

Stone Ridge

SCHOOL OF THE SACRED HEART

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ALUMNAE PERSPECTIVES ON 9/11

Foreign Correspondent Recalls Impact of September 11 Story

by Alicia Abell '91, Freelance Writer

Andrea Koppel '81 was in Lima, Peru, traveling with Secretary of State **Colin Powell** when the tragedy of September 11 struck. As State Department correspondent for the Cable News Network (CNN), Andrea accompanies Secretary Powell on almost all of his foreign trips. But this trip was different. Within a few hours of hearing of the attacks, Andrea was on a plane back to Washington. She, Secretary Powell, and the other reporters were incommunicado for the eight-hour plane ride. When they finally flew into Andrews Air Force Base at 6:00 P.M. on September 11, "Someone said, 'Oh my God, I think that's the Pentagon,'" Andrea recalls. As they looked out the windows of the plane, "We saw this plume of smoke... It was just an incredibly eerie feeling..."

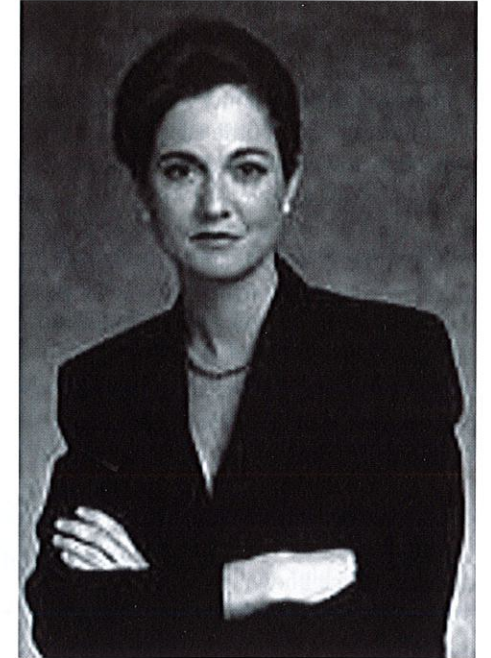
Talk of an international coalition began the next day. As a foreign policy correspondent for CNN, Andrea's job was "to explain to our viewers why a country like Pakistan was important." "I also needed to explain what al Qaeda was, who Osama bin Laden was, how he operates, and how there were these cells...all over the world—and how that was going to complicate matters," she says. Because she had covered the East Africa and U.S.S. *Cole* bombings, Andrea knew quite a bit about terrorism and the Middle East before September 11. But "I don't think

any of us knew how pervasive al Qaeda was," she says. "To just get a sense of how many thousands of people had trained and come out of these camps... I think we were all shocked to learn about that."

September 11 is also branded in her memory because "It was the first story since I left covering local news that affected me personally as an American," Andrea says. Her two sisters, her brother, and dozens of friends live in New York City, so when she returned to the U.S. on the evening of September 11, she was panicked and trying to get through to her loved ones just like the rest of us. "You're trying to work while you're preoccupied with the same images everyone else is seeing on TV," she says.

Since September 11, Andrea has traveled with Secretary Powell on his coalition-building trips overseas (including one in December when they visited ten countries in eight days). She believes that the diplomatic challenge that lies ahead is keeping the coalition intact for the "untold number of years" it may take to win the war against terrorism. "Then it's the fact that Afghanistan is a country that has been ravaged by more than two decades of war," she says. The country has an interim government until May, but "We have no idea about who will come out of this as the next leader." Will he be equally against terrorism?

In the meantime, she believes that



Andrea Koppel '81.

there is a way Americans can help. "My wish is really that our viewers make an effort to follow what's happening," Andrea says, "... whether it involves our civil liberties or how we're treating people from other countries and other governments." "We have a responsibility as citizens who vote to remain informed and hold our government accountable," she says. If we can do that, all of Andrea's efforts will have been worthwhile.

Medic Unit Responds to the Pentagon; Finds "Surreal" Scene

by Private Camie Bruhweiler '99, Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-B)

I was returning home from my twelve-hour graveyard shift at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad when I heard a brief news flash about a plane crashing into the first tower of the World Trade Center. I didn't think much about it, as I envisioned some small two-person puddle hopper grazing the top of one of the towers. It never occurred to me that more could be going on.

Once home I turned on the news to have some background noise when I saw the horrific film clip of a huge airliner crashing into the World Trade Center tower. As I watched on in disbelief I

suddenly heard a reporter scream that a bomb went off at the Pentagon. With the hairs on my neck standing on end and my heart pounding, I instantly ran upstairs and grabbed my uniform, boots and squad ID. I grabbed some basic essentials, since I knew it would be uncertain the next time I would be able to come home.

All my friends, fellow volunteers, and chiefs were converging on the squad at the same time. There was barely room to move. The big screen TV was on at its highest volume setting and everyone sat mesmerized focusing on the events unfolding in front of us. Food donations

were pouring in, overflowing our kitchen. During a meeting with the chief he informed us that three units were at the Pentagon and that some of our other units were covering the normal call volumes of D.C. and Northern Virginia. He was going to try to organize shifts of relief teams and he told us all to get ready for the long road ahead.

Several of us were sent up to the dispatch office to coordinate communication with our units, and to manage the massive amounts of calls coming in from other chiefs, press, and the general public.

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"Camie" from page 11

We also had to have two people whose sole jobs were to receive donations. People in the community were dropping by and calling with donations of food, money, soap, clothing, and cards. The support of the community made what we were dealing with a little easier. Every so often someone would drop by in the dispatch office to give a news update. Every time a new development occurred chills would go up our spines. We were all on automatic pilot focusing on the tasks that were at hand. It was extremely difficult especially after knowing that many of our brother and sister fire and rescue personnel up in New York had been buried while trying to do their jobs.

I was soon told I would be placed on one of the medic units at the Pentagon for the night shift. I continued to work in the dispatch office knowing that going home to rest up before that night would just be too difficult for me to do. While working in dispatch, a gentleman walked up to the

window. He had a strong accent and in broken English said, "I just came here to America, I am an American. What can I do to help? You will have my services, I can cook, I can clean, I can run errands for you. Just tell me what I can do and I will do it. I want to help." This man shared the same feelings as many people who brought in donations that day. Wishing I could tell him something more, I told him that right now we were overwhelmed with help and donations, but that if he could go to donate blood that was where he could help most right now. This man along with everyone waiting at the rescue squad were all feeling the same frustration; we all wanted to be doing something, but there was nothing that could really be done. We had too many people and not enough units and supplies, so many had to sit at the squad waiting to be sent as relief.

That night, as the relief crews were being ready to be sent, I was informed that my services would be needed more the following day when the morning relief

shift went down. I was told to report to the squad at 5:00 A.M. and to go home and try to get some sleep. By the time I got home it was 1:00 A.M.

I arrived back to the squad at 4:30 A.M., got my gear together, and talked with my friends who had been on duty for the past twenty-four hours. Everyone was tired and drained, but we all knew we were going to have another difficult day ahead of us. At 5:00 A.M. we loaded up the van and the relief crew for the air truck and a medic unit piled in. On the drive down to the Pentagon, we all briefed each other on what information we knew.

At the Pentagon site, silence fell over the van. There were no words to describe what we saw in front of us. The images on the news didn't come close in portraying what we saw there that day. We drove first around the side of the Pentagon that was damaged. Outside there was a small city built up. There was a mini hospital with cots and IVs set up, but as we looked

See "Medic" continued on page 13



The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad's Air Truck at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Photo by Paramedic Scott Limburg

"Medic" from page 12

there were no patients. There were exhausted fire and rescue crews dirty and worn down from Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. Smoke still billowed from the Pentagon and it almost seemed beautiful in an eerie way with the sunrise. We then drove through the maze of fire trucks, ambulances, and disaster relief trucks to get to the tunnel that would take us to the inner courtyard where we would relieve the crew that had worked the night before.

Inside the courtyard there was another small city. The American Red Cross and the Salvation Army had set up tables of food and drinks, and there were fire apparatuses parked along the perimeter of the courtyard. It surprised me, but only one medic unit remained inside the courtyard. As we unloaded the van we realized we had to be careful where we stepped. There were flags everywhere where the FBI tagged debris and evidence. We were told to be careful not to disturb anything. There was smoke everywhere and the air was so heavy with smoke and water, that it was difficult at first to breathe. Slowly my crew and I were able to get used to it. We went to relieve the exhausted medic crew that had worked through the night.

We were briefed that no survivors had been brought to inside the courtyard, and that our job had become rehabilitating firefighters who had become overwhelmed by dehydration, exhaustion, or injury. We set up our gear and checked what equipment our unit was equipped with. We had a total of five IVs hung ready to go, and several more laid out. None had been used. Being at the Pentagon was surreal.

Many of the firefighters were soaked through due to the massive amounts of water they were using to try to control the fires burning inside the Pentagon. They were trying to ventilate the fires by breaking through the roof. Many would spend hours surrounded by billowing smoke and steam, to only come down to

our unit frustrated and worn out. "This building was made to be impenetrable, and what we have to do is find how to penetrate it." While they would say this many would shake their heads and after getting the care they needed they would put on their over 60 lbs. of gear and head back up to the roof to continue their work.

Throughout the day they would come to us telling us stories of the conditions they had to compete with inside the building. All of us inside the courtyard had become a family. There were fire rescue workers there from all over the metro area and we each provided this amazing support system to each other.

At approximately 3:00 P.M. alarms started going off. Our radios were not

"Today this job is like any other job we do. There is nothing that makes this job different; it is a fire like all the rest. Even tomorrow we'll see it as any other job. Three weeks from now it will hit us, and we will all realize that we were part of history, and you know what I will do, I will have a good cry."

—Firefighter responding to the Pentagon

compatible with Arlington County's radios so we had to rely entirely on what we heard from the rescue workers. All of a sudden people started screaming at the workers on the roof to get off the roof. The firefighters started running for the only two ladders available to escape the roof. My crew and I assumed that the roof had become unstable due to the intense heat. We jumped into our full fire gear so we could jump in and help the firefighters off the roof. Before we could get on our full gear, National Guardsmen with rifles and full gear began running into the courtyard. Alarms continued to sound and all of a sudden everyone started dropping equipment and running towards the tunnel, the only way out of the courtyard. A Guardsman grabbed me and said, "Grab whatever equipment you can; we are going to need it. There is an unidentified

plane headed towards the Pentagon. Get the h— out."

I grabbed our heart monitor and defibrillator, as well as our medic bag which contained IVs and other equipment. The medic on our unit grabbed the drug box and the oxygen bag, while our driver grabbed any extra supplies he could carry. We had to leave whatever fire gear we hadn't yet put on, as well as all of our personal belongings. All fire rescue personnel ran as fast as they could to the tunnel and out of the courtyard. Screams were heard and the sirens continued to sound. Everything became a blur and we all kept running without looking back. Employees were streaming out of the Pentagon running to be as far away from

the building as possible. Once outside the tunnel, we were told that an unidentified plane was headed toward the Pentagon and that the Air Force was already in the air. We stood there waiting. Even with all the noise going on, all I could hear was the rapid beating of my heart.

It seemed like an eternity, but about fifteen minutes later we finally got word

that the unidentified plane was really a FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) plane that had messed up on its identifying code. Everyone seemed to let out this collective sigh of relief and began, hesitantly, to go back inside to continue doing our job.

The day kept on; all sense of time was lost. The Red Cross and the Salvation Army worked hard to keep all of us fed with bagged meals resembling that of S.O.M.E. (So Others Might Eat) bags and keeping us dry with clean socks and towels. Whenever we would run low on supplies, all we had to do was tell one of the volunteer workers and within a half-hour there would be more than enough of whatever supply we needed.

Finally the fire was under control and many of the firefighters were able to take
See "Pentagon" continued on page 14

"Pentagon" from page 13
a little bit of a breather. While monitoring some of their vitals to make sure they weren't becoming too dehydrated, one firefighter said something that summed up the entire day for us. "Today this job is like any other job we do. There is nothing that makes this job different; it is a fire like all the rest. Even tomorrow we'll see it as any other job. Three weeks from now it will hit us, and we will all realize that we were part of history, and you know what I will do, I will have a good cry."

It wasn't three weeks later; it was two for me. Since my day at the Pentagon I have not yet been back there, and there is not a day that goes by that I don't think about that day. The support from my fellow rescue workers, my friends, family and community has made it easier to deal. I feel privileged that I was part of the rescue efforts of September 11. It meant even more to me when I found out that a classmate of mine from Stone Ridge, **Alison Heidenberger '99**, had personally felt the effects with the loss of her mother, **Michele Heidenberger**, at the Pentagon. It made my help with the fire and rescue efforts even more meaningful to me. I



On graduation day, Alison Heidenberger '99 (left) is joined by her mother, Michele McDonald Heidenberger, a senior flight attendant who died on American Airlines Flight #77 on September 11, 2001. Photo courtesy of Thomas Heidenberger

will never forget the tragedy of September 11 and my day at the Pentagon on the September 12, but, more importantly, I

will never forget the amazing support and coming together of our community and fire rescue family.

He's A Hero

I don't know your name,
and I never will.
I don't know your name,
but I'm coming still.
I have got the ladder,
and I got the might,
so take my hand,
until you see the light.

He is not a saint, he's a hero.
A man who knows how to give.
He is not a saint, he's a hero.
Willing to take the risk
so that others may live.

I may stumble
or I may fall but
know that I'm coming
if I have to crawl.

You're my brother
and I'll carry you,
if that is what it takes
to get you through.

He is not a saint, he's a hero.
A man who knows how to give.
He is not a saint, he's a hero.
Willing to take a risk
so that others may live.

Smoke and fire
can be a living hell,
but I answer the call
when I hear the bell.
I don't quit,
and I don't back down.
I do what it takes
to protect my town.

He is not a saint, he's a hero.
A man who knows how to give.
He is not a saint, he's a hero.
Willing to take a risk
so that others may live

He'll take you by the hand
until you see the light.
He'll take you by the hand
until you see the light.
He'll take you by the hand
until you see the light.
He'll take you by the hand
until you see the light.

—Lyrics by Terry Neill
Herbert '66 and music by
Ric Matkowski © 2001

Note: This song is a tribute to firefighters everywhere. Members of ten different local Chicago bands participated in the making of it. In December 2001, copies were delivered to the FDNY Headquarters for distribution to the 343 families who lost a firefighter on 9/11.

Faces of Survivors Reveal "Goodness Triumphant Over Evil"

by Maureen Ryan '81, Director of Patient and Guest Services at the Washington Hospital Center

The events of September 11 were tragic for all Americans. They were particularly painful for those who lost loved ones or friends, or for those who were lucky enough to live through the attack but were critically injured. It is natural to assume that those critically injured became survivors of terrorism the moment they were attacked. They made it while, tragically, so many others did not. The story of these survivors, however, was far from over.

As Director of Patient and Guest Services at the Washington Hospital Center, I had the unique opportunity to meet these survivors and their families and have known most since they arrived on September 11. The friendships that developed with these special people personalized the tragedy of the Pentagon attack in a way that I will never forget. Each day that I went to work this past fall, I was reminded of September 11 in the faces of the survivors, their families and friends.

In the beginning, their faces and situations represented what pure evil can do to people. Walking around the U-shaped corridor of the Burn Intensive Care Unit late one September evening, I was struck by the many patients in the unit, most wrapped in protective gauze head to toe, struggling to avoid complications and infections that carried a high probability of ending their lives. All were here because someone wanted and tried to destroy them.

Soon after that September evening, I began to see something different in the faces and situations of our Pentagon survivors. I saw the power of goodness triumphing over evil. Each patient in the

Burn Unit defied the effort of evil by tapping into the goodness and healing energy within their own souls and that shared with them by their families and friends. It was profoundly humbling to watch from afar as these patients chose to fight for their lives each day and endure the unimaginable pain of daily skin debridements versus what would have been the less painful choice—to die.

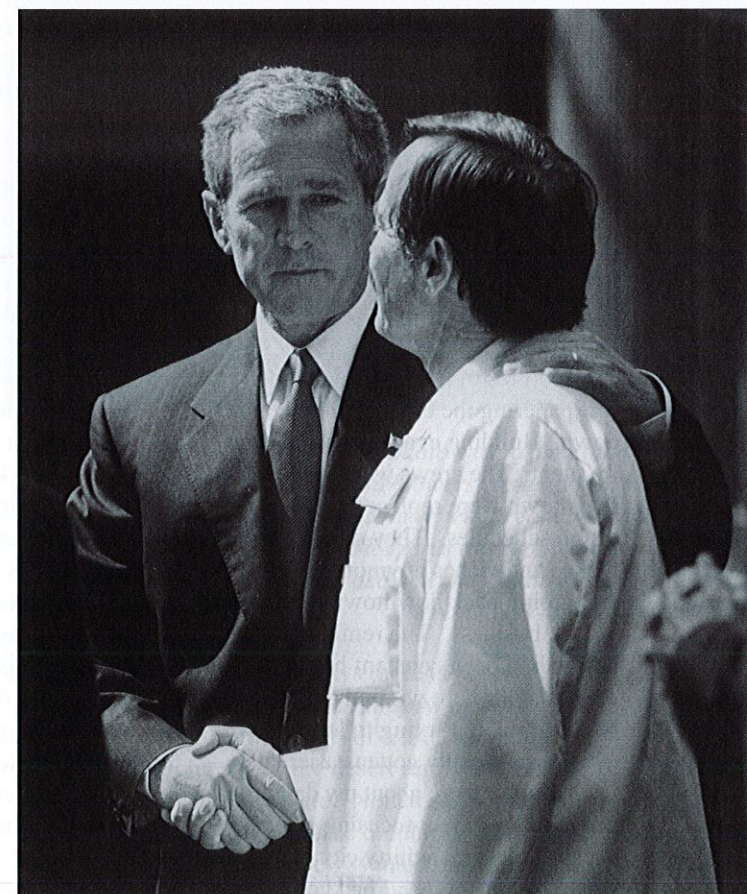
Families and friends, meanwhile,

through every difficult day. There was the day the twenty-nine-year-old graduate of the Naval Academy had two heart attacks four weeks into his stay in the Intensive Care Unit, a reminder to his parents and wife that every day in the Intensive Care Unit was a life or death day. There was the day a husband had to tell his wife of thirty years that every one of her fingers would need to be amputated because they had been burned so badly. There was the

young man who lost his eyesight as a result of his injuries and would not be able to return to the job he once cherished. Each got through difficult situations thanks to the love and support of the collective group.

Although one of the survivors succumbed to her burns the first week after the attack, the remaining seven eventually made it out of the Intensive Care Unit and into the Sub Acute Care Unit, a gigantic step toward reclaiming their lives and independence. Like their families and friends who formed a support system for one another in the Intensive Care waiting room, these patients shared their healing energies with each other to get through the difficult days of rehabilitation. They have continued this special support system as outpatients who now come for treatment three days a week.

All of the patients have scars that will serve as



President George W. Bush meets Marion Jordan, MD, Director of the Burn Center at the Washington Hospital Center, before visiting patients who survived the Pentagon terrorist attack on September 11, 2001. Photo courtesy of Maureen Ryan '81.

© Leslie E. Kossoff/LK Photos

began to form a loving and caring support system for each other. Any time a Pentagon patient developed a medical setback of some sort, all family and friends would rally around the family in crisis. The power of their own souls enabled them to create a healing environment for each other and, together, they made it

permanent reminders of September 11 long after they have left the Washington Hospital Center. The scars represent their Herculean efforts to survive long after the day of September 11 ended. The scars also represent their unending faith in God and their ability to draw him from their souls when most they need him.

After Attack, New York Attempts to Get Back to "Normal"

by Nora Murphy '96, Investment Banking Analyst, Media and Telecom Group, at JPMorgan Chase

There is something very daunting about writing on paper what is already always in mind. Really, I don't want to. I don't want to write about what happened on September 11, 2001; so I'm not going to. I think the media has sufficiently covered what happened on that day. You don't need to hear anymore from me—I was not downtown, I did not work in the towers, my office has not been condemned, I do not have a pair of shoes in my closet covered in that unmistakable dust. In fact, I am the minority in Manhattan right now. However, I do live in The City, and by default, I have been a part of the recovery. Rather than recount the events that the world watched and New Yorkers lived, I think the value I can bring to this exercise is an attempt to give a picture of what it is to be a New Yorker five months after the disasters. So this is not a recount of the horrors of that day; this is a perspective piece from a twenty-something working girl in New York City today.

Immediately after the events of September 11, there was a general sense of paralysis in New York. With transportation at a stand still, businesses closed, and security at an all-time high, attention was focused on ways in which civilians could help. Uncertainty was actually a motivating force. The unknown brought us to blood banks; it sent us to serve sandwiches to the workers downtown; it moved us to firehouses and police stations to say "thank you" to New York's Finest and Bravest; and it inspired us to make donations of anything from towels to home baked brownies. During this time when no one knew anything, this was what we could do and we did it. However, this window of time was short lived.

Even in the face of uncertainty, we soon had to go back to work; we had to start taking the subway; we had to walk through Times Square and Grand Central; we had to stop watching CNN; and we had to buy our morning coffee from the same booth on the corner. In effect, we had to try and get back to normal. But, normal? Was that possible? With public transportation busses making their mad dash

downtown full of the next shift of workers? When getting an outside phone line was still nearly impossible? When venturing below Fourteenth Street was entering a war zone ruled by martial law? When going outside meant being faced

The difficulty, however, is knowing where normal ends reality begins.

with that undeniable odor that can only come from one source. To most, normal was not an option.

With time came more certainty. Certainty that less help was needed downtown instead of more. Certainty that there would be no rescues, only recoveries. Certainty that people would once again push and shove on the sidewalks and that cabbies would honk for sport. The pictures of missing loved ones wallpapering the city began to come down. Building evacuations became less frequent. The crews working feverishly downtown were replaced with professionals on schedules. They didn't need us to make sandwiches anymore. We had to start going back downtown to eat, shop and do business. The reminders that before had been constant began to fade. And this is where we find ourselves today. Not normal, but trying to look like it.

It had actually gotten easier lately—that is, easier to go about my daily routine and to do it without focusing on what happened less than thirty city blocks from what I call my home. I had gotten quite good at ignoring the sand trucks that still block off the roads around my neighborhood as well as the bridges and tunnels. I say good morning to the newly posted police officers on the corners of the streets that I cross as if they had always been there. I look at the makeshift shrines of remembrance outside the firehouses without lingering. I have regained the ability to make conversation that does not involve the terrorist attacks. Then I got a new job.

Before leaving my old office I had to clean out my phone voicemail and my e-mail inbox. In retrospect, I should have

skipped the previous part of this account and just published the words I found in those messages. The chronicle created by those communications alone is an amazingly succinct outline of the journey the City of New York has taken over the last months. I guess I couldn't bring myself to delete the messages from the people who managed to get through during those days. There were messages from out-of-town friends needing to hear my voice to believe I was okay.

E-mails came in from desperate college alumni trying to locate fellow graduates known to be working in one of those ill-fated firms. "I got out, I'm okay, but has anyone heard from Dan?" Sentiments sent to friends just to check in or to remind them how special they are to me. This progression of correspondences is one that I don't think I'll ever be able to delete—symbolic if you think about it. After a little bit of time we went back to e-mailing about business, back to telling jokes or sending out an invitation to the next party. We got back to "normal." We have gotten back to living our lives; we go out, we laugh, we take in a show. The difficulty, however, is knowing where normal ends reality begins. Instead, we have absorbed the upheaval and have made the changes to our skyline and the implications thereof part of our days and nights. We will keep walking through security checkpoints in our Gucci loafers, and we will continue to carry surgical masks in our Prada bags without blinking an eye. We may not have known it before, but that is what New Yorkers do. We rise to the occasion, we do what we can, and then when it's time, we get back to normal.

So I guess I would say that the New York City I live in is almost back to normal. Is it a real normalcy? I'm not sure. What I do know is that tomorrow, or the next day, when I turn that corner on Sixth Avenue and the breeze picks up just right, and I smell that smell that no one can quite describe, that's the moment when I know that September 11 was real, the city is real, and the memories will always be real... and New York is just doing its best to get back to normal.

Inside Kuwait, Americans Observe Vigilance and "Outpouring of Sympathy" Following Terrorist Attacks in the United States

by Lisa Bachhuber Flynn '81, Communications Associate

On September 11, Colleen Quinn '92, an American Citizen Services Officer, was at the end of her workday at the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait when news of the first plane crashing into the World Trade Center towers came. Colleen and her staff had time to turn on CNN. It was then that the second plane crashed into the towers.

The Embassy generated a "warden message" to the some 6,500 Americans living in Kuwait. The message advised Americans citizens living in Kuwait to keep a low profile and exercise vigilance. Four extra phone lines in the Consular Section of the Embassy were activated. Colleen remained in the office until after 1:00 A.M. answering phone calls and watching the news. It wasn't until nearly 2:00 A.M. that she was able to get in touch with her family in Washington, D.C. to learn that they were safe.

In the next few days, Colleen said, "Security, tight to begin with, grew even more rigid. Embassy events were cancelled. Everyone watched and waited, afraid there might be a new round of attacks."

Vigilance is a way of life for Colleen, who lives in a townhouse on the Embassy compound, which is surrounded by a blast wall. The Embassy was bombed in 1983 in a suicide mission. "No one runs out just for milk or anything small because bringing your car back into the compound involves a full search and bomb-residue test every time." Entertaining non-Embassy people can be difficult due to the advance permission needed to bring anyone onto the compound. She also notes that some countries' nationals are not permitted onto Embassy grounds at all.



Colleen Quinn '92 writes, "This photo was taken at the front gate of the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait on September 15, 2001. The flowers were all presented by individuals who came by to sign our condolence book. People here felt a real connection to the tragedy in the U.S. because of the atrocities committed here by the Iraqis during the occupation. Most Kuwaitis have lived in the U.S. either because of the war or because they studied there, and the outpouring of support and genuine feeling was unbelievable." Photo courtesy of Colleen Quinn '92

While she says there is not much fear of a terrorist attack in Kuwait, the presence of thousands of U.S. Troops at Camp Doha and in the desert reminds them to always be aware. Nonetheless, they run many drills in case of attack and all employees have gas masks at their desks and in their homes. Annually, the Embassy runs evacuation drills as well.

The Kuwaiti people responded to the attacks with an outpouring of sympathy. "When the Embassy placed a condolence book at the front gate, hundreds of people braved the 120 degree heat to wait in line to sign it. Flowers poured into the Embassy. Officials from every level of government came to express their grief and support," Colleen said. "It was impossible to leave the compound without being stopped by people of all nationalities who wanted us to know they share our grief."

Colleen had arrived in Kuwait a month before the attacks. Her first post was Barbados. After leaving Barbados, she returned to Washington, D.C. to study Arabic in preparation for her post in Kuwait. Since her arrival, she has found that life for women in Kuwait is better than that in most Middle Eastern countries. Women are allowed to work outside the home and drive, though they are not allowed to vote and do not have equal rights. In contrast to Afghanistan, women in Kuwait also have the same access to education although there is a move by the Islamic student association to have segregated classes at Kuwait University.

Next year, Colleen will leave the Consular Section and move to the Political Section where she will present U.S. foreign policy to the Kuwaiti government and report to the Department of State on Kuwait's policies and politics.

"My Next Thought was What the Country Would Do in Response"

Deployment to Afghanistan and subsequent experiences have broadened "my worldly awareness"

by Helen Macsherry '74, Director of Communications

With the rest of the world, **Alicia Chin '95** remembers watching the events of September 11 while sitting in her office. She immediately thought of all her family and friends in the Washington area. "My next thought was what the country would do in response." Alicia had reason for concern because she serves in the United States Army as a First Lieutenant, Army Engineer and the Executive Officer of a Company which puts her second in command of a 150-soldier unit consisting of five different platoons of thirty soldiers each.

After graduating from Stone Ridge, Alicia attended college at the United States Military Academy (West Point) where she only began the training required for the position she holds today. She received her degree in May 1999 with a major in mathematics and a minor in systems engineering and was commissioned in the U.S. Army.

One month after 9/11, Alicia's unit began to prepare for deployment to "an undisclosed location" for an "undetermined" period of time. Having lost an uncle in the Pentagon attack, Alicia knew she wanted to spend time with her family before being deployed. Two weeks later, her entire family was with her for the weekend and "wondering what was going to happen next." That very weekend, she received another call, and immediately reported to her Company Headquarters. "In approximately three days, the first plane carrying my unit out was going to arrive. Most of my unit spent their Thanksgiving here, working and away from home. Others spent it as I did, en route."

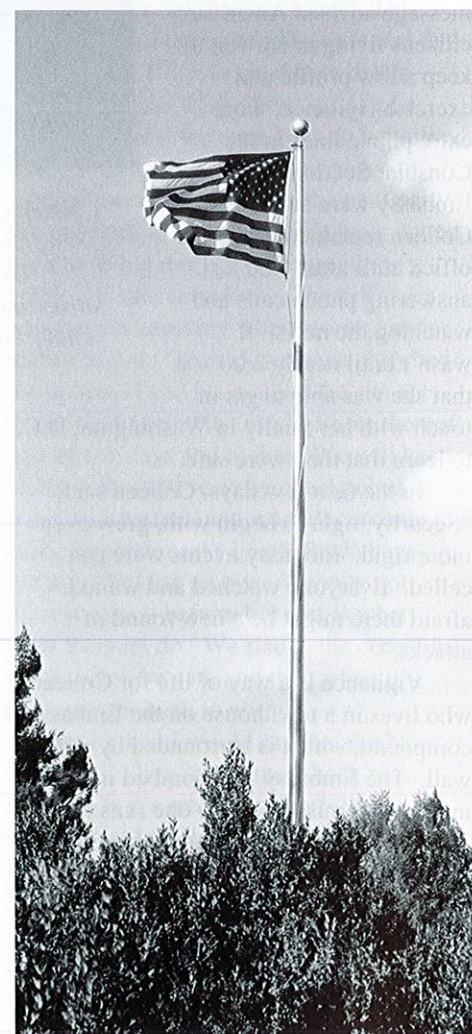
Alicia is now in Afghanistan. Since arriving, her unit "has built up a base camp in the area housing approximately 3,000 soldiers. We live in a twelve-person tent with heating (Thank God) and sleep on cots. There is a community shower tent with running water, which sometimes only has cold water, and a bathroom tent with toilets similar to airplane toilets. There is one store similar to a CVS about the size of one of (Stone Ridge's) classrooms and with very limited supplies.

One section consisting of roughly six tents put together comprises our dining facility, which serves breakfast and dinner. Breakfast is usually powdered eggs, sausage or bacon, and a slice of French toast or a waffle. Dinner varies, but I can tell you that if you're picky, which I am, you'll starve. The base camp is enclosed with guards at each entrance and we are not allowed to leave. We wake up before the sun rises for breakfast and don't break for dinner until it sets. Everyday is a workday, for there is still much to accomplish. We have sent several soldiers on various missions 'downrange' which is closer in harms way than we currently are, and we have no communication with them. Some soldiers have returned with numerous stories and memories to keep, and others are still 'downrange.'"

"This country is a very different world and being here has done a lot to open my eyes to the luxuries at home that I normally take for granted. The exchange rate is 1000 Soums to one dollar. Most women do not wear their hair down; it is considered a sign of promiscuity. The people here do not shower everyday; they do not have running water. There are checkpoints along the roads about every two miles throughout the country. We recently brought a large number of the locals in for various job interviewing. Over half of the locals did not pass medical screening due to various viruses and diseases. The jobs that we are offering them here, which consists mostly of cleaning, are the best jobs that many of these people will hold. If they violate any of the rules set by their government, not only could they be held liable, but their families could also suffer. It is a very sad situation.

"I recently held a conversation with one of the women who regularly cleans the shower and bathroom facilities. It was a broken conversation and consisted of a lot of picture drawing to communicate. I asked her if she enjoyed living here. She said that she did not. She is married with two children and would fly away to live with her sister, who lives in a neighboring country, if she could afford it.

"The women in this part of the world are going through drastic changes. Interested in math and sciences, I never paid much attention to history, excuse me, I never focused on history (sorry **Mr. Davies** and **Ms. Maxey**), but now is as good a time as any for you to look into what is going on over here. I challenge you to learn about the cultures of the Afghan women. Compare them to ours in America and understand what freedoms and liberties the U.S. Flag really represents. Understand why our government is established as it is and what the soldiers...fight to defend. My worldly awareness is greatly broadened by my experiences over here."



The American Flag flies above the Stone Ridge campus in front of Hamilton House.

Class of 1982 Offers Reflections and Coping Strategies

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "Life has got to be lived—that's all there is to it." As hard as it may be to believe under the circumstances, I still see the world as a beautiful place where good and evil exist. The universal law of cause and effect will put these opposing forces in balance. We can only hope that the scale will tilt in favor of the good, and therein lies our Faith. My belief is that God never gives us more than we can endure. When I reflect on my life, I realize that the times that I felt pain were the times I evolved into a better and stronger me. I believe that within all of us similar conclusions can be drawn from our experiences. And the United States will evolve into a better and stronger nation. Also, I avoid watching television. The redundancy of the news can have a negative impact.

—**Celia Barriteau '82**

I lost a friend in the Trade Center, and this experience has taught me how people enrich our lives. I suppose in a strange way, this disaster is a lesson to us all that no matter how busy and stressful things may be, those whom we love are our most valuable assets. That is why I'm spending as much time as possible with the people who give my life meaning. My coping strategies in the wake of September 11 include:

1. Hugging both my daughter, Cameron, and my husband, John, every morning when I leave, just so that they know that I love them both, and just in case it's the last time that I see them;
2. Enjoying the simple pleasures—laughter, tears and sharing life with my family and friends;
3. Making and taking time each day to relax and meditate or pray;
4. Acknowledging that it is okay to be scared and, more importantly, to talk about it; and
5. Thanking God for how blest I am to have people to care for who care about me as well.

—**Debbi Clark '82**

The older I get, the more I realize I really have no clue about things and that life takes a long time. Being a strong woman (as most of us Stone Ridders are) I have had to bang my head up against the wall quite a few times to be willing to learn

to do things differently and to be willing to always live in the question, rather than the answer. The biggest gift I received from Stone Ridge was the gift of building community. I try and do that on a regular basis in all that I do. Plain and simple, the American culture is spiritually bankrupt and people are looking for ways to connect with their souls rather than with "stuff." There is so much division and separation that we are yearning to be part of a community. So, as a coach, I build people on the tennis court or in fitness training and give them a sense that they can accomplish anything as long as they don't give up. I also stress respect for others in group situations. Off the court, I deliberately make eye contact with the beggars on the street and give them food or money. I talk with the grocery clerk and I compliment and try and find something nice to say to most that I am in contact with daily. It is an attempt at trying to practice the principles of the prayer of St. Francis. Like all of us, I still have to deal with the pain and suffering we all have. But at the end of the day, if I have tried to live the prayer, I am not stuck in negative thinking; my glass becomes half full, rather than half empty. I

connect with others and don't experience loneliness as a single woman and feel good about doing something for others. God Bless everyone!

—**Quita Remick '82**

While I'm not sure I have any leverageable strategies, I have found myself more thankful for the multitude of blessings in my life. I have undertaken a few more church and volunteer (mostly Junior League at the Ronald McDonald House) activities. And, I'm determined not to let fear of flying hamper my life—my husband still travels extensively and I am at peace with that. In fact, we just returned last week from a trip to Hong Kong, which was wonderful. Of course all of this probably sounds trite from my as yet untouched corner of the world. I was in Maryland September 6-9 for the first time in three or four years to celebrate my brother's wedding, so it seemed even more surreal to watch the D.C. events unfold a few days later.

—**Elizabeth Everett Williams '82**

Editor's Note: Class Correspondent Meg Hanton de Toledo '82 collected these insights from her former classmates.



Card presented by the Stone Ridge student body to the faculty and staff on the occasion of Feast Wishes. Design by Katie Norton '13

In Wake of 9/11, Students Respond with Compassion, Action

Upper School students flood U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan with cards and letters

Worried about the morale of her soldiers over the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, **Alicia Chin '95**, a 1st Lieutenant of a Company within the 92nd Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy) deployed in Afghanistan, wrote her former classmate, **Margaret Cholis '95**, with an idea.

As Assistant Dean of Students in the Upper School at Stone Ridge, Margaret elicited the help of her students to send a mass mailing of greeting cards to the soldiers. In a thank you note that followed, Alicia tried to communicate her gratitude and that of her Company for the much-needed cards. "I wish you could have seen the faces on the soldiers when reading each card and asking to see the next."

Attached to the letter was a list of the soldiers in her unit and a plea to the Upper School students to continue to write. "We pick up mail every day and on the walk back to the headquarters tent, every head turns to look at the mailbox; literally, every head. We have mail call at 1800 (6:00 P.M.) each night and one of the hardest things for me to do is look a soldier in the eye after he's worked his fingers to the bone in the freezing cold and respond, 'No, you didn't get a letter today. Maybe tomorrow.' So, please, if you have the time in between your studies, take a minute to write a letter to one or more of the people on this list. These soldiers are living in conditions far from what we are accustomed to and serving our country to protect your freedom and your rights. If you are a pacifist and don't agree with the military, you are certainly entitled to that opinion. But, remember, these soldiers are the ones that protect your right to feel that way. In conditions such as these, a letter can go a long way. Please keep all of us in your prayers and keep the letters coming."

The students that were interested broke into groups, divided the list, and began writing. According to Margaret, the students were able to write at least one letter to every single person in Alicia's 150-man company. "Just imagine how powerful and surprising...to call out every single name in the Company. The girls

wrote beautiful letters and even students who disagree with the military operation wrote beautiful and respectful letters. We have gotten back a flood of letters thanking us and telling us about their location and the people they are helping. It is an amazing educational opportunity and the girls are so excited. It has given us a chance to build community as a Christian value (*Goal IV*) and put a face to the troops we hear about on the news."

Alicia acknowledged the letters and more. "The letters that the Stone Ridge Community sent touched the hearts of many. I cannot explain the profound affect that it made and continues to make on my soldiers and myself. It is extremely comforting to know that the people at home, regardless of opinion, support our

efforts. I am proud to know that the students at my alma mater are mature and articulate enough to put their personal opinions aside and understand what the military is doing over here. That regardless of race, sex, religion, or background, we fight for the freedoms that America affords us."

"Many of you may receive mail back. And, those of you that do not, please do not be discouraged. The soldiers are extremely busy, and they often fall asleep as soon as their heads hit their cots. Whether or not you receive a response, know that your letters are greatly appreciated. Some of them even brought tears to the soldiers' eyes. We miss home. A lot. God Bless each and every one of you and God Bless America!"

Middle School presents handmade rosaries to local, NY firefighters

In response to the tragic events of September 11, Middle School students undertook numerous projects. One such project was making rosaries for firefighters in New York and, locally, in Montgomery County, Maryland.

After learning that Catholic firefighters traditionally carry rosaries with them in the line of duty, making rosaries seemed the perfect project to support the fire and rescue teams in the long term. Middle School teachers **Patricia Byers** and **Eileen O'Donnell** provided guidance throughout the project. The students took on the project with enthusiasm and fervor. Each rosary was placed in a small pocket-size case accompanied by a card printed with the Firefighter's Prayer and signed by the student rosary maker. Once completed, the rosaries were blessed by **Cardinal Theodore McCarrick**, Archbishop of Washington, who lost a nephew, a firefighter, at the World Trade Center.

Locally, the students presented fifty rosaries to Montgomery County firefighters accompanied by **Pete Piringer**, spokesperson for the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services and past parent at Stone Ridge (**Catherine '00**, **Christine '97**, and **Kelly Piringer Allred '95**). An additional 250 rosaries were sent to **Fr. John Delendick**, Chaplain of the



Middle School students utilized beads, spacers, medallions, and crucifixes to create handmade rosaries for firefighters.

New York Fire Department, stationed at St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church in Brooklyn.

During the presentation at a Middle School Assembly, student representatives **Francesca Archila '07** and **Caroline Camp '06** read the following proclamation:

"We, the students of Stone Ridge were deeply affected by the events of
See "Rosary" continued on page 21



After receiving instruction, seventh graders (l-r) Nyambura Hunja, Megan Fitzgerald, and Laura Mickum begin threading rosary beads.



Eighth graders Roxanne Nemati (center, standing) and Alessandra Carneiro examine rosaries, while Nicole Antonio (far left) measures thread and Anna Ball (seated) finishes work.



At left, Pete Piringer makes remarks on behalf of Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services.

"Rosary" from page 20
September 11. We watched in horror as precious life was taken away, and we witnessed the bravery and selfless acts of heroism on the part of the Montgomery County Urban Search and Rescue Team and the New York firefighters. These men and women worked tirelessly to save others. We could only imagine their anguish and pain at the loss of fellow firefighters and innocent victims at the Pentagon and World Trade Center that dark day.

"The images of the rescuers on CNN haunted us. Their determination was inspiring, their spirit unbroken, but as days passed and that hope for a successful rescue of victims faded, a quiet desperation began to show on their grimy, soot-smudged faces. While the prayers of all humankind proceeded heavenward for the victims, what of their rescuers? The

students at Stone Ridge would pray for them, too. But was this enough? We began our healing process and thought long and hard. There is an old proverb about feeding a hungry man. 'Give him a fish and feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you will feed him for a lifetime.'

"How could we help the rescuers? Our collective answer was, 'We can teach them to pray.' So the girls in Mrs. Patricia Byers' and Mrs. Eileen O'Donnell's advisories took on the task of making rosaries for the firefighters. They educated each member of the Middle School on the meaning and value of the rosary, and the rosary project. Then the students in those advisories taught each Middle School student how to make a rosary.

"The students of the Middle School produced 300 rosaries which were blessed by Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington, D.C. whose nephew, a New York firefighter, was lost at the World Trade Center. These rosaries and prayer cards will be distributed to the Catholic members of the Montgomery



Caroline Camp '06 (left) and Francesca Archila '07 make rosary presentation.

County Urban Search and Rescue Team and New York firefighters.

"Sr. Dyer, and the representatives of the Montgomery County Urban Search and Rescue Team, please accept these rosaries as a token of our esteem. May the Christ Child bless them, and may we all receive His graces through the intercession of His Blessed Mother, Mary."

After presentation, Eileen O'Donnell joins Montgomery County firefighters (l-r) Will Orndorff, Duane Brand, and Kevin Kirkpatrick.



Sacred Heart Schools in Japan share concern for fellow classmates in the Lower School at Stone Ridge

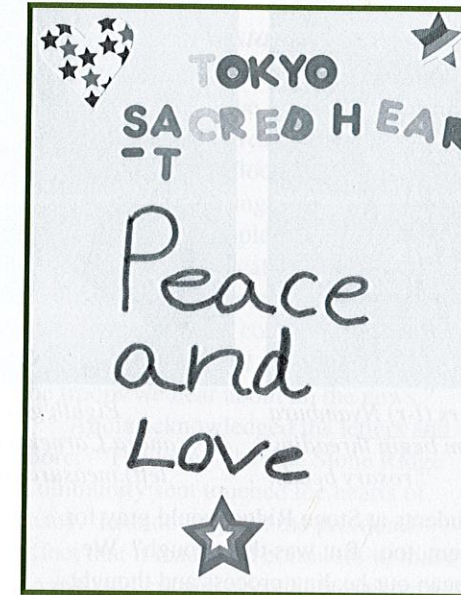
Dear Students and Teachers at Stone Ridge Sacred Heart

Hi.

We are students attending the International School of the Sacred Heart in Tokyo, Japan. We are all shocked and horrified of the terrorist attacks that are currently occurring in America. Our school is an international school, and while we have students from over fifty nations and various religions, all of us sincerely hope that whatever suffering you may be experiencing will heal and that we may once again live in peace.

To express our thoughts, we made "Senba Zuru," a Japanese word meaning "a thousand cranes." It is a Japanese tradition to present this at shrines, Peace museums, and memorials, and to sick patients in hospitals, because they are a symbol of peace and healing.

Please remember that our thoughts are with you, and that we are praying for the safety of you and your families, and



the quick recovery of your nation.

Yours truly,
Sarah LaFleur, Elli Suzuki, and Ai Wong
Representing the International School of the Sacred Heart

The legend of the crane: A tale from Japanese folklore

Hungry and cold, an elderly hunter gave up his search for food and started home through a field of tall grasses. He brooded over his empty satchel as he walked, considering how he would comfort his wife when he got home, but his thoughts were interrupted by the sound of someone wailing. Following the cries, he discovered a beautiful crane caught in the thicket. The old man drew his knife and carefully cut away the reeds, setting the crane free.

Later that night, the hunter and his wife were awakened by a lovely young woman who sought refuge from the cold. The elderly couple hurried her inside and prepared her a bed and a bowl of hot rice—the last of their supplies.

In the morning, the young women rose early to prepare breakfast for her hosts, but there was nothing left to eat. She secured the elderly couple's promise not to disturb her and shut herself into the spare room with a loom. When she emerged, she handed the hunter a beautiful kimono cloth, asking him to sell it. The money he received bought enough food to feed the old people and their guest for many days. In the meantime, the young woman wove

another cloth, again making her hosts vow not to disturb her while she was at the loom.

So the winter progressed. The elderly couple soon noticed that the young woman was growing weaker with each cloth she wove. "We have plenty," they told her. "Please do not work so hard!" But she insisted.

One night, the sound of the loom indicated that the young woman was very ill. The old hunter couldn't bear it, so he broke their promise and peered into the spare room. He gasped in amazement as he saw a white crane at the loom, plucking her own feathers to weave into the kimono cloth. Hearing him, the crane turned into a young woman again. "I am the crane you freed from the reeds," she said. "I wanted to repay your kindness. But now that you know the truth, I must leave you." Knowing the old couple was well provided for, the young woman stretched her arms into wings once more and flew away, never to be seen again.

Since this story was first told many centuries ago, the Japanese have considered the crane a symbol of good fortune and longevity. Old and young alike fold paper

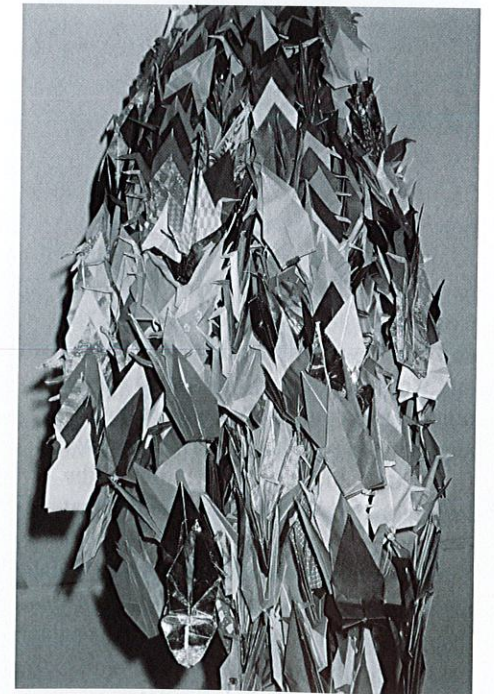
I hope you are all well.

I am enjoying the Sacred Heart in Tokyo (Seishin Joshi Gakuin). Although I do miss Stone Ridge very much, Sacred Heart Tokyo is as wonderful. I just finished the second semester of my third year; I started Third Grade in April where as I would be in Fourth Grade from September if I were still at Stone Ridge. It is as wonderful as it was at Stone Ridge. There are many parts that are the same and many that are different.

I was very worried about my friends and teachers at Stone Ridge and about America this fall. I tried to write to you several times but with the anthrax problem, I decided it was better to avoid sending mail. I prayed for America every day. Each student from Sacred Heart Tokyo made origami crane—a thousand crane chain to show our concern—and sends prayers to let you know that we are all together. I just want to let you know that we are still praying for America and for the world.

I hope to visit Washington again in the near future and wish to see you when I do so.

Love from Aiko Kojima x'10



A thousand Origami cranes from Japan.

cranes to give as gifts. To possess a thousand such cranes is to ensure health and prosperity will follow.