



# THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **July 14, 2023**

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*“Some see things as they are, and say why. I dream of things that never were, and say why not.”*

Robert Kennedy

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## The Chief's Desk

Why? The age-old question. Why me? Why him or her? Why them? Why?? I know many of you are asking yourself "why" right now. As much as you want answers, we simply don't have any to provide, and we may never have all the answers.

Rather than why, I think we need to start asking ourselves "what?" What can I do to live a better life for myself and my family? What can I do to make a difference for someone else? It's the "what" that's going to help us move forward.

As I mentioned a few weeks back regarding the Struggle Well workshop, there is life after tragedy. How we get to the other side is an individual journey. The help I need to come to terms with the loss of Payton is going to be different than what each of you need.

I mentioned last week that losing Zach and Payton has been weighing heavy on me, but I know I cannot allow myself to be paralyzed by their loss; rather, I have to figure out not only how to move forward, but I also have to ask what I've learned and how I can use those lessons.

Despite everything we've put in place to support both our overall physical and mental health, we've still lost members. I'm racking my brain, talking with folks from around the state and country, and talking internally about what other programs may be appropriate to supplement the resources we currently have available.

This year we've been able to offer full body cancer screenings for firefighters over a certain age. Our hope is that we can make these screenings part of our standard process for everyone in the organization. If we can fund the program, we'd offer the screenings every 3-5 years for all of our folks over a certain age.

We continue to promote our peer fitness programs which include functional movement and nutrition. In addition, we offer annual physicals that include enhanced cancer screening via the lab work. We've discussed adding an opportunity for each member to have a one-hour session at Start Moving On at our expense as part of the annual physical process. The session would not be mandatory, it would just be an option. That said, we know that mental health and wellness is just as important as our physical health and wellness.

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### **Upcoming Events:**

July 17 – Policy Meeting, Meet with New Prescott City Manager and Chief Durre  
July 18 – Prehospital CE, Meet on Strat Plan Update with company, Podcast meeting  
July 19 – PVEDF meeting, Meet with DHS in Phoenix  
July 20 – Meet with WFCALegislative Group

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### **Board Meeting:**

Board Meeting: July 24  
CAFMA – 1700-1830

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## **How fire departments can better serve the elderly**

**By: Linda Willing**

One of the primary responsibilities of every fire department is to understand and best serve the community that supports it. This mission is one of the primary reasons for promoting diversity among department members – to better represent and understand the needs of those served.

But there is one demographic that, with rare exception, will never be included among active firefighters, despite a disproportionate involvement with emergency services agencies. Those are the people in your community who are considered elderly or very old.

On my department, we ran frequent calls involving older people – medical incidents, accidents, service calls, fires. We always did our best even as we complained about repeat callers and tried to be philosophical about seeing so much disability and death.

There were addresses we all knew and dreaded when the tone came in. We made bad jokes sometimes to relieve the stress.

But this was years before we had any real training regarding issues of geriatric health and welfare.

The first training session was set up with staff members from the local senior center. It was a revelation. I can only hope that nowadays such training is standard for all firefighters.

### **IMPROVED PUBLIC SERVICE**

There are many things that fire departments can do to improve quality of care and relationship with their older community members.

They can set up training sessions or informal question-and-answer sessions with local experts such as geriatric social workers, doctors or home healthcare providers.

They can develop relationships with staff members at care facilities to better understand how emergency services can best work with onsite care providers.

[firechief.com](http://firechief.com)

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### **The Chief's Desk Cont.**

CAFMA offers six sessions a year at our expense for you to see a counselor of your choice. For our firefighters, the Craig Tiger Act provides fully paid access for up to a certain number of counseling sessions per instance. We have a fantastic peer program with dedicated people and we have a group of significant others working to develop a significant others peer group. There will be a couples retreat later this year as well – more to come on that.

So, with all of the resources available – why? I don't know. Regrettably, the truth remains that regardless of the range of programs we provide, promote, or make accessible, we're faced with the

blessing and curse of personal choice. It's crucial that we continue to offer programs and explore new opportunities for our folks; however, ultimately, the decision to utilize the resources, such as the weight equipment at our facilities or the counseling services, rests in your hands.

In life we have to determine our own 'why,' i.e., your purpose. If you have not read the book, *Find Your Why: A Practical Guide for Discovering Purpose for You and Your Team* by Simon Sinek, I would highly recommend that you order it today. [Find Your Why on Amazon](#)

It's hard enough sometimes to navigate our way through life; it's even more difficult to navigate your way if you don't know your purpose. I know that my purpose in life is to serve others. While it's not always easy, and life has definitely served up some lemons, knowing that I exist to serve others gives me my general heading – it's my compass.

I can't answer the question of 'why' for Zach or Payton, nor can I define your why (purpose) for you. What I can do is continue to search for resources, opportunities, and programs that we can make available. I'd ask that you make the choice to use the tools at your disposal, whether that's our weight rooms, annual physicals, or counseling services. If you haven't already, take some time for yourself and discover your why. Finding your purpose may provide you the navigational tool you need to stay the course no matter what life throws in your path.

Finally, I would ask that you continue to be there for each other.

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