
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everybody:

TGIF – it’s Friday, and boy, did the time fly this week. We had two tours at Jetson this week. One was for two doctors – Dr. Craig Coenson from Magellan, and Dr. Dick Dalton, who currently works for Magellan, but was a psychiatrist at Jetson some time back. It’s always nice and re-affirming to hear about someone’s experience and how he was pleasantly surprised by the therapeutic processes he saw occurring at Jetson. He was very complimentary.

Jetson is definitely in the news this week – we discovered a four foot alligator in the “dookey pond” – an oxidation pond behind the facility. RD Carolyn Lewis thinks we should name it Nasti-Gator, but if anyone comes up with a better name for our new resident, please send it to me. He may not be a resident for long, as we are investigating what we should do about him. Yes, we contacted the Wildlife and Fisheries Investi-Gators.

Just a reminder that our new late summer ritual is upon us – the annual performance evaluations (PES) on all employees are due by the end of next week. Supervisors, you have our work cut out for you.

Heroes come in all forms and shapes and sizes, and a lot of times it’s just ordinary people (and critters) who step up to the plate. Last week, a tiny, 10-pound Chihuahua-poodle mix named Psycho saved two little girls from a rattlesnake in Texas. The snake was coiled and ready to strike when the dog stepped between the serpent and the children to protect them. The canine was bitten on the eye, but the vet says the pooch will be okay.

And this week, a bookkeeper at an elementary school in Decatur, Georgia remained incredibly calm and saved the day (and maybe a lot of lives) when she was taken hostage by a 20-year old gunman armed with an AK-47 assault rifle and 500 rounds of ammunition. By now you have probably heard the 911 tape, which has been aired by news outlets in its entirety, where Antoinette Tuff relayed messages between the gunman and emergency dispatchers, before she convinced the young man to lay down his weapon and surrender. Although shots were fired, no one was hurt, which was truly a miracle. The gunman, Michael Hill, has a history of mental health issues and was not taking his medications. But he did have access to weapons and a lot of ammo. Is it me, or is something wrong with this scenario? Why do we keep living the same scenario over and over? But back to Ms. Tuff (whose name is just so appropriate!). She handled the call and the gunman like she had trained for years in hostage negotiations. She engaged the young man, who truly did not want to hurt anyone, by relating her own life experiences to show that everyone has problems that we need to work through. Her calm demeanor probably saved a lot of lives, including Mr. Hill. The young man reminds me of some of our youth – seriously mentally ill and involved with law enforcement, mother is deceased and father is not in the picture. Sounds familiar, doesn’t it? I hope all of you out there in the field and in the facilities can recognize when a youth is about to break and when s/he needs intervention. I know that every one of you could and would step up and handle a situation as admirably as this untrained bookkeeper. Antoinette Tuff is truly a heroine and we can all learn from her.

There’s no doubt in my mind that OJJ staff in every office and facility would be up to the task under similar circumstances. You are heroes and heroines every day in every location, for choosing to work with a difficult population under less-than-ideal conditions. Wishing you all a wonderful weekend, with my heartfelt thanks for all you do to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

“Doc” *Dr. Mary Livers*

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