



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – Dec 10, 2021

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"The ultimate measure of a person is not where they stand in moments of comfort, but where they stand at times of challenge and controversy."

- Unk

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The Chief's Desk

There is no CAFMA Connect this week. I know, sad right?? Jonah had some work to do with the equipment, and Eric was finishing up a project with the wall behind the table. The next one though may be awesome-ish! – maybe... I will be in San Antonio most of next week for a site visit with the International Association of Fire Chiefs for the 2022 Fire Rescue International Conference. I'm sure John, Dave, or Cody will come up with something creative. As a result of the stress created by having to work with me, maybe all three of them should make one together – you know, a kind of therapy session 😊 FYI, if that happens, Jen would like to participate.

I'm including an article this week written by the Editor of Fire Engineering Magazine, retired Fire Chief Bobby Halton. The article is entitled *Predictably Irrational*. Chief Halton is invited every year to the National Fallen Firefighters (NFFF) memorial in Emmitsburg, MD. This year his invitation included a clause that stated he must be “fully vaccinated” to attend. His response to the NFFF letter is eloquent, professional, and spot on. His position is the same as ours, the only difference is he has a national and international platform to express his concerns with the irrationality of vaccine mandates.

The ambulance transport issues have not gotten any better since last week. I mean, WTH??? I ran into our medical director at Found Fathers this week. He shared with me the frustration of the ER doctors, and the challenges they face when an engine calls in seeking clearance to transport a critical patient in a private vehicle, “Is it better for the patient to be in the private vehicle despite the significant risks based on the patient's condition, or is it better to leave them lying on the floor for another 90 minutes?” He said that it was difficult for him personally last Saturday when Engine 51 asked to transport a patient with a fractured hip in a private vehicle. There were zero other options on the backside of Prescott. His team has a great relationship with the AMR paramedics and EMTs on the street. However, he has lost faith in corporate AMR's ability or willingness to provide resources enough to actually transport patients to the hospital.

AMR continues to mark units on scene 5-15 minutes in advance of their actual arrival. This practice is questionable at best. However, there could be additional issues with it e.g. submitting falsified response data may be outside of statute. EMS Chief Doug Niemynski is gathering all of the evidence we have to include pictures, radio traffic, and response reports so he can file a formal complaint with the state. If anyone else has examples, please send the specifics to Doug asap.

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Upcoming Events:

Dec 12-15: Chief in San Antonio
IAFC FRI 2022 Site Visit
Dec 16: Department Head
Meeting PV, Christmas Pot
Luck, Board Meetings

Board Meetings:

December 16: Administration
CVFD – 1600-1630
CYFD – 1630-1700
CAFMA – 1700-1830

Predictably Irrational

By: Bobby Halton

We like to think we are rational people. Shakespeare said, “What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason!” But behavioral economics professor Dan Ariely, in his book Predictably Irrational, proves otherwise; in fact, we are not often rational at all.

The fire service does not exist in a vacuum. We are subjected to the same influences, frailties, concerns, and irrationalities as everyone else. Perhaps nothing has been as disruptive to our lives in modern memory as the COVID-19 virus and the various reactions rationally and irrationally to it locally, federally, and personally.

The seriousness of this virus is not in question; tragically, many we know and love have suffered and died from contracting this horrible virus. The point of this editorial is not concerned about the origin, the lethality, or the treatment of cases. This is about devastating social contagion promoting the irrationality of the villainization of those who have freely chosen to not participate in taking a vaccine.

The underlyingly nondisputed point is that healthy, noninfected persons pose no threat or risk to anyone. Not being vaccinated does not make you sick or dangerous to anyone. The vaccines are not some kind of magical cure that makes one immune or free of infection. In fact, the rates of infected fully vaccinated persons, who, by the way, are contagious, continue to rise. So, the question is, why are people acting as if unvaccinated healthy persons pose a health risk and vaccinated persons do not? To do so is irrational.

[fireengineering](#)

Five Ways to Improve Your Mental Fitness

By: Kevin Eikenberry

Improving mental fitness. It sounds like a good goal, and last week I wrote about why that is so important, but I didn’t talk about how to do it. Today let’s get practical and specific, with some specific approaches and practices you can employ to reach the goal of improving mental fitness.

I’ll start with a disclaimer: I am not a medical or mental health professional. If you have serious or chronic mental health challenges, please start with your experts. But if you know you could be more mentally fit and this idea intrigues you, read on, and take some action on what you read.

There are many things you can do to be more mentally fit, including getting more physically fit. What follows are a list of things you can do starting today (right now!) with the result of improving mental fitness.

Get More Sleep

Chances are, you need more. In 2016, the CDC reported that 1 in 3 Americans regularly don't get enough sleep. If you are reading this, I'll assume you are between 18-64. If so, you need 7-9 hours of sleep. Is that your average?

Have too much to do to get that much sleep? Maybe but according to a pre-pandemic The American Academy of Sleep Medicine study, 88% of Americans reportedly lose sleep to binge-watching. You know that you are more effective and feel better when you get more sleep. Forget the statistics, lose your ego ("I don't need that much sleep!"), and get more sleep.

This is an area I have consciously worked on. Those who know me know I get up early – but I also go to bed earlier than I used to. I urge you to add more sleep to your routine and you will be improving your mental fitness.

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Chief's Desk Continued

In addition, we understand AMR dispatch may be putting units who are still transferring a patient at the hospital in service and assigning them to another call despite the unit not actually being in service. This is conjecture on my part, but it seems they may be trying to make it appear as if they have resources that they do not have. Once again, I'm pretty sure there may be an issue with erroneous reporting. If you have any direct knowledge or evidence of this practice, please send the information to Doug so he can submit it as part of the complaint. So far, we're hearing about these incidents from some of their crews, some of you, as well as from other sources.

You all are doing a great job in the field while under significant added stress. I appreciate your efforts, and all the support that you give to AMR's EMTs and Paramedics in the field. Unfortunately, I cannot tell you when we can expect any relief. We will keep pushing.

Early this week I responded to an email from local AMR manager Pete Como. He was requesting an update regarding the agreement they sent for our review. The short answer is no, we will not sign it. As written, the agreement does not in any way improve services within our jurisdiction, and it prevents us from educating the public regarding the lack of ambulance transport resources. The agreement Prescott signed, which is the same or similar to the one presented to CAFMA, has done nothing to improve services within the city, but it has prevented them from speaking about it publicly.

Pete also stated that he heard we might be interested in a joint staffing model – something we proposed to them nearly four years ago. Chief Polacek was part of that conversation at the time. He tried to follow-up with AMR on several occasions, however we never received a response. Subsequently, we did receive information regarding AMR's billing practices that were a bit concerning to us. Because any joint staffing would be subject to AMR's charting and billing standards, we decided that it was not in the best interest of our agency to enter into an agreement. That remains our position today.

AMR has been visiting with local elected officials rolling out the same old tired story e.g. it's not our fault, this isn't really happening, if only Chief Freitag would sign this agreement all would be well. They've stated that, if we sign the agreement, they will not intervene in our CON process – well maybe just a little, but not a lot. The state does not allow language in a contract that states an entity will not intervene in another entities CON. To that end, there is no language in the agreement that states they will not intervene, and it cannot be added. Given their history, we know how this goes.

I think the Priority Ambulance hearing started again this week, or maybe next. Hopefully, their hearing will go well and they will receive their CON. I know the hospital desperately wants to see another ambulance service in the area for interfacility transports given the lack of service from the current provider. To be clear, CAFMA does not want anything to do with interfacility transports. That is business for a private company. We are only seeking 911 transport.

We will keep pushing our elected officials and the Governor's office for an emergency declaration so we can run the rescues as ambulances. Nothing will change without action from the Governor. I will be pulling more radio traffic so we can update our webpage and social media. There is a lot of traffic that clearly illustrates the challenges we face.

The CON legislative language update is back at legislative counsel so they can add the final edits. Representative Judy Burges is our main sponsor. We will be working to find additional co-sponsors as we near the session. Additionally, I have been meeting with a lobbyist on behalf of the AFCA. We're looking to hire someone that will focus on getting our bill through the House and Senate. It's a heavy lift, but it needs to be done.

I will keep you all updated as things progress on all fronts. It ain't over till it's over, and it ain't over 😊
