



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **May 22, 2020**

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Quote of the Week

"In a gentle way, you can shake the world."

~Mahatma Gandhi



Operations Chief Jeff Polacek, his wife Katie, daughters Abbey and Lexi, along with his dad – Mr. Polacek. ↓ A bunch of people that like Jeff 😊



Photo Credit: Bill (Santa Claus) Brookins

The Chief's Desk

So, what do you want to be when you grow up? A question we probably all heard as little kids and then again through our high school years. In fact, I believe a similar question was posed to all of you five years ago when Chief Polacek and Chief Bliss submitted their drop paperwork. Wednesday, we held the flag lowering ceremony for Chief Polacek at Station 61. As I stood and watched the flag slowly slide down the pole on its guides, I was struck by just how quickly time disappears. Five years sounds like a long time, but it really isn't.

We still have two retirements ahead of us this year with Chief Bliss and Firefighter Sims. Over the next five years, because of the drop program, we know we have a minimum of 12 additional retirements. It doesn't sound like a lot until you consider how many positions open as a result of each retirement. In 2024 we will see two battalion chiefs retire and in 2025 two additional will retire. That is a significant change in leadership within our operations ranks in a very short period of time. Additionally, their retirements create opportunities for new company officers, engineers, and firefighters. We will lose an additional four captains and three engineers to retirements between 2021 and 2025.

For those doing the math, in the next five years we will have four of our six operations battalion chief positions open, nine of our 31 captain's positions, and at least eight of our 31 engineer positions. And, a number of brand new firefighters that will need leadership and mentoring.

To that end, I will ask the question again, what do you want to be when you grow up? You do not have five years to think about the idea that maybe one day you might want to think about possibly promoting so maybe you should sometime start to consider obtaining the qualifications – possibly?!?!? The point is, if you vacillate back and forth, you may already be putting yourself behind. The ship is starting to sail. Are you ready to get on board, or will you miss out because you procrastinated?

CAFMA has an established succession plan for each position within our agency. To that end, you know now, and you knew five years ago what is required for you to promote. We provide a map and opportunity; it's your job to take the necessary steps to prepare yourself. As Chief Polacek liked to say, act as if you are already in the position to which you aspire. Wise words from a great man!

Let's say for the sake of argument that you take the requisite classes, obtain your degree, act as a leader and in general terms prepare yourself for promotion. Now, for whatever reason, you decide not to test. What have you lost by improving your knowledge, skills, and ability? Nothing, as a matter of fact you've gained a lot of experience and knowledge that will help you excel in your current, or chosen position.

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Upcoming Events:

May 25 – Memorial Day –
Offices closed
May 26 – CAD to CAD interface
meeting, meeting with Mr.
Bard
May 27 – CPM final Sim Zoom,
Statewide mutual aid Zoom
May 28 – Visit stations

Board Meeting:

June 22 Admin

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



2020 State Fire School

By: Assistant Chief of Operations John Feddema

The Executive Board of the Arizona State Fire Training Committee (ASFTC), held a special meeting on May 19th, 2020 to discuss the 47th Annual Arizona State Fire School. After lengthy deliberation, the decision was made to cancel Fire School for 2020. This decision was based on the concern for the health and wellness of all participants, along with the financial uncertainty that many organizations are facing. As a member of the Executive Board I believe it is unfortunate that we are canceling Fire School; however, I don't believe there was support to try and push through the uncertainty we are facing.

As an organization we are committed to providing training to our personnel and opening up opportunities to outside participants. I have already reached out to other members of the Executive Board of the Arizona State Fire Training Committee to discuss what the future looks like for training around the State. We have offered support for hosting courses at CARTA. While I believe it is unfortunate to cancel Fire School, I believe it is an opportunity to expand the influence of the Training Group and represent the strength and commitment of Arizona's Fire Service.

Like other terms that have gained popularity during the last several months, the term "optics" is being used as a weapon in the Fire Service to influence the activities of others. This term gives greater weight to what others may think rather than what we feel is the best decision. While I do not dismiss the safety concerns of COVID 19, I do not believe our leadership should not be defined by what we are willing to cancel but on what we are able to maintain in uncertain times and while facing an undefined challenge. We are not just called to survive in these situations, we are expected to thrive. With that in mind, we have worked hard to provide quality training during the last several months. This training included a 9-week Recruit Academy that was sworn-in during an informal ceremony. We have received criticism for continuing some of our activities; however, we have not continued to move forward in ignorance of the seriousness of COVID 19. We have worked hard to put in place checks and balances to ensure the safety of everyone involved while remaining dedicated to our profession.

I do not believe we can simply stop training. We have the skills and ability to manage the safety concerns around COVID 19 as we continue to move forward. I am concerned that the risk to stop training will result in far more significant issues than we are currently facing in our area. During a recent drill, Chief Carothers highlighted the importance of being "safe and effective"; however, he turned this term around and communicated the significance of being effective, safely. I believe this is an important distinction because we can easily lose all effectiveness as we try to eliminate all risk. If we are not vigilant, we can safely eliminate our ability to perform our job. While I firmly believe all life is precious and I would not ask anyone to put themselves in harm's way unnecessarily, we have dedicated ourselves to a career with inherent risk. We need to continue to conduct this risk assessment to ensure that we remain effective in our operational duties, safely. The best way to accomplish this is by dedicating ourselves to training. Michael Jordan stated in an interview that "I work harder in practice than I do in games, then it slows the game down...keeps me prepared for anything". We need to be as dedicated to our profession as he was to his. We all have the ability to achieve elite status if we dedicate ourselves to performing to the best of our ability. When we can control nothing else around us, we can always control our attitude and effort.

Good Leadership Is About Communicating “Why”

By: Nancy Duarte

In an ongoing crisis, clear communication is more important and more difficult than when things seem normal. Employees and customers are hungry for information, so we’re tempted to pull together presentations and communicate with urgency instead of with careful planning. But if we present without addressing our audience’s core questions of what, how, and why, we’ll sow more confusion than we bring clarity.

At my company, we rework thousands of talks each year for large brands and high-powered executives. When their communications are high-stakes, most of our clients come to us prepared with what needs to happen and how, but they’ve rarely answered the question why.

So, why answer why?

Let’s put it this way: If your boss comes to you and says, “I need you take on this additional project on top of your current work load,” what is your first question going to be? It probably has nothing to do with setting your alarm, re-arranging your schedule, or any other version of how you’re going to get the extra work done. When someone asks you to alter a current behavior, your first question is usually why? Because you’re not going to try something new or hard unless you’re motivated to do so.

Your audience is no different. If they don’t know why a new action is necessary, they won’t be motivated to help you. They’ll continue with their current comfortable behaviors, thank you very much.

Communicators often overlook answering why for two key reasons:

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Chief’s Desk Continued

Folks, we need you to start thinking today about one to three years out not four or five years down the line. As we’ve experienced with Chief Polacek and Chief Bliss, five years goes by in a flash. I do not believe that saying we are at a pivotal point in our history is an overstatement.

We need people to promote who are interested in developing the person behind them. We need people who want to provide leadership and guidance to others so they can be their best and achieve their goals. We need current company officers to realize the impact they can have organizationally at the battalion chief level. We need people who care about themselves, those they work with, as well as the organization and community.

Promoting is not about positional power, it's about giving something back and providing for others. It's about helping set the course of the organization for future success and sustainability. We do not need people who's goal is to attain positional power, we need true leaders.

We have heard that based on the current rate of growth, the Town of Prescott Valley could have a population close to 100,000 between 2030 and 2035. Granted, there are a lot of factors that play into that, but look around – we will continue to grow. CAFMA's estimated population today is 100,000. If Prescott Valley grows by an additional 50,000 and Chino Valley, Dewey-Humboldt, and the rest of our area continue to grow, it's possible that CAFMA's population in the next 10-15 years could be at or well over 150,000. Understanding the potential, what do we need to start thinking about today to ensure we meet our future needs? Fiscal sustainability, talent recruitment and retention, leadership development, call demand, service delivery, etc. There is a lot that goes into planning for our future.

It is going to take a concerted effort by all of us to ensure we are ready to meet the future needs of our organization as well as our community. This means we need people with vision to step up and help us continue our forward progress. Many have asked how long I plan to stay. My goal is September 3, 2030. That will mark my 35th anniversary in the fire service. If you add the additional two years in EMS, that's a total of 37 years in emergency services. In my opinion, that's enough for me. Chief Tharp is looking to retire in 2028 – and because I have written it, its law and he cannot retire before then 😊 Eight and ten years seems like a long time, but it's not. We have to plan today.

If you are interested at all in a future promotion, pull the succession plans from the SOG folder on the terminal and start mapping out your future. Along with a degree, you need to start considering other certification and outside training programs. One that I recommend for captains who want to consider testing for battalion chief is the Battalion Chiefs Academy sponsored by the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association.

I will complete the Certified Public Manager (CPM) program next week through ASU. This is a program that I highly recommend for company officers looking to promote, current department managers, or up and coming department managers, as well as chief officers. It's not an inexpensive program, so there may be a limit as to how many participants we can support per year. I think you would find the CPM program well worth your time, and it's on-line so you do not have to drive to ASU every week for 10 months. If you are interested in additional information, please give me a call directly.

The bottom line is that CAFMA is in a constant state of motion. That forward momentum cannot stop, if we are truly committed to our vision. This is not just an operations or senior staff issue. In the next five years, Fire Marshal Chase retires, and potentially in the next two to three years, Patty will retire from her position as our HR Manager/Mom. There are 32 other operations folks in the next five years that either are or will be eligible to retire. At the same time, we will need to increase our capacity to meet an ever-increasing demand for services.

We have tremendous talent in our organization, and tremendous opportunity on the horizon. I encourage you to start planning today. Do not allow yourself to be lulled into a sense of comfort or

stagnation in your current position – always strive to be more even if your end goal is to remain in the position you hold today.

If you need any assistance or guidance, please reach out. I'm always here if you need me, and more than willing to sit down for a cup of coffee and a conversation about how you can achieve your goals.

Congratulations to our newest recruits! We swore them in Thursday to make them legal – not the way we typically like to do things. We will hold our official graduation, retirement, and promotional ceremony at Findlay Toyota Center on July 14th.



From left to right in the photos:

Seth Collins, Garrett Stretton, Nick McCarthy, Marshall Cazaly, Nelson Divall, Kyle Lund, Ryan Moore, Adrian Kumpula