

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER ELEVENTH

SPA Student's Personal Account from New York

Sarah Pennie
Layout and Design Editor

Editor's Note: Sarah Pennie is spending fall semester at CityTerm in New York City.

The first I heard of the attack was through Minnesota. Forty minutes out of New York City by train, it was ironic that the first I knew of it was when my sister called from home. I was just walking back into my room after math, at about 9:15 in the morning, when my phone rang. It was my sister, asking if I was all right. Of course I was fine I told her, why would I be any differently? Then she told me that two planes had hit the world trade center at 8:45 and 9:00AM. My first thought, (hopeful, considering the situation), was what a horrible and stupid accident, because it was the most beautiful-clear day yet, then she told me that they were suspected terrorist attacks. There were three of us on the floor, and we immediately began trying to get to news sites on the Internet, due to our lack of television, but everything was tied up. The only TV in the building is in the common room, in which classes were being taught. We had to wait until nine fifty, when second period ended before we could watch the news, and even then only for the five minutes of passing time.

The minute classes got out we had the news on. A group began to gather, some who had had an announcement about the attack at the end of their classes, and some who had no idea what had happened yet. Talking to my sister I had been fighting back the urge to cry, and my incredulous that tears were springing into my eyes, but as people began to gather around the television many of us started to cry. Classes did not start again that day. There was a mad rush to call parents, friends and schools to make sure everyone knew we were all right, and we watched the south tower fall, which we had stood on top of only five days before, and then the north. They ran the footage of the second plane hitting over and over again, swinging around to the side and then colliding in a burst of flames. As the shock wore off, panic replaced. So many people had friends that went to school on Manhattan, or parents who worked around the World Trade Center. All the telephone lines were tied up, and no one could get reception, so getting any news at all was

impossible except through email. The shock was much easier to handle than the uncertainty.

We had visited the World Trade Center on September 6, only five days before the attack. The faces of the workers in the gift shop, to whom I had complained about the ridiculous prices, were spinning around in my head, who knew where they were now? During the considerably long ride up the tourist freight

device is normally only a Saturday night event, and people began to disperse, each trying to pursue their own ways to comprehend such an event, and its consequences.

Lunch was quiet, seeing as many students at The Masters School, our host school, lived in the city, and many had parents who had worked in one of the Twin Towers. Discussions of what came next began, along with a collective prayer that Bush would not screw this up.

and many tearful conversations with family and friends began.

In the following days, things began to settle back down. Thankfully no one had lost a parent on one of the hijacked flights. There were many stories of close calls, people who had been to sick to work on Tuesday, or who ran for their lives as 110 stories came crashing down behind them.

What can one really say about the greatest senseless act of violence the United States has ever seen? The class went back into Manhattan for the first time on the fourteenth for a community service project, and the first thing we saw as we stepped into Grand Central was a group of employees raising a flag in the main terminal. The entire building stopped to watch, and clapped and whistled as it rose. Flags hang all over the city, and parks are covered in candles from the national candlelight vigil held on Friday night, (the fourteenth). Posters for people missing from the nineteenth and hundredth floors of the Towers cluttered the walls. The people of the city have rushed to its aid, donating blood, and making sandwiches for emergency technicians. All over Manhattan RIP WTC is stenciled on the sidewalks, and the statue in Union Square Park is draped in a flag, with God Bless America, and cries for peace written all over it in chalk.

Having not been in the city very long, it is hard for me to gauge the obviously huge affect. It is clear however, that everything is moving a little more slowly, and there is a new and definite kind of brotherhood among strangers. On street corners people hand out red white and blue ribbons, and safety pins with which to attach them, for free. More fitting to New York's entrepreneurial history, vendors sell flags and bandanas in the parks. During the week of the eleventh, crime dropped forty percent since the same time last year. It is so said that it takes such tragedy to bring people together, but this new and hopefully lasting unity can only serve to make both city, and country stronger places. As for now, all that is left to do is mourn the incomprehensible loss of life, and in the irreplaceable New York tradition, build again and keep on going. All the while, never forgetting the events of 9/11/01, the bravery of those who died fighting hijackers in the Pennsylvania crash, and rescue workers, who continued saving lives even as New York's Twin Towers leaned and finally collapsed.

elevator to the 110th floor, a few students had been talking about how the towers were perfect for a terrorist attack, and the only real way to do it would be with planes. I could not help thinking that we could have just as easily been on that tower on Tuesday instead of Thursday, and how lucky we were. Much the same thoughts seemed to run through everybody's mind as we struggled to deal with the magnitude of such loss. People's thoughts were not only in New York either, many had friends or family working in the Pentagon as well. The TV stayed on, (a rare event at a school in which the

or ever refer to "hunting" anything down again throughout his term. Worries began to surface about friends who could be drafted in the event of a war, and how our program, all about New York City, would be affected by the attacks. The day was utterly quiet, due to the termination of all air traffic, the only noise being the occasional military jet or helicopter, under which we all cringed and ducked. News kept coming in, we learned more about the plane in Pennsylvania, and rumors began to surface about various car bombs all over the cities of New York and Washington. Phone lines began to open up,

30 times the number of New York City fire fighters killed in one incident in the history of the United States. Among the dead are some of the New York fire



fighters' leaders: William Feehan, the first deputy commissioner, Peter Ganci, the chief of the department, Raymond Downey, the chief of special operations, and the Reverend Mynchal Judge, chaplain of the fire department. Each of the firefighters, police officers, and rescue workers, both dead and living, deserve special trumpets of abounding exultation for their service to our country and its spirit. Their work does more to find people near death and rescue them, it demonstrates to all Americans, and all the world, that America is a nation of kindness and sacrifice for our fellow people, no matter who the people are, no matter how pitiful helping them may be. While at least eighteen terrorists died for the cause of hurting America, these fire fighters and police officers laid down their lives for America and its people. Their courageous service to our nation must remain an example of overwhelming kindness and sacrifice for us all.

In Grateful Memory of the Heroes who Died

Josie Herzog
Variety Editor

Think of any friend of yours, perhaps one you have known for your whole life. Now imagine this friend of yours trapped under the rubble of the World Trade Center. As a good friend, no doubt you would do anything in your power to extract this person from the debris, perhaps even risk your own life. However, following the tragedy on September 11th, hundreds of Americans have laid down their lives for strangers. As firefighters and police officers work tirelessly at the high risk job of searching for people trapped in the rubble of the World Trade Center towers, their own death tolls are mounting. More than 350 firefighters, as well as 40 police officers, have been officially reported missing or dead; this total is almost

ELEVENTH 2001

As Americans We Stand; As Americans We are United

Claire Dowdle
Variety Editor

On September 11, 2001 the United States of America witnessed the worst of human nature. Americans were left clueless and fearful, feeling a loss of the security we had all taken for granted. As I stood in the hallway only moments after the terrorist attack, I watched the faces of the victims on television as well as the people around me. Everyone was obviously devastated, worried, and apprehensive about what was left to come.

Throughout the last few weeks we have all witnessed the way New York City has come together as a community. People openly supported one another, all of us feeling the same. The compassion and comfort our students and faculty found in one another was astonishing. We are all lucky to attend SPA, with such a close knit group, where everyone can feel supported through the worst of tragedies.

People throughout our nation and world have made an amazing effort to support and help one another in this time of crisis. 350 firefighters lost their lives trying to save victims in the World Trade Centers. As many people escaped the buildings, they stopped to help the injured or the disabled. People have lined up all over the nation to give blood to those suffering. Great Britain showed their support by playing the US national anthem for the first time during the changing of the guards. People obviously care and want to do their part to reach out.

Although this tragedy was felt strongly around the world, the people in New York City were undoubtedly hit with the shock the hardest. For those living in the city, there is no escaping it. When they look out their windows,

they see the absence of what used to be New York's signature buildings. When they talk to people on the street, it seems everyone has a horrific story to tell. There's no hiding. My brother Drew Dowdle has been living in New York for the last year. His apartment is about one mile away from the World Trade Centers. He explains the loss he felt as he watched the buildings collapse. "They were gone. Our point of reference. Our anchor. Not just damaged and in flames, but completely gone. It's been almost two weeks now, and I can't get used to this fact. Every morning seems normal again, until I walk outside and I deal with the reality all over again as if I

just heard the news for the first time. I will accept this at some point. It will take a long time, but I will get used to not seeing them. But one thing I know for certain, New York City is forever changed. And so am I."

Throughout the last few weeks he has witnessed the city in devastation. "In the wake of this pure evil, I feel I have seen mankind at its

finest, both here in New York and across the world. New York City is a place where you learn to be wary of strangers. In the last two weeks, I have never felt closer to random strangers in my life. On my way home on Tuesday within an hour of the attack, I saw an old woman totally break down and a police officer ran to her side and hugged her. He didn't say a word; there was nothing to say. He just patted her back and let her cry on him."

The way New York City and the rest of the nation have come together in the last month has been truly an amazing sight. "I went to the noon mass at St. Patrick's on Thursday the thirteenth. There were nearly 2,000 people there. When it came time to give peace, everyone hugged each other. They finished the cere-

mony with a woman singing "America the Beautiful," and literally everyone in the entire cathedral was sobbing. In a place where people take great pride in being strong and not showing emotion, this was truly an amazing site. The spirit and camaraderie in New York has been simply beautiful."

I know this is an extremely difficult thing to deal with across the country, not just here in New York. But we must use this terrible event as a means of bringing people together and seeing the bigger picture. There has never been an event in my lifetime that has united us as a nation. For the first time all division have evaporated. Political parties, state lines, religious affiliations, racial descent - none of this means a thing anymore. We are all united as Americans. And it feels great. We must never forget this. And now we must do what needs to be done for our children and generations to come."



Graphic courtesy of www.time.com

The Greatest Generation Speaks Out

Emily Osthus
Opinion Editor

Once I got over the shock of Tuesday's terror, and despite the pain of all the people directly affected by the attack on Sept. 11, I thought of another group of people who I wished had not witnessed the act of terrorism. The others I am speaking of are our grandparents, the generation that lived through Pearl Harbor and WW II. However, the opinions and thoughts of experienced generations prove valuable, and also stand as a reminder that America was rebuilt once, and we can do it again.

The terrorism attack has been compared to Pearl Harbor on the news and by specialists, but also by those who experienced a similar attack in WWII. I immediately thought of my grandfather, Edward Terrill, who fought at Pearl Harbor. I called him to talk about how he thought the recent attack compared to World War II, and to ask what action he thought America should take. Usually a fiery, right winged conservative with strong opinions, he surprised me in his answers. With regard to the mentality and religious beliefs of someone who would go through all that. It makes you wonder what they live for.

My grandfather compares the Sept. 11th attack to Pearl Harbor in many of the same ways as

others. The biggest difference was that at Pearl Harbor we knew who our enemy was, and could fight back. He also said that Pearl Harbor and WWII united the country. People gave up whatever they had, to make sure that America would come out okay. This however, is different. This is a war to find out who is responsible, and punish them.

Interestingly enough, soon after Pearl Harbor, a news reporter asked my grandfather if he thought the country would ever stand that united again. Never dreaming that the country would ever experience such a great attack again, he said no.

"What we need now is better security at the airport. We need to stop as much as we can on the ground." There are many different opinions and stances regarding what steps need to be taken in retaliation. My grandfather

feels that we need to start now to try to end terrorism. He thinks that the people behind this mastermind need to be sought out and punished, without excessive bombing. He made it clear however, as have many politicians, that this is not something that will be accomplished this year or even next year. He commented that we need to prepare ourselves for delays at the airport and a long haul to achieve justice.

My grandfather holds that, "we are a great and friendly country. We are very charitable." He knows that other nations will help us. Finally, he gave advice for younger generations. Having experienced a similar situation before, he said, "Be patriotic, support your country and abide by the law. We need to stand firm."



Graphic courtesy of www.time.com

In light of the recent tragedy, the Rubicon staff invites any members of the SPA community to contribute to the rebuilding of New York City. A donation box will be set up outside the deanery to collect these donations. Thank you for your consideration and our hearts are with the families of the victims.

~The Rubicon

Dignity for Everybody Should America Demonstrate Forceful Retaliation? The Changing Face of War

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