

ON SCENE

December 2014



Fast Times with Dr. Bob Kiely

Faced with the greatest challenge of his life, JFRD's retired Medical Director remains a man in motion.



DEAR FELLOW FIREFIGHTERS

You have to see it to believe it.

The Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition, fills 20 volumes and consumes two shelves at the Main Library downtown. Besides Oxford, there are 100-plus dictionaries which line 13 more shelves.

If you want to study the widely-accepted definitions of “responsibility,” you’re in the right place at the library. If you’re short on time, Oxford also publishes a Concise Dictionary (two volumes). Its definition of “responsibility” is “the opportunity or ability to act independently and take decisions without authorization.” FYI, “take decision” in

British English is the equivalent of “to decide.”

What’s interesting about Oxford’s definition is the inclusion of “ability.” You could read that definition as a dissection of “responsibility” into the “ability to respond.” The “take decisions without authorization” phrase clearly implies choice.

Bottom line: people can manage their responses to each other, to events, to ideas, etc. That’s not to say it’s easy, just possible. And choosing how we respond can influence the outcome of many situations as well as relationships – for better or worse, short term and long term. This isn’t news to any of us, but it’s a worthy reminder. You may even admire how some people respond in difficult situations and how their demeanor influences a situation.

Take, for example, this month’s cover story about Dr. Bob Kiely, our recently retired medical director. It’s filled with details about his life and career, and if you read the entire story, you’ll have a sense of his mindset. You’ll also learn how he’s chosen to respond to the greatest challenge of his life.

Dr. Kiely didn’t want to retire early but did so because he has ALS, a disease that progressively confounds the nervous system and muscular control to the point of paralysis. Dr. Kiely’s chosen response to this unfortunate, life-changing situation has been constructive. He understands what he is facing, yet he is moving down a hopeful path and still participating in life.

Dr. Kiely’s response to his situation is remarkable.

A career in the fire service guarantees a remarkable spectrum of human interaction and responses – on the street, in the fire station, during training or wherever you interact with your co-workers and the people you serve as first responders. We cannot always anticipate how others will respond, but each of us has the ability to control how we respond. I believe it is our responsibility to strive for the best outcome through our actions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marty Senterfitt', with a stylized, flowing script.

Marty Senterfitt
Director/Fire Chief



The Most Powerful Man on the Job

To shoot, or not to shoot.

Despite the Taliban presence and the context of war, the decision was difficult for Dr. Bob Kiely. After all, he had joined the Army Reserves to save lives, but the doctor-turned-Colonel was on high alert, guarding a perimeter after landing in Afghanistan, and he had his orders.

"I could see something bobbing up and down, probably 500 meters away. They told us if it moves, shoot," Kiely said of his 2010 deployment. "That's contrary to everything for me."

Kiely's conflict soon resolved itself.

"Turned out to be a donkey," said Kiely,

JFRD's recently retired medical director.

For most of his 62 years, Kiely has thrived in an atmosphere of drama and adventure. Whether it was handling an assault rifle, playing college football for a legendary coach, staffing a local ER with colleagues who were pioneering emergency medicine before Jacksonville had a trauma center, or responding to some of our department's most traumatic calls, Kiely was all in.

The "M.D." after Kiely's name was still fresh when he arrived at Jacksonville's Memorial Hospital in 1981. Memorial had already distinguished itself as one of the first hospitals to receive EKG data remotely from first responders working

cardiac calls. Memorial was also home to a group of pioneering doctors who shared Kiely's enthusiasm for the evolution of emergency medicine. They included Roy Baker, a driving force behind the formation of JFRD's Rescue Division, and Dr. Cliff Jeremiah, chairman of Memorial's emergency department and JFRD's first medical director.

Jeremiah quickly realized that Kiely's ambition would help advance not only Memorial's emergency department but also the sophistication of JFRD's relatively new role in providing EMS.

"The firefighters have always been eager to learn and very receptive to help," Jeremiah said. "Bob was ER trained, and



Dr. Bob Kiely and his family were wowed during his retirement party in October at The Jacksonville Landing. JFRD named its largest marine unit after Kiely to honor his 32 years of service to the department. Photo (L to R) Kiely's brother Charlie, daughters Lockett and Layla, Dr. Kiely, wife Robin and brother Guy. Hundreds of people attended the event.

he had a real drive to teach them and be involved.”

So after serving a decade as JFRD's medical director, Jeremiah decided to turn over the reins to Kiely. Then-Mayor Jake Godbold made it official in 1982, and five consecutive mayors would reappoint Kiely to the post, which initially paid just one dollar per year. The pioneering spirit of Jeremiah and Kiely continued to evolve as they opened two acute care centers in Jacksonville in the 1980s. These centers were among the first local alternatives to emergency room care nationwide.

“When you consider Dr. Kiely's back-

ground in emergency medicine, how he helped pioneer the practice locally, and the timing of his involvement with our department, then you begin to realize how fortunate we have been to have his expertise serve as our foundation for EMS,” said Director/Fire Chief Marty Senterfitt. “He's kept us on the right path for more than three decades.”

Kiely may have never become a doctor if it weren't for a series of family vacations from his native West Virginia to neighboring Virginia. Kiely would join his uncle who practiced medicine back when doctors made house calls and when payments for service were negotiable.

“People would barter with him,” Kiely said of his uncle, Dr. Bernard Showalter, who would accept offers of eggs and sometime render care for free.

With a front row seat to the power of healing, Kiely clearly saw his future. When he entered the freshman class at the University of Alabama in 1970, he would encounter another super power.

“He was a big guy with a low and slow voice. He had the presence of ‘God,’” said Kiely, referring to renowned college coach Paul “Bear” Bryant.

Kiely, who depended upon his speed as a 150-pound running back and defensive back, joined the Crimson Tide as Bryant

was in the midst of his 25 years at Alabama, a span in which the team earned six national titles. The practice sessions, the small tower from which Bryant observed scrimmages and the coach's motivational techniques are still memorable.

"We would be waiting for 'God' to arrive," Kiely said of his teammates' awe for Bryant. The coach would routinely climb into his tower and provide simple, concise direction with a megaphone. His locker room technique was similar.

"His pep talks were brief," Kiely said. "The one I remember the most was when we were playing Auburn the next day. He said 'Boys, you're playing Auburn tomorrow. Beat them.' That was it."

Bryant and his team prevailed.

Also brief was Kiely's time at Alabama. After one year, he transferred to Florida State University to reunite with long-time friends and to complete his requisite studies in biology and chemistry. A few years later, with his bachelor's of

science in hand and medicine top of mind, Kiely traded Seminole territory for Gator country. He was ready for the next step in following his passion, but he also figured it would be a large step as he entered the University of Florida's medical program.

He was right.

"At orientation, I walked into a room of 120 people, and they all looked like geniuses. You could just tell they were really smart," Kiely said. "I knew I'd be studying all the time. It was hard ... the academic pressure and the intensity of training."

His hospital rotations had their moments, too. Long hours – about 120 each week – cut into sleep. One time, Kiely said he dozed off while peering into a microscope. He was asleep long enough for the pressure against the eyepiece to give him "raccoon eyes." But the emergency room trauma and drama part of his residency grabbed hold of him and has never let go.

More than two decades into his medical career, Kiely was very successful and plenty busy, but he discovered another opportunity for drama in 2003. He joined an emerging tactical medic team which was a unique partnership with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office S.W.A.T. unit. About a dozen members of JFRD were part of the original team. Its mission: to respond to high-risk calls with JSO to provide medical care as needed to police, first responders, victims and suspects. JSO retiree Roy Henderson was S.W.A.T. commander when the medic team component first formed.

"Dr. Kiely was a 100-percenter," Henderson said. "He wasn't just a teacher; he was a doer. It would be much easier to count the number of times he didn't show up on a call than all the times he did. If he was in town, he was there."

"When you look back and say, 'I've met some great people ... worked with some great people, befriended some great people ... Dr. Kiely fits in every category,'" Henderson said.

Kiely's connection to S.W.A.T. led to numerous friendships which included UF Health's Dr. Barry Steinberg, one of JSO's S.W.A.T. physicians and, as of 2006, a member of the Army Reserves. Kiely had been intrigued with military service throughout this life, especially growing up and listening to his father's WW II Army stories about entertaining the elite German officers while they were held captive in U.S. custody.

"They were Oxford trained and very friendly," Kiely recalled his father sharing.

So, at age 54, Kiely decided to put his skills to yet another test and engage more drama. He joined the Army



Dr. Kiely, circa 1984, with (L to R) brother Charlie, mother Jennie and grandmother Mammie at Kiely's first private practice, Arlington Acute Care Center on Cesery Boulevard. Kiely and Dr. Cliff Jeremiah, JFRD's first medical director, partnered in opening the center which served as an alternative to emergency room care. They opened another center in the Lakewood area a few years later.

Reserves. Once again, he was a 100 percent doer.

In 2008, he served at a Combat Support Hospital in Iraq for seven months and worked with Steinberg. Two years later, Kiely deployed again, this time to Afghanistan as a Battalion Surgeon. Within a four-month span, Kiely said he treated 856 of the wounded in Afghanistan, most them American soldiers. Both doctors said the sense of service trumped the specter of the war surrounding them.

“I think Bob and I sort of shared the same ‘Do the right thing.’ attitude,” Steinberg said. “You have a country that needs you and a military that needs you ... It’s not for the money, it’s not for the power, it’s to do the right thing.”

Kiely’s successor as medical director, Dr. Brad Elias, agrees, whether it’s for the military or as medical director.

“He’s dedicated to his country and the city. The concept of being deployed and doing public service, he was not in this for the money,” said Elias, who met Kiely when Jacksonville hosted the Super Bowl in 2004.

The commitment that Kiely made to his post and JFRD personnel for 30-plus years speaks to his sincerity as well as the responsibility of medical director.

“In all actuality, he was the most powerful man on the fire department because we couldn’t function as an EMS agency without him. But he didn’t carry himself that way,” said Rescue Division Chief Ivan Mote. “Dr. Kiely pretty much allowed us to do what we were capable of doing within the scope of our medical qualifications. When something was above what we were capable of doing, he trusted us to bring it to him for his direction.”



Small World Indeed: Dr. Kiely and JFRD Lt. Todd Hardin (Engine 24) were both deployed to Bagram, Afghanistan in 2010. As an Army Colonel Reservist, Kiely was serving as a Battalion Surgeon; Hardin, a Florida Army National Guard member, was serving as an Ammunition Sergeant. This photo shows both men after they completed a 10-mile run on Sept. 11, 2010 at Bagram’s Air Force Base. The race’s 7 a.m. start time was delayed several hours due to mortar attacks close to the starting line.

Below: Dr. Kiely cared for more than 850 soldiers and civilians during his four-month stint in Afghanistan. He also deployed to Iraq in 2008.



Elias joined JFRD as assistant medical director in March. He said the original plan included a couple of years of overlap between him and Kiely.

“Bob said this is going to be the best job you can have,” said Elias, who added he has no plans for any radical change in SOG 430 or the role of medical director.

The transition plan changed when Kiely was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS in July. The neurodegenerative disease impairs the part of the body’s nervous system which helps govern muscular control.

When Kiely could no longer control his hands to effectively render care, he was facing the most difficult decision in his life. In addition to retiring from JFRD early, Kiely gave up his medical practice, the S.W.A.T. medic team and the Army.

However, he hasn’t given up regular exercise, eating at fire stations and riding with JFRD’s rescue chiefs. He hasn’t given up the drama.

JFRD’s Quality Improvement Officer Capt. Michael Braddock has known Kiely for 15 years. That’s long enough to appreciate at least three points of consistency in the man – traits that Braddock characterized as honorable.

“No matter what you asked him to do, he was always willing to help,” Braddock said. That would include educating paramedics who were hungry to improve their skills or cancelling vacation plans to come to the aid of Hurricane Katrina’s victims in 2005 and also fulfill his duty as the USAR team’s physician.

“Doctor Kiely’s also a great listener ... and to be a good leader, you have to be

a great listener,” Braddock said. “If you listen to people, you’ll gain their respect. People followed him because they respected him.”

The other honorable trait, Braddock said, was Kiely’s consistent, even-tempered demeanor, which Braddock observed and admired in the office they shared at JFRD Headquarters. Just once has Braddock seen the steady demeanor truly fluctuate – the day Kiely opened up about his ALS diagnosis. There was frustration, but it wasn’t a pity party. Braddock said Kiely was fac-

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**– Ivan Mote
Rescue Division Chief**

ing the disappointment that his long-term and cherished role of helping others, including those who are invested in the business of saving lives, was about to change.

Kiely may have been forced to relinquish his career, but he’s still giving life all he can.

In September, he remarried while vacationing in Lake Tahoe. He has a ski trip

planned as well as future visits to his childhood home in West Virginia, now a vacation home for him, his two brothers and sister. Kiely still drives his Corvette from his Jacksonville Beach home to downtown so he can jog across the Acosta Bridge with his new wife. He also visits his two daughters and six grandchildren in Pensacola as often as possible.

Kiely, along with JFRD Retiree Joe Moore, still volunteers at the International Learning Center, providing medical treatment to refugees and immigrants who have relocated to Jacksonville.

Staying active isn’t all Kiely’s doing to cope with his disease. He said his faith in Jesus Christ is the best therapy possible and is the “only way to get through this.” Kiely said he has been a Christian since his childhood and continues to study the Bible and pray on a daily basis with his wife.

His plan for the future is simple: “To stay alive.” That’s another consistency in Dr. Bob Kiely.

“He’s always been active,” said Jeremiah, JFRD’s first medical director and Kiely’s colleague at Memorial Hospital and in private practice. “I think it’s the joy of living every day to its fullest.

“None of us can know what he’s going through now. He’s always handled adversity well. I’ve never seen Bob be a complainer with whatever lot life has given him. All of us would like to be that way.”

Promotions



Captain Sergio Cortez



Captain Bryon Iveson



Captain David Squires



Lieutenant David Baumgardner



Lieutenant Steven Breckenridge



Lieutenant William Coyle



Lieutenant Jason Crawford



Lieutenant Mark Dennis

Promotions



Lieutenant Ryan Gordon



Lieutenant Jason Gruentzel



Lieutenant Jerry Hammett, Jr.



Lieutenant James Hudson



Lieutenant Trevor Hyer



Lieutenant Ben Kodatt



Lieutenant Travis Maple



Lieutenant Shawn Palmer

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Lieutenant Justin Pickett



Lieutenant Richard Ray



Lieutenant Joe Schweckendieck



Lieutenant Thomas Shuman



Lieutenant Matthew Valliere



Lieutenant Nick Vihrachoff



Lieutenant Ryan Weakland



Engineer Roger Alexander

Promotions



Engineer Brandon Bailey



Engineer Roni Bailey



Engineer Arley Baker



Engineer Dominique Bartley



Engineer Mike Best



Engineer Tyson Bishop



Engineer Joseph Brittain



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Engineer Steven Clare



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Engineer Michael Curran



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Engineer Kwasi Dingle



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Engineer Renaldo Horn



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Engineer John Lopez



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Engineer Mario Moya



Engineer Jean Paravisini



Engineer Joseph Phillips



Engineer Murray Phillips



Engineer Ben Pickett



Engineer Eric Reddish



Engineer Paul Rigdon



Engineer Carlos Ruiz

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Engineer Richard Santos



Engineer David P. Smith



Engineer Justin Smith



Engineer Tim Smith



Engineer Roderick Spann



Engineer Tim Sullivan



Engineer Chris Vance



Engineer Jason Walo

Promotions



Engineer Shane Ward



Engineer Travis Williams



Engineer Chance Wilms



Fire Communications Supervisor Karen Johnson



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NOVEMBER 2014 CALL VOLUMES

RESCUES

R5	400
R22	371
R4	370
R28	357
R19	340
R31	325
R30	312
R1	311
R2	306
R15	300
R7	285
R25	283
R20	279
R21	279
R36	270
R13	259
R52	256
R24	255
R34	252
R51	251
R32	247
R26	245
R27	243
R35	236
R50	220
R54	185
R55	184
R58	183
R57	180
R59	177
R23	173
R42	173
R71	160
R81	149
R33	147
R70	137
R49	114
R62	100
R53	82
R85	77
R86	73

R45	60
R43	54
R84	43
R87	43
R46	42
R40	18

ENGINES

E28	426
E19	377
E22	356
E30	353
E31	336
E1	318
E10	312
E25	304
E18	299
E152	296
E36	296
E9	296
E51	294
E21	283
E27	283
E34	279
E44	272
E32	257
E24	255
E4	249
E20	237
E150	221
E42	221
E2	213
E7	213
E59	209
E13	204
E17	200
E135	179
E26	176
E58	171
E14	164
E55	156
E154	150

E23	141
E29	133
E57	131
E33	122
E11	110
E49	102
E41	100
E62	85
E16	81
E53	75
E56	50
E48	49
E46	46
HAZ7	36
HAZ21	26
E143	16
E45	15
E40	11
AIR5	10
HR4	9

SQUADS

S5	237
S37	234
S12	189

LADDERS

L28	216
L31	172
L30	160
TL21	137
L134	128
L10	124
L18	118
L44	113
L1	112
L4	112
TL9	94
L26	78

TANKERS

T28	76
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T52	74
T31	61
T42	28
T29	25
T33	23
T57	21
T54	19
T35	16
T49	14

MARINE UNITS

M38	9
M39	9
M40	3

FIELD CHIEFS

R104	141
F4	130
R105	119
F3	114
R103	90
F5	86
F1	79
F9	79
F6	77
F7	76
F2	49
F8	39

FIRE PREVENTION

Inspections .. 674

PLANS REVIEW

Plans339

Inspections ...288

NOVEMBER 2014

TOTALS

FIRE1,415

EMS8,717

NON EMR ..260

Total ...10,392