

THE CALL

Southwest's Leading Weekly

Kansas Citians Try To Make Sense Of Destructive Act Of Terrorism

By Tracy Allen

From neighborhood to neighborhood, from stadium to stadium, from office to office, Kansas Citians felt the excruciating pain of a country that has been violated.

Whether school children sitting in classes asking teachers to explain the puzzling angles of our world, to professional athletes who wondered when they would play their next game, Kansas Citians from City Hall, Police department, Fire department and to the Truman Sports Complex, try to figure out and make some sense, if any, of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on Tuesday morning.

Leaders from across the metropolitan area that the city is taking every measure to make safety and security a priority following Tuesday's deadly terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. The Mayor spoke at two press briefings in front of City Hall on Tuesday, joining Mayor Barnes at one of the press conferences was Mayor Pro Tem Alvin Brooks and Third District At-Large City Councilman Troy Nash. Two days later, on Thursday, City Hall was evacuated due to a bomb threat. A scheduled memorial service was postponed until next week. -- CALL photo by Jerry Lockett

City International Airport, school buildings across the city and even at Younger Kansas Citians learned as Tuesday's tragic episode unfolded in the eastern United States.

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Today, Friday, Sept. 14, has been declared the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance of those murdered in the terrorist attacks.

Churches across Missouri are encouraged to ring their bells from 11:55 a.m. until noon as a symbol of a state united against hatred.

Churches across the metropolitan area and nation.

On Tuesday, citizens were greeted to tighter security in places such as UMKC Kangaroo soccer team both canceled weekend sporting events.

The University of Missouri-Kansas this Sunday and Monday.

Football League called off games for to play at the Seattle Seahawks on Sunday, as well as the entire National American League Central division leading Cleveland and Indians.

The Kansas City Chiefs, scheduled to play at the Seattle Seahawks on Sunday, as well as the entire National Football League called off games for this Sunday and Monday.

Major League Baseball including the Kansas City Royals postponed games this week. The Royals were to host a three-game home stand with the American League Central division leading Cleveland and Indians.

Not since the bombing of Pearl Harbor and D-Day back in the 1940s, our nation is at war.

Although it may be weeks before non sport, New York City.



ASSURING SAFETY IN KANSAS CITY . . . Kansas City Mayor Kay Barnes assured citizens of the metropolitan area that the city is taking every measure to make safety and security a priority following Tuesday's deadly terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. The Mayor spoke at two press briefings in front of City Hall on Tuesday, joining Mayor Barnes at one of the press conferences was Mayor Pro Tem Alvin Brooks and Third District At-Large City Councilman Troy Nash. Two days later, on Thursday, City Hall was evacuated due to a bomb threat. A scheduled memorial service was postponed until next week. -- CALL photo by Jerry Lockett

The area are encouraged to have their doors opened for prayer services.

The fears that seemed almost incomprehensible just escalated in Kansas City on Thursday morning when a citywide prayer vigil scheduled for noon on the south steps of City Hall was postponed because of a bomb threat inside City Hall. The vigil, in honor of the victims of New York City and Washington D.C., was to include city government officials, local clergy, and certain leaders in the community.

But, unfortunately, City Hall was evacuated and those preparing for the vigil were left to wonder again of what is becoming of Kansas City and a nation.

Prayer continued, however, as City Public Library for public prayer outside the steps of the Kansas City Public Library for the discouraged and encouragement for the aged.

Prayers, which were led by Tony Caudwell of "Beyond the Four Walls" ministry, Patsius Altschal of the Saint Mary of Egypt church and Dawn Walden, were offered by over 100 individuals. Heads were bowed, citizens, some in subdued moods and others with a glorious smile on their faces, sang spiritual songs and offered prayers. Curious onlookers stood at a distance, listening to the prayers and messages given.

Timothy Johnson, a Kansas City African American, showed his patriotism around the area as he proudly walked in front of the Kansas City Board of Education building with an American flag in his hand.

The memorial prayer service postponed until the early part of next week.

Tuesday's mood outside City Hall told the story of what citizens around the area are dealing with.

Government, City and Service officials during several press briefings on Tuesday outside the steps of City Hall, offered words of comfort but at the same time, assured Kansas Citians that they are doing everything possible to keep residents safe.

Kansas City, Mo., Police Chief Richard Easley said the Police department instituted a downtown safety zone from Tuesday morning until Thursday afternoon that stretched from as far as two miles on each side of the City's major government buildings. Barricades were up, Police officers instructed traffic to go elsewhere.

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GIVING WORDS OF COMFORT . . . Kansas City, Mo., Police Chief Richard Easley, Sept. 11, that law enforcement is doing everything possible to keep Kansas Citians safe following Tuesday's deadly attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. -- CALL photo by Jerry Lockett

The main stretch of downtown became empty.

Employees of the Federal building, the Jackson County Courthouse, City Hall, the Federal Courthouse, were all asked to evacuate their buildings Tuesday afternoon and go home.

Workers returned to downtown on Wednesday and Thursday, but were asked to park their cars at Kemper Arena parking lots, the downtown airport and at 16th and Liberty, and take a shuttle to work.

Kansas City International Airport was under the highest of security. Approximately 18 planes were grounded and 2,600 passengers were stranded in the city.

Approximately 34,000 passengers go through KCI daily. That is about 292 flights depart from KCI runways daily and about 584 flights fly in and out each day.

KCI wasn't the only airport grounded. Flights were cancelled across the nation. Stranded travelers were placed in emergency shelters throughout the city. Some Kansas Citians even took travelers in their home.

Airport travel did resume on Thursday afternoon but was restricted to commercial and private flights. Curbside parking was still restricted in some areas of the airport.

"It's important for us to remember the lives lost," said Mayor Kay Barnes during one media gathering on Tuesday. "But, we must also remember, our democracy is strong. We as a city and nation will get through this."

Third District At-Large City Councilman Troy Nash served four years in the armed services before pursuing a public service career.

He has also traveled the world

At Tuesday's noon press meeting, Councilman Nash was frustrated that just 42 hours after arriving on a United Airlines flight from Denmark (he was attending a People To People International Board of Directors meeting), the United States was facing a crisis.

Councilman Nash was still concerned whether those he traveled with to Denmark were able to make it back into the states and back home.

"Having served in the military, I'm somewhat sensitive to these types of incidents," said Councilman Nash. "I'm still trying to figure all this out. I have friends making their way over here and I'm concerned if they even arrived."

Councilman Nash said, "I'm very saddened about all this. Just having flown in to John F. Kennedy Airport (in New York City) and looking outward and seeing the World Trade Center and seeing what all that New York City has to offer and what a great country this is. At the same time, I am angry. When I first heard what happened, I wanted to sign up and fight back."

"The problem with these types of cowardly acts is that you don't know who the enemy is."

Although the nation has yet to prosecute the culprits, Councilman Nash isn't afraid to give his advice - strong and harsh discipline.

"The response from our nation needs to be disproportionate to what was inflicted upon us," the Councilman said. "We need to find out who did this and we need to more than just punish them. To me, public humiliation is in order with some-

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thing like this. They've struck America in a major way. No one has seen anything like this. Pearl Harbor doesn't even compare to this.

"We need to send a message that we won't tolerate terrorist acts on our soil," Councilman Nash continued. "We need to continue to be wise and do the best we can to protect our American citizens here and abroad. At the same time, I do not have a desire to see our democracy suffer from the ailments that effect many other parts of the world."

Said Councilman Nash, "the reality is, we represent freedom throughout the world and we need to continue to represent freedom."

Mayor Pro Tem Alvin Brooks, also affected by the horrendous acts, agreed the U.S. must act wisely in dealing with the perpetrators.

"It's almost like unbelievable," said Brooks, who joined many city officials during press events.

"America is not prepared for this kind of emergency, this type of invasion, this type of terrorist act. It shows that based on our political position in the world, based on our money, based on our power, we represent political and economic readiness. But at the same time, we seem to be the most vulnerable country in the world," Councilman Brooks said.

"I'm not sure with the nation like ours, how much we can protect ourselves from these kinds of act," said Councilman Brooks. "This almost seems like a Time Warner or MGM or Columbia production."

Councilman Brooks stated with concern, "how successful we can be to keep this from happening again, only God knows." *

Residents lined up from blocks on Tuesday and Wednesday to try and get gasoline for their vehicles. Because of Tuesday's attacks, stations and gas companies were concerned that gasoline shortages may occur. And some stations were even considering gouging prices.

Panic erupted as gas stations across the metropolis were faced with long lines of desperate motorists shopping not to be "suckered" in to the \$5 a gallon which was reported at some stations on both sides of the state line.

But, Kansas City leaders, prosecutors and state officials warned that those gas stations that do take advantage of customers will be hit with heavy fines.

"I am deeply disturbed by reports

that some stations are capitalizing on the current national crisis by substantially overcharging Missourians for gasoline," said Missouri State Representative Catherine Hanaway.

"We must all remain calm in the aftermath of this heinous attack against our freedom."

Mayor Barnes condemned those retailers who seek to take advantage of consumers.

"There is no evidence that there is any kind of gasoline shortage in the Kansas City area or across the nation," she said. "Any inflated pricing is completely unnecessary and should be stopped immediately."

Governor Bob Holden also condemns any inflated gas prices.

"I call upon the petroleum industry and the public to act responsibly in the face of the current situation," said Gov. Holden. "I find it unacceptable that anyone would seek to profit from this tragedy by needlessly raising gasoline prices when there are sufficient gas supplies in Missouri."

Jerry Medol, executive director of Anger Alternatives, has been working for almost 31 years with people struggling with anger.

Medol understands the anger and rage that has come as a result of the terrorist attacks on the United States. But he reminds local citizens not to take their anger out on people.

"The most important thing people must realize is that they have to accept the feelings they have and realize that they are normal," said Medol, who not only directs the Anger Alternatives organization in Kansas City but also has a similar program in Chicago and helps with consulting on workplace violence. I too am enraged by this whole thing but I have to carry on with my daily life and go on.

"What people must understand is that anger is a reflection of the heart and not wanting to be hurt. People must get to the point of accepting the fact that I'm hurt. But if I act on what I'm feeling, then there will be tremendous problems and consequences. If we allow the anger to control, we'll do some behavior that will undermine control of ourselves," he said.

Medol said Kansas Citizens and Americans in general, need to remind themselves that violence against another country for wrong done to it doesn't solve problems.

"If we're not careful and we act

out on our anger, we'll eventually wind up being the villains in front of the world again."

State government officials offered their condolences and weren't hesitant to voice their support of swift but wise action.

"Our hearts and prayers are with survivors and families of those who were murdered in New York City, the Pentagon and near Pittsburgh and elsewhere," said U.S. Senator Kit Bond.

"Though still appalled by the damage, the United States is already recovering from these attacks."

"Fate has written many painful chapters in American history. Each is sharply engraved into our collective memory. Most are battles and wars. Gettysburg. Pearl Harbor. Two Jims. Pork Chop Hill. Others were acts of madmen like the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building and the slaying of our Presidents

Lincoln, McKinley and John F. Kennedy," said Senator Bond.

Senator Bond continued, "We are the greatest and most powerful national because we have met and triumphed over adversity. This is our national identity. This is what it means to be an American. This is the strength of character that built this nation over the last four centuries."

"Americans do not face challenges. We surmount them. And we grow stronger as a result," said Senator Bond.

Senator Jean Carnahan offered her words on the American crisis and said, "I can remember as a young girl the shock and sadness we felt with the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. But I also recall the undaunted spirit of America and their resolve to win a victory over tyranny. We dropped everything we were doing and devoted our full energy and resources to eradicating the threat to our freedoms."



A SOMBER MOMENT IN CITY'S HISTORY . . . City officials in Kansas City gathered Tuesday during a press briefing to discuss how the City of Kansas City was going to respond regarding Tuesday's terrorist attacks in the nation's capitol and New York City. Those attending the conference were Kansas City Mayor Kay Barnes, City Councilmen Alvin Brooks and Troy Nash, County Executive Kathryn Shields, Assistant City Manager Rich Noll, City Manager Bob Collins, City Councilman Charles Eddy, Dr. Rex Archer of the Kansas City Health Department, Kansas City, Mo., Police Chief Richard Easley and Kansas City Fire Chief Richard Dyer. -- CALL photo by Jerry Lockett