

Root Scoop II

Volume 6 Issue 1

The First Duty is to Remember

February/March 2008

Jones Introduces Legislation Supporting Stamp

**Walter B. Jones (R-NC) Champions
House Resolution 887, Beirut Stamp**

"Since the tragic events of September 11th, Americans have joined in solidarity to defend the ideals upon which our nation was founded, and to combat the evils of terrorism. We must not forget that the soldiers who lost their lives in Beirut were some of our first victims of terror," Congressman Jones said. "These soldiers went to restore peace in a war-torn nation. A commemorative stamp in their honor would not just further mourn their loss, but would celebrate peace in the American spirit that was embodied in the mission of these fallen heroes."

The House Resolution 887 now needs 50 co-sponsors to bring it to the house floor for a vote, if successful, creating a congressional house resolution backing the support of a Beirut Stamp. It does not automatically guarantee the stamp will be approved, which is still up to the Postmaster General. Having a Congressional Resolution carries a little more support, along with the 2 letters of recommendation we currently have.

ACTION ALERT:

Beirut Veterans and Family Members are urged to contact their local Congressional Representative and request them to sign onto

House Res. 887. Contact information for your congressional rep. can be found at www.house.gov/writerep/

HR 887 which states:

"Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a commemorative postage stamp should be issued in remembrance of the victims and in honor of the veterans of the peacekeeping mission in Beirut, Lebanon, from 1982 to 1984." Beirut Stamp's website: www.beirutstamp.com



Mar. 27 Deadline for Plaintiffs in Law Suit

Beirut Vets and surviving family members must contact a Washington D.C. law firm immediately, not later than Mar. 27, to be included as plaintiffs on a lawsuit against the perpetrators of the Oct. 23, 1983 Beirut barracks terrorist bombing.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION...See PAGE 4!

25th Remembrance Plans: As the 25th Remembrance draws nearer, the Planning Committee has begun intensifying planning efforts. See Page 7 for details...

National Memorial Day Parade Seeks Beirut Veterans to Participate in Annual Event

By Bill Kibler

The Beirut Veterans of America need members to march in the National Memorial Day Parade on May 26th in Washington, D.C., where the BVA will be highlighted this year for its 25th Anniversary. The Beirut Bug (see last issue of Root Scoop) is planning to be centerpiece representing BVA and we would like to have as many Beirut Veterans and Family Members march in this year's parade as possible. The past few years we have only had a handful of Vets and Family Members, but this year being our 25th Anniversary, we need as many people as we



Memorial
Day
Never Forget
Ever Honor

can get from the DC Metro Area, as well as anyone who would like to attend from out of town. Each year it's been a lot of fun and we get an outstanding reception the entire parade route, however, we definitely need more than 5 people participating. If there are enough people from out of town interested, I will try and reserve a block of rooms somewhere local. Contact me (bill@beirutstamp.com or 703-209-USMC) if you are interested in marching and/or need lodging. Keep in mind, that this is also the same weekend that Rolling Thunder does their annual bike ride and is always a fun weekend in Washington with lots going on. For more information on the parade, visit their recently updated website at

www.nationalmemorialdayparade.com/

2008 BVA Board of Directors

Mark T. Hacala , Chairman 3350 Conquistador Court Annandale, VA 22003	703-698-7667
Craig Renshaw RR#3, Box 1303 Folkston, GA 31537	h: 912-496-2710 c: 912-276-0321 renshaw62@yahoo.com
Tim Greer 1461 Tall Oaks Circle Conyers, GA 30013	h:770-760-0679 c: 404-679-7233
Donald G. Inns II 640 Cloverfield Lane Greenwood, IN 46143-7370	c:317-508-2570
Pat Metcalf 11 Trotter Circle Fredericksburg, Va. 22407	h:540-834-5546 c:540-538-9128 hope4@verizon.net
Jeff Bucchi 10724 Hanover Court Independence, KY 41051	859-371-3847 nptwildcat@yahoo.com
Glenn Dolphin 164 Wisteria Drive Aiken, S.C. 29803	w:803-648-0728 c: 803-508-9015
Judith C. Young 30 Eraser Road Moorestown, NJ 08057	(H) 856-235-6918 jeyoung83@yahoo.com
Mary Ellen Jackowski 20 Stagecoach Road Chestertown, NY 12817	(H) 518-494-4609 jjandme@peoplepc.com

Beirut Veterans of America

BVA President - Randy Gaddo
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Secretary - Michael Fullarton
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Membership - Debra Reisert, Jeff Bucchi, Jon Warmeling, and Bill Yontz

"Scoop" mailout - Debra Reisert

Root Scoop II

Managing Editor, Randy Gaddo
217 Sandown Drive,
Peachtree City, Georgia 30269
(h) 770-629-2613
Email: cwo4usmc@comcast.net

Editor, Bill Kibler
2005 Columbia Pike #624
Arlington, VA 22204
cell: 703-209-USMC
Email: bill@beirutstamp.com

This publication is intended as a communication tool for members and friends of the BVA. Views and opinions are those of contributors and do not necessarily reflect views of BVA board, officers or members.

Welcome HMCM(FMF) Mark T. Hacala, USN as new BVA Chairman of the Board.



continued to serve with regular and reserve Marine Corps infantry units for the next 13 years, includ-

A Life Member of BVA, Master Chief Hospital Corpsman (Navy Fleet Marine Force Specialist) Mark Hacala enlisted in the Navy in 1981. As a Hospital Corpsman Third Class (E-4), he served in combat in Beirut, Lebanon with Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Marines, 24th Marine Amphibious Unit from May to November 1983. He contin-

ing a nine-month mobilization and deployment to 3d Marine Division in Okinawa during the Persian Gulf War.

As a Master Chief Petty Officer (E-9) in the Navy Reserve, he is assigned as the Command Master Chief of the 450-person Reserve unit supporting the National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, Maryland. In his civilian profession, he is Director of History and Education of the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation in Washington, DC. There, he is responsible for the Memorial's exhibits, archives, reference library and education programs. He has also consulted for and appeared in several productions for the History Channel.

Master Chief Hacala earned a Bachelor of Arts in history from The University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1993. His personal decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, two Navy Commendation Medals, five Navy Achievement Medals and the Combat Action Ribbon.

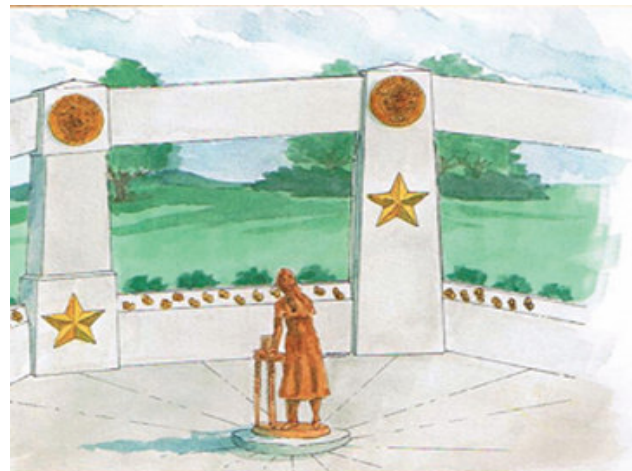
Gold Star Mothers Erecting National Monument in Washington, DC.

The term Gold Star Mother came about during World War I and has remained a term of endearment for all mothers whose sons and daughters have died in the line of duty in the U.S. armed forces or its allies or died as a result of injuries sustained in such service. The National Executive Board of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. voted several years ago to undertake the erection of a National Monument to honor all Gold Star Mothers, regardless of affiliation or membership status. The prototype of the monument was selected after reviewing two proposals, and the winning design was dedicated in Putnam County New York, July 2006. Under the direction of Mrs. Judith Young, Chairman, GSM Memorial Fund, this monument is their gift to all past, present and future Gold Star Mothers. They have received



monetary donations from national organizations to start the first phase; which is to hire a site planner to help them through the process of obtaining ground. It is unknown, at this time, how long this will take and what steps will be needed to ensure they will have a permanent place in history in our Nations Capitol. Also, they are also selling pins to help raise money for this undertaking. These pins are made in the USA by a Vietnam veteran from Pennsylvania and sell for \$10.00. Advisors for the Monument so far include Marines: General P.X. Kelley (Ret) and Navy: Rear Admiral John Higginson (Ret). To read more about this project, visit their website at <http://www.gsmmonument.org>

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Mar. 27 Deadline...from pg. 1

President Bush signed legislation Jan. 28 that opened a 60-day window for eligible Root vets and surviving families to sign on as plaintiffs in a law suit against Iran after a federal court found that country guilty of the 1983 bombing.

To determine eligibility contact the law offices of Heideman, Nudelman & Kalik at (202) 463-1818, email rdheideman@hnklaw.com or mail to 1146 19th Street, N.W., 5th Floor, Washington D.C. 20036. Any veteran in or near the area of the bombing or their surviving families may be eligible. See lawsuit details at www.hnklaw.com

Interrogator Team Searches for SSgt. Ronald J. Garcia

We are making a dedicated search to update our files on one of the Marines lost in Beirut in 1983. SSgt Ronald J. Garcia, USMC was a Marine Interrogator with the 2nd Interrogator Translator Team (ITT) attached in support to the 8th Marines. I am an elected officer with the Marine Corps Interrogator Translator Teams Association (MCITTA) and we honor and remember SSgt Garcia each year at our reunion and Memorial Service. We also have a Roll of Honor at our website that pays tribute to him and all other Marine Interrogators lost in battle since WW II. I am hoping that you or any member of the BVA may be of some assistance to us by providing any biographical information on Garcia; any known surviving family; where he is interred; and any pictures that may be available. Anyone having information about SSgt. Garcia may contact us at our website, www.mcitta.org.

Semper Fidelis

Mitchell Paradis
MGySgt USMC (Ret)
Chairman, Membership Committee

Another 25th Remembrance Paint Job Takes To The Road

James Sottile, a 1958 Beirut Veteran from Southbridge, MA has a 83 Honda 750cc Magna-



motorcycle remembering both Beirut and 9-11. The new paint job was a Christmas present from his Son. Jim plans on participating in this coming Rolling Thunder in May in Washington, DC. Jim explains: "We have to remember that those Beirut Marines in 1983 were of the same stock as those who held Guadalcanal, took Iwo Jima, endured the



frozen Chosen Reservoir, and fought in the Tet offensive."

Anyone who has, or knows of people who have used their vehicles to help support the BVA motto, "The First Duty Is To Remember" send a note to the Editor, Root Scoop.



Sailor Killed in Beirut Bombing Honored by Street Naming

By Patrick Whittle, Newsday.com

Joseph P. Milano had already begun packing his bags to return from Beirut to the United States when a suicide bomber unleashed the deadliest attack on overseas Americans since World War II.

Milano, 22, a Navy medic from Farmingville, NY was among 241 American servicemen killed in the Oct. 23, 1983, barracks bombing during the Lebanese civil war.

Milano was remembered Monday, February 4th, almost a quarter century after his death, when more than 200 people came to watch family members and officials name a section of Midland Boulevard in Ronkonkoma in his honor.

The piece of road at the intersection of Midland and Smith Road, just outside Sachem High School North, where Milano graduated in 1979, was re-named "HM3 Joseph P Milano Road," denoting Milano's rank as a third-class hospital corpsman.

It happened because a man who never met Milano decided, after 20 years of silently visiting Milano's grave, that a tribute was in order.

Thomas Weil, 42, of St. James, a Marine who went to Sachem North (formerly Sachem High School), saw the list of casualties on the day of the Beirut bombing and learned that a man from Farmingville had died. He started visiting

Milano's Calverton grave after he returned from his own duties, which included time in Beirut, in 1986.

Last year, as the 25th anniversary of Milano's death approached, Weil contacted Rep. Tim Bishop (D-Southampton) and started the chain of events that led to



Monday's ceremony.

"I just felt that with what's going on in the world, people should know the sacrifices that are made," Weil said.

Rosalie Milano Donohue, Joseph Milano's sister, agreed. She made the trip from Avondale, Pa., and said she was glad to see a crowd of high school students brave the chilly weather and flurrying snow to watch the ceremony.

"When you look at that sign or cross this street, remember, he was real, he was a friend, a cousin, a grandson, a son, he was a peacekeeper and he was my brother," Donohue told the

crowd, which also included Brookhaven Town officials and local war veterans.

Joseph Milano, who grew up in Brooklyn and moved to Farmingville with his parents during his sophomore year of high school, joined the Navy after an unsatisfying attempt at a career as a dental technician, his sister said. He was part of the international peacekeeping force stationed in Beirut.

Donohue remembered her brother as a "kibitzer" who would "pull pranks on you" and "had a ton of friends."

Bishop, citing Milano's work as a peacekeeper, called the fallen Marine a "hero."

"There is a lot of talk about heroes these days, but Joseph Milano was a true hero who gave his life for his country and for the people of Lebanon," he said.

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Beirut Connection

LAST CALL DEADLINE MARCH 31.

For the 25th anniversary there has been some discussion among the families that maybe we should have a booklet with either a photo or letter (or both) representing the 270 names on the wall. We would like the families to send your favorite photo and or letter to Judith Young, 30 Eraser Rd. Moorestown, NJ 08057.

— Joan & Judy

Condolences:

Glen Hollis on the loss of his wife,
Anne Beth Hollis

New BVA Members

David Popper, Jacobstown, NJ (Regular)
Glenn McMorran, Green Bay, WI (Reg.)
John Wright, Sarasota, FL (Life)
Larry Lenahan, Mahopac, NY (Prospect)
Leslie Kameck, Cuba, NY (Regular)
Julio Flores, Robstown, TX (Associate)
Coy Stone, Texarkana, TX (Regular)
Kenneth Skelton, Colora, MD (Life)
Randy Lund, Beach Park, IL (Prospect)
Sherira Green, Baltimore, MD (NOK)
Betty Lewis, Garfield Hts, OH (NOK)
Pearl Olaniji, Alexandria, VA (NOK)
Deanna Owens, Chester, VA (NOK)
David Owens, Chester, VA (NOK)
Cole Schnorf, Ellicott City, MD (NOK)

**Updated BVA By-Laws are now
available on the BVA's Official
Website at www.beirutveterans.org**

Congratulations goes out to Mrs. Judith Young :

"Dept. of Veterans Affairs has appointed Mrs. Judith Young as a member of the Dept. of Veterans Affairs Advisory Commission on Cemeteries and Memorials and is charged with providing advice to the Secretary on matters concerning the administration and operation of the National Cemetery Administration. Signed, R. James Nicholson, Secretary of VA. March 2007

"Bury Me Next to a Marine"

Bury me next to a Marine,
When my time has come to an end,
So I can spend eternity,
Beside my brother and friend

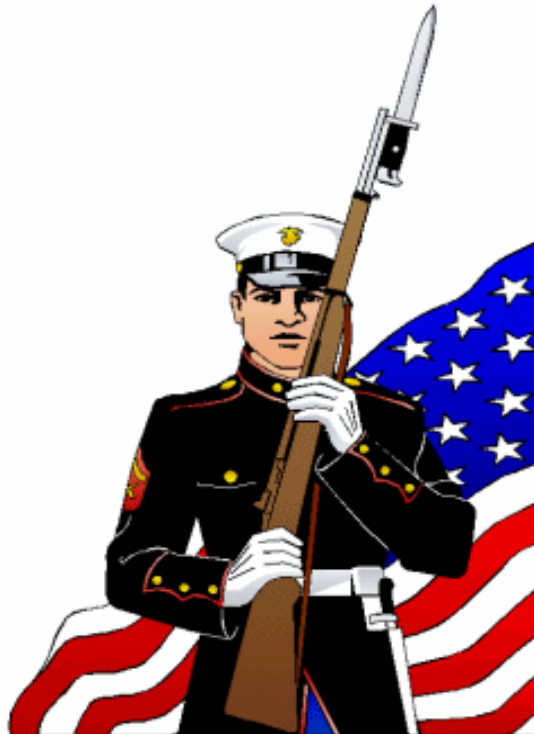
I've served beside them for years
And they've inspired me every day.
They've never asked for anything,
So a debt I can never repay

None of them served for glory,
None for money or fame.
But they've served in every clime and place,
Heroes with but one name.

No one will ever outdo them,
Their honor is never outdone.
They will all go down in history,
As America's favorite sons.

Marines will never fail you,
And their guard will never cease.
Please bury me next to a Marine,
So I may rest in peace.

HM2(FMF) Robert L. Owens
August 31, 2007



Planning Intensifies for 25th Remembrance

It's still nearly ten months away but preparations are already intensifying as the BVA's 25th Remembrance Planning Committee solidifies plans for the 25th Annual Beirut Memorial Remembrance. The event will be held Oct. 21 – 25 in Jacksonville, N.C.

Planning Committee Chairman Craig Renshaw is rallying the committee to make arrangements for the myriad details needed to accommodate the massive attendance anticipated. Dan Joy is providing key assistance in Jacksonville, coordinating with local authorities and organizations to lock in details.

Hotels: at press time five hotels had been secured, as listed below. **You must tell them you are with the BVA registering for the 25th Remembrance to get special group rates.** You cannot get the group rate by registering on-line; you must call at the numbers shown below:

The **Comfort Suites** has been named the Headquarters Hotel (phone 910-346-8900); \$75/night plus tax.

The **Holiday Inn**



Express (910-347-1900); \$75/night plus tax.

The **Innkeeper** (910-938-0800); \$70/night plus tax.

Extended Stay America (910-347-7684); \$76/night plus tax.

America's Best Value Inn (910-455-6888); \$55/night plus tax.

Hospitality suites will be hosted by the BVA at the Comfort Suites and Holiday Inn Express from 8-11 p.m. October 21, 22, 24 and 25. An evening event is being planned on Oct. 23 but final details were not available at press time.

The Command Post and event registration area will again be at the Jacksonville USO, located at 9 Tallman Street in Jacksonville. This is where attendees can join the BVA, register for raffle giveaways, purchase spirit wear items, meet and greet other attendees and get updated information about activities. The USO phone number is (910) 455-3411.

Currently, the schedule of events looks like this:

Tuesday, Oct. 21: Arrival/Registration at USO, noon to 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 22: Registration @USO 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Unit formations (more information will be disseminated on these soon); 3-5 p.m. Annual Membership Meeting, location to be announced

Thursday, Oct. 23: 6 a.m., Candlelight Ceremony, Beirut Memorial; 10:30 a.m. Formal Remembrance Ceremony; approx. 2 p.m. Military Order of Devil Dogs Remembrance Ceremony, Camp Geiger; approx. 4 p.m. Recon Ceremony (to be determined); approx. 7 p.m. evening event to be announced.

Friday Oct. 24 & Saturday Oct. 25: extracurricular activities to be announced.

More complete details on each of these items will be announced in the Root Scoop II and on line at www.beirutveterans.org as they come available.

As plans are confirmed announcements will be posted on the web site and in the RSII.

Root Scoop II

The official newsletter of the Beirut Veterans of America



Feb/Mar 2008

**Debra Reisert
696 Pickett Level Road
Elloree, S.C. 29047**