



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **October 14, 2022**

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"We think about you always, we talk about you still, you have never been forgotten, and you never will, we hold you close within our hearts and there you will remain, to walk and guide us through our lives, until we meet again."

Bruce Rowe

[The CAFMA Connect YouTube Channel](#) – Like, Subscribe, Watch, and Learn



The Chief's Desk

The IMT has been working over the last week and a half to plan for tomorrow's memorial services. It's been our intent from the beginning, and continues to be our intent, to honor Zach and his family. The group did an outstanding job planning, promoting, and running the candlelight vigil at CARTA Tuesday evening. I don't have an official count, but I would throw a WAG that we had over 100 people in attendance.

Tuesday was my first real opportunity to meet Brody and Zach's parents and spend a little time visiting with them. You can certainly see and hear Zach when you talk with his mom.

Chief John Feddema has been working on a staffing plan for tomorrow to ensure those who want to attend the memorial are able to attend. Additionally, he's been able to identify those willing to work on an engine and/or act as a liaison on an engine for another agency who may move up to cover our area. If we need to push beyond countywide mutual aid for coverage, we will utilize the statewide mutual aid system. Dave and Tony in Tech Services have developed a comms plan for units coming from outside of our area to provide coverage.

The memorial service will begin at 1000hrs in the morning. We're asking CAFMA personnel to arrive between 0830 and 0900 to begin lining up to receive Zach and his family when they arrive.

There will be a reception at Granite Creek Park in Prescott following the memorial.

Many have been very busy since Zach passed. These other tasks or activities have allowed for some level of distraction. My concern is not as much today, but what happens next week, the week after, or in the next few months as the distractions wane and the void becomes more real.

What is it that we can do moving forward to support one another and our families? Let's start there – support. I know that Zach had tremendous support, and yet we know the end result. The support exists and is great, but what else? We have Debbie Ritterbush and her team on retainer ready to assist any one of us and our families. We had the retainer in place and yet we lost Zach.

CAFMA's culture has changed significantly over the last few years in that more of our folks are willing to admit they need help. That is a great step, but how do we expedite the cultural change? Will we ever see a complete cultural change? I think we'd be naïve to believe that we'll get 100% true buy-in – that's just not realistic.

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Upcoming Events:

Oct 17: Medical Follow-ups, visit stations

Oct 18: Meet with AFMA, Record podcast with Holger, After action review hiring process

Oct 19: PVEDF Board Meeting, Record YouTube with Realtors,

Oct 20: Chief taking a day

Board Meeting:

Oct 24: Administration
CAFMA – 1700-1830

Hurricane Ian highlights danger of submerged hybrid or electric vehicles

By: Patrick Durham

Electric vehicles (EVs) are becoming increasingly popular for consumers. EV sales are growing exponentially, and experts expect approximately 6 million EVs on the road by 2024. While EVs offer many benefits in terms of pollution-reduction, they do pose some unique challenges for firefighters.

Hurricane Ian highlighted one of these unique challenges as it relates to submerged hybrid or electric vehicles. Specifically, after the floodwaters receded, Florida firefighters – among many others who traveled to the area to help with recovery efforts – faced several vehicle fires involving electric vehicles. Such incidents strain fire department resources already dealing with countless rescue and recovery efforts in the aftermath of a hurricane.

Let's consider how this occurs, what firefighters can do to prepare and how to respond in the safest, most efficient manner.

THERMAL RUNAWAY

The high-voltage lithium-ion batteries are located in a watertight, fire-resistant box that can be made out of steel, aluminum or composite materials. While this box is designed to be watertight under normal operation of the vehicle, natural disasters and floods are far from normal operation. Water may leak into the battery box if the vehicle is partially or fully submerged in floodwaters. Water intrusion into the box can cause corrosion on the battery cells, which can cause a cell to fail, leading to a thermal runaway event.

firerescue1.com

Health & Wellness: Firefighter Suicide—The Families Left Behind

By: Jeff Dill

As a retired fire captain, licensed counselor and founder of Firefighter Behavioral Health Alliance (FBHA), I wrote this article not about expertise, for I am not an expert on suicide. However, I now understand a little about why firefighters take their life and about the effect that has on their family.

FBHA has tracked these tragic events for 10 years. I have talked to more than 1,500 chief officers and family members and collected data, such as age, gender, rank, method and known reason. Why was FBHA founded? For three reasons: to remember our brothers and sisters, to understand why firefighters took their own life and to assist family survivors.

FBHA found that the number one known reason for firefighters and EMS members dying by suicide were family or relationship issues, although many had additional issues that they dealt with, too.

Disconnect and brainwashing

In our workshops, two elements that we discuss regularly are cognitive disconnect and cultural brainwashing.

To FBHA, cognitive disconnect simply means that we base our decisions on the emotions that we experience in the moment. Emotions can include anger, depression, jealousy, guilt and rejection. If we can understand our emotions, we might be able to stop our brothers and sisters from killing themselves and to prompt them to seek the help that they desperately need.

firehouse.com

Chief's Desk Continued

I'm not trying to sound hopeless, because there is absolutely hope; however, I'm aware that the questions above are questions being asked. Not out of a sense of helplessness, but out of a sense of frustration, i.e., what more could we have done? I also know that every one of us is different and that the challenges we face in life are all slightly, or wholly different. We're individuals with different backgrounds, cultural norms, and family dynamics.

We all recognize the challenges with mental health today. As a group, we've been trying to combat the issues through support for one another: increased peer support, increased professional support, and an open dialogue about mental health and wellness. Unfortunately, I don't think we will ever identify every void that exists, nor should we start jamming square pegs into round holes just to see if we can fill the space.

I cannot fathom the depth of despair an individual is in when they make the decision to take their own life. The feeling of hopelessness despite family, peer, and professional support must be unimaginable.

As I said last week, when I first learned of Zach's passing, I was angry with him; however, in the days since, I've come to realize that the Zach I knew and loved was not the same Zach that made the decision to end his life. While I am still deeply saddened by losing him, and angry at that challenges he faced, I am no longer angry with him. I do find myself asking what else I could have done, or why I hadn't called him that week... but, in the end, I don't think it would have changed the outcome. Selfishly, I would have liked to talk with him one last time.

Today, I pray that Zach is at peace and that his spirit will continue to guide us. In the time he had on earth, he set a tremendous example for others to follow. He was kind, had a big heart, an even bigger smile, and he truly lived to serve others. As we heard at the vigil, he looked for the best in everyone he met, and he rarely had an unkind word for or about anyone.

I wish I could end with a funny quip or one of my normal sarcastic remarks, but I'm just not there this week – I am sure that next week I will be back to my old sarcastic self. I'll leave you with this – it is my sincerest hope that you will hug your family a little tighter, keep your friends a little closer, and work to take care of yourself both physically and mentally. We have resources available, or you have the option

of seeking someone out yourself. If you're struggling, don't wait, reach out for help. Hope does exist, sometimes you may just have to look a little harder to find it, but it is there.
