



In recognition of telecommunicators

by

Tonya Brewer

Orange County Sheriff's Office Communications Manager

In recognition of National Telecommunicators' Week 2010...to all of the call takers, dispatchers, teletype operators, and supervisors in 911 Centers everywhere.

YOU are a 911 telecommunicator. **YOU** are the lifeline to the community. **YOU are** the first line of defense to any incoming call...emergency or not....police, fire or medical. **YOU** are...the **heart** behind the voice.

Never look at yourself as 'just a dispatcher', 'just a 911 operator', or 'just a teletype operator'. You are so much more than that!! You are the calming voice on the other end of the phone when the lady calls crying hysterically that her baby is missing. You send her help to locate her missing child. You are the calming voice on the other end of the phone when the man calls saying he's been robbed at gunpoint or that his house is on fire. Just your voice is a reassurance that help is on the way. You are the calming voice on the phone when the elderly woman calls because her house has been burglarized. She's been personally violated and is scared, but you manage to calm her down anyway just through your words.

You are the one that deputies, officers and firefighters turn to for help in the lightest moments...and in their darkest ones. **YOU** are that one voice they depend on for reassurance...for comfort...for reality.

For a living...a paycheck...a career...however you look at what you do...**YOU save lives**. When there is a crisis is someone's life, they call 911 knowing that someone will answer their phone call and guide them through the crisis they are living through at that moment; even if it is a child needing help with their homework or because someone's pizza was delivered with the wrong toppings and was late on top of that or because the washer broke and is flooding the house.

No, you may not be told every day just how important you are. But know in your hearts that **you** truly are a very important and vital link in the community...our community. You may receive those calls from citizens who may use colorful language to express their crisis or those that are crying beyond control. But somehow you manage to get the information you need to assist them, putting your personal feelings aside to meet the mission of the agency.

You are not just a body in a chair. **You are a telecommunicator**...the vital link...the lifeline of your agency and the citizens we serve.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being the professionals you are....the 911 call takers, teletype operators, dispatchers, and supervisors. You are so very important, each and every day, whether it's said out loud or not....remember that. When you look in the mirror, you'll see a strong person...and you'll see...**the heart behind the voice**.

