



# THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **June 16, 2023**

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*"Easy choices, hard life. Hard choices, easy life."*

-Jerzy Gregorek

*(Google this guy's biography and see why)*

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## **The Assistant Chief's Desk**

**By: Dave Tharp**

Chief Freitag is busy educating and being educated this week – which usually means more work for all of us at CAFMA as the ideas start cascading from his mind, but we are grateful that we are a progressive organization and have him as a leader. This week, I started off The Review with a riveting subject about financial planning. It seemed appropriate considering the time of year – the finalized budget for Fiscal Year 2024 is up for final approval this month, we start the new fiscal year in 15 days and the account closures, reconciliations and auditing process for the last fiscal year is already in full swing. Invariably, I have one or two personnel a year visit me about their finances, and I always have two rules of thumb – “It’s not how much you make that matters, it’s how much you spend” and “everyone’s situation is different – so find some financial person you trust and get started”. Again, riveting stuff. But I want to be clear – “financial education will lead to better financial decisions” and though “money can’t buy you everything, it can make your life easier”. You will see an article attached to The Review that outlines six common sense financial tips and though has an emphasis for new firefighters – it applies to everyone. Follow these tips and it will make you have to make some hard choices but make your life easier eventually.

Enough financial planning talk. I love my kids for multiple reasons, but one of the primary reasons is their perspective. It reminds me that I can learn as much from them as they can from me, and they taught me a good one the other day. My daughter, Naya, can be a little dramatic. She is very high energy and often speaks and acts without thought or contemplation to consequence. Because her older brother, Eli, is quiet and doesn’t react to a lot, she tries to solicit reactions from him to gain attention (and somehow, his approval and a hug). Her methods are varied, but often results in either a blank stare or laughter – which tends to invigorate her methods of soliciting more of a reaction or infuriates her. One of these exchanges occurred in which my son retreated to his room and my daughter was steaming.

I asked her if she wanted to go to the grocery store with me and took the opportunity to ask her why she was so angry. She explained her reasoning with most of it blamed on Eli. I reminded her that no one can make another person act – and reminded her that her brother loved her, they are family and maybe he would want to spend more time with her if she wasn't antagonizing him all the time. She turned to me and said that out of those things I mentioned (love, family and time), the most important one to her was "time". I was a little surprised at her answer and asked why. She simply replied that if a person values you enough to spend time with you, they are showing you love – regardless if they are family or not. Mic drop. That is a powerful lesson because we all show what we value based on where we spend our available time.

Though our conversation continued about more healthy and productive ways to show Eli that she appreciated him and wanted him to know she loved him, I told her that she has, at her young age, already learned one of life's most important lessons – time is the most valuable commodity. Though we often are spurred and motivated by other things we think are valuable – like money, recognition, success, romance, etc. – all those things disappear when time runs out. Don't get me wrong, I think all those things are great catalysts, a "means to an end", but we should always understand and focus on the "why" we are working so hard, why we are taking classes, why we are away from our family and loved ones, why we are pushing so hard for a promotion, why we want certain recognition, etc. Everything has a price, and the price is ultimately how you are spending your time – productively or unproductively.

Remember that time is finite and unpredictable, which is why it is valuable. It is our individual choice to decide what is important and why it is so worthy of time. Balancing work, relationships and personal time is so hard and take it from me, I have not been the best at it. Recently, to provide myself focus and clarity and identify what I think is so important to spend my time on, I did an exercise to see how much time during a week I spend doing activities. I figured that identifying what I spend my time on would also identify what I am currently valuing and provide some insight into goals for personal improvement.

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## **TED Talks – How to gain control of your free time**

By: Laura Vanderkam

<https://youtu.be/n3kNIFMXslo>

There are 168 hours in each week. Time management expert Laura Vanderkam studies how busy people spend their lives, and she offers a few practical strategies to help find more time for what matters to us, so we can "build the lives we want in the time we've got".

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## **Firehouse Magazine – Financial Tips for New Firefighters**

By: Steve Pziborski

<https://www.firehouse.com/careers-education/article/12159279/firefighter-careers-financial-tips-and-ideas-for-new-firefighters>

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## **Assistant Chief's Desk Continued**

Honestly, I looked at my week (as is suggested in the TED Talk) and out of 168 available hours, I spend 32 hours on sleep, 58 hours on work (or work related meetings), 12 hours on family (practices, driving, etc.), 8 hours on meals and meal prep, 7 hours on personal reading time, 7 hours on laundry and house work, 4 hours on volunteer activities, 5 hours on exercise, 5 hours on schooling, 3 hours on watering and yardwork, and 4 hours for golf - which left me 24 hours (basically 3+ hours a day) that I spent doing other things. I would like to say that the "other" was productive, like helping a neighbor, fundraising for a non-profit, or teaching a class but I found myself realizing it was social media, tv or some other mind-numbing activity. We are all busy and have time commitments. As mentioned before, understanding the "why" of what you are spending your time on is key. In my example, most of my time is 58 hours at work, and yes, it is too much. I would like to slowly cut that back and focus more of that time on "relationships" activities with my family or friends that will bring value. Also, spending more time on health and physical fitness activities – another use of time that will bring value. Overcoming "ourselves" is not an easy process and identifying there is areas of improvement is the first step.

At CAFMA, we are committed to excellence. Striving for excellence includes an understanding of what is valuable and the "why" behind our efforts and time – individually and as an organization. Again, improvement is not easy – humbling and painful at times - but necessary to become better than yesterday.

"May we never lose our way."