

A NOTE FROM MY B.U.D.*

The Power of a Story

By Kevin Gerarden



I have heard politics described as the ‘fine art of who gets what’ – and anyone who has spent a fair amount of time in the emergency services will sooner or later taste the results of those who practice that art.

“Narrative” – a fancy word for “story” -- has become a popular buzzword in the current political arena. It is used to describe the prevailing story about any number of political issues. Individual stories, of real-life experiences, have the potential to challenge the prevailing narrative so often assumed by our politicians.

We are looking to gather stories – of departments, of individuals, of our customers – who have been affected by the realities of emergency services in these stressed times and whose experience can point the way to public policy and its reform.

On March 15, 2023, members of the Wisconsin Fire & EMS Coalition (WFEC) will have the opportunity to meet with our state legislators for Fire / EMS Lobby Day. The legislative session now beginning will be asked to help mend the systems of funding emergency services in local communities throughout the state. Another goal embraced by WFEC is the emphasis on responder mental health and the availability of treatment for PTSD for volunteers as well as for career personnel.

Our membership in the WFEC provides us the valuable opportunity to have a voice in the public policy decisions that so often determine how we deliver services to our communities. Our voices are most effective when they speak together – and the time has come to tell our stories.

Thanks!

Kevin G.

**A Note From My B.U.D. (Big Ugly Desk) threatens to be a quarterly feature for the newsletter of the Wisconsin Society of Emergency Services Instructors. All opinions expressed are those of the author, who will be grateful for any feedback and discussion.*