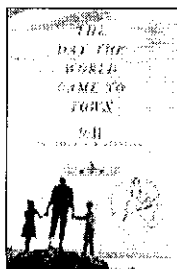


## About The Book

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### The Day the World Came to Town

9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland

By **Jim DeFede**

**Price:** \$14.99  
**On Sale:** 8/14/2003  
**Formats:** Trade PB

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## Book Description

"For the better part of a week, nearly every man, woman, and child in Gander and the surrounding smaller towns stopped what they were doing so they could help. They placed their lives on hold for a group of strangers and asked for nothing in return. They affirmed the basic goodness of man at a time when it was easy to doubt such humanity still existed."

When thirty-eight jetliners bound for the United States were forced to land in Gander, Newfoundland, on September 11, 2001, due to the closing of United States airspace, the citizens of this small community were called upon to come to the aid of more than six thousand displaced travelers.

Roxanne and Clarke Loper were excited to be on their way home from a lengthy and exhausting trip to Kazakhstan, where they had adopted a daughter, when their plane suddenly changed course and they found themselves in Newfoundland. Hannah and Dennis O'Rourke, who had been on vacation in Ireland, were forced to receive updates by telephone on the search for their son Kevin, who was among the firefighters missing at the World Trade Center. George Vitale, a New York state trooper and head of the governor's security detail in New York City who was returning from a trip to Dublin, struggled to locate his sister Patty, who worked in the Twin Towers. A family of Russian immigrants, on their way to the Seattle area to begin a new life, dealt with the uncertainty of conditions in their future home.

The people of Gander were asked to aid and care for these distraught travelers, as well as for thousands more, and their response was truly extraordinary. Oz Fudge, the town constable, searched all over Gander for a flight-crew member so that he could give her a hug as a favor to her sister, a fellow law enforcement officer who managed to reach him by phone. Eithne Smith, an elementary-school teacher, helped the passengers staying at her school put together letters to family members all over the world, which she then faxed. Bonnie Harris, Vi Tucker, and Linda Humby, members of a local animal protection agency, crawled into the jets' cargo holds to feed and care for all of the animals on the flights. Hundreds of people put their names on a list to take passengers into their homes and give them a chance to get cleaned up and relax.

*The Day the World Came to Town* is a positively heartwarming account of the citizens of Gander and its surrounding communities and the unexpected guests who were welcomed with exemplary kindness.



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"A wonderful and engaging account that reaffirms the remarkable humanity and kindness that flourished in the immediate aftermath of 9/11."

— GERALD POSNER, AUTHOR OF CASE CLOSED AND KILLING THE DREAM

ISBN: 9780060559717; ISBN10: 0060559713; Imprint: Harper Paperbacks ; On Sale: 8/14/2003; Format: Trade PB; Trimsize: 5 5/16 x 8; Pages: 256; \$14.99; Ages: 18 and Up

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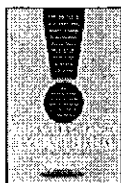
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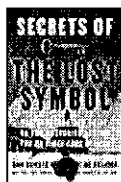
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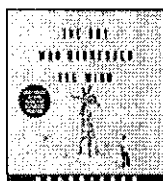
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## ***The Day the World Came to Town 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland***

Jim DeFede



6/18/2005

Rating: **EEEEEE**

There are not many people who don't know what happened in New York City on September 11, 2001. There are not many people who do know what happened in Gander, Newfoundland, after the terrorist attack. DeFede heard about Gander, though, and started interviews. In 2002 he published this heartwarming saga of friendship and neighborliness in the midst of adversity.

Gander, Newfoundland, has a large airport that is left over from World War II. After the larger jets were able to cross further points of the Atlantic, Gander's airport became less used. The size did not shrink, though. When the United States closed its airspace on September 11, Gander was one of the Canadian airports that became strategically important. Thirty-eight aircraft landed in Gander, not sure where or when they could go next.

It was quickly obvious to the local people that the area was now in a state of emergency. They made a town proclamation to that effect so they could use emergency measures to contain the potential problems. There were almost 6,600 people on those planes. The township and area only has about 10,000 inhabitants. The people would not be able to stay on the planes for long. If the U.S. airspace stayed closed for any length of time, the people would need to come off the planes.

That is exactly what happened. By late afternoon crews and passengers started deplaning. The Newfoundlanders processed them through Red Cross to new created shelters as quickly as they could. Even so, many people were on their plane for over 24 hours before being allowed to step off.

Then the people of Gander and the surrounding area began to shine. They befriended the temporary refugees, offering them the use of home showers, automobiles, toothbrushes, access to prescription drugs, cots, blankets, clean clothes, and whatever else was needed to care for so many unexpected guests. And they succeeded.

DeFede tells only a few stories from the thousands that occurred during those days when the planes were grounded. Some passengers never accepted the situation, trying to make demands the whole time they were there. DeFede glosses over those. Instead he focuses on how the locals welcomed the strangers. He tells about some friendship formed that lasted well past those few days on the ground. Amidst the horror of 9/11, DeFede shows us the greatness of people as well.

Yes, this is a feel good book. What is great about it is that it is true. DeFede takes the tone of a loving uncle, looking for the good. He is able to show the reader that a group of terrorists cannot destroy the decency of other people. His writing is almost folksy, welcoming the reader to share the experience.

If you're tired of all the depressing headlines, stop and read this book. Your faith in humankind will be rekindled.

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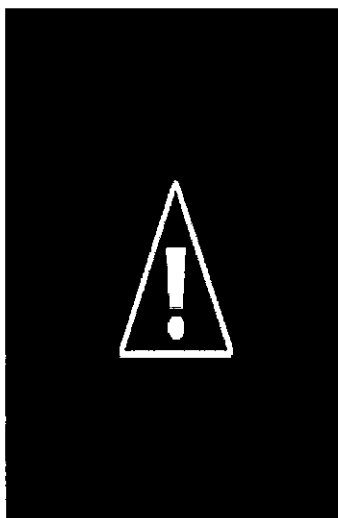
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**397**

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If I started reading a **book about 9/11** and a few pages into it found that an American General, a CEO of an international clothing conglomerate, several members of the board of a wealthy charity, an NYPD detective and parents of a firefighter who is lost in the World Trade Center were stuck in a small Canadian town in the middle of Newfoundland (not to mention a long-lost native son) I would have put the book away with a chuckle and started a new one. Nevertheless, this is not fiction and the events really happen

"The Day the World Came to Town:" by Jim DeFede tells the **non-fiction** story of the 38 **commercial flights**, which have been diverted away from the United States due to closure of the airports, only to **land the small town of Gander**, Newfoundland, Canada. The passengers were forced to spend four days in the town before being allowed to go on their way, but those four days changed them forever.

The residents of Gander opened their homes, buildings and hearts to the stranded passengers and **showed them hospitality** which most of them have never encountered and struck up lifelong friendships. Those without luggage got clothed, business donated food and toiletries and meals were cooked for one and all. Even though I **really liked the book**, and even recommended it to my beloved wife, there are several glaring omissions.

First and foremost for me: there is no map.

The author goes to great length to describe the geographical region as well as the Gander's street layout (which is supposed to be shaped like the head of a moose) — yet...no map?

I find this to be unbelievable.

Second, the writing seems more like a collection of articles than a finished book. That's fine and it didn't bother me that much but I thought I should mention it.

Third, it would be nice to have appendices with a chart of the flights, departure, landings at Gander International Airport, etc.

Fourth, I would have liked to see more pictures. Again, this does not take away from the book but would have been a nice addition. There are several pictures in the book but they are small and grainy (much like...a newspaper article).

Fifth, where is the tourist info for Newfoundland? Come on guys, capitalize on this book. I've been to your area (but not Gander), it is a beautiful, gorgeous part of the world and true to the book — some of the nicest people in the world live there.

However, I still this book high marks because I did thoroughly enjoyed it since it is about the people of Newfoundland and not about the big events happening around them. The only part which took away my personal enjoyment was the first bullet point I mentioned (and yes, I did google the town and found the map but I still can't "see" the moose head layout).

**My rating for The Day the World Came to Town — 5**

## About the Author



Jim DeFede was born in Brooklyn, New York on August 11, 1962. Although his family remains in the same rent-controlled apartment building where he was raised, DeFede left Brooklyn when he was 19 to attend Colorado State University. Much to his mother's continuing disappointment, however, DeFede never graduated from college.

In 1986, DeFede landed his first job in journalism as a night cops reporter for The Spokesman-Review in Spokane, Washington.

In 1991, he accepted an offer to become a staff writer with the weekly newspaper Miami New Times, where he won numerous awards during his eleven year tenure with the paper.

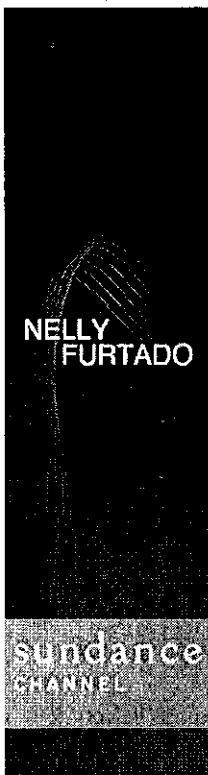
Between 2002 and 2005, DeFede was a metro columnist for The Miami Herald.

In 2006, DeFede joined CBS4 News.

DeFede was a regular contributing writer for Tina Brown's Talk magazine and his work has also appeared in Radar, The New Republic, Newsday, Mother Jones, The (London) Independent, Miami Monthly, Key West Magazine and Loft.

His first book, "The Day The World Came To Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland," was published in 2002 by HarperCollins and was recognized with a 2003 Christopher Award for its ability to "affirm the highest values of the human spirit."

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

## THE DAY THE WORLD CAME TO TOWN: 9/11 IN GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND

by Jim DeFede

Regan Books  
August 2003, 256 pages, \$12.95 (US) \$19.95 (Canada) (paperback)

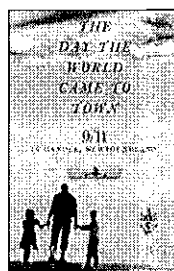
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### Saviors

If you are one of those people who rolls your eyes upon hearing ultra-sunny bromides like "There are no such things as strangers, only friends you haven't met yet," then *The Day the World Came to Town* probably is not the book for you. For if there was ever a book that proved the veracity of such statements, it is certainly Jim DeFede's Christopher Award-winning account of the 6,593 refugees from the sky stranded in Gander, Newfoundland on 11 September 2001.



*The Day the World Came to Town* is a heartfelt account of humanity at its finest during its darkest hours. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks at the World Trade Center, 38 jetliners en route to the United States were re-directed to Gander, a place once dubbed "the biggest gas station in the world." What occurred over the succeeding four days was an outpouring of what could be termed hospitality, although that word is barely adequate to cover the actions of Gander's citizens.

DeFede's rose-tinted and sometimes cliché-riddled writing cloaks a complex, interwoven mass of stories and characters presented to prove that out of great tragedy can come great compassion. One can easily forgive DeFede's feel-good perspective, however, as ultimately, he reveals that there are still people who unselfishly offer help, comfort and hope to those in need simply because they can.

DeFede starts the book by providing an account of Gander's history in order to contextualize the story to be told. Gander is a hard-working, fun-loving community composed of friendly and generous people who meet at the local Tim Horton's or bar for a drink and an exchange of local news and gossip. It is a place where everyone is greeted with a smile and a kind word, stranger and friend alike. In short, it is the prototypical small town one sees in movies or, ironically enough, reads about in books.

But when Gander became the recipient of unexpected guests on that most tragic day, its residents immediately rallied with a swiftness and friendliness that even movies and books cannot accurately replicate. As DeFede consistently demonstrates, the town was a place where no call for assistance went unheard, and no person struggled alone.

Schools and halls quickly became emergency shelters. Residents invited people in to their homes for showers, beds and meals. People stripped their houses bare of sheets and towels, and offered the use of their vehicles. Pharmacists filled prescriptions from all over the world at no cost. Local businesses emptied their shelves of food, clothing, toys and toiletries. One local business, Canadian Tire, was given instructions by its head office to provide whatever was required at no expense. At times, this even meant patronizing the store's competitors in order to provide the items requested.

DeFede fluidly relays the astonishment and shock that the passengers felt as a result of the efforts to ensure their well-being and safe-keeping. He does this so well that it is difficult to not experience those exact same emotions when reading of the passengers' first impressions of Gander.

These first moments of the crisis provide the stage upon which DeFede deftly weaves together the individual stories of the caregivers and the passengers. There are Bonnie Harris and Vi Tucker, who cared for the animals on the flights, and who provided a mascot for airport staff in Ralph, a 10-week old cocker spaniel found on one of the planes. And Roxanne and Clarke Loper and Beth and Billy Wakefield, two families returning from Kazakhstan with their newly adopted daughters, anxious to return home after an already highly emotional journey.

The emotional impact of these and other stories are undeniable. It is difficult to not feel the anxiety of Hannah and Dennis O'Rourke, parents awaiting word about their son, a New York City firefighter. Or the hope and commitment expressed by Beulah Cooper, a local "Newfie," who made it her mission to comfort the O'Rourkes in any way possible.

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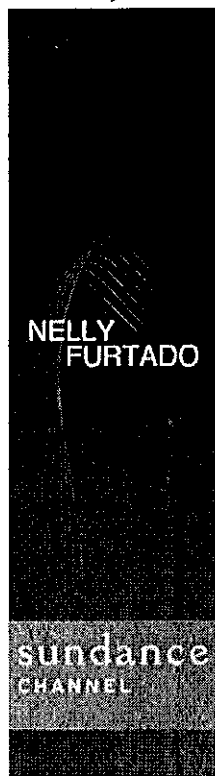
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But for every moment that brings an inkling of a tear, there is another that brings a smile. DeFede's account of Hugo Boss chairman Werner Baldessarini's trip to Wal-Mart for new underwear is certainly worthy of a chuckle or two. As are the adventures of a few lucky passengers who were made honorary Newfoundlanders through their participation in a traditional ceremony that involves drinking locally brewed liquor called Sreetch and kissing a codfish.

These are just some of the individuals and stories that will stay long after the book slowly recedes to the back of the shelf. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the book is that DeFede, a columnist for *The Miami Herald*, never loses sight of the human elements of the story. He utilizes his award-winning journalistic skills to great effect in his first book, an achievement not to be underestimated given the logistics of trying to make a coherent story out of such an intricate web of people and circumstances.

For sure, DeFede's writing is a little blurred around the edges, a little worn in the creases. He does not attempt to break any new ground in narrative style or structure. But this is to be expected. The story does not need tricks or clever devices to get the point across. DeFede wanted to provide an honest account of a previously unrecounted story that most people never knew existed. He achieves his goal with great success.

It's difficult to find fault with a book so earnestly dedicated to showing us that compassion and generosity are not just myths from days past, and neither is the kind of modesty demonstrated by the citizens of Gander, who never wanted nor expected not asked for any recognition or accolades. Instead, they set a standard to which the rest of us should aspire to reach.

— 11 November 2003

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I read this book on the heels of Chris Rose's "1 Dead in Attic: After Katrina." Chris Rose mentions this book toward the end of his, and I thought reading a positive story would be a good balance after reading the details of post-Katrina New Orleans. The story of 9/11 and the people of Gander, Newfoundland is fascinating and uplifting, but the book itself is poorly...

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This review is from: **The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland (Hardcover)**

It's hard to believe that anything written about the events of September 11, 2001, could be described as 'wonderful' but Miami Herald columnist Jim DeFede has penned a book that is all that and more.

'The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland' describes what happened when more than 250 aircraft, prohibited from entering U.S. airspace due to the terrorist attacks, were diverted to Canadian airports. Of those, 38 planes bearing 6,595 passengers landed in Gander, Newfoundland, a town with a population of barely 10,000. What happened next goes a very long way to restore the faith in humanity that was shaken by the terrorists. Without exception, the residents of Gander (They call themselves 'Newfies') opened their doors to welcome the unexpected refugees and poured out such warmth and compassion that one passenger later remarked, "I was on a flight from London to New York and landed in Heaven."

Schools were closed to provide space for shelters. Residents took the sheets and blankets off their own beds to deliver to the passengers and stayed up all night to feed and welcome them when they finally were able to get off the planes. Locals approached 'plane people' in the street and invited them into their homes to shower. Pharmacists made thousands of calls worldwide to verify prescriptions and then filled them for free. Shop owners gave away their stock to those in need and, when they ran out, bought more from the competition and gave that away as well. The events described in this book will make you either proud to be a Canadian or regretful that you aren't.

DeFede skillfully blends the tragic and the comic. One moment Gander's residents are compassionately providing around-the-clock care and companionship to the

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mother of a missing New York firefighter. Meanwhile, other locals are making honorary Newfoundlanders out of several passengers by means of an age-old ceremony involving kissing a codfish and drinking the local liquor whose name, Screech, is apparently an apt description of its flavor.

There's even a little karma thrown in. When the principal of the Lewisporte Middle School allows a passenger to use their computer center to 'run a small business' she doesn't discover until later that the passenger's name was Gordon Conway and the 'small business' that he was running out of her school was the Rockefeller Foundation. Needless to say, her generosity resulted in a new computer center for her students.

After the end of their involuntary visit to Gander, many of the passengers have since returned to Gander to visit and express their appreciation to those who were so kind and generous to them. I, too, plan to visit Gander someday, if for no other reason than to see what kind of people it takes to shine such a bright light on one of the darkest days in our history.

I'd also like to find out what Screech tastes like.

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TOP 500 REVIEWER VINEYD VOICE

It took me a while to get around to reading this book, because, by the time it came out, I was over-saturated with 9/11 materials. But this is a very different type of story from those about Ground Zero. When the United States shut down its airspace and diverted all those planes elsewhere, 38 of them ended up in Gander, Newfoundland, a fishing town of about 10,000. The reason was simple: Gander, in spite of its small population today, has an enormous airport. During World War II, American military planes refueled at Gander before heading across the ocean to Europe. Until the invention of the jet engine, Gander was the "biggest gas station in the world," and many planes still stop there to refuel.

Physically, Gander Airport could accommodate all those big planes landing, but what about the passengers? That's the real story of Gander -- how the people opened their hearts and homes to total strangers and mobilized every resource they had to comfort and care for the thousands of travelers who suddenly found themselves stranded. It was humanity's finest hour.

This book abounds with human interest stories, such as: the fire engine racing to the next town with sirens blaring, to bring back toys for the "plane children"; the animal protection volunteers who crawled into the bellies of the grounded planes to rescue and care for the passengers' pets; the American family returning from Kazakhstan with a newly-adopted daughter; the big party for the four kids with birthdays that week... and many, many more.

I was especially pleased to read about Rabbi Sudak, the Orthodox Jew (Lubovitcher Hasid, actually) stranded in Gander, who set up a small kosher kitchen and ministered to other stranded Jews, as well as curious locals and a "secret Jew" who lived in the area and "came out" to the rabbi. I was aware of this story because I had read about it in a Jewish newspaper but, in all the TV coverage of Gander, I never heard the rabbi mentioned once. In fact, there was a total lack of coverage of Jewish chaplains anywhere during the mainstream 9/11 coverage. This annoyed me to no end, because I KNEW that rabbis and lay Jewish workers were ministering during the 9/11 efforts, the same as their Christian counterparts. So it was very heartening to see this story included among the many tales of courage and caring.

On the technical end, the book is well-written. The author, Jim Defede, is an excellent storyteller. In the course of writing the book, he interviewed over 180 people. From these, he chose a few representative stories to follow through the entire six days of the crisis. At the same time, he paints the bigger picture very well, so that we can see how the whole town of Gander -- as well as several other towns in the area -- were part of it. He also weaves in cultural and historical background about the area, such as the history of the airport mentioned above. (Which, by the way, answered my own questions about why all those planes were sent to a tiny town. I remember wondering about that at the time.) All in all, this is an excellent book -- one that I could not put down once I started reading.

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9/11



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11 of 11 people found the following review helpful:

 **Gives you something to feel good about**, October 6, 2002

By **T. King**  (Brooklyn, N.Y. United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

REAL NAME

This review is from: **The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland (Hardcover)**

Living just 5 miles from Ground Zero I haven't felt the urge to read any of the many books chronicling the events of that horrible day. On a strong recommendation from a friend I picked up THE DAY THE WORLD CAME TO TOWN. Yes this story will bring tears to your eyes but they will quickly be replaced by sheer awe at a community that, without a moment's hesitation, opened its heart and its doors to complete strangers.


If this story was written as fiction one would accuse the author of an overactive imagination. The people of Gander and it's neighboring communities jumped at the chance to render hospitality and comfort to the "plane people", as they referred to them. This story takes the reader through the full range of human emotions from tears to laughter. Yes, laughter. I want to go to Gander myself and just hug everyone I see.


If you read one September 11th book, make it this one. It provides a lesson we all could learn about being a good neighbor.

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Was this review helpful to you? ☐ Yes ☐ No [Comment](#)

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful:

 **A different story about 9/11**, October 5, 2002

By **Dennis Mathes**  (Germany) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: **The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland (Hardcover)**

This book uncovers a more or less unknown story of the events of 9/11. For me personally this story is very true. I was one of the passengers that had to divert to Gander, and as soon as the book arrived, I've read the book within one day. I just could not stop. Never before was I so emotionally touched by a book. Maybe because this book is about "us", who landed in Gander. I don't know. I have learned things from the book, which most of the passengers did not know before. It is just amazing how everything got organized by the citizens of Gander and surrounding communities with the support of the Salvation Army. Jim DeFede picks a few passengers who were aboard different airliners and re-tells their story. I do have my own story (as probably every passenger who was stranded in Gander), and it is interesting to see how other people lived through the week after 9/11 in Newfoundland.

If you want to know about a different story of 9/11, read this book, and you will be amazed how people were helping complete strangers that were caught in the tragic events.

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Was this review helpful to you? ☐ Yes ☐ No [Comment](#)

13 of 14 people found the following review helpful:

 **The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland**, September 6, 2002

By **A Customer**

This review is from: **The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland (Hardcover)**

I work across the street from "GROUND ZERO" and like a moth to a flame have been attracted to every book and documentary chronicling 9/11. It has been a very sad literary experience as you can well imagine. When I picked up this book I expected much the same. I was so wrong. This book gave me and will give you the much needed boost when remembering that awful day. I was immediately captured by such humanity that I believed as a Native New Yorker no longer existed. The people of Gander Newfoundland are a true rare breed. They didn't just sympathize with the plight of the American people during this crisis they became self proclaimed Americans. These Newfoundlanders gave the world an incredible example to follow. The book is so well written that I finished the book feeling as if I knew each and everyone personally. I read this book on the verge of such a horrible anniversary that I'm oddly hoping for a follow up to this story on each anniversary. The stories of each person stranded in Gander will undoubtedly strike

a chord with all of us. Enjoy it I did!!

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Was this review helpful to you? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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8 of 8 people found the following review helpful:

 **Full of Grace**, October 11, 2002

By **Z18 Session** (Brooklyn, NY United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: **The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland (Hardcover)**

Man, there are a lot of September 11th books out there. I've avoided most of them, but this was placed in my hands as a "must read." And I'm very glad I read it.

When the hijacked planes hit the World Trade Center, US Airspace was closed. Several thousand transatlantic airline passengers found themselves diverted to Canada. This is a story of some of the 6,000 that found themselves in Gander, Newfoundland.

You wouldn't think a story about what is on the surface a 4 day unscheduled layover would be so compelling. But the response of this tiny town with a large airport (a former airbase) is incredibly moving.

Jim DeFede does an incredible job of getting out of the way and letting the story speak for itself. He interviewed a large sample of the people who were stranded, as well as the people who opened their homes and set up shelters. A good portion of the book covers the incredible logistics involved, but it never loses the human element.

The generosity of the people of Gander is something to behold. The stories of astounding generosity come one after another: The pharmacist who worked 30 hours straight to fill prescriptions from all over the world at no cost to the passengers, the vet who set up a shelter for animals in transit, and the countless people who raided their own linen closets so the passengers would have sheets and towels (none of the passengers had access to their luggage).

I would recommend this book to anyone who's lost faith in humanity since 09/11/01.

{Special note to Canada: Thank you!}


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Was this review helpful to you? ☐ Yes ☐ No

[Comment](#)

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful:

 **A fresh new twist to the catastrophic events of 9/11**, September 5, 2002

By **R. Loper "Cricketchrp"** (TX USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

REAL NAME™

This review is from: **The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland (Hardcover)**

A light during a time of darkness. When a small town opened its doors and its heart to the passengers stranded when the United States closed its airspace. During a time of utter uncertainty, the residents of Gander, Newfoundland were giving tours, cooking, providing warm showers...in essence, the people of Gander were treating complete strangers as family. Friendships were made and the makings of a great story were formed. Jim Defede did an excellent job capturing the soul of Gander in this book and as a passenger that was stranded...I can say that in a time of extreme uncertainty...Gander rose up and made us all proud to be Canada's neighbor. Read this book. We could all learn a valuable lesson from it. During a time of "good vs. evil", Gander fought the silent fight and made 'good' the victor.


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Was this review helpful to you? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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6 of 6 people found the following review helpful:

 **A love Story for all Nations**, July 3, 2004

By **Jan Philips "Quaker"** (Ridgewood, NJ USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

REAL NAME™

Teachers take note! This is a must read for all future leaders. Jim DeFede tells the reality of people coming together to be "in the moment" during a very difficult moment.

Clergy, this is a must read for religious studies! This is a how to book for adults -- how to turn evil into good, how to step across politics, religion, take down the

borders that separate us and take charge, how to work for peace.  
Parents, a family read! Young and old, children, women, men and animals, every one is counted and made to be accountable for making life go on!  
A fine gift book --Heart warming sincerity at its best!

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8 of 9 people found the following review helpful:

**A New Twist**, September 12, 2002

By **R. Loper "Cricketchrp"** (TX USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

REAL NAME

This review is from: **The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland (Hardcover)**

What an amazing new twist to the horrific events of 9/11. While the U.S. was engrossed in the devastation of the attacks, thousands of passengers were left stranded in Canada. What was to become of the passengers? My family were among the passengers stranded in this small town and the hospitality and love that poured out of their homes was beyond description. Canada made me so proud and I will be eternally grateful for them taking us, the strangers, and making us friends. The U.S. could learn a few things from you guys!

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Was this review helpful to you?

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5 of 5 people found the following review helpful:

**One of the nicest stories you'll ever read**, February 3, 2005

By **Patricia L. Grove** (Rothschild, WI United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

REAL NAME

I am a first order Canophile (a person fascinated with anything Canadian) so naturally I devoured this book. I learned a lot about Newfoundland (and how it's actually quite separate from the rest of the maple leaf.) But most importantly, I learned about how a whole province can come together and lend a hand without being asked. It's the story of how people from all walks of life that ended up in the same place during a tragic time, and the people that took care of them. Stories that may seem unreal to some people, like that of George, who just offered a ride to the nearest tavern (and later opened his home) to a group of Texans who were just walking down the road. Countless people opening their homes for a shower or just a few minutes peace. About the mother that invited a US National Security Advisor to her child's birthday party. It also talks about how other passengers dealt with their stranding. Like the chairman of Hugo Boss, the mayor of Frankfurt, adoptive parents returning from abroad, and a very colorful prodigal Newfie. Some cried, all ate, and plenty drank enough to "embalm a herd of moose" as the author states. My favorite part of the book in fact was about the Screech-In ceremony which sounds like as much fun as you can have legally.

The author does an excellent job blending all these elements together, and really capturing the feel of a historic moment in time. You can sure bet I'm going to Newfoundland someday.

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### **Publishers Weekly Review**

Journalist Defede calls our attention to a sidelight of the events of September 11, when the town of Gander (pop. 10,000) was overwhelmed by more than 6,500 air travelers grounded when U.S. airspace was shut down. For a week, Defede relates, the locals provided food, shelter and supplies and reassurance; "they placed their lives on hold for a group of strangers and asked nothing in return." Here the generous Newfoundlanders get due recognition. Photos. (Sept.) Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information.

### **School Library Journal Review**

Adult/High School-Through selective interviews, this book describes events surrounding the 6595 people on board 38 planes whose transit across the Atlantic was disrupted when they were vectored to the airport in Gander, Newfoundland, on September 11, 2001. As a chronicle of the heartwarming reception these passengers received from touchdown until departure six days later, the volume resounds with tributes to the kindness and acts of generosity on the part of local residents (population 10,000). Quick-thinking initiatives led by the mayor, constable, air-traffic controllers, and local heads of professional disaster-relief agencies organized a process for greeting deplaning passengers; checking luggage; fulfilling immigration/security requirements; and then transporting groups to churches, schools, and community centers where they were housed and fed. One account tells of volunteers from Gander's SPCA who crawled through the cargo spaces of the jetliners, locating pets and animals in cages, and bringing them food, water, and fresh bedding until they could be moved to a vacant hangar. Separate vignettes focus on the parents of a New York City firefighter who was missing, on a Texas couple returning from adopting an orphan in Kazakhstan, on a teenage cancer victim en route home following a "make-a-wish" trip to Italy, and more. Each of these stories will resonate with teens. -Lynn Nutwell, Fairfax City Regional Library, VA Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information.

### **Booklist Review**

On September 11, 2001, 38 jetliners bound for the U.S. were forced to land at Gander International Airport in Newfoundland after the terrorists' attack resulted in the closing of all American airspace. The planes carried 6,595 passengers and crew members; Gander's population is barely 10,000. This book is the story of how the people of Gander and the surrounding smaller towns worked around the clock for the next six days to help these stranded travelers. They prepared meals and--in some cases--took strangers into their homes. The Red Cross collected linens and toiletries for the passengers who had no access to their suitcases. A local brewery offered free samples of beer, animals on the planes were cared for in a vacant hangar, kosher meals were provided for a rabbi, and a volunteer taxi service helped passengers get around town. Readers could do without all the stilted dialogue that Defede has created to move the story along, but the book nevertheless is an engaging account of these copious acts of kindness. --George Cohen

1. If your book offers a **cultural portrait**—of life in another country or region of your own country, start with questions a, b, and c ...

- a. What **observations** are made in the book?  
Does the author examine economics and politics, family traditions, the arts, religious beliefs, language or food?
- b. Does the author **criticize or admire** the culture? Does he/she wish to preserve or change the way of life? Either way, what would be risked or gained?
- c. What is **different** from your own culture? What do you find most surprising, intriguing or difficult to understand?

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2. What is the **central idea** discussed in the book? What issues or ideas does the author explore? Are they personal, sociological, global, political, economic, spiritual, medical, or scientific?

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3. Do the issues **affect your life**? How so—directly, on a daily basis, or more generally? Now or sometime in the future?

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4. What **evidence** does the author use to support the book's ideas? Is the evidence convincing...definitive or...speculative? Does the author depend on personal opinion, observation, and assessment? Or is the evidence factual—based on science, statistics, historical documents, or quotations from (credible) experts?

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5. What kind of **language** does the author use? Is it objective and dispassionate? Or passionate and earnest? Is it polemical, inflammatory, sarcastic? Does the language help or undercut the author's premise?

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6. What are the **implications** for the future? Are there long- or short-term consequences to the issues raised in the book? Are they positive or negative...affirming or frightening?

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7. What **solutions** does the author propose? Who would implement those solutions? How probable is success?

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8. How **controversial** are the issues raised in the book? Who is aligned on which sides of the issues? Where do you fall in that line-up?

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9. Talk about **specific passages** that struck you as significant—or interesting, profound, amusing, illuminating, disturbing, sad...? What was memorable?

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**10.** What have you **learned** after reading this book? Has it broadened your perspective about a difficult issue—personal or societal? Has it introduced you to a culture in another country...or an ethnic or regional culture in your own country?

# JIM DEFEDE

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## E-Mail Jim DeFede

Jim DeFede joined CBS4 News in January 2006, providing regular commentary on the evening news. He now serves as an investigative reporter and a member of the CBS4 News I-Team.

Jim DeFede was born in Brooklyn, New York on August 11, 1962. Although his family remains in the same rent-controlled apartment building where he was raised, DeFede left Brooklyn when he was 19 to attend Colorado State University. Much to his mother's continuing disappointment, however, DeFede never

graduated from college.

In 1986, DeFede landed his first job in journalism as a night cops reporter for The Spokesman-Review in Spokane, Washington.

In 1991, he accepted an offer to become a staff writer with the weekly newspaper Miami New Times, where he won numerous awards during his eleven year tenure with the paper.

Between 2002 and 2005, DeFede was a metro columnist for The Miami Herald.

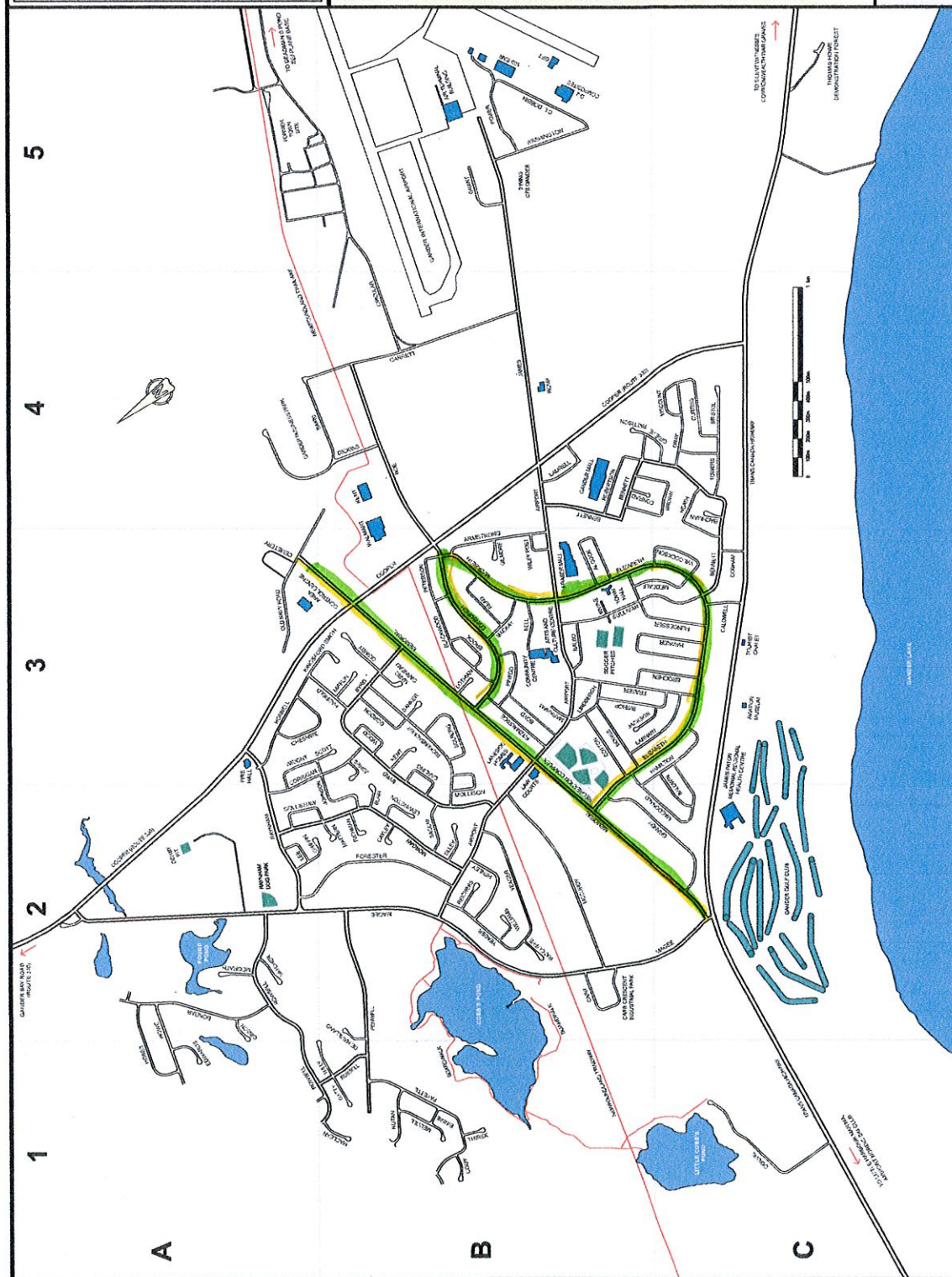
DeFede was a regular contributing writer for Tina Brown's Talk magazine and his work has also appeared in Radar, The New Republic, Newsday, Mother Jones, The (London) Independent, Miami Monthly, Key West Magazine and Loft.

His first book, "The Day The World Came To Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland," was published in 2002 by HarperCollins and was recognized with a 2003 Christopher Award for its ability to "affirm the highest values of the human spirit."



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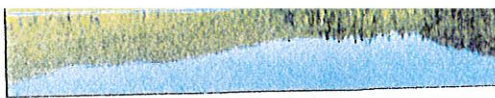








The forested Laurentians... incorporates part of the Laurentian Mountains. Within its boundaries are over 1,600 lakes.



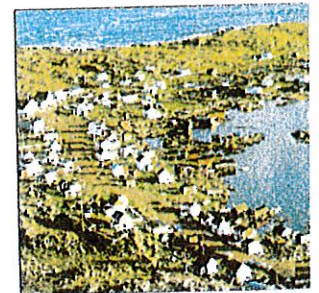
Thes  
tides



The tides at the Bay of Fundy are among the highest in the world. At low tide the tree-topped rocks have been likened to flowerpots.

## TRANSPORTATION &

BOTH QUÉBEC AND ONTARIO have sector located in the south. Across industry is largely based around accounts for the large number of plants and mines. Many of the fa also gradually being harnessed fi

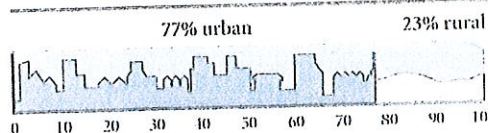


Fish processing is a major industry in the Atlantic provin Fogo Island, off Newfoundland has barely a thousand inhabin but it is able to sustain a number of cod canneries.

## USING THE LAND

WITH THIN SOILS restricting far that grow in vast unbroken tra provide an important source o rely heavily on the rich fishing although foreign competition : in strict policies to conserve st

### THE URBAN/RURAL POPULATION DIVIDE



POPULATION DENSITY	TOTAL LAND AREA
17 people per sq mile (6 people per sq km)	1,061,600 sq miles (2,750,360 sq km)

Land use and  
Population Distribution

Hudson Bay