

# September 11 & SOLOSEZ - 10 Years Later: A Hard Rain Fell

10 years ago, Solosez began the day bright and beautiful -- then at 7:48 am, everything changed. The posts on Solosez recorded that day -- from initial reports, to confirmation of the unthinkable. They recorded shock, concern for fellow members in the danger zone, profound sadness, and rallying of our nation to help.

I was editor of Indiana's GP Reporter at that time, and wrote (actually edited is more accurate) an article comprised of those Solosez posts. 10 years later, it still brings back the emotions and shock of that day -- and my pride in this group and our profession.

On this 10th Anniversary weekend, I thought it appropriate to again share this article. It is set out below:

\*GP Reporter : The Slingshot\*:

\*September 11 A Hard Rain Fell\*

By Stephen M. Terrell, Newsletter Editor

\*The morning of September 11 started as a bright and beautiful late summer day across Indiana. As I do every morning, I took my dogs for a walk, planning my day, thinking about phone calls to make and letters to write. I returned home to get ready for work - help my daughter on to her school bus -take a quick look at the news while I dressed.\*

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\*Then at 7:48 everything changed. We changed. America changed.\*

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\*Solosez is the ABA-sponsored e-mail list of solo and small firm lawyers. It is an electronic community of more than 900 lawyers - helping each other with legal questions, sharing jokes, bickering over politics.\*

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\*Like all America, Solosez started September 11 as other days - postings about bankruptcies, products liability, divorce. But after 7:48, the messages changed. Those messages intimately record the shock, fears, concerns and grief of a nation.\*

Bankruptcy question - You have about two weeks after the discharge until the case is closed. Sheryl Cramer, Lawton, OK

Subject: Ford recall - Does anyone have any case law about Ford recalling faulty starters? -

Jean Moyer

World Trade Center Attack - I am hearing reports that there has been another terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. - Patrick W Begos, New York

Go to [cnn.com](http://cnn.com) or [msnbc.com](http://msnbc.com) or any news site you can get to. Two jets have crashed into the World Trade Center - one on each tower. There are gaping holes in both buildings and flames are shooting out. Its a horrible scene. I was watching it on the Today Show. A 737 veered into the second tower. Absolutely horrible. I cant believe I just saw this happen. - Ross Kodner, Milwaukee

It has also just been reported that another hijacked airliner has also just crashed into the Pentagon in Washington DC! ! - Alan Pearlman, Chicago

I just passed by the site on the way to my office. There was mass confusion, running and screaming in the streets while flames were shooting out of one of the towers. My office shook as the second explosion hit. - Joseph Handlin, New York City

The entire southern tip of Manhattan is now covered with smoke or dust from debris as one of the towers may have collapsed. This is bad, very bad. I have friends near the towers and in the Pentagon. - Ed Lawson

I could see the smoke from the Pentagon from the US Dept of Transportation building several miles away in SW DC. - Joel R Bennett, Washington, DC

I am two blocks from the White House .... they are evacuating it...sirens all over town. - Reid Trautz, Washington DC

Reid, there were earlier reports on NBC of a fire at the OLD EOB across the street from the White House. Is that happening? Get the hell out of there! - Sterling L. DeRamus

NBC showed footage that clearly showed the top 1/3 or 1/ 2 of the second tower has completely collapsed. Its completely gone. - Ross Kodner, Milwaukee

In NYC the UN has been evacuated. I am no longer receiving TV signals except for CBS and through Cable. - Christina Kallas, New York City

Lets all say a prayer for both the victims and those who must go in harms way to rescue survivors and contain the hazards. - Jeffrey Allen McCann, Pensacola

My Associate has come into my room in floods of tears saying the Twin Towers have been demolished by a plane flying into them and Pentagon is on fire. As an expatriate I am just feeling very far away today. This is so upsetting. What is going on? - Valerie Macadam, Edinburgh, Scotland

In Houston: Chase Tower evacuated, Enron Building evacuated, and Reliant Tower is to be

evacuated next. - Arlen M. Driscoll, Houston

Upstate New York District Courts are all closing or closed. I haven't felt like this since JFK was assassinated, but this is so much larger. - Marion Chase Pacheco, Syracuse

As for Chicago, The Daley Civic Center closed, all suburban courthouses closed, Sears Tower closed. Mass Exodus from the downtown loop back to everyone's homes! - Alan Pearlman, Chicago

Baltimore Metro Area: Roads leading into and out of the city being closed. Federal Building being evacuated. This is surreal. - Eleanor Naiman, Baltimore

Lots of AW/\Cs seen in the sky over Oklahoma City. State offices have been shut down. My Mom called and told me to go home. - Melissa A. Shomben Oklahoma City, OK

My daughter lives in Brooklyn and drives to work through lower Manhattan. She called that she made it to work and was safe. She had seen both crashes into the WTC and the collapses which have traumatized her. - Dick Howland, New York

My former firm, Thacher Proffitt & Wood, had its offices at 2 WTC. I shudder to think how many people I know and worked with died today. - Christina Kallas, New York City

Everyone is in a state of disbelief and worrying about friends and family who are stateside. I personally have dealings with several attorneys at Hill Betts and Nash in the World Trade Center, and I fear that I will not see them again. Go home and hug your loved ones. - Andy Simpson, Christiansted, U. S. Virgin Islands

The office upstairs represent pilots and flight crews. They knew several people on the planes that went down from Boston, I had friends working next door to the Trade Center and a partner had two relatives working in the Trade Center. Maybe just too close. - Ed Lawson

I shudder to think how many people I know and worked with died today. My church has scheduled a prayer service at noon today. I suggest everyone with a religious bent take a moment or two today to pray for the victims of this atrocity and for peace. - Charles Kelley

Colleen - Are you okay? I don't know where your office is. . Let us know that you are okay. - Sandra M. Gamerove,

Has anyone heard from Jay Fleishman? He has an office in the WTC area. - Colleen Samuels, New York City

Colleen (and everyone else):- I as well as my entire office staff are alive and well. We are, of course, not in business right now and I don't know when we will be. Jay Fleischman, New York City

I went to the hardware store - where they had run out of flags this morning but had since restocked. Now my new flag is flying. God bless America. - Jimmy L. Vernet; Jr, Dallas, Texas

I am blocking out Friday afternoon to donate blood. I have also made a donation to the American Red Cross. I urge everyone to do the same. I am going to take my daughters to the park now. I need to watch them play for a while - Neal A. Kennedy, Marble Falls, Texas

I am a social worker as well as an attorney. Due to the downed telephone lines I am unable to reach anyone in NY If any organization needs someone for crisis counseling or any other help, please let me know. - Colleen Samuels, New York City

Well, I waited for SIX HOURS, but one pint of my finest blood is now sitting at the local Red Cross center. Sasha Golden, Needham, MA

In the weeks to come, the people of NYC will be inundated with forms they will need to fill out. There will be insurance forms, FEMA forms, SBA small business loan. Lets send a busload or two of volunteers to NYC to help with these forms. - Frank J. Kautz, II, Boston

There will be an awful lot of New York lawyers who need fast advice and help on how to get their practices going again from a technology perspective. I will happily offer my consulting services at no charge. - Ross Kodner, Milwaukee

Washington Rock - General George Washington stood there 225 years ago while the county was under attack and looked across to Manhattan. He saw the British coming. Standing there today, looking across the river, seeing the void in the skyline, showed the work of another enemy. It was chilling. - John R. Parker; Flemington, NJ

I cant help but keep remembering, over and over, how wonderfully quiet and peaceful Washington, D.C., was when I was there last November. Are those times all behind us now? - Gena Holmes

I ask you to join me - Let there be abundant peace from heaven, And lifes goodness for us and for all humanity. He who ordains the order of the universe Will mercifully

bring peace To us and to all humanity. Let us say: Amen - Jay Goldenberg

Jay, thanks for reminding me that even at the most awful of times, our prayer is for peace. Susan Freiman

On the street, I could see that WTC One was burning from its upper stories; curlicues of paper were floating down, glittering in the light, I saw people running past, some of them crying, as I stood immobilized, watching the flames. Then there was an explosion, and fragments of glass rained down on my head. I saw a huge hole in the roof of a building two blocks from World Trade Center. I began running away from the burning buildings, wondering what would blow up next. I started to walk, looking back over my shoulder repeatedly at the burning towers. Someone behind me shouted, There are people jumping!

and I turned to see a black dot, almost certainly a human dot, fall from the top of a tower. A few minutes after I got home I was watching live coverage on CNN as World Trade Center 2 collapsed, then building 1 a few minutes later. I thought of words of a Bob Dylan song:

I've stepped in the middle of seven sad forests,  
I've been out in front of a dozen dead oceans,  
I've been ten thousand miles in the mouth of a graveyard,  
And it's a hard rain a-gonna fall.

The glass I picked out of my hair an hour later was a hard rain. - Jonathan Wallace

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\*"Aztek" Steve\*

Stephen M. Terrell, Indiana

Thank you for sharing ... my how our firm has grown since that dark day.

"Come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord, that we may walk the paths of the Most High. And we shall beat our swords into ploughshares and our spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. And none shall be afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts has spoken." (Jewish prayer for peace <http://www.curw.cornell.edu/prayer4.html>)

Wishing all a Sabbath of peace.  
Never Forget!!

Pamela the Paralegal

Pamela J. Starr

Thanks Steve for the stirring article. Tears welled again. I remember too watching on tv in horror as the second plane hit the tower. Hopefully, our hard rain continues to befall those who did this.

Craig McLaughlin

Thank you for posting this.

Cindy D. Salvo, New Jersey

I was in the Air Force at the time of 9/11 and was in London on leave. I remember being horrified, and later that evening lying in my bed I remember thinking, "we're fucked". Things changed for everyone that day, not in the least for soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines.

Seth Crosland, Texas

Thanks, Steve. A small note:

The final entry, properly credited to Jonathan Wallace and from which you derived your title, was not written by a solosezzer. Jonathan was a solo practice attorney (he's retired now), was and is a close friend. He wrote an essay that afternoon, which I reposted to solosez. The full essay, from which you took an excerpt, is at <http://www.spectacle.org/yearzero/wtc.html>

Jonathan spent much of the next several months and years working on relief efforts. In the trenches, not just as a lawyer.

James S. Tyre, California

I was a high school senior when 9/11 happened. I'll never forget when my Civics teacher turned on the TV and we saw the second plane hit live. I still can't believe it was ten years ago already.

I am praying that the current "credible, but unconfirmed terror threat" for 9/11's anniversary does not come to fruition.

Sincerely,  
Nicholas B. Proy, Maryland

That terrible day on Solosez is still so fresh in my mind. I had just dropped my older daughter off at kindergarten and ordered a ice cream cake with my younger daughter at Baskin Robbins when I heard about the crashes on radio. My husband was working out of town in Alabama, helicopters were whirring overhead (I'm just down the block from

NIH/Naval Medical) and I was by myself with my daughters and just wanted to be around other people to hear their experience. Solosez was my lifeline.

Seeing those old posts brought back memories of that day - and also of the people who wrote them, several of whom I would meet less than a month later at the first Solosez Supreme Court swearing in. Where are they now?

Carolyn Elefant, District of Columbia

I was blythly and blessedly ignorant that morning. Jesse (Army cav scout) called. Over the excited roar of young males in the barracks hallway, he hollered, "Turn on the TV!" I did immediately, and saw the tower's windows billowing smoke. "We're going to war!" His voice was full of excitement and commitment, he and a hallway full of young men who were finally going to test their mettle and their training.

Katie had just come off a crummy vacation. Her co-worker had just transferred out. His replacement had not come in yet. Perfect time for a stop-loss order. She worked double shifts by herself for months sometimes monitoring three targets at once. She and many co-workers had frequent migraines for months afterward. By this time she had been multi-service long enough to have friends who deployed.

Ron had his bags in the Saab and was on his way to the Indy airport when all flights were cancelled. He was coming to Missoula to visit the law school before he presented a CLE on the importance of and how to select assisting attorneys, then on the west coast for a Delta 1/5 reunion. Being highly logical and sensible (right, Steve?) he followed Jake and Elwood's thinking. Days later, we were sitting on the patio of The Iron Horse having a nosh and Ron's first taste of Missoula's fine local brews when a departing passenger plane fly over, signifying a bit of normal.

Jesse didn't go to Iraq -- you can imagine my relief that my cav scout remained stateside -- but he still doesn't say where he went, only that they were guarding something somewhere.

C.J. Stevens, Montana

I was at the Richmond airport headed for Seattle to Microsoft as part of a government agency trip. I heard about a plane crash as I headed to the gate and looked at the tarmac to see what happened. As I passed by the television, I saw the WTC in smoke and then the second plane hit. Someone heard it might have been a small plane of course. No way a small plane could do that much damage and by accident. I got on that plane to go out West. It was delayed and then cancelled. People were screaming about the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond being a target. I had to tell them to get real. With DC to the North and a Naval Base to the South, we were not much of a target.

I headed to work and saw the building being evacuated. I headed home all in a fog with no idea what to do or think or feel.

I remember 9/11 very well. I am sad at what it did to us, to our country, and to our freedoms.

May we never forget. The lack of sense that day and in the days leading up to it amazes me. Why would someone need box cutters on a plane? Why would someone want to know how to fly, but not want to know how to land or take off? How on Earth can someone get a drivers license without identification?

If that event took place in the early 90s, I would have known people on the planes out of Boston.

I had friends and family at and near the WTC and the Pentagon. My wife had been in that hotel (the one that looked ghostly) just a few weeks before. My father had been at the base of the WTC the prior week. My cousin walked into the building as it was hit (he was smart enough to walk right back out).

The outpouring of emotion afterward was moving. May we be able to show that same amount of caring to those being affected by great tragedy around the world. May we not let the terrorists win and end our freedom.

Most important, may G-d bless those who lost their lives, those who lost friends and family, those who risked or sacrificed their lives trying to save others, ...

Mitchell P. Goldstein, Virginia

Gave me chills, Steve. Thanks for sharing. I hope the anniversary helps remind some of us (in Washington, particularly) that we all need to pull together. No one here is the enemy. This country wasn't made great by tearing itself apart from the inside. Like an outsider insulting a family member, this should draw us closer.

Dave Truman, Ohio

Jim --

Thanks so much for this info. It was so wonderfully written. I hope he didn't mind me using the excerpt. It summed up so well the numbness and emptiness I think all of us felt at the end of the day, that I thought it was the perfect post to conclude the article.



And thanks for sharing the link.

Steve Terrell

Nah, he didn't mind at all. I just wanted to give folks here the opportunity to read the full essay, if they choose.

-Jim Tyre

I remember the day very well. It was absolutely gorgeous, not a cloud in the sky. My son was at his third day at a school for disabled and autistic children in NJ, my daughter was in her first week at Bronx High School of Science. I had to hike home from midtown as the buses were jammed, cars were racing out of the City and subways were not running. My daughter and her friends made it to my house on the upper east side, several of the girls had to stay with us for a few days - one had an MD mother who stayed at Bellevue hospital waiting for the injured...who never showed up. One lived downtown and the area was cordoned off for several days. My son had to sleep at his school (with 49 other disabled children from NY). The small town where the school was located got wind of the kids and came over to the school with food, clothes and blankets. It took two days before the bridges opened and he could come home. That first night smoky air filled the City, even on the UES. When I was walking the dog late that evening, it looked like fog but had a strange scent that I had never smelled before or since...There were no cars and few people on the street. Suddenly, out of this hazy fog like smoke, came a fire truck along third avenue, the firemen were perched all over the truck and were covered with the white dust. It moved slowly and silently up the street. I knew that I had lost several friends, but seeing this almost ghost-like truck brought it all home. It was a horrible time. And still feels like yesterday.

Karel

Karel S. Karpe, New York

I live about 20 miles east of Manhattan. The day was what aviators call "severe clear". I was to help a friend man the polls as he was running in a primary that day (elections were of course cancelled). Since I had the day off I watched events unfold on TV. Later that night I too could smell the burning and could see the smoke plum for days in my back yard. I remember sitting on my back steps and seeing the F14's go screeching by about 200 feet above the deck. I live very close to JFK airport and these fighters were flying all night. Pretty scary stuff. I have friends who are firefighters and NYPD (unbelievably, none perished) so for the next few days we were in the dark about their safety. One by one we got the good word about each of them.

Bad days

Graham W. Kistler, New York

Thanks for posting this, Steve.

I joined Solosez just a couple of months before September 11, 2001.

I was on the street going to a hearing just a few blocks from the WTC on that fateful day.

I was mid-block about 4 blocks from the WTC when the first tower fell. I walked in that cloud of... whatever... watched... walked with a shell-shocked, dust-covered crowd uptown...watched and heard the second tower fall... visited several hospitals to see if I could do something....anything....worried about where my family was and how we'd all get home from schools and jobs in three different counties....

The things I saw, felt and smelled... I'll never forget.

Thankfully, my family and I all got home safe and sound that evening.

Later that night I checked in with Solosez.

The support... concern... interest from my listserv brothers and sisters across the country and around the world on that day and the days following was AWESOME! To hear listmates' experiences and words of comfort. I'll never forget that!

Solosez is indelibly part of my experience of that day and I am forever grateful!

Thank you all!

Arthur Miller, New York

On this 10th anniversary weekend I can't seem to tear myself away from the many memorial and retrospective media offerings. On 9/11/01 I was planning to go to a store in the concourse at the WTC, but first had an appointment at my son's school... My office at the time was in the Woolworth Building (approximately one and a half blocks from Ground Zero), and while the building was basically unharmed, there were many months following the tragedy when many offices and buildings in the neighborhood were inaccessible, or, later on, accessible but without electricity or phone service. I recall with great appreciation the generosity of so many lawyers and law firms in NYC who made office space available \*gratis\* to displaced lawyers for as long as a year.

I just don't know why I feel so compelled to relive this monumental trauma. Oh, well.

Lenore W. Tucker, New York

I was in Ocala at the federal courthouse for a 9 AM 341 meeting in a chapter 7 bankruptcy. I always got there early and had parked and gone thru security prior to hearing any news on the radio. Trustee told me that he needed copy of clients deed and I walked across the street about 9:10 to the county courthouse to get it, go up to recording, am standing in line and hear one of the clerks say a plane had hit one of the world trade center towers. I figured it was a small single engine plane and that was about it. THEN after I had gotten a copy of the deed and was walking out, I heard the clerk say that another plane had hit the other tower; at that point I knew it had to be terrorism. By the time I had left the building and gotten into my car, the first tower had collapsed. I drove back to the office and stopped at a convenience store to get a pack of cigarettes and they had a TV; it was showing the collapse of the first tower and I couldn't take my eyes off of it. I went back to the office at which point the second tower had collapsed, and I remember how difficult it was to get info; not least of which was because my office had basically horrible radio reception and all the news sites on the internet were overloaded. I finally hung sign on the door and walked over to one of my clients who had a dress shop down the way and had a TV in the back. I watched TV news off and on for the rest of the day.

The next week was very confusing; I spent as much time watching TV and listening to the news, etc. I personally didn't know anyone in the towers or the pentagon.

At the time I was in grad school at UCF, classes were on Monday nights, so a week later I went to class and everyone was still stunned. At least one girl had lost a relative; step father IIRC.

Ronald Jones, Florida

We were in the London Dungeons around 2 or 3 London time I believe, and a girl working there dressed up like it was Halloween said to me, "did you hear what happened?" being the smartass that I am I said, "I heard we beat you guys in a war a few years back". She said no, a plane hit the world trade center. I too thought oh that sucks. I thought it was a cessna or something and an accident. It wasn't till we got out of there and noticed people were acting weird and there were more police around that I started to wonder. We headed back to the hotel and that's when we learned what happened. I tried to call my parents in the states to let them know we were ok but it took hours to get through. The airports were closed for a few days and we couldn't get back home to our base in Germany. When we got back it was like we were in a war zone. I think we were at threatcon Charlie for weeks.

Seth Crosland

You are not the only one. And my guess is that like me, you sit with this hollowness inside you.

Notice how detailed the responses are. Everyone not only recalls hearing the towers were hit, but what they were doing, feeling, sensing -- a moment in time universally frozen in our memories.

-- Steve Terrell

I was at work. My boss's mom called sounding strange. Then my mom called, and all she kept saying was "the Towers are gone." I'm like what do you mean they're GONE? By the time my boss got to work, they were letting those of us that felt the need to leave for the day. So I left, went to a meeting at my sons' school, went home, turned on the TV, saw what had happened, and just cried like I'd lost someone close to me. Because I remember when the WTC was built. I remember my father taking us to the observation deck, where you could see clear across NJ on a clear day. I remember just the year before taking my children there and eating hotdogs in front of the WTC, while they marveled at how high in the sky the towers were. And I remember days later explaining to my colleagues who had never been to NYC that the damage was not just limited to the visible towers, but the whole world UNDERNEATH..the shops, the PATH trains, etc. I've not yet been back to NYC, and I'm almost afraid to go back, knowing that my emotions will overtake me, and I will weep all over again, mourning for all that was lost.

Anna D. Collins Ford, Paralegal

I had just started law school in the evening program. My day time gig was a management position working for the company that built most of the airplanes that were involved. One of my employees ran into my office and hysterically yelled "we are under attack, we are under attack" he was so shook up that I didn't really know what he meant. (my employee later told me that I looked at him with a blank face and just said "ok" and turned back to my computer)

Because i started my career as an engineer on the production floor and then later managed crews that built the airplanes I knew one striking a building would be catastrophic.

I got online desperately trying to identify the carriers involved because someone very close to me is a flight attendant. (luckily she was not on one of the planes)

It wasn't until late in the afternoon that I saw the actual footage. I had nightmares for weeks after the attack. I have not watched any of the replays this weekend.

G. (Gus) Benjamin Lindsey III, Washington

thanks. Steve. I'm forwarding to friends. It really brings back the temp of that day.

Jay S. Goldenberg, Illinois