



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **May 15, 2020**

This Edition:

The Chief's Desk Page 2
How The Best Leaders Are Already Planning Past
The CrisisPage 3
Two MD Firefighters Injured Trying to Rescue
WomanPage 3

Quote of the Week

“One of the great mistakes is to judge policies and programs by their intentions rather than their results.”

~Milton Friedman



Congratulations to Assistant Chief of Operations Jeff Polacek on your retirement! You have left a legacy in the fire service that will serve us well for generations to come. This is especially true given the fact you trained or had a hand in training a majority of the firefighters in our area – as well as some in the valley. Just the other morning at breakfast we had a restaurant owner tell us that he has employed lessons learned from you to run a successful business outside of the fire service. I hope you truly understand the impact that you’ve had throughout your career.

Who would have thought when I met you at the National Fire Academy nearly 10 years ago that I would have the privilege of moving across country to work with you over the last 6.5 years? What you have helped create with CAFMA will have a lasting impact on the communities you have dutifully served throughout your career. Our citizens are fortunate to have had a man of your character, professionalism, and expertise ensuring that their needs and their safety are our priority.

It has been an honor serving with you, and an honor to call you a friend.

Chief Polacek’s flag raising ceremony is scheduled for 0800 hours at Station 61 on Tuesday, May 19. His flag lowering ceremony is scheduled for 0800 hours on Wednesday, May 20. He chose Station 61 because that is where he started his career, so he thought it fitting to end his career there as well.

Our recruit graduation, promotional, and retirement ceremony has been postponed. We have rescheduled the ceremony for July 14 at the Findlay Toyota Center.

The Chief's Desk

Day, no week, no..... Whatever! We have entered phase one of reopening our economy, which is a good step! I may not have agreed with the lock down, but I'm glad we're finally opening things up. It's unfortunate that there will never be a true after action review (AAR) completed concerning our nation's response to this event. Don't get me wrong, the CDC and others may tell us what a great job they did by implementing "social distancing" to flatten the curve. However, they have yet to provide any conclusive evidence to support that claim. Others will say it was an extremely exaggerated approach based on flawed data – okay, let's be honest, I may have said that more than once. Some will always believe that this entire thing is one giant conspiracy designed to take away our freedom of thought and movement – just to clarify, that is not at all what I believe. We will have another group that says we didn't do enough and that we still want people to die – ummm, no, no I do not think anyone at any point wanted people to die. Ultimately, we will have variations of history written and re-written about the 2020 pandemic.

It has taken years for the fire service to truly implement sound AAR's following an incident. For far too long we did not want to admit to ourselves that we did something wrong or could have approached an incident differently. In the meantime, we continued to repeat the same mistakes over and over again. Unfortunately, our inability to be honest with ourselves was a disservice to our fellow firefighters. Our issue was not as much political as it was ego driven. Fortunately, the fire service changed. We're not perfect, but a lot better.

Because of egos, political divides, and extremism I don't think we'll ever learn the lessons we should from our recent experience. Admitting someone was incorrect during COVID would be like blood in the water for sharks. Seriously folks, what have we come to as human beings??

Governor Ducey announced the reopening of businesses and recreation facilities this week. While I appreciated some of what the Governor had to say, because he was finally opening things up, I cringed as he responded to questions from the media regarding "who" is enforcing social distancing in restaurants. Hearing him respond with "they are" and "they did" with no context for who "they" represents was painful. Not that the Governor reads this, but here is my recommendation for a future response to similar questions:

We do not live in a police state, nor are we legislating new laws from the Governor's office. My office has provided guidance for citizens, restaurants, stores, and gathering places. We would expect that proprietors will take responsible measures to protect their employees as well as their customers. At the same time, we would expect Arizonans to make responsible decisions for themselves and their families. We neither have the resources nor desire to provide 24 hour governmental oversight that infringes upon individual rights.

Upcoming Events:

May 18 –MAC meeting
May 19 – Flag Raising 61
Polacek, visit stations
May 20 – Flag Lowering 61
Polacek, visit stations
May 21 – Board meetings

Board Meeting:

May 21st Admin

CVFD – 1600-1630
CYFD – 1630-1700
CAFMA – 1700-1830

My message to business owners is this; we have provided you guidelines that we feel are in the best interest of your employees and patrons. We strongly recommend that you take appropriate precautions. For citizens, decide what is best for you and your family – you do not get to make decisions for everyone else.

Continued on Page 4

How The Best Leaders Are Already Planning Past The Crisis

By: Lolly Daskal

When a crisis disrupts the usual order of things, leaders can't settle for just dealing with what's in front of them today. They need to immediately begin looking ahead and planning for the future to make sure they're prepared for what comes next—even if they have no idea what shape it will take.

It may feel like a time to sit and wait, but in fact it's a time to be proactive about the future—yours, your team's, and your organization's. Here's how you can emulate the best leaders in planning through crisis.

Brainstorm: Gather the sharpest minds and most insightful thinkers in your organization to discuss what the next months and years may look like. Spend time together exploring a range of scenarios and tracking for each of them how you can move the business and its people beyond the crisis.

Discover opportunities and threats: In the discussion of each possible scenario, include a big-picture assessment of possible opportunities and threats, grounded in awareness that the crisis is changing not only your organization but also your industry and your customers.

lollydaskal.com

Two MD Firefighters Injured Trying to Rescue Woman

By: Alex Mann

A woman died Thursday in a fire at a waterfront home in Pasadena, unable to escape as firefighters tried to rescue her, Anne Arundel County Fire Department officials said.

Callers from across Rock Creek called 9-1-1 around 11:30 a.m. to report flames and smoke emanating from the back of the waterfront home, said Capt. Erik Kornmeyer, a department spokesman.

It was the first fire fatality in Anne Arundel County this year.

The first firefighters arrived within six minutes of the call to find heavy fire and smoke. Kornmeyer said the house had a high-vaulted ceiling.

"So, the fire spread very quickly," he said.

Considering the home's position on Rock Creek, with the Key Bridge in the backdrop, fire boats from the Baltimore City Fire Department were summoned, Kornmeyer said. The boats are equipped to draw water from creek, in case firefighters don't have access to water from land.

firehouse.com

Chief's Desk Continued

My guess is that this response would not have been well received by the media, but may have been better than repeatedly saying "they." Has anyone watched the Kevin James short film where a fellow citizen calls 911 because two people shake hands in a park? It's hilarious until you realize people are actually making those calls! Hello, we live in America, you remember, land of the free. So, knock it off and police yourself.

On another note, I saw something recently that said wearing a mask is about compassion. Nearly tugged at my heart strings – a tear almost welled up. Nope, not really. I think Carolyn in the front office said it best, but for this publication I will summarize her thoughts in a more politically correct way – Compassion is about educating people and then letting them decide. She was spot on. Saying that wearing a mask is about compassion is meant to guilt you into doing something that for most is not necessary. Why not educate folks about masks, which has not been done. N95 masks for which professionals are fit tested provide significant protection. Surgical masks of a certain type provide some level of protection, but that decreases as standard/quality of the mask decreases. Cloth masks provide marginal to zero real protection. This does vary based on the material used to create the mask.

The idea of a cloth mask was born out of a concern after H1N1 that N95 or protective surgical masks would run short. As I wrote last week, a 2010 study using regularly available cloth determined that cotton masks were nearly 97% penetrable immediately by small viruses. We also learned that any gaps in the masks decreased protection by 50%. So, if the mask is 3% effective with a perfect seal, the rate of effectiveness in theory would drop to 1.5% when not sealed properly.

To be fair, the above results are from the 2010 study that used T-shirt material, sweatshirt material, and bath towel material. Those are fabrics easily sourced and/or found around the home. The 2020 study showed significantly better protection from cloth masks than the 2010 study. One caveat, the better protection in the 2020 study was provided by silk, chiffon, and tightly woven cotton with batting. I'm not clear on this, but I believe silk and chiffon are rather expensive and not readily available around your home. Additionally, neither study conducted field tests using live test subjects e.g. neither tested for repeated use, how humidity from your breath may diminish performance of the cloth, nor did they re-test the material after multiple washings.

Notice, the recommendations to wear a cloth mask, at least from what I have seen, do not include any data related to their effectiveness. Rather, what's said is that "it's better than nothing," or "it's not about you, it's about everyone else." Again, compassion is about educating people and then allowing

them to make a decision based on the information/data. Allow me to pose a question – if cloth masks are that effective, why release dangerous criminals from prison to protect them, why not just provide cloth masks? Asking for a friend.

I never thought I would do this, but I researched the size of soot particles during a structure fire. When we wear our gear into a fire and have a white T-shirt on underneath, we come out with the white t-shirt covered in soot. This causes serious concerns related to carcinogens soaking into our skin. Additionally, we wear Nomex hoods to protect us from heat, but as they become saturated with sweat, they become less effective at protecting us. Interestingly, soot created by a structure fire is measured in micrometers. Viruses are typically measured in nanometers, which by the way are smaller than micrometers. If large particles of soot can penetrate our firefighting ensemble and then our T-shirts, please explain to me how a T-shirt material covering our mouths will stop something measured in nanometers? Just a question, not trying to be argumentative. No, our gear is not perfectly sealed which is typically how the soot gets through, but neither are the cloth masks.

It seems the narrative changes regularly. At one point, top scientists said that wearing masks is not recommended for an otherwise healthy public, and may actually be unhealthy. Now they recommend everyone wear a mask not necessarily because they are significantly effective, but out of compassion. Seems a 180 from their initial recommendations. Remember this, they have not actually studied these things on real people, and the people making the recommendations only consider what happens in their lab using a machine, in theory, or in their office.

I encourage people to understand the limitations of cloth masks as well as lesser surgical masks and make your own decision. If after researching the data you decide that wearing a mask is something you should do, then you should absolutely wear one and no one should ridicule you for your decision. However, if after researching the data you decide that wearing a mask is something you do not need to do, then you should not wear one and should not be shamed for your decision. In a word – respect. I think Aretha Franklin performed a song about it.

Last Friday I ran into an engine company at the gas station. The Captain shared with me that someone in the grocery store parking lot had become agitated when the crew got out of the engine without masks. The person was so agitated that they removed their own mask to properly yell at the crew. Fortunately, we had a very professional officer who was able to diffuse the situation. In the end, the citizen thanked the crew for their service to the community. I applaud the officer and his crew for their professionalism!

One of our other Captains is married to a nurse who cares for pediatric patients. She is medically trained, knows which masks are which, how to wear one properly, as well as the limitations of the mask. She chooses to wear a mask in public because she feels it's a good way to protect her patients from anything she may come into contact with while not at the hospital. I applaud and respect her professionalism, commitment, and efforts. That said, a man in a store chastised her for wearing a mask. WTH!!

Some have recently posted memes asking why it's okay to require a shirt and shoes, but not a mask. Typically, unless you are kicking me in the face, your feet are not used to communicate. Your body

language is a means of communication, but I don't need to see your bare chest to understand. However, if I can't tell if you're smiling or frowning, communication becomes cold and ineffective. Your face and facial expressions say a lot when we interact with one another. In my opinion, I do not see the comparison. This has also led to misunderstandings, and frustration. A good way to increase tension during an already stressful time.

So, this week I want to close with something more direct for those unclear as to where I stand. I personally do not recommend otherwise healthy people wear a mask – that is my opinion based on my research into the subject. That means I do not recommend that CAFMA personnel wear a mask unless you are caring for a sick patient. Yes, that is a different position than the CDC, but at least I'm basing my opinion on data, observation of the general public, and more of an understanding of cloth materials than I ever wanted. That said, if you would like to wear a mask, you can do that as well. It's your choice.

I hope you have found this week enlightening. I've really tried to be clear as to where I stand, and apologize for not being more straightforward the last several weeks. I'm tired of this, so next week we will focus on Chief Polacek's retirement. Okay, there may be some discussion concerning other CDC recommendations like ceasing the use of tobacco, or maintaining a healthy diet and weight. The fallback position for many folks is that the CDC recommends wearing a mask. Well, they also recommend you eat healthy and stop smoking and chewing. At least the last recommendations are based on years of scientific research and field studies.