



# THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **January 3, 2020**

## This Edition:

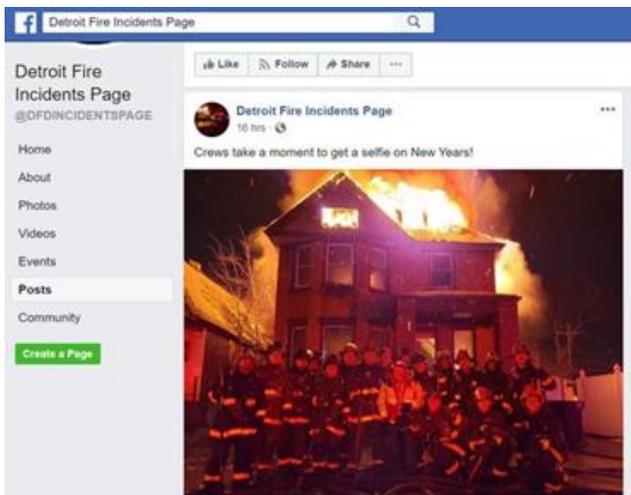
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Too wordy this week to add more.....

## Quote of the Week

"Gentlemen, we are going to relentlessly chase perfection, knowing full well we will not catch it, because nothing is perfect. But we're going to relentlessly chase it because in the process we will catch excellence. I am not interested in just being good."

Vince Lombardi



## Detroit firefighters under fire for selfie in front of burning home

By: JC Reindl

Detroit's fire commissioner says he will investigate the circumstances of a social media photograph posted on New Year's Eve showing 18 firefighters posing in front of roaring house fire, according to media reports.

The photo was posted on the "Detroit Fire Incidents Page" on Facebook along with the caption "crews take a moment to get a selfie on New Years!" In the background is a house engulfed in flames. The post has since been taken down.

[Detroit Free Press](#)

While we do not know the entire story, the picture doesn't send a good message. It is however reminiscent of the one from New Jersey several months ago.

As we begin the New Year, please remember not to do anything this ill advised. Thank you all in advance for your cooperation!

*Chief Freitag*

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## The Chief's Desk



Welcome to 2020!! It's funny, I've heard and read a lot of comments concerning the end of 2019. The general theme has been – "2019, what the hell was that?" Seems for a lot of folks, 2019 was not a banner year. I certainly had some days, especially in the first 6-8 months of 2019 where I was thinking and may have even voiced, "What the hell was that?" However, as I reflect on 2019 and the challenges we

faced, I feel like we are headed into 2020 a stronger organization. As an individual, I feel like I'm starting 2020 stronger as a person both emotionally and intellectually. Not despite the challenges of last year, but because of the challenges last year. Growth requires us to challenge ourselves whether we want to or not. Without challenge there is no growth, nor are their opportunities.

Make sure you read the Quote of the Week. I hope you know by now that I am not okay with CAFMA just being good. We will always pursue excellence!

As I mentioned, I've been reading the book, *12 Rules for Life: An Antidote to Chaos* by Dr. Jordan B. Peterson. Yes, I'm still reading it. It's a pretty heavy book psychologically which I enjoy, it's just that I'm not that bright so it takes me a bit longer to read and comprehend this type of work. Over the last week I've read a few things I'd like to share with you as we move into 2020.

The first concept is relatively simple – "Make the world better." Sounds like a big hairy audacious goal, but if you think about it, it's not. The concept is not about solving the world's problems, rather it's about making your part of the world better. That includes you, your family, your friends, your neighbors, your peers, your work place, etc. As I've said before, your sphere of influence is far bigger than you think.

In reality, if you are not trying to make yourself and those around you better, what are you doing? The opposite of making the world better, is making it worse – don't do that.

This brings me to the second concept – "Do what is meaningful, not what is expedient." There are several examples that help explain this one, but due to time and space I'll pick just one. As you know, we have educational requirements as part of our succession plans. I've had a number of people tell me that they had not finished their degrees for a variety of reasons. I totally get that, however this is what I do not understand – the idea of seeking a short cut to your education e.g. the simplest and fastest way to check the box. I've heard it from both adults and kids who need a degree for their profession, but don't want to put forth the effort. I've said it before, higher education is not the be all end all, but it does provide additional tools in your toolbox as part of your journey for personal mastery. Continued on Page 5

### Upcoming Events:

Jan 6 – Senior Staff Meeting  
Jan 7 – Labor/Management,  
Chief's Interviews for Captain's  
promotional process  
Jan 8 – SOG meeting, Video  
Conference with IAFC for FRI,  
Chief's Interviews for  
Engineer's promotional process  
Jan 9 – AFSI in Phoenix

### Board Meeting:

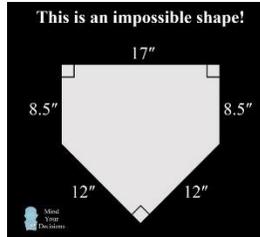
January 27<sup>th</sup> Administration  
CAFMA – 1700-1830



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## Widening the Plate (A good reminder to start 2020)

By: Chris Sperry



Twenty years ago, in Nashville, Tennessee, during the first week of January, 1996, more than 4,000 baseball coaches descended upon the Opryland Hotel for the 52nd annual ABCA's convention.

While I waited in line to register with the hotel staff, I heard other more veteran coaches rumbling about the lineup of speakers scheduled to present during the weekend. One name kept resurfacing, always with the same sentiment — “John Scolinos is here? Oh, man, worth every penny of my airfare.”

Who is John Scolinos, I wondered. No matter; I was just happy to be there.

In 1996, Coach Scolinos was 78 years old and five years retired from a college coaching career that began in 1948. He shuffled to the stage to an impressive standing ovation, wearing dark polyester pants, a light blue shirt, and a string around his neck from which home plate hung — a full-sized, stark-white home plate.

Seriously, I wondered, who is this guy?

After speaking for twenty-five minutes, not once mentioning the prop hanging around his neck, Coach Scolinos appeared to notice the snickering among some of the coaches. Even those who knew Coach Scolinos had to wonder exactly where he was going with this, or if he had simply forgotten about home plate since he'd gotten on stage. Then, finally ...

“You’re probably all wondering why I’m wearing home plate around my neck,” he said, his voice growing irascible. I laughed along with the others, acknowledging the possibility. “I may be old, but I’m not crazy. The reason I stand before you today is to share with you baseball people what I’ve learned in my life, what I’ve learned about home plate in my 78 years.”

Several hands went up when Scolinos asked how many Little League coaches were in the room. “Do you know how wide home plate is in Little League?”

After a pause, someone offered, “Seventeen inches?”, more of a question than answer.

“That’s right,” he said. “How about in Babe Ruth’s day? Any Babe Ruth coaches in the house?” Another long pause.

“Seventeen inches?” a guess from another reluctant coach.

“That’s right,” said Scolinos. “Now, how many high school coaches do we have in the room?” Hundreds of hands shot up, as the pattern began to appear. “How wide is home plate in high school baseball?”

“Seventeen inches,” they said, sounding more confident.

“You’re right!” Scolinos barked. “And you college coaches, how wide is home plate in college?”

“Seventeen inches!” we said, in unison.

“Any Minor League coaches here? How wide is home plate in pro ball?” ..... “Seventeen inches!”

“RIGHT! And in the Major Leagues, how wide home plate is in the Major Leagues?”

“Seventeen inches!”

“SEV-EN-TEEN INCHES!” he confirmed, his voice bellowing off the walls. “And what do they do with a Big League pitcher who can’t throw the ball over seventeen inches?” Pause. “They send him to Pocatello !” he hollered, drawing raucous laughter. “What they don’t do is this: they don’t say, ‘Ah, that’s okay, Jimmy. If you can’t hit a seventeen-inch target? We’ll make it eighteen inches or nineteen inches. We’ll make it twenty inches so you have a better chance of hitting it. If you can’t hit that, let us know so we can make it wider still, say twenty-five inches.’”

Pause. “Coaches... what do we do when your best player shows up late to practice? or when our team rules forbid facial hair and a guy shows up unshaven? What if he gets caught drinking? Do we hold him accountable? Or do we change the rules to fit him? Do we widen home plate? ”

The chuckles gradually faded as four thousand coaches grew quiet, the fog lifting as the old coach’s message began to unfold. He turned the plate toward himself and, using a Sharpie, began to draw something. When he turned it toward the crowd, point up, a house was revealed, complete with a freshly drawn door and two windows. “This is the problem in our homes today. With our marriages, with the way we parent our kids. With our discipline.

We don’t teach accountability to our kids, and there is no consequence for failing to meet standards. We just widen the plate!”

Pause. Then, to the point at the top of the house he added a small American flag. “This is the problem in our schools today. The quality of our education is going downhill fast and teachers have been stripped of the tools they need to be successful, and to educate and discipline our young people. We are allowing others to widen home plate! Where is that getting us?”

Silence. He replaced the flag with a Cross. “And this is the problem in the Church, where powerful people in positions of authority have taken advantage of young children, only to have such an atrocity swept under the rug for years. Our church leaders are widening home plate for themselves! And we allow it.”

“And the same is true with our government. Our so-called representatives make rules for us that don’t apply to themselves. They take bribes from lobbyists and foreign countries. They no longer serve us. And we allow them to widen home plate! We see our country falling into a dark abyss while we just watch.”

I was amazed. At a baseball convention where I expected to learn something about curve balls and bunting and how to run better practices, I had learned something far more valuable.

From an old man with home plate strung around his neck, I had learned something about life, about myself, about my own weaknesses and about my responsibilities as a leader. I had to hold myself and others accountable to that which I knew to be right, lest our families, our faith, and our society continue down an undesirable path.

“If I am lucky,” Coach Scolinos concluded, “you will remember one thing from this old coach today. It is this: “If we fail to hold ourselves to a higher standard, a standard of what we know to be right; if we fail

to hold our spouses and our children to the same standards, if we are unwilling or unable to provide a consequence when they do not meet the standard; and if our schools & churches & our government fail to hold themselves accountable to those they serve, there is but one thing to look forward to ...”

With that, he held home plate in front of his chest, turned it around, and revealed its dark black backside, “...We have dark days ahead!”

Note: Coach Scolinos died in 2009 at the age of 91, but not before touching the lives of hundreds of players and coaches, including mine. Meeting him at my first ABCA convention kept me returning year after year, looking for similar wisdom and inspiration from other coaches. He is the best clinic speaker the ABCA has ever known because he was so much more than a baseball coach. His message was clear: “Coaches, keep your players—no matter how good they are—your own children, your churches, your government, and most of all, keep yourself at seventeen inches.”

And this my friends is what our country has become and what is wrong with it today, and now go out there and fix it!

"Don't widen the plate."

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## **Chief's Desk Continued**

If you are looking for a short cut requiring the least amount of work, then you are not on a journey of personal mastery. Rather, you're looking simply to check a box which only serves to undermine you and the opportunities that lie ahead. If you're seeking a short cut to your education and development, what other areas of your life are you looking to short cut? That's a problem. Do what's meaningful in an effort to make the world better. Expediency will end up biting you in the ass. In every aspect of your life, not just education, you should put forth the effort to do what's meaningful.

Rule 8 is “Tell the truth, or at least don't lie.” You really need to read the book to grasp the entire concept, but I'll give you a snippet here. Part of this rule includes not lying to yourself. Dr. Peterson describes an authentic person as someone who strives for something, misses the mark, and says to themselves “I'll work harder and do better next time.” An inauthentic person is someone that strives for something, misses the mark, and says to themselves as well as others “That was not my fault, I got screwed by \_\_\_\_\_!” An inauthentic person, someone who cannot take ownership of their own situation, is lying to themselves as well as everyone else. You are in charge of you, you have the gift of choice, and you have to own it – whatever “it” is. Obviously, this rule gets into greater detail about overall honesty as it relates to other people, which I'm not going to get into here. However, if you cannot be honest with yourself, how can you be honest with others?

As we start 2020, and as it relates to you as well as to our agency strive to make the world better. Make it better at home and at work. Do what's meaningful and don't look for short cuts. Personal mastery is a journey, there's not an end point, and there's no short cut. Be honest with yourself and others. Own your choices, own your opportunities, and own the outcome. Yes, outside forces can have an impact, but you can own that as well. I could have stayed at a former employer and been miserable despite my

efforts to improve the environment. Instead, I chose to recognize my situation, own it, and leave. Sometimes, ownership is making the choice to step away from an unhealthy situation. Not necessarily in my situation, but in many others it's not just ownership, its courage.

If we relate accreditation back to the two concepts and one rule I shared above, you'll see a direct connection to each one. Accreditation will help us make CAFMA better i.e. make our part of the world better. We are approaching the process in a meaningful way. Three years ago we took a pass on expediency when we declined to accept the offer to do a half-assed job. That's not the way CAFMA operates. Finally, our process will be a completely open and honest evaluation of where we are as an organization. If we have areas that are deficient, we will own them and work to improve. We'll celebrate the areas in which we excel, but will not get complacent. Excellence knows no short cuts, and does not allow for complacency.

One thing that is constant in life is change, and we expect that CAFMA will see additional changes throughout 2020. I am not delusional, so I expect we will experience challenges along the way. I don't know what they will be, but I can tell you that whatever happens, we will be stronger going into 2021 than we are today. Just apply that to each day and year moving forward. Simply put, strive to be better tomorrow than you are today, and that will culminate in you being better starting 2021 than you are starting 2020. No New Year resolution, just a daily resolve to be the best you can be.