

Ten years later: community reflections on September 11

By Charlotte Hudson
STAFF WRITER

Where were you on September 11, 2001? Where were you when the first plane crashed into the World Trade Center, with the second plane soon to follow? Where were you when the other planes crashed, one in Pennsylvania, one into the Pentagon?

9/11 was one of those days that started out as normal, but then became one that would change people's lives forever, whether you knew people who lost their lives in the attack or not.

Whether you are young or old, live close to or far away from the sites of the attacks, had family members and friends who were affected or not, everyone can agree that it was a day like no other.

Senior Sarah-Jaana Nodell

"I lived twelve miles outside of New York ... and you could see the towers right from my middle school. One of my teachers was screaming, pointing out the window. The blinds were shut all over the school and the alarm was blaring. They told us that a bomb had gone off, and we had to go down in the bomb shelter and stay there until our parents came to pick us up that afternoon. My uncle (who worked in the World Trade Center) left ten minutes before the first plane crashed to get coffee ... My mom's partner missed

a subway, which was right under where the attacks happened, because she spilled her coffee and dropped her keys. When I moved down to the South, I felt disconnected. It was the end of my innocence."

Georgiann Bogdan, associate disability services coordinator

"I was teaching at UNCG. I was just about to walk in the classroom, to start class, when the secretary started causing a commotion, panicking. I went out to find out (why), and that was when she told me. I panicked, because my brother, who was stationed in the Air Force, worked in the Pentagon, where one of the planes crashed into. My mom calls me, also panicking about my brother. It turns out that he was not there at the time, and they never told us where he was. I remember feeling a sense of numbness."

Sarah Dreier-Kasik, CCE student, via email

"I lived in the Chicago area at the time. I clearly remember that I was driving and in the left turn lane, waiting in front of the local community college on my way to class, and the radio was announcing that a plane just crashed into the first tower. I thought it was some sort of commercial gimmick. I grew to realize that it was really happening. Walking through the college's halls, the TVs were on, showing the video as it occurred. The first

class I had, we watched everything. My second class was a normal class, although you could see everyone worried about anyone they might know. My relatives live in the New England area and my aunt had a friend who did not make it.

"My birthday is on the fifteenth of September, and in 2001, that was my 21st birthday. Needless to say, I did not go out and party that day. Nowadays, I appreciate that I have another birthday to celebrate."

Senior Bennett Christian, via email

"I was living in Paris, France at the time. Because of the time difference, when the 9/11 events happened, I was in art class finishing up what seemed like just another day of seventh grade.

"For some reason, I took a different route home, so as my parents were trying to intercept me and take me to my dad's office as opposed to me walking straight home as usual, I'm sure they were stressing out about what may have happened to me.

"We eventually caught up, so that the whole family, including my sister, was together. They told me about what had and was happening in the U.S. and that we were going to go to my dad's office away from our home near the Eiffel Tower in the event that 9/11 was going to be a broader attack on the world's, or at least the West's, landmarks ... I remember watching the news at my

dad's office. The next day, our school had a moment of silence lasting about 10 minutes."

Maia Dery, visiting instructor of art

"When the planes were hitting the towers, I was in a little log cabin in the woods where I lived at the time. I was preparing to drive into Guilford to teach Photo 1. I was in my first month as a photo teacher. A friend called me to tell me that planes had flown into the World Trade Center.

"The change (brought by 9/11) was enormous. It was the first time in my life that an overwhelming, confusing event took place when I was the designated grown-up with a bunch of young people. That day of being a photo teacher raised questions about my role I am still in the process of answering. As a citizen, I don't think the attacks precipitated a huge change. I was in college during the 1980s when the U.S. Government was supporting some very unsavory characters in Latin America and I felt personally responsible then, and I still feel a degree of responsibility for the unintended consequences of our decisive actions abroad.

"If anything, I feel a bit more optimistic now than I did then. The events of the Arab Spring are clearly complicated, and I have neither time nor capacity to understand the nuances, but I am an American, and it always seems fundamentally hopeful when people take more control over their own lives."

Students develop greater understanding during trip to Palestine

By Bryan Dooley
STAFF WRITER

Director of the Friends Center and Campus Ministry Coordinator Max Carter was a conscientious objector to the Vietnam War because of his Quaker faith. As his alternative service to military duty, he taught in Ramallah, Palestine. In 1997, Carter escorted the first Guilford College work group to Palestine.

In summer 2010, a group travelled with Carter to help at a school in Ramallah where he taught math in the early 1970s. Since the school had been long established, the group met prominent political figures who were associated with the school. In exchange, they did volunteer work like painting playground equipment and landscaping.

Four members of the group spoke at a reflections panel on Sept. 7: sophomores Kelsey Worthy and Stephanie Seligman, graduate A.J. Willey '11, and community member Zane Kuseybi. Each reflected on the immense misunderstandings they brought to the trip.

"I was reluctant to visit at first because, as a Syrian family, we are prohibited to go into what we consider 'occupied territory,'" said Kuseybi. "The more I thought about it, the more I realized I needed to go there in order to understand the situation."

Each of the travelers had their own reasons for travelling to Palestine, not necessar-

ily religious.

"I am not religious, so I travelled to see where all the Western religions began," said Seligman. "I wouldn't say I found it, but I learned a lot."

As a whole, the group agreed that the American people do not get a sense of the culture in the West Bank region. To illustrate this point, Willey asked the audience, "What do you all know about what is going on over



Students and community members travelled to Ramallah, Palestine, this summer to work at a school. The group learned about Palestinian history and culture during their trip.

there (in Palestine)?" One member in the audience hesitated and said, "A little bit."

The trip began with early experiences of passing through security and border crossing in Israel.

"As soon as we said we were going to Ramallah, I noticed a difference in the security guard's attitude," said Worthy. "They kept asking, 'Where are you going?' and when we said Ramallah, they kept asking, 'Why?'"

Not all Israelis that the group came in contact with were opposed to peaceful coexistence with the Palestinians. The group recounts going into a checkpoint where 18-to-21-year-old Israelis serve three years of their lives securing the border.

"It is kind of sad, because we actually spoke with some of the soldiers, and most of them told us stories about how terrible it is," said Willey. "In fact, they gave us a book filled with stories written by soldiers, called 'Breaking the Silence.'"

"We all went over there with an image of Palestinian women and men," said Worthy. "A stereotypical image of women with their heads covered up and men being very different from American men."

They came back with a totally different perspective. Contrary to previous beliefs, the Palestinian people were some of the nicest individuals they had ever met.

"I had a perception of what Islamic extremists might be, but I knew that those people were not all the same as the Palestinian population," said Worthy. "The Palestinians we met were very gracious and well-mannered."

Carter said he always notices a difference in the group after they return.

"They come back with a deep appreciation for the humanity on both sides," Carter explained. "These aren't just numbers and statistics; they are real people, and the students start to fall in love with them."

Guilford remembers Tim LaFollette '01



Tim LaFollette, pictured above with a friend, smiles during a visit to the zoo.

Tim LaFollette '01 passed away on August 23 after a more than two-year struggle with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also called Lou Gehrig's disease.

After LaFollette's diagnosis in 2009, his friends started the group Often Awesome to raise support for LaFollette and awareness of ALS. Often Awesome will continue its mission to raise awareness of ALS as a non-profit organization through its website, Oftenawesome.org.

"(LaFollette) taught me so much about giving things another shot," said Catie Braly '01, a friend and early member of Often Awesome. "He got hurt so many times ... and the next chance he got, he was right back up there."

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Sept. 24, at 5:30 p.m. at New Garden Friends Meeting.