



A Personal View: Stories shared, voices heard, our community speaks as America responds and heals

by Leah Lubin



It's more painful to write about than I had first expected. How the world has changed in one month and how everyone's life has been affected.

At first, I thought that I would go way back into my own history with terrorism and war, starting at the young age of five while living in Israel. But I just couldn't do it. So I'll start much later, in fact, two weeks before September 11.

My parents were visiting from Israel, on the way to Skylonda via Minnesota where my father was on a one-month writer's retreat in Red Wing. My mom arrived one week earlier and as she unpacked, she brought out a long, scary looking, five-inch kitchen knife from one of her suitcases. "What's that Mom?" I asked shocked. "It's my favorite kitchen knife and I can't cook without it," she replied casually. I retorted, "How the heck did you get that through security? I can't believe they let you travel on an airplane with that!"

Yes, my mom does enjoy cooking. It's her hobby and she made things I would never try; complicated dishes that seemed to take three to four hours to prepare. Two weeks later, it was time to go home and my parents were packing. My mom slipped into the kitchen to retrieve her knife. But I put my foot down, "No Mom, no way am I letting you get back on a plane with that knife. Say good-bye to that knife, it will be here for your next visit."

Usually she wins, but this time I was adamant. A creepy strange feeling inside me would not let me listen to her "they never bother old ladies" story.

My parents left America safely and happily from San Jose Airport on a pleasant Sunday morning. Thirty hours later: Attack on America! One of the most dastardly deeds ever done. Thousands killed. The effect of this on life in America is yet to be told. A declaration of war by a terrorist organization with reality showing us scenes that no movie picture has dared to depict.

Fighter jets follow Air Force One back to the capital. Fireman and policemen rush in as everyone else tries to exit. The police and firemen of New York— our heroes with a bravery that is hard to fathom.

We all lived in "Ground Zero." Ate the dust, felt the pain. We stood in line removing debris with little plastic buckets. We welcomed the heavy equipment and greeted the steel workers that had built these buildings, now there to help tear them down.

Watching America unite, as if an invisible magnet more forceful than any previously on Earth pulled us together. A flag, always loved and admired, became so much more. A symbol to wrap oneself with to give us strength and hope. I felt it would be helpful to us all to hear from the following people in our community. I am grateful for their contribution.

"A few blocks from where I live, down at the street corner there is a shrine. It has lots of candles and poems and letters, mostly from children. It's a beautiful expression of humanity. Everytime I pass it, I pause and reflect how this tragedy has brought us all closer together as a family of people. What a good feeling that brings."

Gary Gates

Gary Gates Band and Pescadero Cowboy

"In the last three weeks, what I've been working on artistically is an eagle carved from oak. I am getting close to finishing it. It's my therapy and it's making me feel better. The music wasn't soothing me enough, I had to go further and find something more."

Reid Dennis

Elf Ent Studios and Mark-Reid Band, La Honda

"We where horrified, shocked, but we had a benefit on Monday, September 24 to which a lot of people responded. At this fund-raiser, we raised the amazing amount of over \$20,000. We are sending this money to the New York Firefighters Disaster Relief Fund. Our own volunteer fire brigade gave \$2,500 which was matched by the Art Fair."

Pat Wurster, Publisher

The Kings Mountain Ecco

"Here and abroad, arrogance, indifference and religious extremism are our worst enemies. Insensitivity to violence and poverty leads to terrorism."

George Cattermole

San Gregorio Store and San Gregorio Music Festival

As we win the war on terrorism, share your voice for future "A Personal View" columns by contacting me by e-mail at leah_lubin@att.net.