

Commentary...

Remembering 9/11 – and 9/12

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, are fading into history, though the echoes of that terrible day continue to reverberate through our lives.

Sgt. First Class Elis A. Barreto Ortiz, who was killed by a car bomb in Kabul, Afghanistan, last week, was 16 years old when the Twin Towers fell and the U.S. went to war to dismantle al Qaeda and their Taliban hosts in Afghanistan.

We're still trying to extricate ourselves from the endless conflict in that war-torn land.

A new generation is coming of age that was not yet born when the events that changed our world took place.

For the rest of us, September 11, 2001, is forever burned into our consciousness. We remember where we were and what we were doing when we first understood that the U.S. homeland had come under serious attack.

It was a Tuesday, and I was driving into *The Nugget* for work, still basking in the afterglow of the Sisters Folk Festival. I heard a radio report that a plane had struck one of the World Trade Center towers, but, like many, I assumed it was an aviation accident. I got to the shop, sat down at the keyboard and went to work.

Nugget publisher Kiki Dolson came in and asked me, "Do you know what's going on?"

I said, "Yes, I heard a plane hit the World Trade Center."

"Two," she said, and I felt gears and tumblers turn and fall into place as the whole world shifted. I went home and woke my wife and told her the U.S. was at war.

Information was hard to come by in those strange, dislocated hours, where we tried to go about our work with our minds 3,000 miles away, in New York; Washington, DC; and Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Most Americans then were only vaguely aware of al Qaeda and someone named Osama bin Laden. I felt in my gut that it had to be the same people who had bombed two embassies in Africa in 1998 and the U.S.S. Cole in Aden Harbor in Yemen in 2000. I fumed that the administration of

President Bill Clinton had failed to treat those attacks as the acts of war that they were.

Fuming and grieving were about all we could do.

And yet when September 12, 2001, dawned, America was rousing itself from its shock and disbelief and rallying with a newfound sense of purpose. People in their thousands donated blood; young men and women enlisted in the military; diverse groups began to organize to find myriad ways of supporting the great city that had been struck so terribly.

For a time, there was a widespread sense of unity and purpose that is often lacking in our political and cultural life. The bitterly contested election of 2000 seemed a long ago trial from another world; political and ideological orientation ceased to matter as we turned our might and resolve to face an assailant who despises the values Americans hold most dear.

That sense of unity couldn't last in a diverse, fractious republic — and it didn't.

President George W. Bush squandered much of it in leading the country into a misconceived invasion of Iraq in 2003. The opposition party soon reverted to a focus on political calculation. And as time marched on with no new attacks on the homeland, Americans' attention shifted back to domestic concerns, even as a small number of American servicemen and women fought in two savage wars and engaged in countless covert actions to combat Islamist terrorism around the globe.

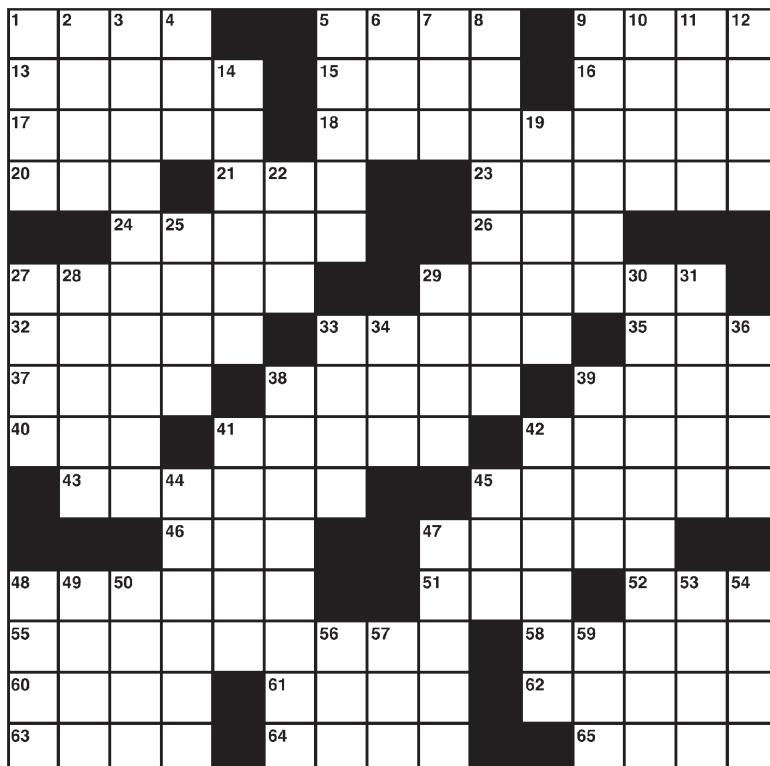
We have fallen a long way from the spirit of September 12, 2001. Divisions are so stark and apparently unbridgeable that some believe that Americans are actually locked culturally in a "cold civil war." No one wishes for a catastrophe on the scale of the September 11 attacks to restore a sense of unity. But it would behoove us all on in this anniversary week to contemplate the values that bring us together.

The idea of America, no matter how flawed in its manifestation in the rough-and-tumble of history, is worth holding up and worth defending today, just as it was in those turbulent times nearly two decades ago.

The Nugget Newspaper Crossword

By Jacqueline E. Mathews, Tribune News Service

- ACROSS**
- 1 Tight hold
 - 5 Cygnet
 - 9 ___ even keel
 - 13 Wanderer
 - 15 Story
 - 16 Newborn
 - 17 Mac maker
 - 18 Plato's famous pupil
 - 20 Tiny
 - 21 Summer cooler
 - 23 Bathroom feature
 - 24 Youngster
 - 26 ___ Vegas
 - 27 Remember
 - 29 Handgun
 - 32 Tickle pink
 - 33 Not tactful
 - 35 Dyer's tub
 - 37 Recedes
 - 38 Giant-killer
 - 39 Ricky Ricardo's portrayer
 - 40 Chat room laugh
 - 41 Wild animal
 - 42 Sicker than before
 - 43 Riches
 - 45 Deep-seated ill will
 - 46 Nickname for Dorothy
 - 47 Swamp
 - 48 Not formal
 - 51 Hang-___; personal issues
 - 52 30-day mo.
 - 55 Still the same
 - 58 See eye to eye
 - 60 Leave suddenly
 - 61 ___ palms; do a fortune-teller's job
 - 62 Salary
 - 63 Former mates
 - 64 Energetic
 - 65 Accessory with a buckle



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 9/11/19

- DOWN**
- 1 Chew like a beaver
 - 2 Pulley maker's need
 - 3 Flawless
 - 4 Crony
 - 5 Can't ___; hate
 - 6 Major conflict
 - 7 Muhammad ___
 - 8 Baby bird
 - 9 Reed player
 - 10 Countrywide: abbr.
 - 11 Skillful
 - 12 Khrushchev's refusal
 - 14 Besmirch
 - 19 Eggs' accompaniment
 - 22 TV's "___ in the Family"
 - 25 Head toppers
 - 27 Rod and ___; fishing gear
 - 28 Shove
 - 29 Grid play
 - 30 Engage in price gouging
 - 31 Lariat
 - 33 Uninteresting
 - 34 Fleur-de-___
 - 36 Bleachers level
 - 38 Homesteaders
 - 39 Puts on, as clothing

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— Last Week's Puzzle Solved —

A	B	E	D	A	D	D	Y	S	O	W	S		
T	I	E	D	E	R	O	D	E	P	U	R	E	
I	L	L	S	N	O	V	A	S	C	O	T	I	A
P	S	I	M	O	S	E	Y	O	U	S	T	S	
E	L	A	T	E	H	A	S						
S	E	V	E	R	E	D	E	S	E	R	T		
A	M	A	N	S	S	T	O	A	T	E	A	R	
F	I	B	S	S	K	I	L	L	H	E	R	E	
E	L	L	C	A	I	N	E	P	A	N	D	A	
Y	E	A	R	N	S	M	A	R	T	Y	R		
M	A	D	P	A	S	T	E						
S	H	O	U	T	S	N	A	G	S	R	E	D	
C	O	N	S	E	N	T	I	N	G	L	I	A	R
A	B	L	E	B	I	N	G	O	O	N	C	E	
T	O	Y	S	C	R	E	S	T	U	G	H		

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- 41 Balloon
- 42 Capital city in Europe
- 44 Men and women
- 45 Lil Wayne's music
- 47 Like a garden after the rain
- 48 Six-sided figure
- 49 Healthy as ___
- 50 For ___; on the market
- 53 Prepare to eat a banana
- 54 Nap
- 56 Ad ___
- 57 Cochlea's place
- 59 Chew the fat

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