Root Scoop II

Vol. XX, Issue 2

"The First Duty is to Remember"

Sept/Oct 2012

U.S. Embassy Beirut Honors Marine Sacrifices in Lebanon

The eagle, globe and anchor now fly proudly over the Memorial Wall site at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut that commemorates all Marines and U.S. Embassy staff who lost their lives in Lebanon.

Nearly 30 years to the day that 850 US Marines, assigned to the 32nd Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) came ashore in Lebanon to assist French and Italian troops with the PLO withdrawal, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Maura Connelly and Commander of U.S. Central Command General James N. Mattis dedicated a new flag pole to fly the colors of the United States Marine Corps.

See "Flagpole," page 7



The new flagpole (right) proudly flying the Corps Colors at the U.S. Embassy, Beirut

Change to BVA Spirit Wear Sales

Sgt. Grit Agrees to Carry BVA items, Percentage of Sales Back to BVA

The BVA has changed how it sells spirit wear and related items.

Long-time volunteer spirit wear coordinator Cliff Walling has been called to the ministry, thus having to step down from the job he has done for decades.

"We will no longer be selling spirit wear from our web site," wrote BVA President Craig Renshaw in an email to members. "The BVA has for several years looked for someone to take over the position of sales, stocking and mailing of our Spirit wear and after some thought and consideration decided to contact Don at Sgt. Grit."

Sgt Grit is a web-based business run by a Vietnam veteran. The site offers arguably one of the widest selections of Marine Corps memorabilia anywhere. Their website and accompanying catalog boasts "If we don't have it, Chesty wouldn't want it." The website is found at www.grunt.com.

Renshaw said that a partnership has been formed with Sgt. Grit.

"We have agreed to work together to make this the best opportunity for our members to be able to buy their BVA spirit wear and other items," he wrote. "We ask that you give us time to work things out and to come up with new items and or designs."

The partnership, approved by the BVA Board of Directors, should be beneficial for everyone.

Not only will the BVA still be able to offer existing t-shirts, ball caps, golf shirts and other items, there are hopes to expand the line. "I ask and need you to send me any ideas you may have add to



our inventory," said Renshaw. "Most importantly I ask that you log onto www.grunt.com and sign in, to become a registered member of Sgt Grit."

He cites two reasons: so that members can be added to the Sgt. Grit email list to receive their newsletters and sales notices (they will from time to time list BVA items at lower cost); and also Sgt. Grit needs to know who is a member of the BVA so that when orders are placed by members, the BVA will receive a percentage of the sales of those items sold.

See "Sgt. Grit" page 6

New BVA Logo?

Board of Directors/Officers Discuss Possibility of New Logo

As the 30th Remembrance of the Beirut Bombing approaches in 2013, the BVA Board of Directors and Officers have decided to explore the possibility of adopting a new organizational logo.

"Since its inception, the Beirut Veterans of America organization has used as its logo the flag of Lebanon within a circle," said BVA Board Chair HMCM(FMF) Mark T. Hacala, USN (Ret). "To those of us who served there, the sight of the Lebanese Cedar tree has made an immediate and strong connection to a time and place that changed our lives.

"Unfortunately, our logo does not give a clear feeling of who we are as veterans, service mem-



bers and Americans, and why we served."

The thought of a new logo that addresses these aspects of the BVA's identity has now been suggested. After much dis-



cussion, the Board and Officers decided to ask members for ideas.

BVA leaders are asking that members begin thinking about this idea now. The concept will be discussed at the membership meeting during at this year's annual meeting on October 22 in Jacksonville. If members agree it is worth pursuing, officers will collect member ideas after the meeting and agree on a new design as soon as possible after the meeting. The selection that is chosen will be used on materials such as T-shirts, golf shirts and other spirit items for the 30th anniversary and thereafter.

2012 BVA Board of Directors

Mark T. Hacala, Pat Metcalf, Glenn Dolphin, Randy Gaddo, Rick Cunningham, Bill Yontz, Bryan Ayres (new), Mary Ellen Jackowski, Alicia Shields (formerly Sanchez)

BVA Membership Contact, Bill Thompson: Email: bva.membership@gmail.com

Beirut Veterans of America

BVA President - Craig Renshaw Vice President - John Jackson

Secretary - Michael Fullarton Treasurer - Steve Godfrey

Membership/
- Bill Thompson, Jon
Warmling & Bill Yontz

"Root Scoop II" mailout - Jeff Handy

Root Scoop II

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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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Plan Is Set For 29th Beirut Remembrance

If you plan to go to the 29th Remembrance in Jacksonville, NC this year and still don't have your hotel reservations, here's some info you might need.

"I hope you have already reserved your hotel rooms," BVA President Craig Renshaw emphasizes. "If not, you need to do so very shortly."

Rooms are blocked out at the Holiday Inn Express (910) 347-1900, Candlewood Suites (910) 333-0494 and Comfort Suites (910) 346-8900. Just call in and tell them you are with the Beirut Veterans.

The Holiday Inn Express is again the designated Headquarters for this year. They are going for an average of about \$90 per night this year. Renshaw stresses that the BVA does not get anything for the rooms sold. So if you want to go to another hotel because you can get it cheaper or you think it's better....by all means do as you wish.

Many people find advantages booking a room from an on-line services such as Hotwire, where some report getting a room for as low as \$63 per night with 2 adults for 3 nights, in this case it was at Jacksonville's Baymont Inn (910-347-6500).

Registration will occur on October 22 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Jacksonville USO at 9 Tallman Street, Jacksonville, NC 28540, phone 910-455-3411.

The BVA annual meeting is scheduled Oct. 22 at 2 p.m. at the USO. Five Board of Director positions are open for re-election and the BOD will appoint new officers.

A hospitality suite is planned to be open from approximately 7 to 10 p.m. Oct. 22 at the Holiday Inn. BYOB, some snacks will be provided.

The annual Candlelight Vigil will be held at the Beirut Memorial at 6 a.m. Oct. 23. At about 10 a.m. the official Remembrance ceremony will be held at the Memorial. At 2 p.m. the Military Order of Devil Dogs will hold their annual Remembrance wreath presentation at Camp Geiger.

Helpful Info To Assist Planning for the 2012 Beirut Remembrance

Hotels

Command Post: **The Holiday Inn**, 2115 Hwy. 17 N., Jacksonville, NC 28546, phone 910-347-1900. Tell them you are with the Beirut Remembrance to get discount.

Nearby Comfort Suites: 130 Workshop Ln. US 17 N., Jacksonville, NC, 28546; Phone: (910) 346-8900

Nearby Candlewood Suites: 119 Penny Lane, Jacksonville, NC 28546; Book online or call:1 877 660 8543

Schedule

Holiday Inn generally has a hospitality suite or other gathering area for Remembrance guests. Ask at the desk when checking in.

Oct. 22: registration at the USO in Jacksonville. USO located at 9 Tallman Street, Jacksonville, N.C. 28540, phone 910-455-3411. See the newly-remodeled Beirut Room.

Oct. 22: BVA Membership meeting, election of board members and appointment of officers

Oct. 23, 6 a.m. Candlelight Vigil at the Beirut Memorial, candles provided, every name on wall read aloud by families and veterans

Oct. 23, about 10 a.m., formal Remembrance service at Beirut Memorial; music, guest speakers, wreath presentation, gun salutes

The First Duty Is To Remember

Marie Innocenzi, age 80, passed away Sept. 9, 2012. Marie was the mother of Marine Corps Warrant Officer Paul G. Innocenzi III, who was killed in the barracks bombing on October 23, 1983. The Beirut Veterans send their condolences to the family and thank them for their service to our nation.

Retired LtCol. Joseph A. Frasier III, a 1958 Beirut Veteran and Life Member of BVA, passed away June 14, 2012. His son James M. Frasier, a Marine corporal who served in Beirut in 1983 and who is also a BVA Life Member, noted that, "After the creation of the BVA, I signed us both up for lifetime memberships.

"I have lost a father, a brother Marine and a brother Beirut veteran," said James. "We would both be honored if there was a mentioning of his passing in the...Root Scoop."



Carry On is a forum to share information about families of Beirut veterans. Families may forward their information to Rosalie (Ro) Milano: email, ojgroup@ojcpi.com or fax 610-268-0305 or call 610-268-0304. The RSII will attempt to include as much information as possible but may need to edit for space considerations.

VOICES FROM BEIRUT: The Peacekeepers Speak

Editor's Note: As we move toward the 30th Remembrance next year, it is especially important that families, friends and fellow service members make a special effort to support this monumental effort, "Voices From Beirut." This can be an enduring document to capture forever the words, thoughts and memories of those who died fighting the first battle in the Global War on Terror.

BVA Next of Kin members Mary Ellen Jackowski and Peggy Stelpflug plan to collaborate on a collection of letters from the Peacekeepers.

They would like family members and Beirut Vets to participate by submitting either one of their letters -- or excerpts from various letters -- written by the Beirut Peacekeepers.

Since memories fade, this will be a permanent record of the

thoughts and feelings at that time.

"Though this process may open up painful memories, the desire to record the thoughts of the US Peace-keepers, 1982-1984, overcomes this very real concern," said Mary Ellen. "Those who died in Beirut can no longer speak for themselves, but we can be their voices and ensure that their words are heard. Through this project, by sharing personal thoughts, Beirut Vets can continue their healing process."

If no letter from Beirut is available, a present-day written account regarding a particular serviceman can be submitted. This account may include any specific memory or experience such as why he joined the military, thoughts about the peace-keeping mission, future plans or any memory or experience shared during his time in Beirut.

The format of the collection will include an alphabetical listing of one page per serviceman:

Sgt. John S. Doe U.S. Marine Corps H&S 1/8 MOS: Cook

An introductory paragraph about the serviceman;

The letter or excerpts from several letters;

Your name and relationship to the serviceman which indicates your permission to publish the information.

Before the *Beirut Connection* became part of the BVA, many families and vets shared letters from Beirut. Permission to reprint any of those letters would be greatly appreciated. (Please follow the sample format.)

"I just got an email from Sgt.
Tommy Keown's brother with his
last letter from Beirut," said Mary
Ellen. "I hope everyone will submit
a letter. I feel strongly that if we
don't do this project soon, no one
will hear their 'voices.'

"This project was in the planning stages before the 25th Remembrance and it is our hope that it will be realized before the 30th Remembrance in 2013."

Please submit your information to: Mary Ellen (jjandme@peoplepc.com), or Peggy (pegstelpflug@charter.net). Hard copies (copies-- not originals) can be mailed to: Mary Ellen Jackowski, 20 Stagecoach Road, Chestertown NY 12817- (518) 494-4609 (or) Peggy Stelpflug, 2600 Orchard Circle, Auburn AL 36832 - (334) 821-8671

Voices From Beirut

Example From Stelpflug Family Given To Help Others Contribute

EDITOR'S NOTE: BVA family members Mary Ellen Jackowski and Peggy Stelpflug have been working hard since before the 25th Remembrance in 2008 to get the word out about "Voices From Beirut." (See page 4 for details) Unfortunately, they aren't getting the participation they had hoped for. They do have submissions trickling in, but not at the rate it should be. I cannot stress enough how very important this project is. The letters from our fallen brothers speaks volumes about what we did in Beirut and this will be an important document for researchers years from now, when they want to go back and find out what the troops were saying. The excerpts from Bill Stelpflug below provides one example of how it can be done. It is meant to encourage others to submit material. It can be entire letters, excerpts from letters or a written account of the serviceman from a family member. If you are uncertain about what to submit, call or write Mary Ellen or Peggy at the contacts provided on page 4. They want to hear from you. We all want to hear from you. We want to hear the Voices From Beirut.

Semper Fi, Randy Gaddo, Editor

Bill Stelpflug, Lance Corporal, USMC

(Also known as Billy or William John)

Born March 13, 1964, Air Force Academy, Colorado Parents: Lt. Col. (Ret. USAF) William J. and Peggy A. Stelpflug

Hometown: Auburn, Alabama

Entered U.S. Marines September 24, 1982, after early enlistment on June 11, 1982, following graduation at Auburn High School, Auburn, AL

Trained at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina.

Graduated December 17, 1982, with Platoon 3080, 3rd Recruit Bn MCRD, Parris Island, SC

Assignment Beirut, Lebanon, with 3rd Section, Dragon Platoon, Weapons Company, BLT 1/8, 24th MAU, 2nd MarDiv KIA October 23, 1983, Beirut, Lebanon

[Letter written to his brother Joe on July 21, 1983, from American University Library, Beirut]

You know I'm at the University and we see some pretty fine babes, nothing compared to A.U. [Auburn University] though. The chicks around here hold hands and look so f---- fine I want to shoot myself in the f---- foot. Must be the f---- Sun. I think I'm going nuts, bonkers, and out of my f---- mind....I get along with everybody. They call me all sorts of nicknames, from "Tin Man" (they think I look like the f---- tin man in Wiz of Oz) to "Vilhelm" (I told them the "Old Man" was a German interrogator). Well as long as they don't call me late for chow.

[Letter written to his sister Kathy and her husband Mike around September 10 near Beirut International Airport.]

Well, I've always dreamed about being in combat, and here I am a teenager giving them hell....We take a lot more than we give though. America I guess is too big to fight. For that matter, what the hell are we doing here

besides giving the Moslems target practice.

[To Bill's parents, October 19, 1983, BLT, Beirut]

Well, it won't be long now. Can't wait. I think I'll have them drop me off 10 miles from home, so I can savor every pasture, pond and familiar sight. As for why I get myself in these positions, you know I'm just getting material I can write with. But I'll have to be captured by cannibals in the Amazon, and be in a riot in South Africa before I can settle down and put my experiences to words....I dreamed I got married last night. I woke up in a cold sweat. Maybe someday far from now.

[To Bill's parents, October 1983, BLT Headquarters Building, Beirut, Lebanon]

I think I will take a bus back just to see what it is like to come home so slow and happy instead of leaving so fast and sad....I hope you won't get mad at me if I lie on the sofa too much....See you in a while. Love, Bill

Bill and some other Marines would get together to write poetry. [Contributed by Danny Joy, Weapons Company, 1/8, Beirut, Lebanon, 1983]

And the War King calls his subjects to battle To hear the rockets whistle

And the very ground to rattle.

The trucks are revved, the knives all glisten.

The desert sun shines on a million guns.

When the War King calls, everybody listens.

Many will die. Many will fall.

And will give their soul

To the War King's call.

[From Bill's poem "The War King Calls" found by Father George Pucciarelli, Reverend Danny Wheeler and fellow Marine Danny Joy in the ruins of the BLT.] Root Scoop II Sept/Oct 2012 6

Beirut Veterans Also Seeking a Dedicated Volunteer Web Master

Sgt. Grit...from page 1

Sgt. Grit has agreed to give a percent back to the BVA to help fund future Remembrances.

"So please Log onto their site and sign in and tell them you are a BVA member," says Renshaw.

If, after login onto the site, you want to find items of interest to the BVA, just type "Beirut" in the search box and it will take you to BVA items.

For those who may not be familiar with Sgt. Grit, it is a web-based business that also has a store located in Oklahoma City. As Don, the owner, explains, "I hope this works out for all of us. I know the sell price of some items we were selling has gone up, but because of this agreement and in order to continue to have items to sell to our members this is what had to be done."

Cliff Walling has been a dedicated BVA web master for several years and his calling to ministry also means he will need to shed this responsibility.

As a result, the BVA is seeking one or more dedicated people for this very important duty.

"Cliff has done a great job in making sure Beirut veterans and their families had a place to go for information on the website and a place to purchase quality BVA spirit items," says BVA President Craig Renshaw. "He has gone above and beyond in performing these volunteer duties but now he has been called to a new set of responsibilities. We will miss his presence but appreciate the many contributions he has made."

The scope of the web master's duty has been reduced since Sgt. Grit will now handle spirit wear sales.

Thousands of families, friends and service members rely on the website for information about Beirut veterans and their families. It will be especially important to keep the site updated as the 30th Remembrance approaches in October, 2013.

Anyone interested in these duties can contact the RSII editor Randy Gaddo at cwo4usmc@comcast.net; or BVA President Craig Renshaw at renshaw62@yahoo.com. Veterans, next of kin or friends of the BVA are encouraged to apply.



WWW.grunt.com

THE FIRST DUTY IS TO REMEMBER

WE CARRY OVER 30 ITEMS FOR MARINES WHO SERVED IN BEIRUT AND FOR ALL VETERANS OF BEIRUT.

Flagpole from page one

The flag pole was built with donations by Marines who have served in the past who wanted to honor the memories of those who courageously served and sacrificed in Lebanon.

On Sept. 2, 2012 in front of an audience of Embassy personnel that included former U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Vincent Battle, CENTCOM Political Advisor Ambassador Michael Ranneburger, and CENTCOM Executive Officer Brigadier General Carl Mundy, Ambassador Connelly spoke about the proud history of the Marine Corps in Lebanon.

She recalled that Marines were at the forefront of U.S. efforts to, "advance the goal of promoting an independent, sovereign and stable Lebanon dating back to 1958, when President Eisenhower ordered two U.S. Marine battalions to Lebanon to help avert a civil war."

She acknowledged that the presence of those 14,000 Marines allowed Lebanese leaders to form a representative government instead of taking up arms against each other. "With stability restored, our troops returned home in October, 1958," she explained.

Marines were called back to Lebanon as peacekeepers in 1982 when President Regan announced a new multinational force to help the Lebanese government extend its authority over Beirut. 1,200 Marines attached to the 32nd MAU re-entered Lebanon in late September 1982. The threat environment in Lebanon changed in 1983 following the April 18, 1983 terrorist bombing of the U.S. Embassy that killed 63 people, including one Marine Security Guard. Ambassador Connelly noted that attack did not deter the work of the Embassy nor of the Marines who came under increasing threats throughout the summer of 1983.

"In August, the Marines suffered their first fatalities, when Second Lieutenant Donald Losey and Staff Sergeant Alexander Ortega died in a rocket attack. Over the next two months, four more Marines would fall victim to mortar fire," she said.

The names of Losey and Ortega are



(L-R) Ambassador Connelly, Gen. Mattis and John Dalziel.

among the 334 names etched on a granite memorial wall at the U.S. Embassy around a panel that states, "They Came in Peace." Of those names, 241 were killed in the October 23, 1983 Hizballah attack on the Marine barracks at the Beirut Airport.

"The names of all those who died in the service of the U.S. government, in the service of a mission of peace, are etched on the monument behind me. The U.S. Marines in Lebanon – be they those first peacekeepers in 1958 or the last in 1984 – came in peace, and they made their Corps and their Nation proud," Ambassador Connelly stated.

General Mattis opened his remarks by sharing his personal connection with the Marines who came in peace and paid the ultimate sacrifice in Lebanon that fateful October day.

"As a young Captain I was tasked with performing six casualty calls," General Mattis remarked.

He continued: "It was 6:20 a.m., on a Sunday like any other normal Sunday morning, the only difference is that on this Sunday the U.S. fell victim to, and was launched into, a new world war. We sometimes forget that this war didn't start on 9/11- it started decades earlier. We didn't realize when it started – we

didn't recognize that some people had declared war on us because it was such a different kind of war," remarked General Mattis.

The death toll that fateful Sunday morning was the deadliest single-day death toll for the USMC since the battle of Iwo Jima in WWII and the deadliest single-day death toll for the U.S. military since the first day of the Tet Offensive during the Vietnam War.

Both Ambassador Connelly and General Mattis thanked John Dalziel, a Marine who was TDY to Lebanon with the 24th MAU during the tumultuous summer and fall of 1983, for playing an instrumental role in having the USMC flag pole erected.

Dalziel had left the barracks just minutes before the October 23 bombing and joined other survivors who worked for days to pull their wounded and fallen comrades out of the rubble. Dalziel returned to Lebanon in 2011 to continue his efforts to fight Hizballah, this time as the FBI's Assistant Legal Attaché at the U.S. Embassy.

Ambassador Connelly stated, "The flagpole we are dedicating today is the tangible result of his efforts to honor the legacy of the courageous Marines with whom he served."

General Mattis presented Dalziel and Marine Edward Anzalone with the colors of the Marine Corps to be raised on the new flag pole.

General Mattis concluded his remarks with a poignant reminder and a warning to America's enemies: "Reminder to the maniacs who did this, to the maniacs who attacked our country on 09/11, who thought that by hurting us they could scare us. They didn't understand Americans. They didn't understand that the Marines who fought at Iwo Jima and Fallujah do not scare. This enemy will not be successful. We will wear them down. We will continue to have the flag here. We will continue with the flag still flying and the names remembered on the Memorial. We will not lose one ounce of our commitment and our devotion. Thank you and God Bless America."

Honoring Beirut Heroes

Georgia Marine Corps League Hosts 3rd Annual Memorial Run



(Left) the start of the race in its inaugural year, 2010. (Above) the t-shirt design for the 2012 event. (Below) registration form

Marine Corps League Post 1339 in McDonough, Ga., will be hosting the 3rd Annual Beirut Memorial 5K and 1 Mile event October 20th.

The event started as a means of paying tribute to the Marines, Sailors and Soldiers killed by terrorists on October 23, 1983.

Race organizer Jeff Owen told runners just prior to the start of the first year's race, "As you run today remember those 220 Marines, 18 sailors and 3 soldiers who were killed on October 23, 1983 in the Beirut barracks bombing as today we honor them and the others killed in action in Beirut."

Proceeds of the run will help support the Wounded Warrior Project and the Marine Corps Reserve Toys For Tots program.

The Beirut Memorial 5K is part of the Run & See Georgia Grand Prix series.

The run has grown each year with about 200 runners in the 2nd event.

The McDonough detachment was just formed in September of 2009 so it is an especially impressive feat to pull together an event of this size.







Beirut Memorial 5K and 1Mile October 20, 5pm Heritage Park

benefiting_Toys for Tots, Wounded Warrior Regiment, and other Military projects

5K and 1 Mile Prices

AGES 15 & UP: \$20 PreRegistration/\$25 Race Day AGES 14 & UNDER: \$15 PreRegistration/\$20 Race Day Ghost Runner (Shirt Only): \$20

Race Day Schedule
ay 3:45pm Registration Opens

4:45pm Registration Closes 5:00pm 5K & 1 Mile Begin

Awards to Follow!

ONLINE REGISTRATION AT WWW.ACTIVE.COM

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For questions, please contact Get Set Grow at 404-694-1939 or karen@getsetgrow.com

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Root Scoop II

Sept/Oct 2012



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