

## STRIKE STORIES



**By Donna Finn**

Senior Administrative Analyst  
Systemwide Safety  
Improvements

**It was early Saturday morning.** The strike has just begun. I took my first call in Customer Information. An elderly woman was in a panic because she couldn't get to her cardiologist. She had just been released from the hospital following heart surgery. I spent about an hour with her that Saturday, successfully helping her find a way to her doctors.

My second call was from a man who was incensed that he couldn't get to Hollywood. He vowed he would sue the MTA. "The trouble with the MTA", he insisted, "is that you just don't care about commuters."

For over a month I answered calls in Customer Information, trying to help people all over the city. Many were angry, some were depressed, but the majority of the callers were grateful for any assistance I could provide them.

I never knew what the words "transit dependent" meant before. Many of my customers were utterly without any viable means of transportation. For them, our bus and rail service are their lifelines to the outside world, and our transportation schedules are their bibles to a fuller life. During the strike, with so few buses running and without any rail service, many of them were rendered virtually helpless.

For the first time since I joined the MTA nine years ago, I really felt a connection to the riding public. I now realize how important a service we provide, and that without us, many thousands of our fellow citizens would be left in isolation.

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