

THE BLUE BANNER

Volume 36 Issue 2

The University of North Carolina At Asheville

September 12, 2002

Remembering Sept. 11 one year later



ED FICKLE / NEWS EDITOR

In New York, people strain to see the remains of the World Trade Center Sept. 11, as they remembered the tragedy that took place one year ago. UNCA students, faculty and staff also commemorated the tragic day with on-campus events, including a candle-light vigil and a flag ceremony.

UNCA student travels to NYC for Sept. 11

Sarah Wilkins
Guest Reporter

I stood at the edge of the World Trade Center remains. New York City police officers hustled onlookers away from blockaded streets as voices read the names of terrorist victims.

I traveled over 12 hours from UNCA to witness the anniversary of America's tragedy.

As I entered New York City, I understood that I would witness one of the most significant events in America's history.

I listened to conversations in the crowd amongst New Yorkers and tourists, and empathized with their feelings of outrage, sorrow and resolution.

As the morning continued, gusting wind caused national flags to rustle angrily, and unshed dust stung the eyes of onlookers.

From blocks away, I could hear the tiny sound of the stage's microphone, and I saw the huge American flags draped on the skyscrapers before I even got close to the site.

Memorials to firefighters and police officers covered fences and buildings along the streets. I saw notes and gifts from all over the country and the world. American flags prominently appeared in the hands of bystanders, and their dress often reflected our national colors. I discovered police officers guarding many street entrances, refusing admittance to anyone who wanted to get closer to the site.

Evading police barricades, I found my way down to Church Street, which borders the former Trade Center location. I joined other persistent individuals who wanted to view the Sept. 11 memorial, where the twin towers once stood.

Straining to see over people's heads, I witnessed the procession of firefighters carrying flags as the crowd clapped in appreciation of their heroism. At the end of the ceremony, I saw the long line of the victims' family members leaving the site. Many of them carried similar moments of loved ones. Looking at their faces, I noticed that expressions of sadness and resolve were reflected in the melancholy tone of the crowd.

Slowly the observers dispersed, drifting into small gatherings to tell stories that illustrated the terrorist attacks' effects on regular Americans.

Then, I headed to Central Park, where thousands of people sat in the Great Lawn holding a candlelight vigil remembering the victims. I gazed at the small points of flame highlighted in the darkness with the skyscrapers framing the scene with more light.

While the orchestra played the "Blue Danube Waltz," a tribute to firefighters, several people in the crowd had tears slipping down their cheeks.

Many UNCA voices recount an American tragedy

Elizabeth Moe
Managing Editor

For as long as our living memories last, the terrorist attacks on the United States Sept. 11, 2001 will loom tall as one of the most horrific and mind-numbing events our generation will ever experience. Each of us struggle to find the most appropriate way to commemorate our losses, and muddle through the conflicting ideas and emotions as best we can.

This year, at UNCA, we began our memorial to all victims of that atrocity with a reverent moment of silence around a stock-still flag, halted at half-mast. Well over a hundred gathered there, in the growing light, as a representation of unity and remembrance. A new dawn, as bright and innocent as one just a year ago, peeked over the skyline. To some, it was a symbol of hope and new beginnings-a rebirth.

As dawn faded into mid-morning, and then, into a candle-lit black night, students, staff and faculty joined in a series of events designed to embody the spirit of America in times of trouble and adversity. But, it seems that it is the dialogue, the mutual understanding and healing we as a community experience together, that best expresses the true backbone of America, and in a way, best commemorates those who we

seek to honor.

"I detest war, all its ideas and what's behind it, but at the same time, so to speak, that's what gives me the right to be who I am, to function like I do, to wear the clothes I like. I can do that and a lot of people suffered for that. If it comes with that price, then I sure am grateful for it," said Sharon Lloyd, an undeclared junior.

Those who spent the day compassionately listening to the melting pot of diverse community members that construct this university were rewarded with perspectives that enlighten and inspire.

"We see this as a personal tragedy, which it certainly was," said Luther Barnhardt, a member of UNCA's board of trustees. "It was a horrific episode, but it should give us cause to reflect on countries of this world who go through this every day."

"What I hope this will do is make us more aware of our role in the

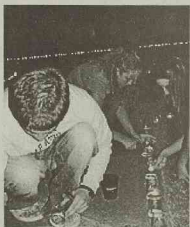
world, and more aware of the fact that there are other people in the world who are suffering so much more than we. Institutions like this with a liberal arts background aren't only focused on technology, we are

focused on people and humanity," said Barnhardt.

The sentiments surrounding the commemorative events of Sept. 11 were, in many ways, confused, emotional and conflicting. While some students, faculty and staff felt the university's efforts to be completely appropriate, many others felt the university's efforts to be completely inappropriate.

It's part of the process of healing and moving forward," said Linda Cornett, director of international studies and assistant professor of political science. "Any way that people do that - through their religious faith, through debate and dialogue or through academic discus-

sion - it's got to be a positive step." "Institutions of learning have a special place in moments like this. The best colleges and universities are places where people come together to discuss important issues, to reflect on important events and to share in important community moments. What we've got here is, in a tragic way, something that has brought all of that together. Campuses are places of dialogue, places of community. That is what I hope for today," said Chancellor James H. Mullen.



J.P. AMMONS / PHOTO EDITOR
The Student Government Association sponsored the candlelight vigil.