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ALASKA Journal of Commerce
Week of September 11, 2011 • Vol. 33, No. 37
www.alaskajournal.com
Alaska's Paper of Record • Established 1977

ESSAY: Post-9/11 'new normal' looks much like old

By Calvin Woodward
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP)—In the crucible of Sept. 11, no one could imagine things would ever be the same again.

Seems they pretty much are.

The attacks that spawned two wars and will haunt forever from history books are well receded from daily life for most Americans.

Not so for the soldiers who have fought or for those in government who know there will be hell to pay if the nation is ever caught so off guard again.

For the rest?

The "new normalcy," as life under threat was called 10 years ago and many times since, is resembling the old one. Airport security shakedowns excepted.

This, after an epoch shaped by fear and fighting, the onset of the Patriot Act and all its new powers and the cobbling together of a homeland security superstructure meant to see over everything and is itself overseen by more than 100 committees in Congress.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, the United States was host to all sorts of un-American activities.

Perpetually hickering politicians hugged. Americans stopped shopping. Lawyers even ceased suing.

Almost everyone was on the same page.

On the radio, home of shock jocks and other crudities, they stopped playing sad songs and got ultra-sensitive. Even "Leaving on a Jet Plane" was nixed from playlists.

An in-your-face people feared their own shadows. Pollsters asked a weird question: How are you sleeping?

It was an unnatural state of affairs, and it is largely gone.

Handing off the wars and the swollen anti-terrorism apparatus to his successor, President George W. Bush said in his final White House address in 2009 that "most Americans were able to return to life much as it had been before 9/11." He quickly added: "I never did."

He waged a war thrust upon him, in Afghanistan, and one of his own choosing, in Iraq. Both started fading from public attention even before President Barack Obama inherited them, upped the effort in Afghanistan, then began winding both down. Economic woes came roaring in as the public's chief concern.

With respect to the 9/11 tragedy, Ken Kreimer, 64, a Vietnam veteran from St.

AP Photo/Don Gasque
Sgt. 1st Class Nathan Marshall, 30, of Kahoka, Mo. (center) and other soldiers of the Army's 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, wait for a flight home near a mural commemorating the World Trade Center at the Transit Center in Manas, Kyrgyzstan, after a year's deployment in Afghanistan. The attacks that spawned two wars have receded from daily lives of most Americans, but not for the soldiers who have fought or for those in government who know there will be hell to pay if the nation is ever caught so off guard again.

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Alaska Journal of Commerce launches new website; more changes to come

By Melissa Campbell
AJOC Managing Editor

We invite you to visit our new website at www.AlaskaJournal.com.

For more than 30 years, our primary focus at the Alaska Journal of Commerce has been to provide our readers with the best and most comprehensive business news affecting Alaska. For years, our website has been a linear image of our weekly newspaper.

Our primary goal has not changed; we will continue to work to provide the best of Alaska's business news.

But our website gives us a new agenda: We want to become the place for all your business reading – for state, national and international business.

So what's new? Here are some of the highlights:

- Lunch Break – Here, we'll post the day's business news and updates. You'll find the top stories in business and politics, as well as breaking news. As the name indicates, stories will be ready for your lunch break.
- Social Media Sharing – We've provided buttons for quick and easy sharing of your favorite stories.

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