

# Central Fire District

## *From the desk of the Chief*

September 21, 2011

### **Do You Know Who or What You Are ??**

It was a side conversation being held between 4 or 5 of our FF's and EMT's and I was kind of eaves dropping on a conversation that I was not part of. I probably should not have been sleuthing around but many times that is what you have to do as a Chief if you really want to know what is going on because many times folks won't tell me what they really think. I heard in the conversation the comment "We are only volunteers we don't really make a difference". Ouch!!!!!! I hate that comment. It gave me a reason to stop and think for a few minutes about what I have learned about you, your motivations, and your contributions to society. Let me take a few minutes to tell you what I think.

Sometimes when we consider who we are and what difference we make we have to look at it from the perspective of others. In this case those whom we serve. Here are some examples:

Who are you... to the mother of the 6 month old child who just had a febrile seizure? It is the first one her daughter has ever had and although it is a minor thing to us it is a life threatening and altering time for the mother. Then you arrive and comfort mother and child while the seizure goes away. You calmly explain to her what has just happened as you wait for the ambulance to arrive.

Who are you...to the husband of the 73 year old whose wife just had a stroke? She can't tell him how she feels. She is only able to struggle as she moves and is fighting for every breath she takes. He has never seen this happen before. He only knows that he doesn't know what to do and he is afraid his lifelong companion is going to die and leave him alone. Then you arrive and you give her oxygen, calm her down, take her vital signs, and prepare her for transport to the hospital. You and your partner calm and support him and the patient during those long minutes it takes for the ambulance to come to complete the process.

Who are you...to the family that has spent a lifetime building and updating their home only to have it now threatened to be destroyed by the grease fire caused when they momentarily forgot to watch the French fries cooking on the stove. They see everything they own being threatened with destruction. Then you arrive on scene and quickly and efficiently put the fire out. You check each area to make sure there is no extension. One of the crew members explains to them how and why you are doing each task. You work hard to remove the smoke, reduce the damage and save everything you can. When it is all over they see damage but it is repairable. It is not all gone they can still sleep there and the precious memories are safe.

Who are you... to the young children who watch you as you quickly begin to extricate their parents from the wreckage of their severely damaged SUV? As one of you sits with the children and tells them what all those FF's and EMT's are doing and assures them that you will do all you can to get Mom and Dad out safely you feel them begin to relax just a little. You have made life easier for them and they will never forget.

Who are you.....to the dispatcher who just took the call from the frantic parents of the 2 year old little boy who is missing and she is afraid he is in a canal near her home. She takes the call and then pages out CFD personnel to help. All she gets to do now is sit there and hope....and pray that all will be okay.

Who and what are you to all these people.

**YOU ARE THE ANSWER TO THEIR PRAYERS!!!!**

They prayed that someone would come, someone would help them, and you came. You responded and did all that you could to help.

**YOU ARE THE ANSWER TO THEIR PRAYERS!!!**

The call comes in and the page goes out

“Someone help me” is the pleading shout

You come and do all that's in your power

To help them in their helpless hour

You do your best to ease their pain

Then prepare to do it all over again

Please, Please, don't ever forget who and what you are!!!

Take care of yourself because you are important to your own family and to our CFD family.