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SPECIAL
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WEST SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL 6100 ROLLING ROAD SPRINGFIELD, VIRGINIA 22152



Caroline Evey's dad, Lee, laminated a banner made by the Class of 2003 and hung it on the fence in front of the Pentagon. Hundreds of Spartans signed the tribute.

Lee Evey

Attacks alter lives of WS students Spartans face day of terror, uncertainty

By Lauren Decot
Managing Editor

Among the hardest hit rooms in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon was number 1D457. Junior Kristen Snyder's father's office was 1D525.

"He had first and second degree burns on his arms," said Snyder. "He has minor burns on his face and neck."

Snyder's father was one of three men who worked in Room 1D525. He works for the Army Staff and had just returned to the room. The other two men from his office were out of the room when the hijacked 100-ton airliner collided into the Pentagon.

"He had heard about the World Trade Center, but he was trying to get some work done," said Snyder.

The ceiling inside Room 1D457 collapsed and the fire sprinklers came on. Fireballs exploded and spread down the halls of the E and D rings. The explosion caused extensive damage to support columns on the first and second floors.

The room had just been reconstructed as part of ongoing Pentagon renovations. "For the construction, a wall had been

set up," said Snyder. "The plane ricocheted off the wall."

Anxious students made calls throughout the day, inquiring about their parents and loved ones.

"Of course my first thought was about my mom and whether she was okay. She works for the State Department," said sophomore Valerie Vargas.

A state of confusion infused the hallways of WS.

"The first thought that came into my mind was what is going on?" said sophomore Peter Fahim.

Senior Jenna Soto and her brother Jesse, a sophomore, lost their father, Steven Jacoby. He was a passenger on the plane that crashed into the Pentagon.

"It didn't sink in right away because I was still accepting the fact that America was being attacked," said Jenna. "Then finding out your father was on one of the planes was unreal."

Jenna and Jesse are still attending school, and have dealt with the situation well.

"I think it's hardest accepting the fact that he's gone," said Jenna. "You never thought it would happen to you."

By Laura Robinson
Managing Editor

First the debris from the Pentagon came tumbling down, then the lines of students came pouring into guidance.

On September 11, counselors were swamped with messages from parents trying to relay information. Students also came to the guidance office to use phones to try and reach their loved ones.

"In between classes I let students use my phone so they could call their parents and make sure everything was OK," said counselor Ken Christopher. "We usually never let students use our phones but considering the circumstances it was the least we could do."

The main office and guidance office were busy as students, parents and teachers tried to figure out what was going on. Everyone in the guidance office was involved in the effort to help relay information.

"We probably contacted over 100 students. Counselors, student aids and teachers who weren't teaching that period were running around," said counselor Dan Zwicker. "It was very hectic but it

worked."

In order to communicate well with students, the counselors relied on their training and expertise.

"We all have degrees in psychology, counseling or social work and lots of experience," said School Social Worker Florence Ferraro. "We used that when talking to students and other than that we just took deep breaths and spoke slowly. Students were very reasonable and we were all in it together."

Counselors maintain that they will remain committed to helping students move past the events of September 11.

"If there are sufficient numbers of students having a hard time dealing with it, we will put students in groups to get through it," said Zwicker.

Christopher and all the other counselors reiterate that their doors will be open to all students who would like to talk or seek advice about the situation.

"We're here to help people cope," said Christopher. "If they're still having trouble we're here for them...The best thing for students to do is talk to their friends, their teachers and their counselors so they're not keeping it all inside."

Dear Editor,

The only way I can really express my feelings about the attack on America is in one word: disbelief. It's hard to believe that someone would hijack a plane full of innocent Americans and fly it into a building full of more innocent people. Everyone that was killed September 11 (except the hijackers) were innocent civilians. No one should have to worry about their office being blown up, and up until September 11, no one did.

If it turns out to be Osama bin Laden who really was behind the attacks, I really hope the military backs up everything it's been saying. And they shouldn't just go after bin Laden. Afghanistan equally shares the blame with him, because even after we're almost positive it was bin Laden's plan, the government of Afghanistan still won't extradite him. Anyone in their right mind can see that this was an attack meant to kill innocent people with families, and if they can't understand that, well, that's just ridiculous.

I just hope we can get revenge on everyone related to these attacks. If anyone deserves to be punished, it's the people responsible for these horrible crimes.

Justin Breault, junior

Dear Editor,

The whole terrorist attack scares me quite a bit. Seeing the two holes in the World Trade Center and in the Pentagon made me realize that what I did not believe could happen, can and did happen. I never thought there would be any kind of terrorist action or war while I was alive. I felt tremendous fear on September 11 because my father works at the Pentagon, and I had no idea where his office was. Luckily, his office was not hit, and he was not injured, but it was right on the edge. Seeing all of the American flags out around the community and on cars show me that the United States will not fall as a country because our patriotism will hold it together. I feel as if my safety is in jeopardy, but I know that the military will not let anything happen to the people. Whoever caused this attack and is not taking any responsibility is a coward. I know that we will find out who did this, and they will suffer, but I am hoping that a war will not cause the United States any more pain. I believe all we need to do is show the terrorists we are still strong and will not fall. Even though we have lost an American trademark and suffer from losing many American lives and others, I believe we will not lose anymore because our patriotism and support is strong.

Candice Tedesco, junior

Dear Editor,

It is truly amazing how much this terrorist attack on America has affected everyone and everything in our country. It came as such a shock to the whole country that the work force completely stopped and watched the news, waited, and, for some people, only worried. The attack seemed like a dream; it did not seem real at all because of how terrible it was.

There have been many negatives creating a domino effect toward many businesses. Airlines have lost almost half of their total income because many people fear more hijackings. Many of the small airlines have gone out of business due to the event. Another economic effect was on the stock market. It dropped more points in one day than it had ever done in its history.

Many families have also been greatly traumatized, especially those in New York and DC. However, everyone was affected emotionally. Many people pray constantly for those missing; neighbors and all Americans have been pulled together in community spirit and rise of patriotism. Firefighters, police and volunteers have put in their time, trying to help and rescue those who may still be trapped underneath the fallen buildings and help gather donations for those directly affected.

Although I and others are questioning going to war, I feel that those responsible need to be punished for their destruction of American free market and innocence. I hope that we don't sink down to the level of these terrorists, but something must be done.

Robert Pithian, junior

Dear Editor,

I feel somewhat untouched by the "Attack on America," as it is being called. I have not known anyone who has been killed or injured. I have not even known a family of someone killed or injured. My emotions regarding what may come are more specific, so I will expand on those. I am scared. Scared that there will be a draft, and my older brother will have to go to war. Scared that the terrorists will bomb the DC metropolitan area and everyone I know and love, including myself, will be killed. I am proud. Proud to know that I am part of a country that will not fall because of a great loss, but will stand taller for it. Proud every time I see an American flag because I know that we are unified and will conquer anything that happens to us.

I am amazed that people could hate so much. They hate enough not only to kill others, but to sacrifice their lives. I hope that what has happened does not evolve into war, but if it does it is good to know that we will stand together.

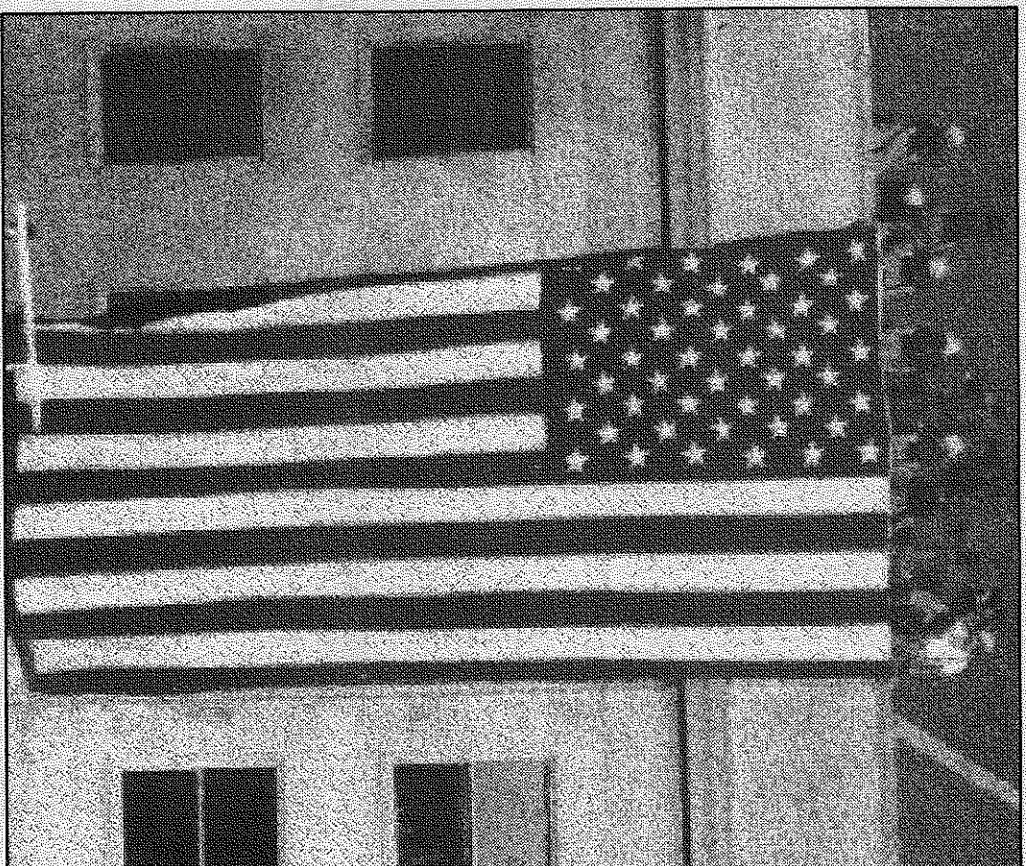
Beth Edwards, junior

Dear Editor,

My feelings on this situation are that America had a sense of false security for too long and became lax in dealing with security. The employees of Starbucks receive more training than most airport workers, who are responsible for our safety. These and many other things will soon change. Many security measures that used to exist will now be brought back because of those events. This event has also sparked an outburst of patriotism across the nation. Flag sales have most likely tripled and everyone is celebrating America. The fact of the matter is, why weren't we doing this before? I mean, something bad happens and suddenly everyone is patriotic. Shouldn't Americans have been doing this all along?

The efforts of all the rescue workers are to be commended as well. Their tireless work has saved the lives of many people trapped in the rubble. In addition, the multitudes of people who are willing to donate blood and money to help the victims and the relief efforts is incredible. All of this just goes to show that good things do come out of bad situations.

Jameson Rickett, junior



Associated Press

Dear Editor,

Last Tuesday was a horrific tragedy involving both the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. It was a sorrowful, heartbreaking event that will go down in history. Due to this terrorist attack on America, many innocent people have lost their lives, and families are now in shock. My family lost a close relative on my dad's side. The young man was in the first rescue squadron that was sent to the site of the WTC. From what my family knows, all two hundred rescue workers were risking their lives to save others who were still stuck inside the WTC. It is a feeling of extreme pride and respect that these men had so much bravery and courage, endangering their lives to help others. The tragedy is extremely painful for many families across the country, but the community of people nationwide is extremely kind, helpful and comforting. Even though the tragedy has hurt and caused pain for many, I feel it will strengthen the unity of our nation.

Phillip Ferraluolo, junior

Dear Editor,

I am extremely disgusted, ashamed and saddened by the recent attack on America. It was an extraordinarily cowardly act, and I personally hope to see the person or people that did this punished. I wish that there was something we could do to help, but since we're not 18 yet, there isn't much. I've already taken food to volunteers, but it doesn't seem to be enough. It has amazed me how this incident has brought patriotism and pride out of many people. It has brought these things out in me too, as well as my religious beliefs. I have been wearing red, white and blue, saying the pledge, praying, going to church and sticking up for people of Middle Eastern descent. Those people have been picked on and tormented simply because of their background. It is unfair and cowardly on our part. This tragedy has brought out the best and worst in our country.

Lindsey Bell, junior

Dear Editor,

Some people have said it's our fault that the attack happened, and that if we didn't interfere with other countries then we wouldn't have been attacked. What happened is a tragedy, and at this time we should not be held accountable for what happened. This country helps all other countries with very few questions asked and with no compensation for the military, men, and time we pour into these other countries. Our jets carrying our people were used against us and for what? So a few terrorists can go to "Heaven" for pleasing "Allah"? People tell me that we need religion to get through this, but isn't it religion that got us here in the first place? The terrorists who are responsible for the attacks believed their so-called "God" would be happy with them. It pains me to see all the destruction and death resulting from the crashes. I want revenge for this, and if that means war then so be it. I'm ready to serve my country to bring the terrorists to justice.

The plane that crashed in Pennsylvania was a great story of American tenacity and heroism. All those Americans involved in the crash should be hailed as heroes and their next of kin should be given medals for bravery of their family who gave their lives to save so many more.

It saddens me to know that we will not know the true story about what our government does with those responsible for the attacks of terrorism, but I find solitude in knowing the information will be undisclosed because of possible "atrocities" we might commit on those captured.

Jack Budd, junior

Dear Editor,

This past week has been devastating for many people. In this tragedy, we find people warming and healing our hearts little by little with hopes. There are firefighters, police officers, rescuers, and other many volunteers helping out to save more lives. I think those people are the true heroes in our society. They are risking their own lives to save others. We find many volunteers all around us and many other people helping every way possible.

I think it's so wonderful that there are people that we can depend on and work together. Even though not everybody is affected directly by this attack, it seems like everybody is involved somehow. I see people volunteering, giving blood, or just wearing red, white, and blue clothes, or having a flag at home that shows their unity as a country.

I think these little things that people do for their country are the real heroes and we should thank them and appreciate their generosity and love for the country. I believe that heroes are the common people who just do little things out of love for people who need their help. I believe that I am a very lucky person to be safe and surrounded by people who I can depend on. I believe that Americans' support and love for their country will make America recover from this attack soon and acknowledge our heroes more.

Chelsea Lee, junior

Dear Editor,

I believe that the terrorists are not 100 percent at fault. I think some of the blame has to be drawn on the United States. For instance, if we just stayed in our country and fought our own battles, people in the Middle East wouldn't get so mad at us. A partial cause of the terrorism is the United States involving itself in foreign affairs.

Another thing is that people are going after people of the Muslim religion as a way of letting their anger out. It is wrong to do that and is just a form of racism. What these bigots don't realize is that many of these people from the Middle East are some of the nicest people in the world. I believe that it is a disgrace to the American people to have bigots like this making the lives of other people miserable. The Muslim people living in the United States are not to blame and maybe the people of Afghanistan aren't, either.

Joel Baumgardner, junior

Dear Editor,

The events of the past week have sparked some feelings. My feelings on the security of the United States are that we should step up security in some areas and broaden our intelligence network. I also feel that if we need to go to war to show that people shouldn't mess with us, then we should. Some people say that a retaliation would make us just as bad as them, we could never be as bad as them because we didn't surprise attack an office building filled with innocent people, which were also national symbols.

I also feel that this event has brought the nation together and that the people are going to support the government's decision, as well as support the Armed Forces, instead of dishonoring them like in Vietnam.

I believe that this event will show what nations are with us and which against. Though this is a tragedy it will bring the best out of a lot of people.

Andy Bond, junior

Dear Editor,

This terrorist attack that has just recently occurred is a very heart-breaking and depressing event. Although this has mostly been a negative event, the United States has come together in an unbelievably positive manner as it never has before. As I drive down the street seeing the colors red, white, and blue at every corner and street, tells something about this country that only the citizens of this country could understand.

To be in a country that has just been devastated unite like the Americans have been doing is unreal and emotionally uplifting to everyone who is involved with this tragedy. I believe that President Bush's determination to hunt down the people responsible for this event is also a showing of what this country is about.

As the appreciation of the men and women of all over that have joined together to help the people in need of many things has become a major influence on everyone to try and do something to help those in need. As the country unites and overpowers terrorism, my heart goes out to all the families that have lost loved ones.

Bobby Surdam, junior

Dear Editor,

September 11 was a horrible day for the United States and the world. It's hard to believe that in two short hours we could lose two of America's most prestigious buildings and thousands of innocent lives. Now, as our country is rebuilding, Americans are showing generosity and patriotism that we as a nation have not seen in a long time.

Many people are so full of mixed feelings of anger and sadness that they demand revenge on the people who did this and some even resort to violence and hatred toward Muslims. Instead of having this senseless hatred, we need to pull together as a nation: Black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Muslim, Indian, and help those who have been affected by these events.

Joseph McMahon, junior

Dear Editor,

I was shocked and could not believe the destruction the terrorists caused. The president did a good job informing the people of America to live on with our lives and show the terrorists their act of cowardice can not stop us from living on. However, the president also says we are in an act of war. The terrorists killed thousands of people after hijacking planes and using them as missiles to bring down the twin towers and damage the Pentagon.

Assuming Osama bin Laden was behind the event on September 11, should not draw the United States to go to war with a suspect we are not sure of. According to some veterans who fought in Vietnam, Korea, and World War II, it would be better if we do not go to war. And who knows better than veterans who actually experienced war? What makes this country so right to say the terrorists are bad for killing innocent people but then what happens when we go to war? With nuclear technology, think

Dear Editor,

When I first heard about the terrorist attack, I couldn't believe it. I thought that maybe they were mistaken. During school I didn't really realize how serious this situation was until I got home and turned on the television. All the channels were covering this tragic event without even stopping for commercials.

After I heard and saw the WTC and the Pentagon in ruins, I felt disbelief. It was like a movie. I never imagined that our country could ever be attacked. Maybe because I always perceived America to be dominant.

The shock of all this really came at me when I saw a picture in the newspaper where the people on the WTC were jumping off the buildings to try to escape. How desperate they must have been to risk jumping off the buildings to try to escape. How desperate they must have been to risk jumping off those buildings.

I just hope that the families of those people who died or are missing are coping well with this tragedy.

Paula Kim, junior

Dear Editor,

I feel that this event was one of great loss and that we all should have anger, but we should not use our anger to aid in hurting anyone. Even if we do find out who did this, we should not kill or destroy them and their followers because that could easily lead to more violence. If we respond to this with violence this could have a very serious outcome. We should just show them that we are stronger than them in that we can take a tragedy like this and hold back our anger and become a stronger country because of it. I also think that if we held back in retaliating we could be an example to others that violence will never solve anything and that it will just lead to more violence. By holding back we will become a stronger nation because our minds will be more on helping our fellow man and not just punishing them. I would just like to see our nation hold back on its urge to hurt whoever did these horrible deeds.

Ian McWilliams, junior

Dear Editor,

When the attack first happened, I thought it was a scene from a movie. Then the second plane hit and the class went silent. Everyone knew the odds of two planes hitting the World Trade Center in the same day were not good. That's when it finally hit me—America, the country we live in, was under attack. On my way home from Edison there was something wrong. People weren't zooming by and there were a whole lot of cars on the road. That's when I knew something else must have happened. I walked into school and heard the Pentagon was hit by a plane and many were killed. That's when I thought who did these acts is going to be punished. I was also in a state of shock. The Pentagon is like 15 minutes away and that's just way too close for me to be comfortable. All day, we watched the news to see what was happening and if everyone was OK. While I walked to my car after school you could hear the fighter jets flying over. I knew now that this act of terrorism could cause another war. When I got home I felt that a lot was going to change around the United States. I got in my car to pick up a flag and I saw children with signs changing that they love America. That made me feel like everything will end up alright.

Ricky Campbell, junior

Dear Editor,

My first day was America's day of terror. I feel scared because I don't like war. I saw many terrible scenes on TV. I don't want there to be anymore victims. I want peace. When I was in Korea I lived with an American family. I thought America didn't want to share with anyone and was full of greed because my cousin's company is American, but now I think America is really the best country and the people are friendly and always kind. I hope America will avoid war with Afghanistan, because I don't want innocent people to die. I think America wants peace, but also to be free from terror. I

Michael Chang, junior

respect America and expect the right choice will be made.

Hwayoung Lee, junior

Dear Editor,

When I find myself in times of trouble, Mother Mary comes to me... I believe this lyric from the Beatles song "Let It Be," could be the motto for our own country right now. Due to the tragedy of last week, many Americans who are not regular churchgoers decided to attend services on Sunday. In my church, which seats 400, there were many people standing in the back. I think it's great that people are finding comfort in church and prayer, but I also think it's sad that this only happens for many during times of crisis. I spoke with my pastor last Sunday, (he said the last time he remembered his church being so full (not including Easter and Christmas), was during the Persian Gulf War. Even though I wish that this feeling of renewed faith would last, I know that once this ordeal is over people will once again stop going to church. People should realize that God is always with us, not just in times of crisis.

Alicia Kirsch, senior

Dear Editor,

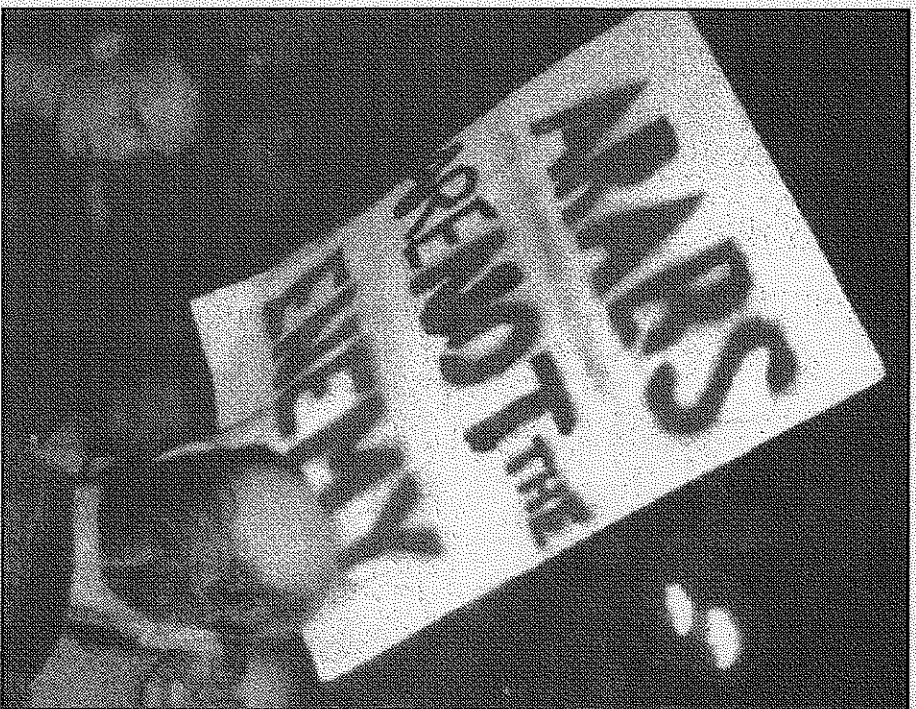
Thousands of lives are lost and families are devastated because of the attack on our nation, but our unity has never been stronger. I am so impressed by the tremendous amount of patriotism the United States citizens have shown during this tragic time. People are eager to help in any and every way they can. Blood has been drawn, money donated, supplies packed, etc. Not to mention all of the people helping to look for survivors in all the debris. The prayers and times of unity are wonderful. I am very glad that here at West Springfield we participated in the moment of silence at noon on National Prayer Day and had a candlelight vigil along Rolling and Old Keene Mill Roads. Those actions meant a lot to me. They were just little things our community would do to pay our respects and share the loss with the rest of the nation. I hope the new-found togetherness and unity of our country continues to stay strong and we all continue to support each other like we have been through this devastating time.

Cassidy Doone, junior

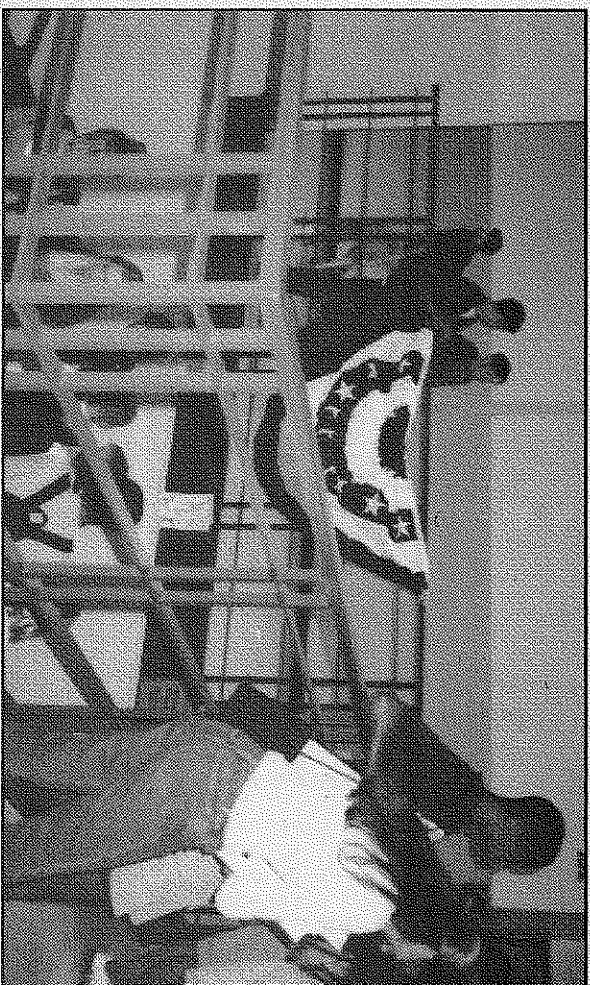
Dear Editor,

My emotions/feelings toward the attack on America are anger and hurt. But, besides those, which most of the world is feeling, as well as the patriotism now in America, I also feel that we should tread carefully. It is very important as to how we treat this predicament, what we do in response. It is utterly essential that we do not make a mistake here. The situation poses two needs: how we take care of the desecration of our country and how we deal with those responsible. First, we should find who/what we can of survivors/who's left, and then rebuild, although perhaps not in the same way. With this new experience, we have gained knowledge and in rebuilding, that new knowledge should be used. Second is far more important, for how we deal with this situation in regard to the perpetrators will define the future. Yes, we can bomb Afghanistan or another country to kingdom come, but will that accomplish anything? It may satisfy our anger; however, it will only continue the cycle of hate. Yes, what happened September 11 is a terrible tragedy, but let us not make mistakes that would indirectly cause such events, perhaps in different form, to happen again. Think, too, of the Golden Rule. Some may say the bombing warrants us to retaliate, but we have just had this national tragedy and tragedy is the key word. We did not appreciate it, so why should we, morally speaking, do it to someone else? No, instead we should investigate and determine who did this, then reason with them. We should try to understand just what it is exactly that drove them. And then? Solve that problem through negotiations and compromise, instead of letting this problem run away to come back or cause a vicious cycle, we should solve the problem with the people who are responsible.

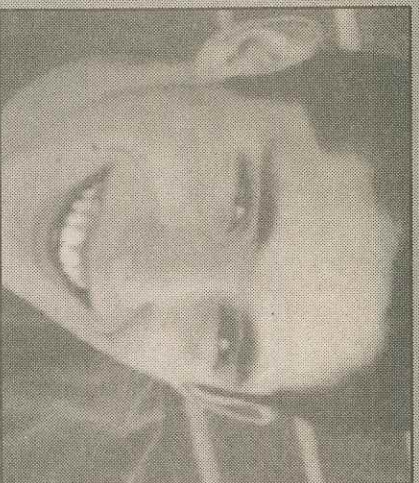
Seth Trevaskis, junior



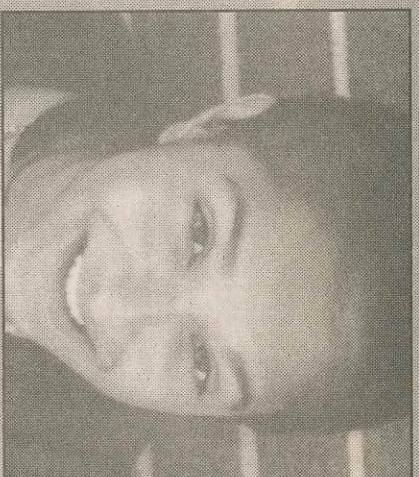
Associated Press



Associated Press



"I don't think Arab-Americans should be held responsible."
—John McFarland, 10



"I don't think the U.S. should retaliate by taking it out on a whole population."
—Trisha Chhaya, 11

Ourselves, each other, this place

By Amy McKeever
Entertainment Editor

"O say can you see..."
Our National Anthem. We hear it all the time—at football games, assemblies and many other events. We always stand up because we are required to do so, but rarely do we ever think about what we're doing. This is also true for the Pledge of Allegiance every morning in school.

But everything has changed now. Listening to the Madrigals perform "The Star Spangled Banner" after our nationwide moment of silence on Friday almost brought me to tears. Every morning that we've said the Pledge, almost everyone has spoken the words more reverently than usual, especially considering some people never recite them at all.

If the atrocity of the terrorist attacks had any positive results, it was the sudden and dramatic change in American attitudes. We know now that

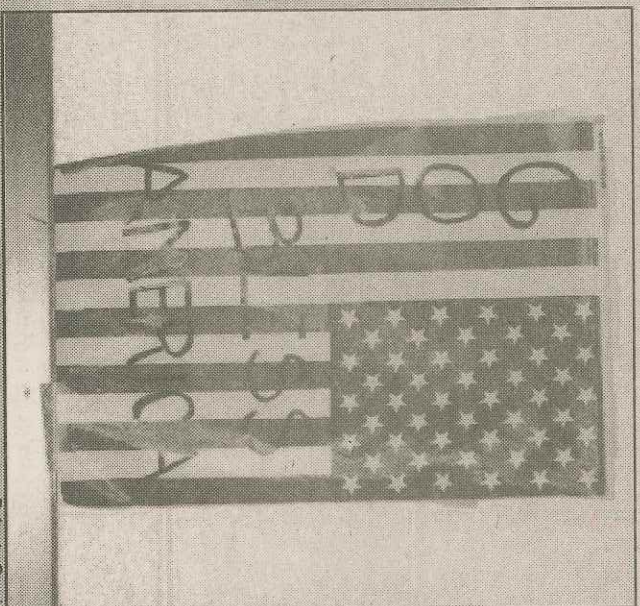
so many of the things we worry and argue about from day to day are meaningless, and many of us have become aware of the extent of our own patriotism. It is unfortunate that it took the loss of thousands of innocent lives for us to realize this, but at least we have.

For the rest of my life, I will remember 9-11-01 and how my fellow Americans pulled together in a time of tragedy.

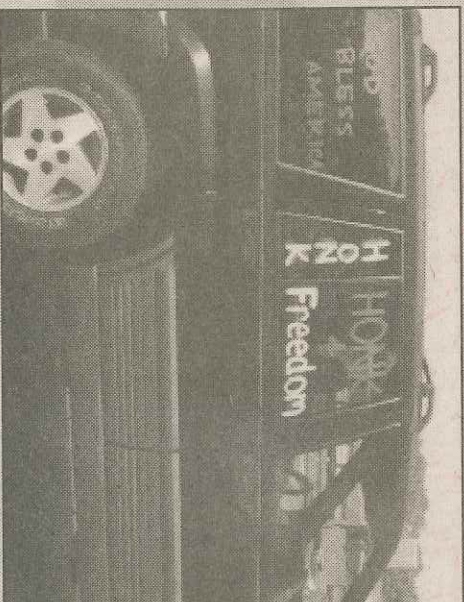
People all over the country have been showing their support for the victims and each other in many ways. Hospitals have had to turn away potential blood donors, including WS students, because of the overflow of donors in response to their initial pleas for blood. WS students have also been wearing red, white, and blue

while carrying American flags in school. Almost every house I pass on my block has a giant American flag hanging out front. Every night since the attack, a candlelight vigil has been held somewhere.

I remember days in years past when I was not proud to be American. It is true that there have been many dark days in our history, many mistakes that we have made and will continue to make. But for the rest of my life, I will remember 9-11-01 and how my fellow Americans pulled together in a time of tragedy. It seems like we all took a page from Dr. Smith, "Take care of each other." I am inspired every time I watch my neighbors put their differences aside and bask in the one thing they have in common — love for our country. With this outpouring of support and caring, we shall overcome.
"Oh say does that star-spangled banner yet wave, O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."



Roberto Garcia



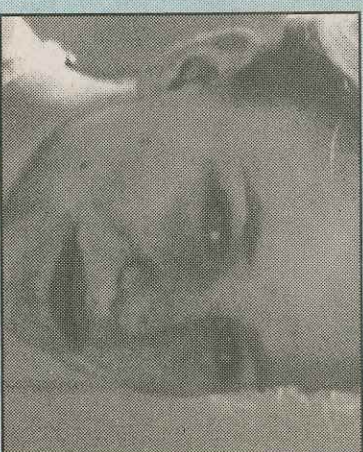
Roberto Garcia

Students showed support for their country by decorating the school and the parking lot with flags and other patriotic messages.



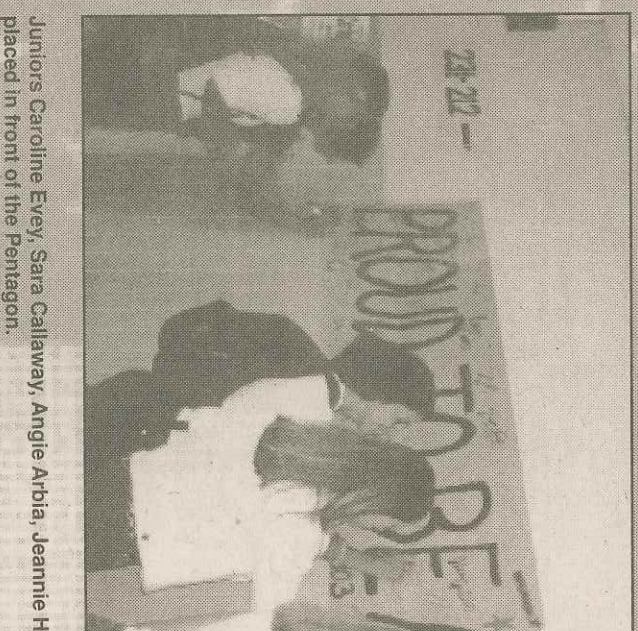
Russ Waddell

"Relatives keep calling, we know some people whose office was destroyed. Fortunately, they were okay."
—Jeff Day and John Cooke, 11



Russ Waddell

"It brings into perspective what other countries think about America."
—M.K. Martin, 12



Juniors Caroline Evey, Sara Callaway, Angie Arbia, Jeannie Hines placed in front of the Pentagon.

A picture's worth

By Emily Morris
Features Editor

It was the plane crash that hit the whole world. Within minutes of the faceless act of terrorism, the whole school lined into the media, and so did the world.

"AMERICA UNDER ATTACK" was the headline on CNN just moments after the crash on Tuesday morning. CNN covered the events nonstop for days afterward. CNN stayed on top of it so well, that in a frenzy to report the news as quickly as possible, CNN sometimes reported false information.

I can not blame CNN for its mistakes, and I was glad to see their honesty when they reported retractions and cleared up any confusion. The reporters were doing their job to inform the public by passing on the facts they received before they had a chance to confirm them.

Despite all the attention paid to the news networks though, TV was not the only form of news people turned to.

Within hours, *The Washington Post* had a special late edition on news stands. The front page section was the only section that changed, yet most stores

sold out in less than a couple of hours. I think *The Post* was an extra copy because of the extra copies I had to go to every morning on the world is turning. It saw *The Post* I knew on. When I saw the them, see the pain, up on a TV screen then replaced.

I never thought without visuals. B from school on Tu to WHFS 99.1 and I did not see picture. Brokaw, all I did w

Stories of anyone in and share their HFS stopped playing their phone lines to who I could relate. It touched me about his girlfriend Pentagon. He could she was listening phone. One girl with two of her friends were of Muslim de

How has this tragedy affected you?

SONG CATCHER



Roberto Garcia
Emily Hatch, and Lindsay Beeler sign a banner that was later

1,000 words

In an hour. To get my five different stores. *Washington Post* put out something that we get our doorstep. If the world would go pictures I could study they were not just put for a few seconds and

to death with a baseball bat. When you can hear someone else's pain and tears, it can be more effective than any picture. HFS also did a good job on sharing any facts or new developments. However, there is a difference between reporting facts and reporting emotions. I was sickened to see Pat Collins lost the home of a family who had just lost their son. The boy was an 11 year old who was one of the students on a field trip.

I could be so touched but on my way home today, I was listening almost started crying. I heard stories. I who wanted to call thoughts and feelings. I heard people in the area

Family and friends were sobbing and mourning over his death. Then Pat Collins arrived to shove a microphone in their face and ask them questions. It is sad that news stations believe they have to go to that extent to get good ratings. What little respect that I had for Pat Collins before this incident has all been lost.

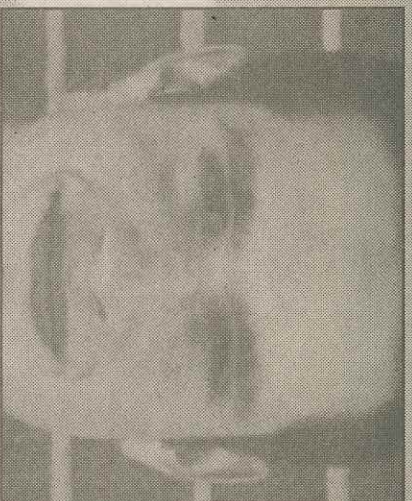
I believe that when CNN, *The Washington Post* and HFS adequately reported the facts and stories that people were waiting to hear. But I draw the line when people are not left alone to grieve and mourn. People need time to heal. It will take a long time for everyone to heal and until that happens, only the facts should be reported.

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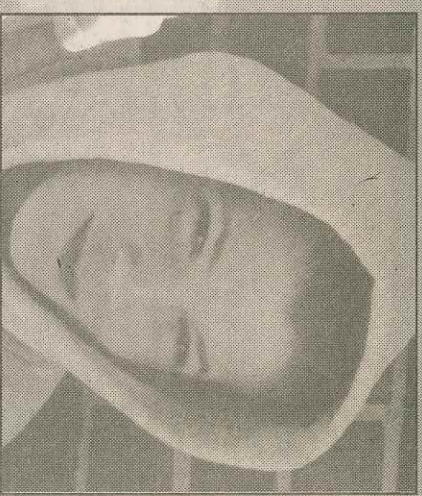


Russ Waddell

"It's going to necessitate change as a society that will affect us on multiple levels. I hope we have the will to respond as we need to."
—David Smith, Principal



"We should retaliate by bombing terrorists in general."
—Steven Spinoso, 10



"We should retaliate by capturing Bin Laden and making him suffer."
—Taylor Maxfield, 9

Allah preaches peace, not war

By JD Kaleem
Business/Systems Assistant

I am scared, a lot of us are. I am shocked and appalled, and I am angry, as are the rest of us. After the fateful events of Tuesday, September 11, I, as a Muslim in America, have much to be concerned about.

Just as in the past after the Oklahoma City bombing, the government and media threw around accusations as to who committed the act and people were considered guilty by association. The government is pointing fingers at Islamic extremist groups such as Osama bin Laden's "Al Qaeda" and those related to it.

We, as Americans and students at WS, have to realize that no community should be judged or punished because of the acts of a few crazy and fanatical people. Although it may not be well known, the true form of Islam does not support the killing of innocent people, and it does not allow such killing to be put under the excuse of "holy war." The word "jihad," which has come to mean "holy war" in the west, has many meanings, some being of an inner, spiritual struggle, or of self defense, but nowhere in the Quran is it described specifically as only a "holy war."

I am a Muslim, as well as a Pakistani American and a human being, and I have been deeply been affected by this event as

How could this happen here?

By Melissa Lipman
Oracle Editor

It was never supposed to actually happen. This is what film studios pay millions of dollars to create images of, images for action movies designed only to scare us to the edge of our protective bubbles.

We were supposed to be safe. Of course there were dangers. I always knew they were there. But the threats were supposed to come in the forms of small problems and controllable situations. Everything was supposed to be okay as long as I didn't take drugs or play with matches.

My health teachers told me that teenagers often have these superman-complexes. I always thought that I had a decent grip on reality, on the dangers. But I was just as much inside that bubble as anyone else. Because I never thought anything truly terrible would ever happen so close to me.

I wish I could still be so naive. What am I supposed to say to someone who has just lost a mother or a father at the Pentagon? How am I supposed to tell someone that it's going to be okay when I can't even make myself believe that?

The death count I heard as of Thursday listed nearly 6,400 people as dead or missing, 5,000 out of the 50,000 people who usually work at the World Trade Center.

One out of every 10 people there probably died. More people are on that list than are on the list of those who died in Pearl Harbor, where 2,400 were killed, less than half of the staggering 6,400 in New York.



Firefighters spread an American flag over a section of the Pentagon.

Associated Press

the rest of America. I felt threatened soon after the attacks took place and I was shocked at the incidents of Muslims, Sikhs, Middle Easterners and South Asians who have been harassed, beaten, and even killed as a result of the ignorance of certain people. Islamic mosques have received bomb threats, been forced to closed and been vandalized.

I encourage everyone at WS and in the world to stay away from any type of racism, prejudice or stereotyping. Nobody should be hurt physically or emotionally in punishment for the actions of a few fanatic people who do not represent true Muslims in any way. Fanatics and extremists exist in every community, religion, race and country, but there no reason for us to judge all the members of any community based on the wrong standards of a few.

We all are in this together and have been affected in some way. The response to this incident is not to hate more innocent people, thus being no better than those who killed so many that one Tuesday.

We as Americans need to unite together instead of drawing more lines between us. In general, Islam, Muslims and people of Middle Eastern descent are not to blame for the deadly events, but instead individuals are responsible. A religion or nationality does not commit crimes, people do. In essence, the terrorists are as Muslim as Timothy McVeigh was Christian, and as human as the airplanes they used to commit their acts.

How do I come to grips with the reality of numbers so high? I like to think of myself as a fairly intelligent person, but this is something I can not even begin to comprehend.

How am I supposed to return to life as usual, return to college applications and timed writings, when I know that in New York and around the country there are thousands who can never do that? Thousands who are forever gone, thousands who have lost loved ones, and thousands working to clear the mess that's left behind.

How am I supposed to walk my dog without feeling guilty?

How am I supposed to get on another airplane to visit friends and family without being filled with fear?

How am I supposed to visit New York or drive past the Pentagon without bursting into tears?

Even worse, beyond the fear, the sadness and the confusion, is the anger that fills me. As a person who has spent

her whole life convinced that war and killing are not solutions to anything, what do I do with this blood-just I now feel?

I had been contemplating the possibility of going to an anti-death penalty rally in DC Tuesday evening. I now find myself, in the part of my heart that I don't like to talk about, feeling that I could never reconcile myself with the idea of the culprits spending a lifetime in a cozy jail. Because that luxury of a lifetime is something that 6,400 Americans were robbed off while simply going about their jobs.

How do I continue without losing the beliefs that I have held so vehemently my entire life?

I have a magnet in my locker. It's one of those that are filled with a myriad of faces expressing different emotions and another magnet to highlight the emotion I'm feeling on that day or at that time.

When I returned to school on Thursday morning, I simply didn't know which emotion to pick.

Dear Editor,

The attack on America was one of the most tragic events that has happened to this great country. I always think in my mind about how someone can have so much hatred for other human beings to massacre them. It also hurts me to see the people over in the Middle East celebrating such an event. Led by President Bush, our country will survive this and come back even stronger than before. Our patriotism

angry about the economy suffering a considerable blow. I'm angry about people thinking they can do this and get away with it. Finally, I'm angry that America, the land of the free and the and the home of the brave, is free, we can never be assured 100 percent that something of this magnitude will happen again.

Ami Sharma, junior

repetition so many times until you just can't bare to watch television anymore. I feel as if Tom Brokaw and Peter Jennings are stalking me. Every time I turn on the television, I see one of the two. I know a lot of people are still shocked and want to hear as much as they can about the attack, but eventually we have to move on.

Danita Brazil, junior

on Tuesday 11. I give my heart out to all of the families that lost loved ones. I have no idea how they must be feeling. The people that survived the attack are all heroes in my book. Now I can truly say that every day I have to live is a treasure.

Sam Breedlove, junior

Dear Editor,

I have many feelings about the crashes that took place on September 11, both good and bad feelings. First, I'm really sad and hurting inside for the people that died in the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Also for the families that are heartbroken for losing their families. When I first heard of the crashes, I was in Spanish class watching the news, when the lady on the news said that a plane had crashed into the Pentagon. Students in my class jumped up and began to cry because their parents work in the Pentagon. When I saw them crying, I started crying with them. Even though I didn't have family in there, I don't like to see people hurt and upset. At the same time, I'm kind of happy because after what happened, America seems to be more united. Everyone has American flags either on their house, or their car, or they are wearing red, white and blue. People are giving food to the fire fighters who work there all day trying to clean up the rubble. Everyone is turning to God. I really am happy for that because I think that America has neglected God long enough. I don't think America needs more security or military, but I think what America need is more God. So, I'm thinking maybe all of this happened for the good.

Mahiet Hahn, junior

Dear Editor,

When I found out that the Pentagon had been hit by another plane, I went into a state of shock. I was in Spanish and immediately went up to my teacher and started to cry. My dad works in the Pentagon and I was sick to my stomach. Being in the military, I always knew there was a risk that something would happen to my dad.

Sheri Boone, junior

Dear Editor,

The World Trade Center and Pentagon bombings are two things that will stay with the people who have witnessed it for a long time. This act of terrorism brought many mixed emotions and feelings out of people. Some



Roberto Garcia

will soar to new heights, as will our economy. Heroism played and still is playing a significant role. For example the people on the second plane that was flying toward the Pentagon were courageous and brave when they decided to try to overpower the hijackers. Presently, all the firefighters and volunteers are displaying strong will in their fight to rescue victims. I have heard firsthand what the Pentagon situation is from my stepfather. He says that it is incredibly difficult to get up and see parts of bodies just laying in the rubble. With all of these government officials working around the clock to keep us safe and out of harm's way, I have great confidence that a similar event will not happen. The responsibilities of every citizen of the United States is to either go to the Red Cross and give blood or donate any amount of money. Our country will recover from this horrific tragedy.

Drew Murray, junior

Dear Editor,

I'm afraid. That's the one big emotion that keep surfacing. I'm afraid for all the people who were hurt by this, and I'm afraid for all the others who don't even work for the US Government or terrorists. They might get hurt again. I'm afraid that if we go to war with whomever, we go in because we are enraged and want revenge. I have no blood-just, I just want to know that the people who did this go away forever.

For a while, when I saw people getting patriotic. I saw people getting pumped up about hating. It took me until I saw that candlelight vigil on Rolling Road. That's when I saw true patriots who want to unify the nation for the better, so that we can heal and survive. These people were here for justice and peace, not to rally to turn Afghanistan into a glass slab. That's what I want, peace and justice, not war.

I'm sick of the madness and sorrow and pictures of explosions of death. I want it to be over. If there is going to be a war, let's just have it and be done quickly. Let's just give justice to those who did this, learn, and move on.

Tom Eisman, junior

Dear Editor,

I'm angry first and foremost. I'm angry about a lot of things. First of all I'm angry that all of those innocent people died. I'm angry that we're not sure who is responsible. I'm angry that many of the firemen and police were killed trying to help others. I'm angry that people who are not Muslim, from Afghanistan or Pakistan, are being harassed. Even though I'm not Muslim I'm angry that those people who did this twisted the meaning of Islam. I'm angry about not being able to give blood. I'm angry about people not being able to feel safe. I'm

So many deaths make us die
America mourns
those we did love we do cry
Tears bleeding like thorns.

My soul does ache and burn
it will all my life
But my heart will one day learn.
Pure love endures all strife.

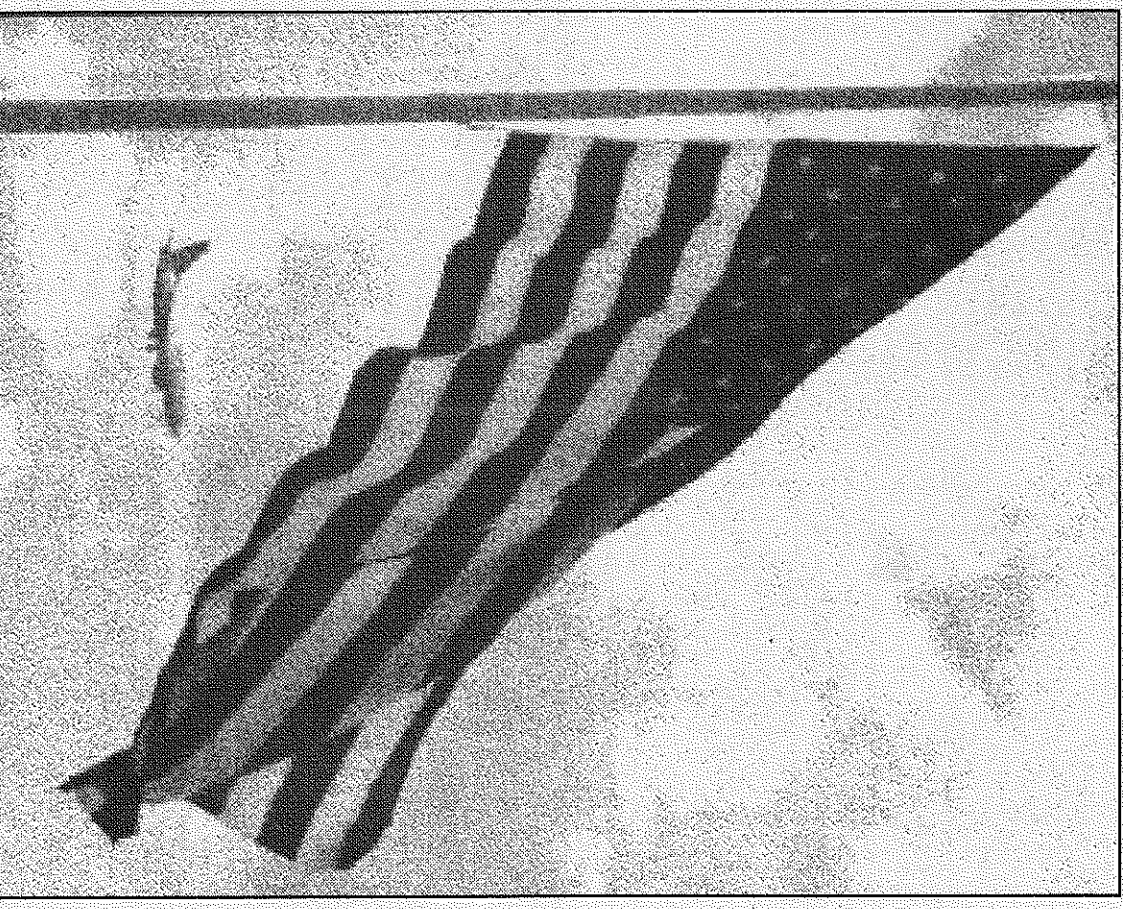
We will survive this attack
with strength that's unknown
and traveling back.
We'll know we're never alone.
Differences put aside.
units, we can't fail
In God we abide and true power...
Prevails

Lady Bell, junior

Dear Editor,

I think that what occurred was really unfortunate. Whatever we (America) did to cause such a horrific thing to occur must have been pretty hard-core. I really feel for the people who died in these attacks. They started the day as if it were any other morning, but ended (it) in the midst of the remains of the World Trade Center or at the Pentagon. A lot of people lost family members or friends in the blink of an eye. I am amazed by the heroic efforts of rescue workers who have the grim task of searching through rubble for survivors.

While I am shocked and saddened by the event, at the same time I am sick of the continuous coverage by many television channels. I mean, I understand that what happened was devastating and I know there is important news to be given to the American people. But information can only be given in



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But it really hit home when I saw that jetliner plunge into the Pentagon. I am sickened by the events that took place

people felt sad, while others felt anger. But it is safe to say that the majority of Americans felt the (need to) retaliate. They want to retaliate

against the people who they feel are responsible for (the attacks). But I am one of the very few people who believes (otherwise).

No, I am not a monster. I just have a secular view of the world. Bin Laden and his associates are currently living in Afghanistan. A retaliation against Bin Laden would do nothing but harm the poor civilians of Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan have no control over what has happened to their country. Bin Laden and the Afghan government have forcefully taken control of the country and the people. A war



Associated Press

is ridiculous that Americans are taking their anger out on their fellow Americans. We should be suppressing terrorism, not advocating it. Muslims want to see justice prevail and see that the perpetrators are captured and given a fit punishment. Their involvement in this crisis is only one of support and admiration for rescuers and victims. Their voice in this country is as strong and imperative as anyone else's. Muslims, whose only goal is for achieving peace, are a great part of the United States and should be treated as such.

Humaira Jami, junior

Dear Editor,

My sympathy goes out to all those people who lost their lives and those who lost their loved ones. It is extremely painful and shocking to know that those people who died were walking around and breathing just a few minutes before the planes crashed. This kind of terrorism is absolutely intolerable. It is our duty to guarantee the extermination of terrorism for we have the right to be safe. Military response is definitely needed because terrorists will not cease to attack.

They will continue to take away lives of innocent people in order to achieve their goals. Therefore, this is the perfect opportunity to get rid of the horrible continuation of terrorism in this world. Those who support such madness will also have to be brought to justice. When they are captured they will be accused of numerous crimes. They are responsible for the death of thousands of lives, destruction of federal properties, temporary decline of stock market and economy, and the destruction of peace.

James Yoon, junior

Dear Editor,

The events that occurred on September 11 will be forever ingrained in my memory. I can only imagine the emptiness of those families affected by their loss. I offer my condolences and support. Throughout the United States, there has been a sense of pride growing among the American citizens. It's a comfort to know that we can stand behind each other and offer our hearts. We have been pushing one another to take small steps in this time of tragedy. I have never felt such pride to call myself an American as I have now. Once we stood separated as a nation and now we stand united. We will not let terrorism rip apart our spirits. We will grow stronger and defeat our enemies. May God Bless America!

Lena Matos, junior

Dear Editor,

The attack on America on September 11 was an unbelievable event. It was a surreal, unimaginable tragedy that had struck America. When I had heard the news, I thought, "Who the heck would do this kind of thing?" I am willing to bet that everyone was thinking that when this happened.

During these times, I hope that people can still move on with their lives. To do what they normally would do even through this tragedy had struck us all in our hearts. Although I hadn't lost any of my relatives, I think that I have lost a part of myself to those who died. I believe that America should get stronger and that everyone should be stronger so we can expel this evil force from this planet. America and its allies will stand strong and eliminate terrorism so everyone can live in peace, unity, and hope.

Joe Han, junior

Dear Editor,

We will always grieve for those lost in the terrorist attacks but we must now focus on stopping terrorism. When people say that we have a list of the terrorists that could be responsible and that we have to find out which one did it, I don't understand. Why can't we

hunt all of them down? They are terrorists, each group is responsible for some attack against the US, and the only way to be safe is to eradicate all of the terrorist factions.

We must always be prepared for another attack. This attack would most likely occur on the Internet in the form of a virus of worm. If the terrorists are interested in destroying the US economy, then we must be careful and not open anything we aren't sure about in our e-mail. A lot of trade and business deals are over the Internet. If the terrorists strike again, that is where it will be.

Also, I'm very angry to see other countries give their condolences to us but do nothing to help us. America has always helped others in need, but in our need we received no help. We will do it alone if we must, to make the world a safe place.

Garrett Len, junior

Dear Editor,

I have many feelings about the attack on America. First of all, how could anyone do something so destructive? I can't even begin to imagine what it would feel like to have been on a plane that was about to crash. It must have been chaotic with everyone knowing that they were about to die.

Ever since this has happened, many people have been praying; praying for the families of those who are injured, dead, or missing. There is also praying that the missing will be found, and that the injured will heal. It's amazing to see so many people gathered to pray at church and at school.

Suzanne Cryer, junior

Dear Editor,

The recent attack on America was devastating and very emotional. I am so thankful no one I knew personally was hurt, but there are many other people in the world who lost loved ones. It is a shame the US was not ready for this and prepared when they let a dozen or so hijackers slip through airport safety. I think the US should retaliate the same way "Alghansian" attacked us. I believe in an eye for an eye. They should have thought twice about attacking America and killing thousands of innocent people leaving their own country at risk for American retaliation.

I hope their attacks on us are over and I hope no bio-terrorism takes place. If what I heard is true in that the US is preparing for a bio-terrorist attack, that the vaccines to anthrax, small pox, and the plague will be ready, but not ready until 2004.

I hope the outcome of all this is good for America and that never again should this many innocent people be killed. America should stand proud and strong, and I believe in the people in charge of this matter.

Janelle Duddy, junior

Dear Editor,

The attack on America was first met with anger from my point of view. The fact that "men" were capable of causing such destruction and death to the innocent in such a deliberate attack, was just unbelievable.

As the days went on and I saw more and more of it on TV, it started to become extremely sad. Those were not just buildings crumbling or planes crashing. Those were people.

Also, as the days have gone on, there have been very few survivors from Tuesday found alive. Only some 200 dead bodies have been located, and about 5,000 more are believed to follow. My strongest feelings about it now as I

write is revenge. Closure cannot come until the terrorists that performed these acts are brought to justice. The US must seek them out through military actions and take their right to live, as they did to so many on September 11. Despite whatever feelings we have, we still need to go on with our lives. If we let ourselves be afraid, then the terrorists have defeated our spirits and shaken our foundations as Americans.

This is a time to stand as a country, united as one, to stare our fears in the face, and to shout our pride as Americans and our defiance to let terrorists shake the foundations of America. Even though we delayed things such as TV show premieres and sporting events, by returning only a week later, in overwhelming patriotism, is a strong message to the terrorists that even though they did hit the key symbols of American capitalism and American military strength, they still missed America.

We shall overcome these tragedies, and in the words of Mel Gibson in the movie "Braveheart", "They may take our lives, but they will never take our freedom."

Mike Sneed, junior

Dear Editor,

I'm saddened by the tragedy that has struck America. I think it was wrong that the terrorists did. It upsets me that we, as a country, are assuming it was bin Laden and his people automatically. We should get the facts before we blame it all on one person.

Even though we know he holds hatred against America, it's still not fair to place all of our hatred on him. We should work harder to try and gather more accurate facts. I feel sorry for all the families that have lost loved ones, and even for the families of the terrorists and the guilt they might be feeling. My prayers go out to everyone that has been affected in this horrible disaster.

Jawuan Hall, sophomore

Dear Editor,

A tragedy has struck our nation, but that tragedy should stop here. Most Americans have responded to September 11 with calls for revenge and retaliation, but what will we gain? Nothing. Missile and bombing strikes will only result in us becoming the terrorists. We condemn others for killing our innocent but would kill other innocent in response. There is no sense in that.

September 11 attacks have given Americans a tolerance, even a desire, for civilian casualties. If we keep this attitude and allow the military to kill civilians as it did in Serbia and Iraq, America will only inspire more hatred for itself across the globe. We may even make martyrs

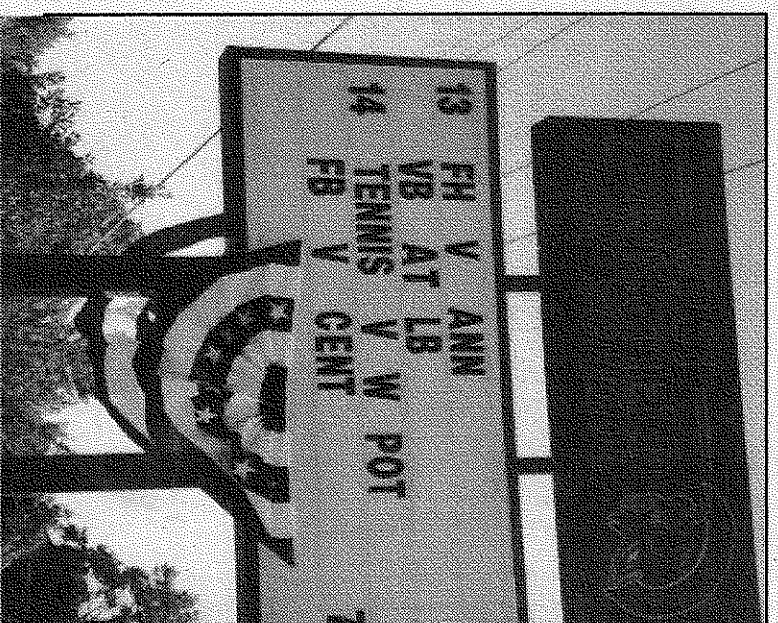
Dear Editor,
There is no doubt in my mind that everyone in this school was stunned and horrified by the events of September 11. For nearly a week television stations and Internet sites had 24 hour coverage. While I have no problems with this coverage, I do disagree with the decision to air and re-air the footage of the planes crashing into the buildings and then showing the buildings collapsing. I have seen them myself at least 50 times. It seems to me that the news stations are almost desensitizing the public. I can now watch them without cringing or gasping like I did originally. This is not coverage of a baseball game where the highlight of the night is shown over and over. The more times we see this terrible image the less real and tragic it will become. By now everybody has seen it from all angles and views, so why not put that aspect of the coverage aside. Besides, footage of all the men and women aiding in rescue efforts is much more worthwhile.

Betsy Soltoni, junior

Dear Editor,

I believe the attack on America was a horrendous act of violence that cost the lives of thousands of innocent civilians. Emotions spurred out of this devastating trauma, among them anger, sorrow, and the feeling of revenge. These emotions played a great role in the harassment of many Muslim—looking individuals.

Although the American people suffered extreme afflictions, they have no reason to take out their hatred for the terrorists held responsible on the millions of Muslims in this nation. Muslims, too, are Americans that share great love and patriotism for this country. The acts that the terrorists committed were aimed at dissolving American unity and peace. The followers of Islam cannot be held responsible for what happened because they share the same faith or resemble terrorists. The recent attacks on Muslim men and women are outrageous. It



Russ Waddell

of the thousands of Afghans who would be killed if we do not plan our attacks carefully. Limited violence might be necessary to dispose of bin Laden, but another bin Laden will arise if we do not end the poor policies that brought on the attacks in the first place. We cannot kill the weed without getting the root.

Brendan Williams, senior

Dear Editor,

The events of the past week have been nothing but tragic. I am at a loss of words to how deeply saddened I am about the whole incident. I am taking it especially hard because I am an Afghan-American.

For most Afghan people the news of the bombings and suicide started on the 9. It was Sunday when I heard about the assassination attempt of the Afghan Northern Alliance leader, Adnan Shah Masood. He was the Anti-taliban leader of Afghanistan. It was he who controlled five percent of the country and who wanted democracy for the war-torn country.

On the 9 and 10 my family and I were constantly on the Internet searching for news about Mr. Masood and his condition. Two men posing as reporters had hidden a bomb in a camera and it exploded in a conference room in which Mr. Masood was in. Unfortunately he died on the 14, surviving almost a week since the assassination attack.

On the 11 when I heard of the World Trade Center bombings I knew that Taliban and Osama bin Laden had something to do with it. Mr. Masood had been fighting all his life to get rid of the Taliban militia. He wanted peace and he wanted women to be free (in the September 2001 issue of "Seventeen" magazine, there is an article about Afghan women and their censored lives).

The horrid and inhumane rule that the Taliban impose in Afghanistan is not the view of all Afghans. Recent video tapes of Afghanistan show that in the Taliban controlled regions, supporters of the Taliban were breaking tapes and films because they claimed it was un-Islamic to listen to music and to watch movies. However, in the areas where Mr. Masood controlled, a man was playing a guitar-type instrument that he had made out of scraps.

Not all of Afghanistan is filled with uneducated, ignorant, Islamic radicals. The Taliban represent the peasant population in Afghanistan. With Adnan Shah Masood, there was still some hope for the Afghan people, but now the future seems dim.

Many people ask why is the Taliban hiding Osama bin Laden? My thoughts are that he supplies the Taliban with artillery and money. That also answers the question of how the Taliban got control of so much land in Afghanistan. With war fought in Afghanistan since the Russian invasion in 1979, it has been 22 years of bloodshed, and now the future holds more. My hopes are that with the United States weakening the Taliban militia, the Northern Alliance will gain all of the lost land back, and a real democratic and just government will come into place.

Not all Afghans are radicals, and not all Muslims live their lives so constricted and dark. To be a real Muslim is in your heart. Osama bin Laden is not. He has tarnished the image of Muslims. Because of him, mosques have been vandalized, Muslims have been harassed, and the Islam religion has gained a bad name. The things Bin Laden and the Taliban have done to America and Afghanistan are unforgivable and heinous. All that is left to do now is to wait and hope for peace and closure for the Americans and Afghan families.

Julie Rahimi, senior**Dear Editor,**

Allusions to FDR's famous declaration of war on Japan have predictably appeared in newspapers across the nation. "A date which will live in infamy." This is an appropriate description for such a terrible day.

America is changed forever; it's sad, but true. Now as I look around the school, the city, and the entire nation, I see how an unfortunate tragedy has brought this country together. Flags are waving proudly, heads are bowed in prayer, and remembrance, scores of our citizens wait in lines that are six hours long to give blood, enlistment rates have skyrocketed, the list goes on.

That terrible, cowardly act has brought America together and a strong sense of patriotism has engulfed the nation. This truly is the land of the free and the home of the brave. Once again we have proven that when faced with any trials we will rise up and overcome them as a united nation.

Mike Cryer, senior**Dear Editor,**

'When I find myself in times of trouble, Mother Mary comes to me...' I believe this lyric from the Beatles song "Let It Be," could be the motto for our own country right now. Due to the tragedy of last week, many Americans who are not regular churchgoers decided to attend services on Sunday. In my church, which seats 400, there were many people standing in the back. I think it's great that people are finding comfort in church and prayer, but I also think it's sad that this only happens for many during times of crisis. I spoke with my pastor last Sunday, (he)

said the last time he remembered his church being so full (not including Easter and Christmas), was during the Persian Gulf War. Even though I wish that this feeling of renewed faith would last, I know that once this ordeal is over people will once again stop going to church. People should realize that God is always with us, not just in times of crisis.

Alicia Kirsch, senior

WS staff members proudly display American spirit by decorating their classroom doors.

911
"Today our country saw evil, the worst of human nature." —Bush

*We never thought we'd see the day,
Living in and out, we were okay.
We look for granted our free land,
But it could go by the strike of a hand.*

*We never thought we'd see the day,
when America would go under way,
We will stand and fight,
no one will take us down tonight.*

*Lives lost at the blink of an eye,
mothers hold their children close and cry,
Together we will unite,
no one will take us down tonight.*

*Moments of silence or hours of grief
what has happened is beyond belief.
God, give us the strength to go on
and let the light shine with tomorrow's dawn.*

*On the land, out at seas,
in the air and on our knees,
We all are one and together stand
no one can threaten our beautiful land.*

*911 a day we will hate,
but one day we'll walk through the pearly gates.
No one can take this nation down,
we are strong and together bound.*

—Angela Fiorino**Dear Editor,**

On September 11, America was attacked by terrorists. The news doesn't do nearly a good enough job of expressing the sorrow and the pain felt by the victims family and friends. I keep on hearing people say, "I'm still shocked" and quite frankly, I'm annoyed. Shock only last for certain amount of time, and the ones who say are usually nowhere near New York and didn't lose anyone. I don't mean to be attacking these people, but at this point they're most likely sad and angry, not shocked. I'm angry too, after all, they attacked my country. There's no shame in being angry.

Now, I know we have Muslims in this country and I have nothing against them, but those who chose to applaud should be deported. I heard teachers say, "I hope we don't go to war." I hope we do, then we'll get a chance to take out most of the world's terrorists. I hope their children go with them because they'll grow up to become terrorists also.

If and when we defeat bin Laden we should take his money and do something noble with it; don't incorporate it into the national budget; feed the homeless, or feed the hungry. In Africa, \$300 million will feed a lot of people. Also, let's take the oil, and give Jerusalem to the Jews. By the way, there's nothing wrong with the word Jew.

Robbie Watkins, junior

Dear Editor,

On September 11 my safety and security were shaken. I stared in amazement as I watched the planes hit places important to this country. Yet through all this I felt an overwhelming peace. I knew if I were to be a victim of one of these tragedies I would be going to Heaven.

My faith in God was what held me through. I know that even though this is a horrible tragedy, great things will come of this. Our patriotism for one thing, we've come together as a nation like never before. People are pitching in the rescue efforts, giving blood, trying to help out in any way possible.

I'm inspired and thankful that we have such great rescue workers, who are willing to give their lives for others. I've noticed everyone being so much nicer to me than ever before. I can't wait to see how we are going to grow and bond as a nation.

Jason Elwood, junior

Associated Press

A New York Police officer wears a patriotic helmet while searching for survivors in the World Trade Center.

Dear Editor,

The morning of Tuesday, September 11 came as usual. Groggy and tired-eyed I rolled out of bed and found my way to school. It was hard to get back into the groove seeing that school was only in its third week but I managed. The air outside was so crisp and clear that I could taste fall on the tip of my tongue.

I'm in class and ready to go and here come the announcements. What do you know, we have to stand up and say the Pledge of Allegiance. Barely standing, my eyes wander and the words hardly roll off my tongue. I'm only honoring our nation's flag, it's just a task, something that we have to do every morning and none of us see the point to it, right?

So fourth period rolls around and Mr. Griffin gets on the intercom to tell us that we've been attacked. "The Twin Towers have collapsed and the Pentagon is on fire," repeats in my mind. All I could think about was my mom's final words from the morning, "I'll be at the Pentagon for business so call my cell if you need anything." I felt sick. My body was shaking, but it was numb. Chills ran down my spine and tears streamed down my face. I was speechless but my eyes said it all.

I ran to the office as soon as we were given permission to call our families. After the painful dialing and two perpetual rings, my mom picked up her phone. With shivers in her voice she started to cry once she heard it was me. I told her I loved her and she told me she said she was coming to get me. Everyone in the office seemed to have blank eyes and scared thoughts running through their head, I felt their pain.

As I walked back to class, thoughts screamed through my head like frantic children running through a haunted house. Do I feel angry, sick or sad? I felt like I was watching a horror movie but it didn't end.

I was in shock the next few days. As we were all recovering from the horrible disaster at the same time we were uniting as a nation. Flags hung, cars were decorated, prayer sessions held, moments of silence hushing the nation and most of all the Pledge of Allegiance said with pride. Is this what it takes to unite our country? Millions of Americans rushed out to get flags meaning that they didn't own one before. It makes me upset but at the same time proud. I'm sure we're all confused in a time like this.

When I went to church the Sunday after the tragedy, I listened to the sermon with both ears, instead of the usual one. He told us that someone hung a sign that said, "God is no where." A few minutes later a man walked up to the sign and rearranged the letters so it would say, "God is now here." Although many people turn to God in a time like this, some turn away. But I know that there is a reason for all of this, and to all those people that don't see it, look outside. See how the nation shines now, see how united we are. America is no longer a stubborn nation but one that believes in itself.

If it's a beautiful feeling to stand up in class and say the pledge with pride in my voice. No longer is it a task, but something I look forward to.

Kristi Poling, senior

THE ORACLE

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