can't help but be excited about the direction CAFMA is headed. I believe it's safe to say that a majority of you feel the same way.

We've certainly witnessed our share of tragedy over the last couple of years. It's taken a toll on everyone in the organization, Operations and Non-Operations alike. Yet, we've rallied, supported one another, supported families, shared our grief, and continued to move the organization forward. It hasn't been easy, but we've done it.

If there's one thing I know about our organization and our people, it's that we come together in crisis, and we come out the other side stronger than when it started. We actually do turn challenge into opportunity and that's what makes us strong as a team. The lessons we've learned from the loss of our members has helped shape a culture in our organization that is accepting of folks sharing when they're not okay. At the same time, we've continually worked to enhance our mental and behavioral health services.

Recently, we hosted the first five-day Struggle Well program with our partner fire and law enforcement agencies. I believe we had five people participate, including Captain Brody Fields. When I saw him at CARTA earlier this week, he shared with me the value he felt the program would bring to our folks.

The partnership with Start Moving On that we've established, the PEER Program, and access to the Center in Maryland are all great steps, but there's still a piece missing. In my mind, all the things we've added, while great, are still the reactive part of the mental and behavioral health. What we need to find is the proactive part, i.e., a program that provides the tools to build resiliency for you and your families throughout your careers. Brody shared this about Struggle Well, "It wasn't a counseling class, it was a program that teaches life skills."

He's exactly right, and that's why I wanted to bring the program to the area. Struggle Well acknowledges that struggle in our lives is normal, it's how we deal with struggle that makes the difference. This is the proactive piece of the puzzle we've been trying to find.

Over the next several years, we'll be working to bring the Struggle Well program to our area two to four times per year. Our overarching goal is to put every member of CAFMA, Operations and Non-Operations through the program. Tucson PD has made significant progress, with over 70% of their personnel completing the Struggle Well program, and they say that the culture of Tucson PD has changed significantly and that people are happier and healthier than ever. **Cont. Page 4**

Upcoming Events:

May 13: Senior staff in Mesa for a meeting regarding NERIS, Record podcast

May 14: Final Chiefs interview for Engineer, Labor/Management, review 115 Trust, Chief to attend the Prescott City Council meeting followed by the Chino Town Council Meeting

May 15: Chief in Phoenix panelist at the CRR Conference, WFOA Board Meeting, Quarterly CAFMA/PFD Staff Meeting

May 16: BC Meeting, Timber WUI meeting

Board Meeting:

Board Meeting: May 23
CAFMA – 1700-1830

Firefighters must practice self-care to achieve post-traumatic growth

By: Sara Jahnke, Ph.D.

With the thousands of first responders who have been called on to help with the natural and man-made disasters, it's more important than ever to pay attention, not just to the response efforts, but to the responders themselves.

Disaster response – whether it's a hurricane, an active shooter incident or a terrorist attack – is particularly challenging because it has so many layers. In Houston, for example, many of the first responders were not only facing the trauma in their communities, but also were managing the risks and losses their families, friends and neighbors were facing.

It is not uncommon for responders to have negative behavioral health responses in the wake of a disaster, including feelings of burnout and compassion fatigue in the form of secondary traumatic stress. In particular, responders are vulnerable to feelings of anger, sorrow and guilt.

Symptoms of burnout include feelings of frustration, failure, disconnection from others and using alcohol or other substances to manage. Responders may also experience symptoms of a phenomenon termed "secondary traumatic stress," or compassion fatigue. This is when helpers take on the stress of the people they are trying to help. Always being the person there to "save the day" can take its toll on a firefighter, particularly in the shadow of a major event.

There also tend to be higher rates of post-traumatic stress symptoms and depression in the weeks and months after a disaster. Reactions can even come years after an event as people start to process what they experienced.

[FireRescue1](#)

Completing the 540: Drones provide elevated insights into fireground operations

By: Vince Bettinazzi and Christian Sliker

Establishing command, completing a 360 and assigning crews. This is considered baseline for almost every fireground operation in the country.

But what if there's more? What if you could provide another view that would show more than just walls and roof lines? What if this view could provide an aerial snapshot of fire, smoke and hazardous conditions that would aid incident commanders (ICs) in making safer fireground tactical decisions?

Drones allow us to complete a 360-degree perspective of the scene. This allows the IC to make more informed decisions, develop a solid incident action plan, and start those winning tactics. Add some nifty drone accessories like a FLIR camera, and we have a real-time, ongoing incident assessment.

Let's review the implementation of drones in the fire service and how they can help take your organizations scene safety to the next level.

Once your organization had decided to pursue a drone program, the inevitable first question is, "Where should we start?"

The first step is figuring out which drone will fit your specific operational needs. Just like buying a car, there are a ton of options. Maybe not heated seats or fuzzy steering wheel covers, but there are plenty of options to help tailor the aircraft to fit your use specifications.

[FireRescue1](#)

Chief's Desk Cont.

While some in Tucson initially balked at having to attend, each embraced the program by the end. We saw a similar thing happen with some of those who attended the two day that was scheduled to showcase the program for the Quad Cities.

I hope as we move forward with the planning and implementation of the program you'll embrace the opportunity. The lessons I learned and the things I learned about myself in just the two-day program have had an impact on how I approach my life and the struggles I face. Senior Staff will each attend a five-day program, even though we've been to the two- day.

Many of the programs we're trying to implement, studies that we are participating in, and adjustments to our approach to things like the recruit academy are all in an effort to improve the health and wellness of our members. Moreover, our efforts extend beyond Operations, we're always seeking ways to offer the same or similar programs to our Non-Operations members.

During our Chiefs' interviews for engineer promotions this week, we had a member talk about some of the challenges he's seen with the recruit academies related to some of the intense physical conditioning. Listen, we all know the Chiefs' interviews are more conversational than intense interrogation. To that end, we may have been a bit off topic – go figure. That said, some of his ideas are right in line with the study we'll be part of as we look towards the fall academy.

The candidate's comments/concerns, along with his recommendations for improvement, tell me that we're moving the right direction. I plan to share some of his information at our meeting on May 22nd.

I don't know who needs to hear it this week, but you matter, and you make a difference. Everyone who works at CAFMA serves a vital purpose within our organization, and each of you is important to your family and friends. To that end, it's incumbent upon us to do everything we can to offer opportunity and create a culture that embraces the idea of the complete health and wellness of every member and their family.
