



THE REVIEW

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

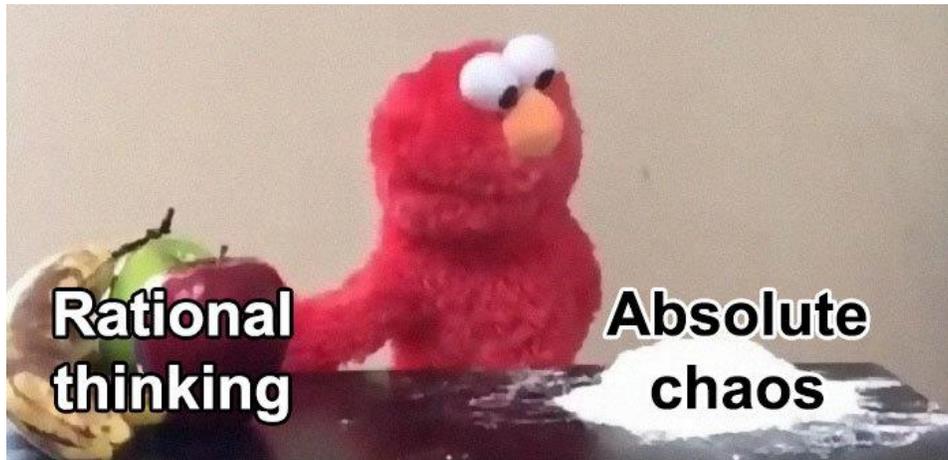
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Quote of the Week

"Stressed people thus create stressed teams, which leads to stressed organization."

-Dr. Henry L Thompson



The Chief's Desk

I feel like writing a science fiction intro this week. Something along the lines of: "Captains log - Week four of the siege, our grip on reality is beginning to loosen as we contemplate what to do without toilet paper and N95 masks." This is a crazy time in our world, with things seemingly turned on their side, upside down and spinning – I don't even like science fiction. The difficult part for us is that there is no clear road map to follow. Don't get me wrong, it's not all exactly trial and error, but there are parts of it that would fit the definition.

As Fire Chief, I would love to be able to coordinate with staff, labor, and our other partners around the state and region to provide a sound and easy to follow plan to address today's challenges. Unfortunately, that simply is not possible. As an example, I was on several web meetings earlier this week with Senator Sinema, the Center for Homeland Defense and Security, the AFCA, and AFDA. There is tremendous frustration with the lack of PPE, but no answers. The stock just doesn't exist. Here's our take as the staff of CAFMA: there's a shortage, be judicious with your use, but protect yourself per our guidelines. Long before we run out of PPE we will have an established plan to protect you. It may not be comfortable, but we will have a plan. I wish we could tell you with 100% certainty how things will play out, but we can't right now.

Here's the thing, getting upset about the lack of PPE and sending letters to the Governor or anyone else is not going to make PPE appear. They know, they understand, they've heard our concerns, and they are trying to get what is needed. Getting frustrated and upset about things you cannot control simply adds to an already heightened sense of anxiety and stress. More about that later. Please be assured that staff is working diligently every day and monitoring the situation to ensure we are prepared. As things change, we adjust. We are making decisions based on CDC recommendations, as well as best practices to keep our operations running.

I do not have any epiphanies or significant updates to share with you related to our COVID-19 plans this week. You are all doing a fantastic job both in the field, in planning and logistics, and in the office keeping both sane and safe. We have implemented safety precautions that are being tweaked as necessary, however we're not finding a need for significant adjustments at this time.

We have responded on at least one known COVID positive patient. The crew wore the appropriate PPE, rendered needed care, and decontaminated everything per policy. What we are doing in the field is working. It also seems that the precautions we have taken in all other areas of our organization are working. Continued on Page 6

Upcoming Events:

April 6 – Senior staff meeting, MAC Meeting, Coronapocalypse, CAFMA Spirit Week Declared in Admin by Kathy
April 7 – Labor Management, Coronapocalypse
April 8 – SOG Meeting, Coronapocalypse
April 9 – AFSI Meeting via Zoom, Weekly staff COVID meeting

Board Meeting:

April 27 Admin

CAFMA – 1700-1830



PPE Levels

By: Assistant Chief Scott Bliss (Hasn't changed, so I'll just leave this here sf)

In terms of supply levels, CAFMA continues to be in reasonable shape. We are pulling from our cache of pandemic supplies to provide needed masks and other PPE. Although the overall situation is good, we do face a need to resupply long term and the ability to do that is not currently available. Most suppliers are backordered and do not have an expected date to be able to deliver. We anticipate that the situation will improve as companies such as Scott shift their manufacturing focus to PPE but it will take a while to see the results of that change. For now the fall back supply source for all area agencies is the Yavapai County EOC and they are only able to distribute what they are given by the State. Please follow the direction of Chief Niemynski in regards to appropriate PPE use. This should provide the needed protection while also conserving our limited resources for the higher risk calls.

Company officer challenges in the era of COVID-19

By: Linda Willing

There are also specific challenges for company officers during this time. Company officers must sustain the readiness and morale of their small teams, and they are also on the front lines of dealing with the COVID-19 crisis in the community.

What can company officers do to best meet the increased demands currently on them?

First, they must be vigilant when it comes to station and scene hygiene and personal protection. Stations and gear must be maintained at an exacting level of cleanliness. All members must be held to high standards when it comes to the use of safety equipment and following protocols on scene.

But don't ignore other important functions that company officers must fulfill in order to maintain the best readiness possible among their crews. Specifically, company officers can focus on three key goals during this time: training, communication and restorative support.

1. KEEP UP ON TRAINING

Keeping a normal training schedule might be difficult right now. Fire crews are busy with other things and may be constrained by community guidelines during the virus emergency. But it is critical to keep crews current on training, even with the challenges. It's always good to combine intellectual stimulation with physical activity through hands-on training, but don't overlook the possibilities even if you are confined to quarters.

If you are limited to in-house training, try not to bore your crew by just doing routine review of book-based topics. A lot of what fire crews are doing these days is tedious, in terms of constant cleaning and decontamination. Don't make training tedious as well.

[Fire Rescue 1](#)



March Response Report - 2020

Land Area: 365 sq. miles Population: ≈100,000 Fire Stations: 10 Full-Staffed

Responses in District	
TOTAL FIRE INCIDENTS	9
STRUCTURE FIRE	2
STRUCTURE FIRE; CONFINED	1
MOBILE HOME/PORTABLE BLDG	2
VEHICLE FIRE	3
BRUSH/GRASS/WILDLAND FIRE	0
OTHER/TRASH FIRE	1
<i>Fire is 0.96% of call volume</i>	
TOTAL RESCUE & EMS	672
<i>EMS is 69.64% of call volume</i>	
OVERPRESSURE / OVERHEAT	0
HAZARDOUS CONDITION	10
SERVICE CALL	155
GOOD INTENT	94
FALSE ALARM/OTHER	25
<i>Other is 29.43% of call volume</i>	
TOTAL INCIDENTS IN DISTRICT	965
INCIDENT RESPONSES BY CAFMA	1,058
Residential Fire Loss	\$252,813
Commercial Fire Loss	\$0
Vehicle Fire Loss	\$5,800
Calls in Town of Chino Valley	160
Calls in Town of Prescott Valley	452
Calls in Town of Dewey-Humboldt	41
Calls in District, Unincorporated Areas	312
Calls Out of District	5
Average total # of calls per day	31.13
Average fire calls per day	0.29
Average EMS calls per day	21.68
Average all other calls per day	9.16
Aid Given to Prescott	129
Aid Received from Prescott	84
Mutual Aid Given	1
Mutual Aid Received	0

Unit Responses		
	In District	Total
E50	105	110
E51	33	173
E53	151	151
E54	115	116
E57	44	44
E58	139	140
E59	120	123
E61	107	109
E62	108	113
E63	37	39
T50	3	3
B3	39	44
B6	29	30

Call Volume at PRCC		
	MONTH	YTD
PFD	729	2,176
CAFMA	965	2,958
GCFD	11	25
OD	4	10
WKFD	4	7

Top 5 Call Types

608	EMS
87	Assist Invalid
52	Cancelled en Route
32	Public Service
23	Vehicle Accident w/Injuries

Move Ups by Station

50: 45	57: 0
51: 30	61: 4
53: 13	62: 3
54: 0	63: 33
58: 0	
59: 4	TOTAL: 132

Chief's Desk Continued

As I said last week, and I will say throughout the duration of this episode of the Twilight Zone, we need to remain calm, focused, and offer reassurance to each other as well as our community. You are all well trained professionals. Each made a commitment to serve our community and each other whether responding to calls or ensuring our bills are paid. We are here and will continue to be here because that is what we promised we would do.

I appreciate Governor Ducey's most recent Executive Order i.e. Stay Home, Stay Safe, and Stay Healthy. It was NOT a stay at home, lock your doors, and draw the shades or you will be arrested order. Rather, it is a reminder to protect one another by staying home when we can, practice physical distancing when we can't, ensure your employing appropriate hygiene practices, and get out for some exercise. In my mind, it was a good message.

This last week Chief John Feddema and I had a dialogue about a recent article in a Fire Service publication written by a respected contributor. The author used a title referencing EXTREME LEADERSHIP and describing things as a conflagration. What the is that guy thinking!! I'm sorry, but inflammatory language is not helpful. I completely understand the concept of Extreme Leadership, but what he wrote does not fit the model. In response to my last post on the CAFMA FB page after the Governor's order, and in regard to the article we were discussing John sent me the following:

We will call that "leadership restraint". I think we need to push that instead of "extreme leadership." **Definition - when wisdom prevails over emotion and restraint is exercised in uncertain times or when facing an undefined challenge.** This needs to be utilized by more people right now.

In reality, what John describes is extreme leadership as restraint and not letting your emotions take control are exactly what Jocko Willink advocates in his books and Podcasts. I'm currently reading a book called *The Art of Thinking Clearly* as part of my reading for the Naval Post Graduate School. One of the concepts shared in the book is called Social Proof e.g. If fifty million people say something foolish, it is still foolish. Social proof is another term to describe a herd mentality. Just because everyone else believes the sky is falling and that we should all panic does not mean we should. Critical thinkers would ask strategic questions searching for flaws in the "conventional wisdom." They would likely come to the conclusion that no, in fact the sky is not falling, it's still right where it was. In times of uncertainty, we need to seek wisdom, truth, and balance as opposed to falling prey to social proof, or the herd mentality.

Crisis thinking, using words like conflagration, or headlines highlighting horribly dire predictions based on seriously flawed data are not helpful. Hell, most of the time the headline in no way reflects the story. All of this simply adds to already high anxiety and stress levels for some. Increased stress leads to the release of cortisol, epinephrine, adrenaline, and other chemicals into your body. There is certainly a time

and place for the body to release these naturally occurring chemicals, however long duration chemical baths are terribly unhealthy.

I just completed the book *The Stress Effect: Why Smart Leaders Make Dumb Decisions – and What to do about it*. The book is written by Ret. Special Forces ARMY Col. and PhD Henry L. Thompson – Jocko Podcast episodes 204, 205, and 206. I highly recommend listening to those episodes.

Dr. Thompson's book is about how stress affects our bodies, our ability to make decisions, and how it affects both our cognitive abilities as well as our emotional intelligence. You may remember when I wrote about the almond shape brain thingy (amygdala) vs. the prefrontal cortex (PFC). As a reminder, the almond thing controls emotion and the PFC acts as the CEO of the brain directing rational thought and cognition. When the almond takes over, watch out. As Dr. Thompson describes it, we get to our crazy threshold and that's when our crazy twin Skippy comes out and hijacks the conversation. You know you've been there, it's almost like an out of body experience. You can hear what you're saying, you can feel the heat in your face, but you cannot control the angry words coming out of your mouth. Your rational PFC is telling you to shut the hell up, but Skippy is on a roll. It's not good, and we should avoid letting Skippy out to play.

That said how do we consciously work to manage our stress levels, especially in the topsy-turvy world we find ourselves in today? Dr. Thompson has developed a system he outlines in Chapter 9 of the book called ARSENAL. The idea is that if we practice the seven concepts contained within the system we can strengthen our cognitive resilience as well as create a more stress resistant level of emotional intelligence.

ARSENAL

A – Awareness: We talk a lot about situational awareness e.g. what's happening in the environment around us. When we lose our situational awareness whether it's while driving, entering data, or fighting a structure fire bad things can and do happen. Without awareness, none of the remaining parts of the ARSENAL work. As it relates to COVID-19, we need to be aware of the situation as it unfolds, and we need to maintain our situational awareness whether out in public or responding to a call. What we do not need to do is bath ourselves in social media or attention grabbing news headlines. That's not awareness, its drowning. Be aware, not emotionally overwhelmed.

R – Rest: Make sure you are getting the rest your body requires. Stress interrupts our sleep cycles, which can lead to a state of exhaustion. Being tired lowers our emotional stability threshold and increases stress. So, stop reading crazy stuff on line about COVID, or listening to competing talking heads in the media all day and before you go to bed. It's just not good for your psyche. Talk to your family, read a book, listen to some music, or watch a movie. Doesn't matter how you do it, give your brain a break from the craziness and make sure you're well rested to face the day.

S – Support: Given your stuck in the house, fire station, or office there should be plenty of support and few places to hide. As the Governor said, it's physical distancing not social distancing. Stay close with friends and family. If you're feeling stressed, have a person, or group of people that you can talk to. Not

a group that's going to reinforce your feelings of stress, rather a group that will help reduce your stress level and provide clarity.

E – Exercise: Absolutely, yes, get outside and do it! I said it last week, and the Governor said it this week. Get out on a trail – while maintaining physical distancing – and exercise. If you work for CAFMA, and your normal gym is closed, we've made arrangements for our employees to utilize our facilities. Even admin has a gym area thanks to Eric and Andy. Sitting on the couch eating crap food and drinking sugar laden beverages is not good for your stress level or your health. So, get out, get moving, and enjoy some time with your family.

N – Nutrition: What you eat is vitally important as well. Yes, I know that it's easier to grab fast food at the drive thru right now, but should you? This is a good time to prep some healthy meals in advance, grill outside, or let the crockpot do its thing for you. Some of our sit down restaurants are providing healthy take out options as well. Filling yourself full of sugars and fats is generally bad for your health, and adds to your level of stress. Find some heart and brain healthy foods to keep you moving, not stuff that compromises your immune system by clogging your arteries.

A – Attitude: Your attitude determines whether you choose to respond or react to things around you. Don't confuse passion with being overly emotional, they're not the same thing. As I discussed about PPE in the beginning, we can get mad and gnash teeth but that will not make PPE appear. Or, we can accept the challenge and develop a creative a solution. You choose your attitude, choose it wisely.

L – Learn: This is a good time to pick-up a book and learn something, or pick a new hobby. Challenge yourself to learn something new every day. No, I did not say become a Facebook Professor on COVID-19. Learn something that will help you achieve a goal, or that expands your knowledge base allowing you to be more of a conversationalist (Not Huskers Football though Merrill☺). We all have some time right now, don't squander it. Put your mind to use learning something, anything that allows you to focus on something new and enjoyable.

Personally, I would add another L to ARSENAL. The additional L stands for laughter. I'm not trying to be dismissive of what's happening around us by the memes I use, or some of the words I subtly place in strategic locations. Rather, I think laughter really can be the best medicine. So, please, do not mistake my lightheartedness for apathy, it's just that sometimes you have to laugh in order to maintain balance.

I realize I've gone a bit long this week, but I think it's important that we all consciously focus on controlling our stress levels. Building cognitive resilience as well as stress resilient emotional intelligence will help us all keep our crazy twin Skippy at bay, and enjoy life no matter the wackiness that is our world right now.