RESPECTS PAID TO AMERICA’S HEROES AT 9/11 MEMORIAL IN CLOVIS »
BILL GIVING PROTECTIONS TO ‘GIG WORKERS’ SENT TO GOVERNOR »
18 YEARS LATER, AMERICA VOWS TO ‘NEVER FORGET’ 9/11 »
Emotions flowed Wednesday morning in Clovis as about 500 people vowing to “never forget” paid their respects at the newly expanded California 9/11 Memorial. Situated at the business park that formerly housed Pelco, the 18th annual remembrance featured for the first time replicas of the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, at 1/100 scale. The names of some of those who perished — including Navy Lt. Commander Otis Vincent Tolbert from Lemoore — are etched on the replicas. Tolbert, who played football at Fresno State, died Sept. 11, 2001, at the Pentagon.

Memorial Board Raised $350K for Improvements
The California 9/11 Memorial formally organized as a nonprofit group following last year’s event. Then it worked on its goal of creating a larger memorial intended to better convey the historic significance of the terrorist attacks, particularly for younger Americans. The Pentagon replica includes a water feature. In addition, the new memorial will have a meditation garden, a monument for those perished aboard United Airlines Flight 93 at Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and a survivor tree, similar to a pear blossom that survived the Twin Tower attacks.

Display storyboards around the grounds help share the story of 9/11, including a timeline of how the tragedy unfolded. The final words of United passenger Todd Beamer — “let’s roll!” — became a national catchphrase. Beamer, a former Fresno State student, was one of several passengers who attempted to regain control of the jet from the hijackers. The memorial’s centerpiece remains the existing 110-foot flagpole, representative of the 110 stories of the Twin Towers. It took only three months to complete the privately funded $350,000 renovation. A collaborative group of engineers, landscapers, and architects helped design the memorial.

Educational Event
Anna Borgeas, executive director of the California 9/11 Memorial, says the project’s aim is to preserve history. “Our goal is to not only honor but to educate and remember,” Borgeas said. Wednesday morning’s ceremony included the Fresno County Office of Education hosting its OneVoice event, a celebration of America. Students who won a local 9/11-themed art contest were honored, as well.

“Most of our students were not alive during the time of the 9/11 attacks. Through this contest, students can learn more about this defining time in our country’s history and help keep the memory alive of those who died in these attacks,” said Fresno Unified Superintendent Bob Nelson.

Watch: Clovis 9/11 Memorial Expansion Project

September 11, 2019 | David Taub

“Our goal is to not only honor but to educate and remember.” — Memorial executive director Anna Borgeas
MEA GULPA: FIRESTONE INVITES FRESNANS TO CHILL WITH BREWER

September 9, 2019 | David Taub

Firestone Walker Brewing Company wants Fresno to know it loves having the city as its neighbor. David Walker — president of the company that crafts such brands as 805 and Firestone DBA — is mortified about a disparaging comment made by his brewery’s communication director about Fresno over the weekend. “It’s inaccurate. It’s a dumb comment made on her own personal time,” Walker said of the tweet Jemma Wilson made about Fresno.

Now, Walker wants to make things right. He’s invited Fresno to come to his Paso Robles brewery for “Chill with Fresnans” tours and samples. He also said something in Fresno may be in the works. “Fresno is our neighbor, and we want to be neighborly,” Walker said of the tweet Jemma Wilson made about Fresno.

Now, Walker wants to make things right. He’s invited Fresno to come to his Paso Robles brewery for “Chill with Fresnans” tours and samples. He also said something in Fresno may be in the works. “Fresno is our neighbor, and we want to be neighborly,” Walker said of the tweet Jemma Wilson made about Fresno.

However, Wilson responded with “I’m so sorry you had to go to Fresno though” in a tweet that is no longer publicly accessible. The backlash on the social media platform came quickly. Many people were shocked that a communications director could make such a comment. “I’m well past caring about people taking easy, lazy shots at Fresno. This time I’m mostly amazed that as hard as Firestone markets here (even sponsoring our big music festival), their comms manager is so quick...
SACRAMENTO — State lawmakers sent Gov. Gavin Newsom a bill Wednesday that would give new wage and benefit protections to workers at so-called gig economy companies such as Uber and Lyft where people pick up jobs on their own schedule. The 56-15 Assembly vote marked a victory for labor unions and a defeat for tech companies that vehemently oppose the proposal. Newsom has already said he supports it. If signed, the proposal could have national implications as politicians and businesses confront the changing nature of work in the so-called gig economy. In a rare injection of presidential politics into a state issue, most of the major Democratic presidential contenders urged California lawmakers to pass the bill and have championed similar proposals in their campaigns. “This isn’t perfect, but I think this goes a long way to protecting workers, legitimate small businesses, legitimate businesses that play by the rules, and we as taxpayers that have to clean up the mess when these businesses don’t provide enough for their workers.” — Democratic Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez

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Bill Passed Over Republican Opposition
Newsom is committed to continuing talks on other refinements even after he signs the bill, said governor’s spokesman Nathan Click. The state Senate passed the measure with a 29-11 vote late Tuesday over strident Republican opposition. The bill has drawn staunch opposition from on-demand delivery and ridesharing companies that say it will effectively kill their business model. Drivers are divided on the issue. By picking which industries can use independent contractors and which workers must be treated as employees, “we are playing a political Russian roulette with their lives, their livelihood and their labor,” said Assemblyman Jim Patterson (R – Fresno).

Expected to Affect Wide Array of Businesses
The bill would put into law a California Supreme Court decision making it harder for companies to classify workers as independent contractors and instead would make them classify the workers as employees. While its impact on gig economy companies has drawn most of the attention, it would affect a wide array of industries. “Today these so-called gig companies present themselves as the so-called innovative future of tomorrow,” Democratic Sen. Marie Elena Durazo of Los Angeles said as she presented the bill in the Assembly late Tuesday. “Let’s be clear. There is nothing innovative about underpaying someone for their labor.” The law lays out a test to decide if workers can be labeled as contractors.

Companies Say Bill Limits Worker Flexibility
They have proposed a base hourly for workers, paying into a fund for benefits including accident coverage and allow for “sectoral bargaining,” where workers across the industry could organize. Several of the companies have threatened to spend $90 million on a ballot measure next year if they do not get their way...
COURT WON'T BLOCK DEATH PENALTY TRIALS DESPITE MORATORIUM

SACRAMENTO — The California Supreme Court refused Wednesday to block death penalty cases from proceeding during Gov. Gavin Newsom’s moratorium on executions. The justices rejected defense attorneys’ arguments that jurors can’t realistically gauge the seriousness of imposing a death sentence if they think it’s never actually going to be carried out.

Newsom halted executions in March for as long as he remains governor, but the death penalty remains on the books and courts have been proceeding on the assumption that executions may one day resume. Attorneys for two men separately facing trials in multiple slayings say it’s unfair to ask jurors to consider what for now would be hypothetical sentences.

“In light of this paradigm shift, a California jury in a capital case cannot be expected to provide a fair and reasoned penalty phase determination free from speculation,” defense attorney Robert Sanger wrote on behalf of his client, Cleamon Demone Johnson. He is awaiting trial on five counts of capital murder and one of attempted murder. An appeals court said they were “six casualties of the gang wars between the Bloods and the Crips in the early 1990s.” California hasn’t...
NEW YORK — Americans commemorated 9/11 with solemn ceremonies and vows Wednesday to “never forget” 18 years after the deadliest terror attack on American soil. Victims’ relatives assembled at ground zero, where the observance began with a moment of silence and the tolling of bells at 8:46 a.m. — the exact time a hijacked plane slammed into the World Trade Center’s north tower. “As long as the city will gift us this moment, I will be here,” Margie Miller, who lost her husband, Joel, said at the ceremony, which she attends every year. “I want people to remember.” After so many years of anniversaries, she has come to know other victims’ relatives and to appreciate being with them.

“There’s smiles in between the tears that say we didn’t do this journey on our own, that we were here for each other,” she said. President Donald Trump laid a wreath at the Pentagon, telling victims’ relatives there: “This is your anniversary of personal and permanent loss.” “It’s the day that has replayed in your memory a thousand times over. The last kiss. The last phone call. The last time hearing those precious words, ‘I love you,’” the president said. Vice President Mike Pence was scheduled to speak at the third crash site, near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Effects Visible From Airport Security Checkpoints to Afghanistan

The anniversary ceremonies center on remembering the nearly 3,000 people killed when hijacked planes slammed into the trade center, the Pentagon and the field in Pennsylvania on Sept. 11, 2001. The effects are visible from airport security checkpoints to Afghanistan where the post-9/11 U.S. invasion has become America’s longest war. Earlier this week, Trump called off a secret meeting at Camp David with Taliban and Afghan government leaders and declared the peace talks “dead.” As the Sept. 11 anniversary began in Afghanistan, a rocket exploded at the U.S. Embassy just after midnight. The political legacy of the 9/11 flowed into the ground zero ceremony, too. After reading victims’ names, Nicholas Haros Jr. used his turn at the podium to tear into Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota over her recent “Some people did something” reference to 9/11. “Madam, objectively speaking, we know who and what was done,” Haros, who lost his mother, Frances, said as he reminded the audience of the al-Qaida attackers. “Our constitutional freedoms were attacked, and our nation’s founding on Judeo-Christian values was attacked. That’s what ‘some people’ did. Got that now?” he said to applause. Omar, one of the first Muslim women elected to Congress, has said she didn’t intend to minimize what happened on Sept. 11, and she accused critics of taking her words out of context. Another relative at ground zero underscored that Muslims were among the dead. Zaheda Rahman called her uncle, Abul Chowdhury, a “proud Muslim-American man who lived his life with a carefree nature, a zeal for adventure and a tenacity which I emulate every single day.” Haros’ remarks weren’t the only political message to draw applause at ground zero. So did Debra Epps’ plea for tighter gun laws.

Remembering the Nearly 3,000 People Killed

“This country — in 18 years, you would think it had made changes to bring us to more peace. However, gun violence has gone rampant,” said Epps, who lost her brother, Christopher. The anniversary ceremonies center on remembering the nearly 3,000 people killed when hijacked planes slammed into the trade center, the Pentagon and the field in Pennsylvania on Sept...
MANCHESTER, N.H. — Gently lifting a wooden frame containing dozens of Italian honeybees, Vince Ylitalo seemed transfixed as he and several other veterans inspected the buzzing insects.

“This is really cool,” he said, pointing to a bee with blobs of orange pollen on its hind legs. Ylitalo, who has battled PTSD after serving nearly 40 years in the military including two tours in Iraq, didn’t seem bothered by the bees swarming around his head or crawling all over the entrance to their hive. Instead, the 57-year-old logistics expert said the several hours spent working on the two hives each week at the Manchester VA Medical Center in New Hampshire was a respite of sorts from his anxiety and depression. Known as an apiary, the hives are located next to a lilac garden off a busy street.

“I’m in this program to help me get out of the thought process of all those problems that I have,” said Ylitalo, who has struggled since leaving the Army in 2017. “It helps me think of something completely different. … I’m just thinking about bees.” Researchers are beginning to study whether...
IRAN URGES US TO ‘PUT WARMONGERS ASIDE’ AFTER BOLTON FIRING

September 11, 2019 | AP News

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran’s president urged the U.S. on Wednesday to “put warmongers aside” as tensions roll the Persian Gulf amid an escalating crisis between Washington and Tehran in the wake of the collapsing nuclear deal with world powers. Hassan Rouhani’s remarks signaled approval of President Donald Trump’s abrupt dismissal of John Bolton as national security adviser, a man routinely pilloried by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif as part of a “B Team” that targeted Iran. Bolton had for years been critical of Tehran and once promised before an Iranian exile group that they’d be celebrating the overthrow of Iran’s government this year.

Related Story: Trump Fires National Security Adviser John Bolton

Bolton’s departure also comes amid speculation about Trump potentially meeting Rouhani during the upcoming U.N. General Assembly this month in New York. Whether such a meeting materializes, however, remains in question, though Iranian comments Wednesday seemed to suggest Tehran would be willing to pin hostilities on the departing Bolton rather than Trump himself. Rouhani spoke after a Cabinet meeting Wednesday, a day that saw all major newspapers in Iran cover Bolton’s departure. The pro-reform Shargh daily newspaper had one large headline that read: “Bolton: A scapegoat for Iran?” “Americans have to realize that warmongering and warmongers are not to their benefit. They should not only abandon warmongering but also abandon their maximum pressure policy.” — President Hassan Rouhani

“He ruined the credibility of the United States and destroyed the peace process.” — Nabil Abu Rdeneh, spokesman for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas

Bolton’s dismissal may help the U.S. have a “less biased” attitude toward Iran.

Bolton Was Critical of Any Potential Talks Between Trump and Leaders of Iran

Though he stressed the dismissal was an internal U.S. issue, Rabiei called Bolton “the symbol of America’s hawkish policies and its animosity toward Iran.” For his part, Zarif again used Twitter to write about what he calls the “B Team,” which included Bolton, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, all hawks on Iran. Zarif said “the world — minus 3 or 2 panicked cohorts — was breathing a sigh of relief” after Bolton’s ouster. “Thirst for war — maximum pressure — should go with the warmonger-in-chief,” Zarif wrote. Hard-liners, however, urged caution. Gen. Mohsen Rezaee, a commander in the powerful Revolutionary Guard and its former chief, said in a tweet: “We will not be deceived by the sacrificing of Bolton.”

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Ali Shamkhani, a top Iranian security official and secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, said Bolton’s exit has “no impact” on how Tehran views U.S. policy. He said what matters to Iran is U.S. “compliance with international commitments as well as lifting cruel and illegal sanctions,” the semi-official Fars news agency reported Wednesday.

Related Story: Trump Fires National Security Adviser John Bolton

Bolton was critical of any potential talks between Trump and leaders of Iran and had persuaded Trump to keep U.S. forces in Syria to counter the Iranian influence in the region. Last year, Trump pulled the U.S. out of the landmark 2015 nuclear deal that lifted sanction on Iran in exchange for caps on Iran’s nuclear program. The U.S....
FRANKFURT, Germany — The European Central Bank appears to be preparing a new shot of stimulus to prop up the economy, amid broader questions about whether central banks like the ECB and the U.S. Federal Reserve can re-energize global growth on their own.

Analysts say the bank is likely to cut a key interest rate further below zero on Thursday and could take other steps, including restarting a bond-buying program to pump new money into the economy. That could all help the economy by making money cheaper to borrow, a policy that the U.S. President Donald Trump has repeatedly been pushing the Fed to emulate. Yet some officials question how much good another large blast of stimulus will do. That has raised uncertainty about exactly how big a stimulus package will be decided at the meeting of the bank’s 25-member governing council, setting up President Mario Draghi’s next-to-last meeting as a dramatic finale to his eight-year term as head of the monetary authority for the 19 countries that use the euro.

Draghi gave clear hints in a speech in June and after the bank’s last meeting July 25 that more action was on the way to counter a slowdown in economic growth blamed in large...