



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **May 24, 2024**

This Edition:

The Chief's DeskPage 2
Leadership competencies: 4 ways battalion chiefs
can best develop company officers Page 3
How mentoring can foster officer development
.....Page 3

**"If you accept the call to leadership, you
must be willing to be misunderstood,
criticized, opposed, accused, and even
rejected."**

Unk

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To all of you celebrating graduations this year,
congratulations to you and your graduate!!

The Chief's Desk

I attended the Baggers Meeting on Monday and Tuesday this week in Glendale. Baggers is an invitation only event where chief officers from across the country, including Hawaii, get together for a round table discussion. Each person has the chance to discuss unique opportunities or challenges they're currently facing in their organizations. We also discuss things that are happening at the state and national levels.

Because I was not speaking on day one, I took some time to jot down some notes regarding our agency. At the end of the day, I had a full page of great things happening now, as well as a good outlook for the future. In short, I had a list that paints a picture of a strong organization with a very positive present and future.

When we look at the pay plan that's been developed with a well-designed road map for implementation over the next three years, the addition of new personnel both in ops and non-ops, our first regional training academy in the Fall, accreditation to include the first ever regional standards of cover (SOC), we have permission to purchase a second ladder, the support we enjoy in the communities we serve, as well as having a supportive board, and the very real idea of holding our own CON. This list just scratches the surface especially as we look at the possibility of merging the districts next year, and the possibility of a bond in 2026. I'd be remiss if I didn't point out that the relationship between the City of Prescott and us is the strongest it's ever been. I'm not just talking about our partners in the fire department, I mean across all city departments.

As I said at Baggers, ours is a story of resilience and perseverance. These good things didn't just happen, they're happening because of a tremendous amount of work, weathering dark storms yet staying together, and not allowing optimism to be replaced by despair. It's because we've built strong relationships with community leaders, elected officials, as well as many others. Relationships matter.

To illustrate to the Baggers group what I meant by stating "ours is a story of resilience and perseverance," I started by sharing the loss of Zach in October of 2022. Then went into the challenges a couple members faced in January of 2023 (no specifics or names), losing Payton in July of 2023, and then the incidents with Dave in July and September of 2023. I mean, there's plenty of reason for us to kick the dirt and ask why us, but that's not what we've ever done as an organization. In fact, I would challenge anyone to point out a time when we've gone through crises and not come out the other side stronger as an organization. We may not always agree, but we find ways to stick together.

Cont. Page 4

Upcoming Events:

May 27: Office closed in observance of Memorial Day
May 28: Tunnel to Towers Golf Event, exec staff meeting, MRI, senior staff meeting
May 29: Coffee meeting with NAU, lunch meeting with PV Town Manager, record podcast, Granville Community Meeting
May 30: Technology discussion with Central Pierce FD, meeting with YRMC, Coyote Crisis Collaborative virtual board meeting, AFCA virtual conference committee meeting

Board Meeting:

Board Meeting: June 24
CAFMA – 1700-1830

Leadership competencies: 4 ways battalion chiefs can best develop company officers

By: Chris Paskett

When scanning the landscape of the U.S. fire service, the positive momentum feels palpable. Leaders are building bridges and collaborating on solutions to shared industry challenges. Professionalism and accountability are widely celebrated as virtues. Science and data are increasingly more supported, blending with tradition and being communicated in a way that considers the lived experiences of firefighters on the line.

Many of these advances stem from fire chiefs leveraging broad leadership competencies to grow themselves, their organizations and the fire service as a whole. So how do we continue to build on this momentum and take the next step forward? One area we should examine more closely is the development of our company officers, instilling in them a wider range of leadership competencies.

Company officers have tremendous influence on department culture and make up the pool of future decision-makers and, ultimately, fire chiefs. Developing this group as well-rounded leaders has the potential to not only help advance their careers but also model thoughtful decision-making and intentional leadership actions across the organization. One way we can do this is through encouraging battalion chiefs to provide focused development opportunities that highlight underutilized leadership skills and proficiencies.

Battalion chiefs who mentor company officers provide an amazing opportunity to move beyond the operational setting and teach a more comprehensive skillset. Emergency operations are the lens we are often viewed through by the public, not to mention the reason most of us got into this profession. But engaging stakeholders, strengthening public trust and effectively managing employees helps build, fund and safeguard the entire profession for the long term. Furthermore, company officers who develop broad leadership competencies can use those skills to demonstrate intentional leadership actions and make better decisions.

[FireRescue1](#)

How mentoring can foster officer development

By: Victoria Mikulan

Mentoring has long had its place in the fire service. Ask any firefighter, and they'll name an individual, a fellow firefighter, officer or instructor who had a significant impact on their development during their career. Where other industries create formal mentorship programs to develop their talent, firefighting mentoring relationships tend to just happen. That doesn't make them any less ineffective. However, formal mentor relationships often define the benefits to both participants.

While we expect the mentee to learn from the mentor, what can the mentor learn from the mentee or the experience? What impact does being a mentor have on their leadership capabilities? As leaders, officers often find themselves as mentors. By acting as a mentor, officers may find they can develop their skills as well.

The impact of your mentoring

Scott Garing, fire chief of the Harmony Fire District in Pennsylvania, believes that acting as a mentor has a significant impact on an officer and leader. One reason he believes mentoring helps officers develop is that you are always learning as an officer and leader. Through mentoring, you learn from your mentees, and that helps you when you're teaching others. As fire chief, Garing aims to pass on a core set of values to his mentees/junior officers so that one day they transition seamlessly into his role. "It is the best legacy I can leave," he explains.

Steve Prziborowski, a deputy fire chief with the Santa Clara County (California) Fire Department agrees, saying that it is an officer's duty to mentor as many as we can: "If we don't train our replacements, who will? Good mentors are not threatened by the success of others; instead, they encourage and are proud of the successes of others." Mentoring can be an act of self-reflection; mentors become invested in their mentee's success.

[FireRescue1](#)

Chief's Desk Cont.

In addition to the organizational issues, I've been on my own health journey since 2021 which has added significant stress in my daily life because of excessive pain. In June of 2021 I had a significant surgery on my left shoulder for the fourth time. Later in 2021, my back started to degrade quickly and by July of 2022 every joint in my body started to swell. It wasn't until September of 2022 that I was finally diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA). I went in for my first back surgery a week later. Three months later Chief Feddema, Engineer Wagner and friends had to haul me to the hospital because L3/L4 decided to crush each other. That led to a spinal fusion in January of 2023 that also resulted in nerve damage in my right leg. After a year, my leg is finally at around 85% - I'll call that a win. In December of 2023, I had to go back in for a fusion of the right SI joint followed by carpal tunnel surgery in January of 2024. The carpal tunnel release surgery should have been easy, but it's me so it got badly infected.

In April of 2024, my left shoulder gave out again. The prognosis this time is that its irreparable. We're going to try conservative treatment to manage pain and strength because the only definitive fix is a reverse shoulder replacement. The doctor believes I'm too young to have the shoulder replacement right now. All I got out of that conversation is that I'm young, and I'm holding on to that 😊 I'm also dealing with a potential torn hamstring tendon. So, that's fun.

I'm not walking you through my medical history looking for any type of sympathy, we all know I'm my own worst enemy. Nor am I trying to cause anyone to relive the tragedies we've experienced over our recent past. What I'm trying to demonstrate is that we have persevered despite our struggles, we have stuck together, and we are stronger today than we've ever been – in my opinion.

We have proven that we are a resilient organization committed to taking care of both each other as well as our community. I have to say that I was moved a bit by the list I drafted which led me to call each senior staff member to thank them for their efforts.

As for writing this in The Review this week, my hope is that by sharing a list of some of the great opportunities we have happening right now as well as those on the horizon, it might serve as a reminder that we truly have a solid organization and team. We cannot forget the trials and tribulations we endured getting here, nor should we think we won't face additional challenges or disagreements in the future. That said, we know our strength as a team, and we should never forget that no matter what struggle we face, we will triumph in the end.
