



# THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **October 19, 2018**

### **This Edition:**

The Chief's Desk..... Page 2  
Don't be that Guy! From a Chief who was. Page 2  
All The World's a Stage, and The Fire Chiefs Merely  
Players.....Page 3  
Stuff that's Happening..... Page 5

### **Quote of the Week**

"Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment."

Jim Rohn

## **T50 Dedication Ceremony**

**October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1400 at Station 50**

**Bring your family to help celebrate!**



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## The Chief's Desk

### *The Disciplined Organization*



What does it mean to be a disciplined organization? I think you have to have discipline, and, well, discipline within your discipline. The word seems to have somewhat of a negative connotation, but it really depends on what definition you are considering. Discipline, or disciplined, in one context means: to train oneself to do something in a

controlled and habitual way. In another context it means: train (someone) to obey rules or a code of behavior, using punishment to correct disobedience. Finally, it can mean: a branch of knowledge, typically one studied in higher education.

The English language is hard.... One word, three different meanings, yet each meaning has something to do with learning. Given I will get confused writing this, if I use the word discipline to discuss more than one or two topics, I'm going to use the word accountability to describe discipline as it refers to corrective action. No, they do not mean the same thing. Accountability: the fact or condition of being accountable; responsibility. However, the point I will attempt to make is that disciplined organizations hold people accountable for actions that are contrary to established policies, principles and philosophies. Sometimes, holding someone accountable can lead to discipline.

One of our first undertakings as CAFMA after the IGA was signed in 2015 was to establish a committee that would be responsible for developing our mission, vision and values. Establishing our core, as I'll refer to them, helped us create and understand our overarching philosophy. These guiding principles were used to create our Compass.

Continued Page 3

### **Upcoming Events:**

Oct 22 – Board Meeting Monday  
Oct 23 – Chief on Floating Holiday to recover from Monday. Chino Town Council  
Oct 24 – Truck 50 Ceremony 1400 hrs,  
Oct 25 – Yavapai County Chief's Quarterly Meeting, NAZ Suns Ticket Pick-up, PV Town Council Meeting

### **Board Meeting:**

October 22<sup>nd</sup> Chino Town Hall

CVFD – 1600-1630  
CAFMA – 1630 -1730  
CYFD – 1730-1800



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## Don't Be THAT Guy! From a Chief Who Was

By: Ken Himel Fire Engineering



While teaching a class for the department in which I began my career, I asked the audience, "If you were the chief, how would you view yourself as a firefighter?"

No one responded. So, I interjected that, as a fire chief, I would have really liked the firefighter I used to be. When asked to explain, I answered that I was eager, dedicated, and all in.

I then followed up by saying, “Now, in the role of fire chief, I often wonder what I would think of the captain I was?” Where did that statement come from? My answer was, “Simple—I wouldn’t like him very much.” I saw the look on a student’s face, and it conveyed, “Wow! Did he just say that?”

I explained how I never thought of things from a chief’s perspective. Again, I was asked to elaborate; I explained that, somewhere along the way, I became arrogant, self-serving, and defiant. I always thought that I knew better. I never looked at things from the “other side.” But honestly, I was just too arrogant. I was *that* guy!

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## **All The World's a Stage, and The Fire Chiefs Merely Players (Part 1)**

Article and Artwork by: **Fire Chief Scott Ferguson**



How to start a discussion on a topic few may want to admit exists among those who are supposed to have reached the pinnacle of their firefighting career? How does one admit that a man or woman responsible for ensuring that firefighters maintain their balance has in fact lost his or her own? How can an audience believe that behind the scripted smiles and carefully placed words is a psyche fatigued and frustrated by the never-ending political games, selfish attitudes, and moral end-arounds? How is someone supposed to trust a person willing to concede that, if they had to do it all over again, they would never have accepted a position as fire chief?

What started as a cathartic attempt by a senior officer to generate a little conversation about a quiet voice in his head has become a mass confession by fire chiefs that the top spot isn’t always what it is cracked up to be. In fact, several acknowledged that if they knew then what they know now, they would have pumped the brakes long before they took that final oath of responsibility. The following observations were prompted by a pair of recent surveys that were sent to a number of fire chiefs around the nation. These surveys were designed to gauge how much the perceptions of occupying the top spot in a fire department match with the reality of the position. Compounding matters, if a third anonymous poll issued to city managers and department heads is any indication of the truth, the toothy smiles and public compliments directed towards public safety professionals may not be as genuine some may like to believe.

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## Chief's Desk Continued

Part of being a disciplined organization is knowing why we exist, what we want to accomplish, and establishing pathways for success. From there, all other aspects of the organization fall into place, if we stay true to our core. This also means that we train to meet our mission. This is not limited to operations. Our entire organization, every division, must be trained in their respective *disciplines* – and there it is – if we are to effectively achieve our mission, vision and values.



Staying true to our core also means we have to provide service beyond expectations both internally and externally. Understanding that we will fall down from time to time, we have to be disciplined enough to pick ourselves back up, dust ourselves off, make necessary course corrections, and move forward striving not to make the same mistake again. This means owning our mistakes and asking for forgiveness when necessary, and/or accepting an apology from someone who has stepped outside our stated core values.

We must be an organization that not only espouses the concept of accountability, but actually holds individuals or groups accountable for their actions. If we allow someone to violate policy because it's "too hard" to hold them accountable, we start down a path of normalizing deviance rather than adhering to our stated core values. Disciplined organizations remain committed to their core. If we use an excessive form of discipline as our first choice rather than offering corrective guidance, we are not a disciplined organization. We need to provide learning experiences as well as opportunities for rebuilding and growth. Now, if after we've offered appropriate correction and guidance, the person continues to act in a manner that is not reflective of or core, then shame on them.

Our goal should be to avoid "shot gunning" problems, and deal with issues as individuals or individual items unless there is a substantive reason for making broad based change. Let's take the "Davis Light" for example. Yes, it was "someone" with the last name Davis, I won't mention Brad's first name, who removed a compartment door using a block wall while leaving the station responding to a call. The fact of the matter is doors are left open on apparatus all over the country, and engineers drive out of the station leaving a crumpled mass of metal that used to be a door behind. In one instance I'm familiar with the door actually took a structural pillar out and collapsed the roof on top of the truck. Fortunately, the door did not come off the apparatus☺ I digress, the fact of the matter is that a warning light indicating a compartment door is ajar is simply a good idea – that said, we are leaving the name in place.... The "Davis Light" has a nice ring to it.

As an organization we owe it to ourselves, each other and our community to train for discipline within our discipline. We owe it to everyone to be accountable for those things we do and/or don't do as the case may be. This means that there may be discipline, if lesser corrective action hasn't worked. It's how we maintain discipline, within our discipline so we will remain disciplined. And, you know what, that's

okay. To err is human as they say. It's how a person responds, not reacts, to it that reveals their true character.

We are an organization that strives for excellence, not perfection. Perfection, as we've discussed before, is not real. Excellence however is real and is achievable as long as we train, as long as we treat each other and those we serve with respect, as long as we continue to strive for innovation, and as long as we remain committed to our core as clearly articulated in the Compass. In short, as long as we are disciplined within our discipline we will be successful..... And that folks is why people around the world cite English as the hardest language to learn – we can't even follow it sometimes.

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## **Stuff That's Happening**

Finance and Chief Tharp have been working with our new auditing firm this week to complete our annual audit. This is a laborious and time consuming task for all involved. At the same time, finance staff has been working to process all payroll action forms for the agreed upon October pay adjustments. This group is dedicated, and at the end of this week, tired. If you have a chance to say thank you, please do – remember, they handle our paychecks☺ And, their just nice people in general.

If you haven't had a chance to stop by tech lately, I'd encourage you to take a minute to say hello and look at the facility. They have done an amazing job wading through the crap that had piled up over the years – it looks completely different. Honestly, I didn't know there was work space with a work bench in the garage. Having Alex McKinnon back working part-time has been a huge help to the tech staff. You may have noticed a number of notifications coming from Tech regarding server maintenance – yes, that is something that is supposed to be completed regularly... Who knew?? Anyway, the communication is greatly appreciated!

Domenic has been working with Rosenbauer to coordinate getting the new Type 3 back to the factory so they can do the job right the third time – hopefully.... He's also been working on the specs for new apparatus and evaluating our options. Travis has been working closely with Chief Polacek and the rest of the SCBA committee getting the SCBA spec together.

I met with the training committee for the AFCA/AFDA Leadership Conference on Wednesday in Mesa. So far, it looks like we have a really good slate of programs and speakers. Now we just have reach out and see who is actually available. I will be making contact with those I'm responsible for over the next week. Chief Karrer and I have been selected to teach our new program "Leading a Fire Department beyond the Operations Level." Our teaching gig is a sub-set of Randy and Scott's Excellent Accreditation. As you may recall, we will be the direct competition with CPSE when it comes to all things accredited. Our stickers will be way cooler!

Chief Polacek and I met via video conference on Thursday with Golder Ranch Fire to discuss our joint SCBA purchase. We will be meeting with them and a sales representative at Golder's Administrative Offices on November 7<sup>th</sup> to move the process forward.

Annual peer fitness evaluations appear to be going well according to Engineer Corbiere. Things are going so well in fact, that he and Mongo dined on "power rings" in the front office before returning to CARTA. I believe the statement was "do as I say, not as I do." However, I could be completely incorrect in my restatement of the statement☺ Either way, that was the sentiment....

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