

Unsung Heroes of Ogden, an Anonymous Letter

I've lived in Ogden City most of my life. I grew up here. I'm raising my own children here. For years I've slept and risen under the blanket of protection and services this city provides and yet I've never once stopped to say thank you to all the heroes who work tirelessly everyday ... unsung.

So, to the 911 dispatchers who talk to me when I have to call for an ambulance – thank you. Your voice becomes my lifeline, my safe place. “Help is on the way,” you say kindly and sincerely, even though you've already said it a hundred times that day. And I know you mean it.

To the firefighters, EMTs and paramedics who arrive like angels in my times of crisis – thank you. Your kind eyes and gentle hands bring hope and comfort. When you tell me I'm going to be okay, I honestly believe you and I feel something that a chronically ill person rarely feels. I feel safe. And to the one who has a habit of tenderly but professionally holding his patient's hand during the bumpy ambulance ride – that memory remains long after all the bad ones have faded.

To the police officers who work so hard to go out of their way to reach out to children – thank you. I can't count the number of you who've actually knelt down to be at eye level with my little boy to speak to him. This has taught him that officers are honorable men and women, and that they represent a safe place. He respects the law and those who enforce it, and he knows if he's ever lost or in trouble he can “go find a cop to help cuz they're our friends.”

To the crossing guard who literally saved my daughter's life on Monroe Boulevard – thank you. She stepped off the curb with you, a car sped through the crosswalk and you shoved her back and put your own arm forward in her place. As a result, your stop sign was ripped right out of your hand by the car and broken to pieces. If you hadn't acted so swiftly, the broken thing on the ground wouldn't have been a stop sign. It would've been my little girl. And this thank you extends to all crossing guards, who stand and protect our kids every single day. Guardian Angels, all of you!

To the Special Services Officer who taught my children not only the importance of wearing a helmet while they ride their bicycles, but how to wear them properly and look cool doing it – thank you. My little boy took a spill down our driveway, which looks like a slope on Mt. Everest, and tumbled down like a ragdoll. The only part of him that wasn't scratched up was his head. Now I hear him tell his friends, “Don't get on that bike without your helmet. Your brain belongs inside your head.” You may be able to estimate how many children you have fingerprinted or taught bike safety to, but you will never know how many little lives you've saved!

To the brave men and women of SWAT who once crawled through the fields in my worst nightmare come true to disarm a maniac I called daddy, and stopped long enough along the way to comfort a scared, sobbing little girl – thank you. I was only about 11 years old then, but I think about it often even now. Please know that the people you put your very lives on the line to protect do not forget you when it's over. I remember your faces. You made me safe.

To Mayor Godfrey and our City Council, the dedicated men and women who have worked so hard to rebuild our city – thank you. We can see your efforts blooming all around us! You refused to give up on Ogden and my beloved city is being reborn because of it. I drive through downtown Ogden and tears fill my eyes because there's always something new, something beautiful.

To the people at the Water Department without whom nothing would be flowing – thank you. I would imagine you only hear comments from the public when the water flow stops. I suffer from chronic pain and joint degradation, so there are some nights when a hot bath can mean the difference between making it through the night or taking a trip to the ER. For this citizen, water equals tranquility, and I know it isn't brought by the water fairy. And on the rare occasion when service must be interrupted for something, I find your people efficient, courteous and friendly. Please know that every giggling baby dunking a rubber ducky in a bubble bath appreciates you, they just don't know it yet.

To the IT people who keep our city's network and communication running – thank you. And the parks and streets maintenance people who make our city beautiful – thank you. To all the "behind the scenes" people who do so many things every single day that most of us know nothing about but would be lost without – THANK YOU!

You may be unsung heroes, but you're still heroes! And I hope you see it every day in the faces of the people of your city. Ogden is beautiful, and it's thriving in its rebirth. It's growing and prospering anew, and for those of us who've lived here all our lives and love this city, it's like being given a very precious gift. So I, as a citizen of Ogden City, want to say thank you!

Jane Q. Citizen