

Official Newsletter of the Beirut Veterans of America

Root Scoop II

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"The First Duty is to Remember"

July/August 2005

Terrorist States Would Pay Reparations

Lawmakers Introduce Victims' Legislation

A Pennsylvania U.S. senator and two New Jersey U.S. congressmen have introduced bipartisan legislation entitled "Justice for Marine Corps Families – Victims of Terrorism."

A July press release from Washington, D.C. announced that Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Congressmen Jim Saxton (R-NJ) and Robert F. Andrews (D-NJ) introduced the legislation to "affirm Congressional support for the victims of state-sponsored terrorism, and their families, by providing the legal alternative needed for them to receive court ordered reparations from convicted states

The release went on to cite the 1983 barracks bombing and noted that in March 2003 families with the BVA brought suit against the government of Iran in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. A federal judge ruled that Hezbollah carried out the direct will of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its Ministry of Information and Security in this brutal act of terror.

"The families of 1983 Beirut bombing victims have suffered greatly and have been denied



compensation for their tremendous loss," Senator Specter, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said. "I urge Congress to pass this legislation that will allow these families and others to seek justice in court, and send the message that the United States will not tolerate state-sponsored terrorism."

In the May 2003 ruling, U.S. District Judge Royce C. Lamberth said the suicide truck bombing was carried out by the group Hezbollah with the approval and funding of Iran's senior government officials.

"In the early morning hours of that day, 241 American servicemen were murdered in their sleep by a suicide bomber," he wrote. "On that day, an unspeakable horror invaded the lives of those who survived the

attack and the family members whose loved ones had been stolen from them."

The judge called the October 23, 1983 bombing "the most deadly state-sponsored terrorist attack made against United States citizens before September 11, 2001."

Currently, victims of state-sponsored terrorism and their families are not able to collect court ordered damages due to a loopholes in existing U.S. laws, which are exploited by terrorist states. The proposed legislation will make the necessary changes to existing U.S. laws, allowing the Beirut families – and all similar victims and families – to receive compensation.

Lynn Smith Derbyshire, who lost her brother, Captain Vincent Smith, in the 1983 attack, applauded the legislation.

"This critical legislation is not only about justice," she said, "it's about deterrence. It is not only about holding the government of Iran accountable for the murder of 241 Americans; it is about depleting the enemy's resources so that they cannot hurt anyone else."

Innocent In Their Sleep

By Doris Dixon (submitted by Joan Muffler)

Doris Dixon wrote this poem in 2003 after watching a news report of the 1983 Beirut bombing. She wanted to share it with families of those who were there.

**Our soldiers in Beirut
With orders not to shoot
Stationed on low ground
With mountains all around
Our casualties had been few
But suddenly they grew...
Trouble in the Middle East
Enemies loaded up their crazed beast
His life he was willing to take
As the morning was about to break
Countless others the brave Marine
Never again to be seen
What evil can take apart
With a twisted mind**



**A blackened heart
So quick...so fast
The memory will forever last
With disbelief...pain and tears
Broken hearts and realized fears
As the death toll mounted
The broken bodies counted
The families of those there
Feeling pain almost too hard to bear
With bated breath they wait
Praying not mine, Please God
'This can't be their fate
Innocent in their sleep
Their mission for peace to keep
Life so wrongly taken
Leaves our country shaken
Loved ones know no comfort
Only emptiness, loss and hurt
At home we hear the screams
For the dead and wounded Marines**

2005 BVA Board of Directors

Timothy J. Geraghty (H) (602) 237-5592
4519 E. Le Marche Ave
Phoenix, AZ 85032

Col. Philip E. Smith International Phone
PSC 557 Box 1732 (H) 011-81-611-746-6283
FPOAP 96379-1732 (W) 011-81-611-722-9209

Tim Greer (H) 770-760-0679
1461 Tall Oaks Circle (w) 404-679-7233
Cuneyers, GA 30013

Donald G. Sims III (H) (317) 884-4894
Recording Secretary* (W) (317) 226-7928
640 Cloverfield Lane
Greenwood, Indiana 46143-7370

Matthew E. Collins (H) 606-224-1032
112 Lantern Way
Nicholasville, KY 40356

Judith C. Young (H) 856-235-6918
30 Unser Road
Moorestown, N.J. 08057

BVA

Membership Statistics Update

Regular	482
Life	124
Affiliate.....	19
Associate.....	27
NOK	193
Prospects.....	41
Public Affairs	1
News Media.....	1
Info.....	1
TOTAL - 888	

ROOT SCOOPS

Poet Seeks Beirut Veteran

A former Air Force airman turned poet is seeking an unknown Beirut Vet so she can dedicate her first book of poems to him and all Root Vets.

Michelle A. Crawford says she saw this Marine on the Dahlilia talk show about four years ago and his story moved her.

"I am a cancer survivor and his story inspired me to take action, so I have been writing poetry for the troops," she wrote in an email to BVA president John Perez.

She said the unknown vet said he was 39 years old at the time, never married, never had a family and sought validation for his life. He was in therapy for 14 years and was still suffering from survivor's guilt and the loss of his brothers.

Crawford says she has petitioned the Dahlilia talk radio show for assistance to no avail. She plans to go to the Montel Williams Show in hopes that he can help find this Marine and "bring peace to this generation of warriors."

She said she was a young airman stationed in Bentwaters AFB, England in 1983 when the bombing occurred. As a veteran, this is her way of giving back to other warriors, she says.

Anyone who might know who this Marine is can get the name and contact information to the Root Scoop editor (see contact info this page) or to Perez at wpxl_266@yahoo.com.

New President of Gold Star Mothers Familiar to Root Vets

Judy Young, known by Beirut Vets synonymously with the Beirut Connection, assumed duties as president of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. during the organization's national convention in June. Young is also on the BVA Board of Directors.

The American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. is a federally chartered, non-profit organization founded in 1929 by Mrs. Grace Darling Scibold and a group of mothers from Washington, D.C. The price of membership is measured in unimaginable grief. To qualify as a Gold Star mother, a woman's son or daughter must die while fighting in the ranks of the U.S. military service in the line of duty.

Judy's son, Jeffrey, was killed on Oct. 23, 1983 in the terrorist attack on the barracks in Beirut. Her assumption of the presidency is significant; she is the first Gold Star Mother national president outside the Vietnam era.

The Gold Star Mothers' mission is to perpetuate the ideals of American freedom and democracy for which their children have so gallantly fought and died. The organization was named after the Gold Star that

Judy Young

families traditionally hung in their windows in honor of a deceased member of the U.S. Armed Services.

The Beirut Connection serves as a non-profit support organization for the families of servicemen lost in Lebanon. Young, associate Joan Muffler and their husbands have been among a small group of parents who have persevered in maintaining the organization since its inception shortly after the Beirut bombing. They continue to support such efforts as the Beirut Stamp Initiative, annual Remembrances at Camp Lejeune and special Remembrances every five years.

The BVA works closely with the Beirut Connection to ensure that the lives of fallen heroes in Beirut are remembered and celebrated. Beirut Vets salute Judy Young in her new post.



Beirut Veterans of America

BVA President - John Perez
 Vice President - Don Inas
 Secretary - Randy Gaddo
 Treasurer - Steve Godfrey
 Membership/ - Debra Reiser
 "Scoop" mailout - Jeff Buel

Root Scoop II

Editor, Randy Gaddo
 217 Sandown Drive,
 Peachtree City, Georgia 30209
 (404) 770-6314/4074

Email: rwg4beirut@comcast.net

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.

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Developing Reunion Information

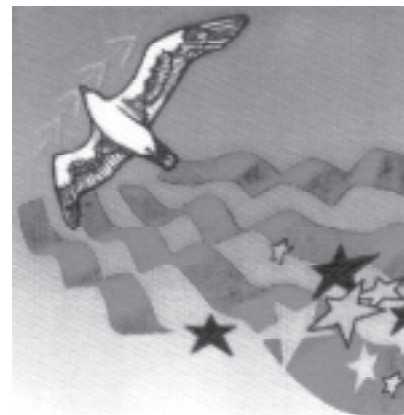
The observance will be on Sunday, October 23 at 2:00 PM. The City of Jacksonville has invited General Michael Hagee, CMC, to be the speaker. At press time, his attendance has not been confirmed.

First Battalion, 8th Marines will be there to participate and they are planning some other activities that aren't finalized yet.

Watch the official BVA website, www.beirutveterans.org, for updates as they come available.



July/August 2005



Remember the
PEACEKEEPERS
Beirut, Lebanon 1982-1984

**Debra Reisert
8219 Sara Lane
Georgetown, IN 47122**