



Friday Night (under the) Lights...

Twenty twenty-three.



Happy Friday...

And happy 2023! And here's to our first FNuL for the year...

As we turn the corner into 2023, I'm hoping everyone had a *memorable* Holiday season - whatever you believe in, whatever you did, whoever you did it with and whenever you were able to, or chose to, do it. I'm not trying to be politically correct, by the way (I mess that up way too much), I'm truly hoping you had fun in the way *you* love to have fun. Because that's the best way.

It's another discussion for another day, but I truly believe that "fun" is a major part of what makes life special and makes the world go round (my daughter would probably say "you do you, dad" ...).

So here we go.

As the calendar flips, 2023 is the Year of the Rabbit in the Chinese Zodiac.

The Chinese Zodiac is a traditional classification scheme based on a lunar calendar that assigns an animal and its reputed attributes to each year in a repeating twelve-year cycle.



I found out some encouraging news... Here are some of the beliefs of the Rabbit,

"To outsiders, the Rabbit's kindness may make them seem soft and weak. In truth, the Rabbit's quiet personality hides their confidence and strength. They are steadily moving towards their goal, no matter what negativity others give them".

Hmmm. Sounds like the EMS Profession...

Keep going...

“With their good reasoning skills and attention to detail, they make focused scholars. They are socializers with an attractive aura. However, they find it hard to open up to others and often turn to escapism”.

I'd say that's also a pretty accurate description – especially the *escapism*.

And finally...

“A plain and routine life is not their style. Though conservative and careful in their actions, they need surprises every so often to spice things up”.

OK. That's it.

It's officially the Year of EMS!

I'll draw attention to other similarities, like rabbits are fast. Just like we're supposed to be.

Rabbits have ears that can rotate 270 degrees so they can be constantly vigilant for predators (think “scene safety”, although our ears can rotate a full zero degrees).

Rabbits have a phenomenal sense of smell. They have over 100 million scent cells – that means they often smell predators before they see them. I think we'd all agree that an important trait of EMS is smelling problems before we see them (many stories here, I'm sure).

But Rabbits also have almost panoramic vision. They can see just about 360 degrees around themselves, meaning they always know when someone is approaching from behind (another scene safety trait).

Rabbits are fast chewers. They chew their food up to 150 times per minute. I'm going to guess that if you're in our profession, you can chew even faster.

Rabbits are crepuscular (I had to look that one up). It means they're very active around sunrise and sundown. We call that “shift change”.



Finally, Rabbits are one of nature's most active breeders.

I'm going to stop here.

It's pretty clear, 2023 is the Year of EMS...

Kidding aside, one of the very comforting things about a "new" year is the sense of starting fresh. Everything seems to have an opportunity to "begin anew". We make ourselves new goals (resolutions), the calendar resets, the next 365 days are in front of us.

It's a forced beginning in the middle of our journey through life. It's also a welcome pause. A quick catch your breath, if you will.

I personally love how it feels. It's comforting to me. It's also the world's most celebrated holiday (probably because it's the only thing humankind could agree on) ...

Sociologists note that many of us become more serious about life on New Year's. We take stock and plan new courses of action to better our lives. Many embrace the tradition of making resolutions to foster becoming better.

BTW, on average each North American makes 1.8 New Year's resolutions.

For me, seems like I'm able to stick to 1.8% of my resolutions for the whole year.

But overwhelmingly, the New Year permits us to look forward – to look through the windshield and away from the rearview mirror. And the things we look forward to are universally positive.

Seriously. Ever heard of anyone having a New Year's resolution to try and increase their chance of a heart attack? Be hated by more of their neighbors? Get fired? Wreck their car?

You get my point...



Think about this. Every resolution you make (made) when the year turns over implies that we are in control of ourselves, that we are not a victim fated by circumstance, controlled by stars, owned by luck, but we can make choices to change our life.

We're in the driver's seat...

Truth be told, we always are (or can be). New Years just brings it front of mind.

So – where is this going, you ask?

Imagine if each one of us resolved to make our profession, EMS – *Better*.

There's no question, EMS has been wounded over the past few years. It's been hard. Challenging. Not so easy sometimes and not as rewarding as we want our lives to be.

And sadly, it hasn't been as fun...

Well – Happy New Year. Let's grab this one together and make things better. No one has a better opportunity than we do.

Remember what we do. We jump into another human being's chaos, and we do everything we can to create order. We exist to try and make people's lives better.

The course corrections we need as we evolve out of the challenges of the past few years are within our individual and collective control...

I think today is a great time to start...



- **The most trusted profession in the country...**

So, this will surprise no one, but it's a wonderful recognition for a part of our profession that's had a particularly rough time the past few years, both inside and outside the hospital...

The Gallup organization conducted a poll from November 9 to December 2, 2022, to determine who Americans trusted the most.

The questions related to honesty and ethical standards...

Top of the list (by far) were **nurses**. 79 percent of Americans surveyed rated nurses very high or high.

Think about that – out of ALL the potential professions out there, Nurses. Are. The. Most. Trusted.

And, as a point of reference, nurses have topped the list for honesty and ethics each year since the profession was added to the ratings in 1999 except for 2001, when firefighters outperformed them in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Here's another interesting fact. 2020 was the highest rating not only for nurses, but healthcare professionals across the board. Americans' assessments for honesty and ethics among healthcare professionals soared in the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sometimes, it's important to remember how valuable you are to those we take care of – even when it doesn't feel that way...



So, to our Nurse colleagues, hats off once again for being the most trusted profession out there. You've earned it and we're fortunate to work with you...

And - Just one more reason we doctors are scared of you...

Oh yeah. The end of that list?

Car salespeople, members of Congress and telemarketers earned the lowest rankings for honesty and ethics...

I do have a solar system that's bundled with an extended car warranty when you sign up for Medicare if you're interested...

- The cardiac arrest watched around the world....

By now, almost everyone has watched and followed the concerning course of Damar Hamlin, the 24-year-old Buffalo Bills Safety who suffered an on-field cardiac arrest after being struck in the chest during their Monday night game against the Bengals.

What we now know, is that Hamlin most likely suffered Commotio Cordis – an extremely rare event that happens less than a couple dozen times a year in the US – most often in young male athletes.

If ever there was a “perfect storm” cause for a potentially fatal event, Commotio Cordis is it.

Commotio cordis (Latin for “agitation of the heart”) is caused when individuals experience an episode of ventricular fibrillation or ventricular tachycardia after a strong, sudden impact at just the right spot in their chest at just the right moment during their normal cardiac cycle.

Specifically, patients receive a blow to the middle portion of their chest from a fast-flying object (baseball, hockey puck, another player, karate kick, etc) that causes a sudden distortion of the myocardium.



The contact occurs during ventricular repolarization, specifically during the upstroke of the T-wave before its peak. The perfect storm? This period occupies only about 1% of the cardiac cycle.

The impact energy must also be sufficient to cause ventricular depolarization, estimated to be about 50 joules.

Untreated, most of these patients will not survive.

But what Damar’s event reminded the world was that appropriate, rapid treatment will have a dramatic positive impact on outcome.

And even though Damar’s rescuers were physicians and medics and seasoned healthcare professionals, what they did on that field can be done by anyone reading this sentence.

Damar received immediate CPR and was treated with a readily available AED.

And there's Powerful Message #1 – Anyone with the right training and an available defibrillator has the ability to save a life.

Powerful message #2? Damar is young. Cardiac arrest isn't just a condition of the elderly. The spectrum of illness (and injury) that can lead to a cardiac arrest is wide. It's important to remember that it's an equal opportunity offender.

Powerful message #3? Damar's very encouraging daily improvement (most comforting being his apparent normal neurologic status) reminds us of the critical importance of the massive team of professionals, the focused interventions and the coordination of all the post-arrest care team. Damar experienced two team sports that day.

Powerful message #4? The message itself. Statistics tell us that there were close to another 1000 people who suffered a cardiac arrest the same day Damar did. The difference with this one is the attention it created.

People ask questions. People are focused on what happened and his progress.

And you know what? People have learned from this. And hopefully the event has encouraged more people to get trained in CPR. Hopefully it stimulates placing more AEDs in our communities and making sure they're accessible when needed.

It's so heartwarming (pun intended) to see such a positive outcome from such a catastrophic event. My gut says we will be better prepared for more of these because of it. There's an entire public health story deep inside this very personal story...

And you know what else was really cool?

When he was emerging from his sedation, he was communicating via pen and paper with the doctors in his room.

His question?

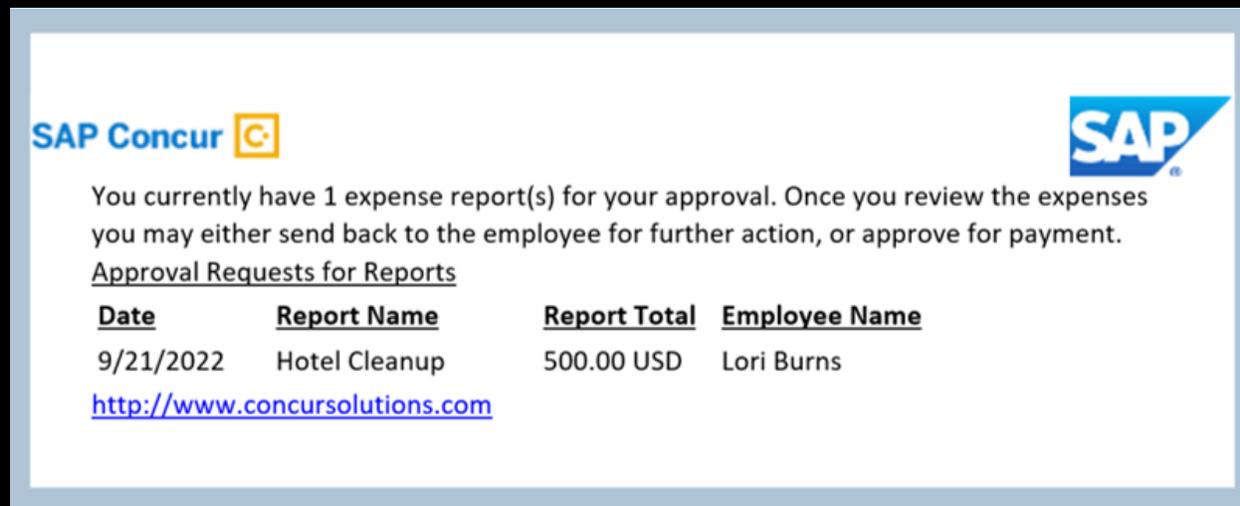
"Did we win"?

Probably the first game in NFL history that was won without ever finishing the game...



- Epilogue...

Every now and then, I get a great Epilogue gift directly from life itself...

A screenshot of an email notification from SAP Concur. The email header includes the SAP Concur logo and the SAP logo. The main text states: "You currently have 1 expense report(s) for your approval. Once you review the expenses you may either send back to the employee for further action, or approve for payment." Below this is a section titled "Approval Requests for Reports" which contains a table with the following data:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Report Name</u>	<u>Report Total</u>	<u>Employee Name</u>
9/21/2022	Hotel Cleanup	500.00 USD	Lori Burns

At the bottom of the screenshot is a blue hyperlink: <http://www.concursolutions.com>

So, that's it from my World. Happy Friday.

And Happy New Year, everybody...

I don't think I can ever say it enough – I appreciate what you do, and how you do it. When your head hits the pillow tonight (or tomorrow or whenever) – remember how many people depend on you (on us) to be there when things go south.

Whether it's at the patient's side, months ago at a lectern in a class, from behind the microphone in the comm center, from deep inside the engine compartment of the ambulance, under the avionics in the aircraft, welcoming people into the office, making sure what we do is compliant and legal, from the business offices that support our sustainability or any of the thousands of touch points that allow us to fix busted anatomy and physiology – we make a pretty cool team and a (wait for it – here it comes) *fun* profession...

After all, it's the year of the Rabbit – Actually the year of EMS – May you experience all the aspects of our friend the Rabbit...

Best to all of you tonight...

Ed

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