

30th Remembrance,  
October 2013

Official BVA Website: [www.beirutveterans.org](http://www.beirutveterans.org)

# Root Scoop II

Vol. XXI, Issue 3

“The First Duty is to Remember”

October 2013

## Last Minute Details: *Base Access Top of Your List!*

Getting access onto Camp Lejeune should be at the top of everybody’s list as the first thing to take care of when you get into Jacksonville N.C. for the 30th Remembrance.

**If you do not have a valid DOD vehicle sticker and ID card, you will need to obtain a temporary vehicle pass** at the Base Pass and Registration office which is located in the Camp Lejeune Visitor Center (Building 818) adjacent to the main gate. They are open Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

**You will need to present a**



**valid drivers license, vehicle registration and proof of insurance. Three-day passes will be issued.**

Those with DOD stickers and ID cards should be able to get on base as usual.

If renting a vehicle ensure you also have the rental agreement with you to register it.

Attendees may be asked for names and identification of all passengers in the car as well. In that regards, the BVA has been tasked by base officials to provide a list of all known attendees planning to come on base and participate in any of the events hosted by the BVA. As such: **URGENT RE-**

**QUEST!** BVA President Craig Renshaw has issued an urgent request to provide him via email ([beirutveterans.org@gmail.com](mailto:beirutveterans.org@gmail.com)) by **Oct. 14** with all the following information, from which he will compile a comprehensive list: **first name, last name (of person who will register vehicle— whether your own or rented); drivers license number/state issued; vehicle year, make, color, plate (tag) number/state issued; insurance company, policy number and expiration date.**

*Continued on page 2*

# Last Minute Details for 30th Beirut Remembrance...from pg. 1

## Guest Speaker Will Hudson

Guest speaker at the banquet will be Will Hudson, son of Navy Lieutenant (Dr.) John R. Hudson, the battalion surgeon who was killed in the bombing when Will was an infant. He will speak about his experience growing up learning about his father through the efforts of his family. He will also speak about how families have helped keep the memory alive of what his father and the others who didn't return home from Beirut in 1982-84 accomplished.

## Centers of Activity

Attendees are reminded that on Oct. 21, the Jacksonville USO will be the center of activity with Remembrance information, sale of 30th t-shirts, sweatshirts and coins, a **pig pickin'** and other activities. On Oct. 22 the Goettge Field House on board Camp Lejeune will be the hub, with all the above activities (except pig pickin') as well as a mass unit formation. The Goettge Field House will also be the site of the banquet



the evening of October 23rd.

## The Banquet is now completely sold out!

BVA President Craig Renshaw announced on Sept. 25 that an additional 150 seats were opened at the banquet, bringing the total to 750; those additional seats sold out in less than two weeks.

## Beirut Wreath at Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

BVA Next of Kin Board Member Mary Ellen Jackowski contacted the RSII at press time to inform that she and her husband John have been asked to place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in honor of U.S. Servicemen lost in Beirut. Carmella LaSpada of *No Greater Love* contacted Mary Ellen and ask if she and John would do the honors. The wreath laying will be done on Oct. 20 at 11:15 a.m.. Ms. LaSpada also said she would present a wreath Oct. 23 at Arlington National Cemetery, section 59, where some of the Beirut KIAs are buried and where a Cedar Tree of Lebanon also grows .

## 2012 BVA Board of Directors

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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.



# Helpful Info To Assist Planning for the 2013 Beirut Remembrance

## Schedule

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

### **October 21, 2013**

Noon to 5 p.m. at the USO located at 9 Tallman Street, Jacksonville, N.C. 28540: See the newly remodeled Beirut Room; BVA Event Information Desk; sales of official 30th Remembrance t-shirts, sweat-shirts and coins; display tables available for groups, book signings, informational displays, **Pig Pick-in' outside USO**

Hospitality Suite opens at Holiday Inn, 7 to 9 p.m. - BYOB; snacks, sodas and mixers will be provided.

### **October 22, 2013**

Noon to 5 p.m. at Goettge Field House, Camp Lejeune: Special Events are being planned for this day. Times and activities will be announced on the BVA website, www.beirutveterans.org., or posted at the event site.

Events will include a formation featuring active duty, retired or veteran service members involved in any Beirut operations from 1958 to present day. Family members of KIA's or other deceased Beirut Veterans may stand in formation for their service member. The formation will be held at the football field adjacent to the Goettge Field House, time to be determined and will be posted at USO, field house and hospitality suite.

Hospitality Suite opened 7-9 p.m.

### **October 23, 2013**

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

10:30 a.m., formal Remembrance service at Beirut Memorial; music, guest speakers, wreath presentation, gun salutes

2 p.m. Military Order of Devildogs Beirut Ceremony, Camp Geiger

**Evening Banquet & Program** – at Goettge Field House; 6 p.m. cash bar cocktail hour (w/light hors d'oeuvres included in cost of dinner); 7 p.m. Banquet & 7:45 p.m. Program; four cash bars available for duration of event.

**Remember: Bring business cards, pens, pencils, notebooks, cameras and phones to capture contacts and memories; bring chargers for all electronic gear!**

## **VOICES FROM BEIRUT:**

### **The Peacekeepers Speak**

Edited by Beirut Gold Star Mothers  
Mary Ellen Jackowski  
Peggy A. Stelpflug



## Long-Awaited Book Ready for 30th

The long-awaited book, "Voices From Beirut: The Peacekeepers Speak," will be ready for the 30th Remembrance.

The project has been five years in the making, according to one of its originators, Mary Ellen Jackowski. Her co-editor is Peggy A. Stelpflug.

"Since those KIA in Beirut can't speak for themselves, it is our duty to do it for them," wrote Mary Ellen. "Also, all those who were there have kept it bottled up for 30 years, so their voices must be heard."

The book is com-

pleted writings from veterans, families and even KIA's themselves in the form of personal letters.

**Editors plan to give one copy of the book per family to those who sent a submission -- in loving memory of their sons, Jamie and Billy, who paid the ultimate sacrifice in Beirut. Copies will be available for all others at the Jacksonville USO Oct. 21 and the Goettge Field House Oct. 22 for \$10.00 each during the Remembrance, while supplies last.**

## Living Memorial To Move *Site Selected to Sustain Bradford Pear Trees*

*(As reported in the Jacksonville Daily News by Thomas Brennan, August 2, 2013)*

A living monument to those killed in the 1983 Beirut bombing will be getting a new home.

City officials selected a site for the creation of the Beirut Memorial Grove.

Bradford pear trees were planted to honor the troops killed in Beirut.

But some of the trees along N.C. 24 have been removed, damaged, or died.

Some were removed because of construction.

The city planted a new grove of 273 autumn flowering cherry trees on 16 acres at the intersection of U.S. 17, N.C. 24 and Wilmington Highway across from Camp Geiger to symbolize the 273 lives lost during the blast or related incidents.

“As a bombing survivor, I am happy to see that continued commitment to honor our shared sacrifice,” said Beirut Veterans of America Vice-President Danny Joy. “I’m sad to see the (original) trees go, but it’s a good thing to see that there is a plan to never forget the Beirut bombing.”



The Bradford pear trees along the Lejeune Boulevard median are a product of Jacksonville’s Memorial Tree Program and were one of the first honors given to those lost in the bombing — the deadliest act of terror in Marine Corps history. The trees were successfully planted and dedicated by March 24, 1984.

“It’s a very sensitive issue,” Joy said. “Some parents have adopted the trees in remembrance of their son so I’m sure it will be truly heartbreaking for them to see them go.”

Others, such as Mike Ellzey, a former public works director for the city of Jacksonville said the new

grove is long overdue.

“We wanted to have trees to represent those killed over there and the first place we came up with was the median down Lejeune Boulevard,” Ellzey said. “We recognized after we put them there it wasn’t the best place for them.”

Ellzey said the new site will better represent, not only the sacrifice, but the support of the military from the local community.

“The fact that the trees will now bloom during the fall is great,” Ellzey said. “That’s when the (Beirut) families come into town and for them to see that would be just great.”

### Beirut Memorial 10K run October 12 to Honor Heroes Killed in Beirut

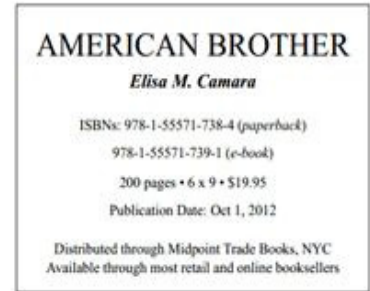
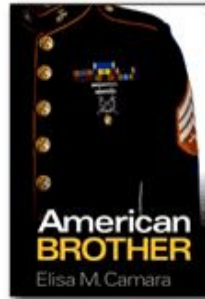


The Beirut memorial 10k Run is a scenic flat asphalt course that winds through Camp Johnson and historical Montford Point. One section of the course is run on a gravel/dirt trail road. This is a run to remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for freedom in Beirut.





## Beirut KIA's Sister Writes Book about Brother: American Brother



### About the Book

On October 23, 1983, a suicide bomber rammed a truck filled with explosives into barracks housing United States Marines in Beirut, Lebanon. Two hundred forty-one Americans died that day. Among them, Sgt. Mecot Camara. His little sister, Elisa, their family and the small town of Hinton, West Virginia would never be the same.

In this moving tribute to her big brother, and all the brave men and women of our Armed Forces, Elisa Camara recounts the life, the loves, and the adventures of an ordinary small town American boy who grew up to become an extraordinary man, a devoted son, husband and father, and, ultimately, a proud United States Marine who gave his life for his country. For Elisa, this is meant to serve not only as a cathartic telling of her brother's amazing story, but also as a reminder of the importance of courage, respect and selflessness--the very qualities that Mecot Camara embodied. The qualities that made him the quintessential *American Brother*.

### About the Author

**Elisa M. Camara** was born and raised in West Virginia. She has a degree in Business Administration from Queens University in Charlotte, North Carolina, currently works and lives in Orlando, Florida, and is the mother of three sons. Elisa is actively pursuing a creative writing career and currently developing a series of patriotic-themed children's books.

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## Gold Star Ride

# Retired Major Plans Coast To Coast Ride

Retired Marine Major Jennifer L. Marino is enroute on a 77-day motorcycle trip in honor of Gold Star families, including families of those killed in Lebanon.

The ride, which started in August, stretches from Camp Pendleton in California to a final destination at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico.

If she stays on schedule, Marino's schedule brings her to Jacksonville on October 22, in time to meet with Gold Star families and attend the 30th Remembrance.

Gold Star mother Mary Ellen Jackowski reported that she met Marino at a national Gold Star Mothers convention. After Mary Ellen spoke with Marino and told her about the Remembrance, Marino decided to change her schedule to arrive in time for the Remembrance.

"I am thankful for what your Fallen Heroes gave to protect my freedom, and that of all Americans. Thank you, God Bless, and I look forward to seeing you soon!" Marino pledged.





## ***From the BVA President***

# Remembering the Sacrifices of Beirut Peacekeepers

We are into the 31<sup>st</sup> year of the deployment of service members to Beirut, Lebanon and into the 30<sup>th</sup> year of what has become the day that all Beirut veterans and family members come together to remember our brothers each and every year on Oct 23rd.

I hope each of you will in some way remind the people within your area of the sacrifices made to help a troubled country from 1982-1984. This is also the 55<sup>th</sup> year of those that deployed before us, who were also sent to do the same in 1958, in what was hoped to

help bring back and establish peace during their time.

We all had the same mission then and we all have the same mission set before us today. Even though we are much older and most of us are no longer serving within military ranks today, we still have an obligation. It is our duty and responsibility to remind the people of the sacrifices of those before, during and after us. Especially to those that are serving today to keep this country and others free. In today's world we should not be a silent majority, we should stand proud

and be proud to honor all those who cannot. So I ask you to make it a point to go out and speak up when the opportunity arises to remind everyone that all who served have in some way given a sacrifice for peace and freedom.

I look forward to being in Jacksonville, NC this year, to see who shows up and what changes life has brought to all of us. I also look forward to feeling (one more time) that kinship and bond that was built and molded into each of us as we severed together. Then there too, are those who I may not have served with but have over the years built a friendship that only we brothers come to know.

Lastly but not least, I do look forward to seeing what has become my extended families of my brothers who have gone before me. It's because of you that I will always cherish the friendship I had and shared with your loved one. It's because of him, that we cry, smile, joke, hold hands or hold each other as we stand with one another. Like each of you, we will come together on this day to remember that tragic time of our lives, but most importantly, we will all stand together as we proudly and honorably remember the life of our brothers, our best friends and your loved ones. Thank you my brothers and my friends, thank you for those memories. I will always remember you.

***Semper Fi, Craig Renshaw***

