

INTRODUCTION

An unforgettable day

Sept. 11, 2001 is, for most of us, an indelible mark in our lives. The terrorist hijackings and subsequent attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., as well as the tragic and ultimately heroic crash of Flight 93 in western Pennsylvania all provided horrific images and memories, good and bad, that will last a lifetime.

This special section of the Record-Eagle attempts not to dredge up and regurgitate events that are

already passing into history, but to put them in perspective a year later. We've taken readers' words describing what they remember about that day and have sprinkled them throughout this section. We also take a look at how northern Michigan has changed since then — in terms of how we live our daily lives and how we have become a more giving community.

We hope you take the time to read this and recall those who lost their lives and those who saved others one year ago today.

SECURITY IN THE AIR

Airports improve safety measures

By KEITH MATHENY
Record-Eagle staff writer

TRAVERSE CITY — The future of aviation and airline security changed the moment terrorists crashed hijacked airliners into buildings on Sept. 11, 2001.

Officials with northern Michigan's two major airports said increased security measures since the terrorist attacks are becoming smoother and more efficient, lessening the inconvenience to passengers.

But some frequent flyers expressed concerns that aviation security as it stands now would not necessarily prevent another terrorism attack.

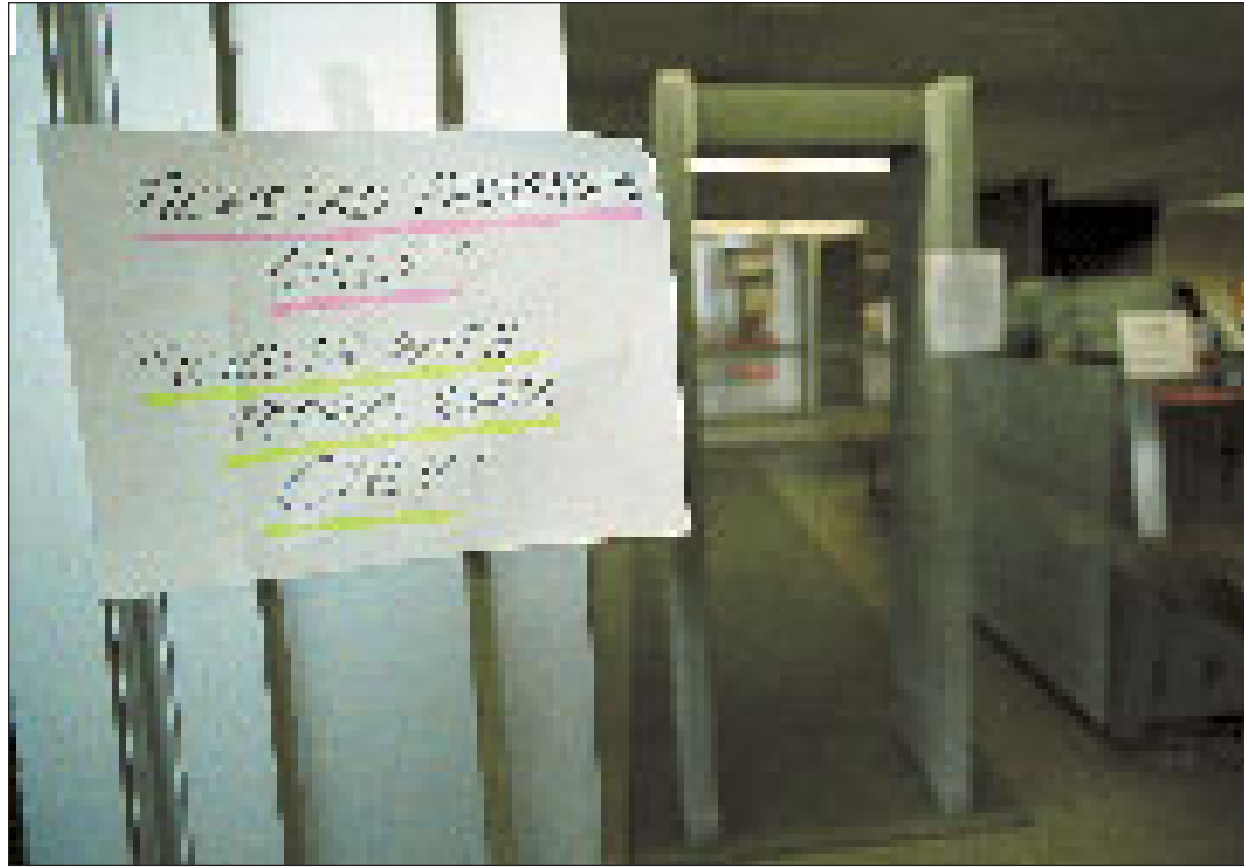
"It just feels like it is for show, rather than actually accomplishing anything," said Nancy Flowers of Lake Ann, a frequent flyer from Traverse City's Cherry Capital Airport.

Flowers, who is several months pregnant, said she was nearly arrested earlier this year at the airport when she was selected for a random search at the airport's boarding gate. A small knife on a key chain was discovered in her purse — "smaller than your pinkie," she said.

She said she had forgotten to take the knife off as she usually does before flying, and it had passed through the airport's downstairs security checkpoint.

"Thank God for the police officer, who was reasonable," she said. "But the airport was insistent upon making this an issue. It really felt like they were trying to make an example out of me."

Flowers also noted the airport security's stopping and looking into cars as they near the termi-



Record-Eagle file photo

Security was tight at Cherry Capital Airport immediately after Sept. 11, and remains so.

nal area. She said such looks are cursory, with no real searching of a vehicle or examining its underside.

"It just seems cosmetic, which is frustrating for somebody who flies a lot," she said.

Jeff Corbin, a Traverse City businessman who flies out of Cherry Capital weekly, said he notices no significant security improvement with the systems that are in place now. He cited an incident at Cherry Capital in May, when a Georgia woman was stopped in a random search at the boarding gate and found

with a knife and box-cutters. She had already passed through the airport's main security checkpoint.

"That seemed pretty loudly to me," Corbin said.

Corbin said security is very inconsistent from airport to airport nationwide.

"Generally, I think the security effort that we are putting forth in this country is pretty lax," he said. "There are lots of ways to beat it. As a passenger, it's an extra hassle. I wish the end results would be more effective for the hassle that we

have to go through.

"We're probably setting ourselves up for another bad day someday, when somebody figures out where the most lax airport is."

Cherry Capital director Steve Cassens defended the airport's security, calling it "very good." And he noted the security detail at the airport will become federalized this month, in an ongoing homeland security effort.

How that will affect passen-

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SECURITY ON THE GROUND

High-profile sites get extra attention

By KEITH MATHENY
Record-Eagle staff writer

PETOSKEY — Kathy Simmons gets paid to reject the notion that "it couldn't happen here."

Simmons is the emergency management coordinator for Cheboygan, Charlevoix and Emmet counties. While that job has been geared toward preparing for blizzards, tornadoes or a chemical spill from a semi-truck crash, increasingly it involves thinking about a terrorist attack in the region.

"We don't have any real urban centers," she said. "But we are a highly publicized and well-known area for recreation. We have some very visible sites, such as Mackinac Island. And we have high-profile events that go on, such as the Mackinac Bridge walk (on Labor Day annually) and fairs.

"Who knows how a terrorist's mind is working? The whole thing they feed on is fear and doing the unexpected. The only thing I need to do is try to be prepared for anything that might happen."

Since the Sept. 11 terrorist



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Mike Hiler, security supervisor at Munson Medical Center, checks new digital security cameras that cover hospital areas.

attacks, Simmons said she and other emergency management coordinators throughout the state have been dusting off their preparation plans for potential local disasters such as a biological or chemical spill. Such plans now include provisions and updates for instances where such a release of potentially harmful gases or agents is

not the result of an accident but of a deliberate act.

"Planning has changed since Sept. 11," she said. "It's more in focus. We are constantly revisiting the plans."

A term created in the year since the Sept. 11 attack — homeland security — has changed how law enforcement officials look at and go about

their work, said Inspector Russell Smith of the Michigan State Police's 7th District headquarters in Acme. The district includes 19 counties in the northern Lower Peninsula.

"It has elevated our awareness for things being out-of-place in the community," he said. "That requires a vigilant effort by all people. Citizens are called upon to be a little more wary, to be aware of things that seem out-of-place."

Emphasis in the wake of Sept. 11 is on agencies and hospitals working together in a coordinated response to a catastrophic event — city-to-city, county-to-county, region-to-region and even state-to-state.

Ken Hebert, safety program director for Northern Michigan Hospital in Petoskey, noted that even if a terrorist attack were to occur in a populated area of southern Michigan, it would have a similar effect for his facility as if it had occurred locally.

"If something happens to a hospital in a large city, and they are overburdened or forced to

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I was working at Kmart in South Bend, Ind., and I watched as the plane crashed into the other tower. I realized that is where my aunt worked and I just got on my knees and prayed and cried.

I had to leave work and now I am trying to rebuild from my loss.

Daniel DeLator
Traverse City

Someone said, "A plane crashed into the world trade center."

We watched ...

An entire company, stood in silence, in disbelief.

Then a second plane, then a third.

The phone rang, no one moved.

We looked at each other, without words.

Later.
My daughter called, for reassurance.

A veteran, Coast Guard Officer, speechless.

My wife called, are we safe? I had few words.

I wanted to fight. I wanted to cry. I wanted to do something, anything ... but stand ... and watch.

We ended up — praying ... all of us, my company, my family, my country.

Chief Warrant Officer
James R. Ferguson
U.S. Coast Guard (Ret.)
Dickson, Tenn., and Traverse City

My morning routines were well under way when I sat down at my desk at my home on Lake Leelanau and turned on the TV to catch up on the morning news. It was about 8:30 a.m. I started going over some paperwork when I heard the newscaster say "there seems to be a problem at the World Trade Center."

I looked up to see the first tower damaged and on fire. I noticed the second airplane approaching the towers in the background before the commentator did.

When I saw it crash into the second tower, everything in life came to a screeching halt and I said right out loud, "This changes everything."

After years of commuting to my office in Nashville, usually flying four and five times a month, I said to myself, "That's it for me." I have flown only once since Sept. 11 and have no plans to fly again anytime soon.

Michael Camp
Lake Leelanau

I remember that day so clearly. I was in the woodshop at Goodwill Industries, working by myself. I heard initial reports on the radio and was so shocked I had to go out into the main shop and ask if it was some kind of a joke.

The horrible feeling that settled over me and everyone else as we listened was like a heavy veil dropping. I wanted to run home, grab my teen-age sons and just hold on to them.

I remember the silence from the airport right behind us, that was so eerie.
Jennifer Gingles
Fife Lake

I was flying home from Crystal Lake to Florida, along with my brother's family and my cat. When we landed in Chicago, passengers started chatting on cell phones. "A plane just hit the World Trade Center," I heard, and, "A second one hit!"

We spent the next four days in one motel room, glued to the TV. After rebooked flights were repeatedly canceled, my son drove from Grand Rapids, loaded us in his van, and drove us to Florida. We were the lucky ones.
Ann Franklin
Beulah

Sept. 11 was an experience I'll never forget. I spent it glued to my TV, as many did.

What I remember most was starting vacation on Sept. 13 on my annual Amtrak trip. Because airlines weren't flying, Amtrak was taking on everybody they could to help people get

home. I was bound for Oregon aboard the "Empire Builder." Usually half-full, the train was overflowing with stranded flyers — some sleeping in the viewliner car just to get home, food in short supply, etc.

But it was the best trip ever. People shared things, we talked and I felt closer to people than I had in a long time.

Garry Rosam
Traverse City

I just finished dropping off my children at school in northwest Washington, DC. My car radio interrupted its program with a special announcement. Something about a

terrible plane crash into one of the World Trade Center buildings.

I ran inside to turn on my TV. My eyes kept watching the image over and over, as I wondered how a plane could go so off course.

I saw the second plane hit the second tower and I knew that this was on purpose. Two planes still missing, maybe heading our way.

Where was my sister, a flight attendant for American? I had to get my kids.

Kim Wagner
Traverse City

This day we'll never forget. After spending 10 days in Spokane, Wash., with our son we were ready to fly home on

Sept. 11, 2001. We got up to have our last cup of coffee before flying home.

The news was on TV when the first tower was hit and then to see the second tower hit, we were in total disbelief. Shortly after we heard, "all airports closed."

We then decided to drive home.

On day one we drove more than 1,000 miles listening to AM radio. On day two, 625 miles, and on day three, 500 miles. So needless to say our adrenaline was running high.
Dave and Vivian Reidel
Traverse City

I had just received a phone call from my sister in Germany to wish me a happy birthday when the first plane flew into the World Trade Center. I told my sister to turn her TV on, that we just had a terrible accident in New York.

Minutes later the second plane crashed into the center

and we realized this was no accident. This immediately brought back memories of September 1944 when my hometown was bombed, something we could not believe at that time either.

Twice in my life a terrible loss of life happened on my birthday, something one never forgets.

Ursula Clark
Kewadin