



Root Scoop II

Vol. VII, Issue 4

"The First Duty is to Remember"

November/December 2010

Memories, Meetings, Hello's and Goodbyes

BVA President Reviews 27th Remembrance

Another year of waiting has come and gone for all us who were able to attend the Beirut Remembrance ceremony and now we wait for next year.

For all who were able to travel and attend, I would like to thank you. I know that taking the time to attend is hard in many ways for different reasons for each of us. For me, I gain so much more and take home with me new friendships, experiences and memories.

As President of the BVA, I thank all of you who have taken it upon yourselves to arrange and plan these ceremonies across the nation. Because of you, many Beirut vets and families are now able to attend a ceremony closer to home and attend for other reasons. Because of you Beirut Vets and family members are being found; because of you and the ones who attend, you have reminded the people of this Nation, "The First Duty is To Remember."

In Jacksonville, NC this October we had about 100 people attend the event there. As with every year, Oct, 22nd started off with registering at the USO and meeting up with families and friends. At 3 p.m. we held our BVA annual meeting. Below is a rough outline of the meeting.

Mike Miller and Sarah Holcomb, Archives & Special Collections, Library of the Marine Corps, Marine Corps University, Quantico, VA (2040 Broadway St., Quantico, VA 22134, (703) 784-4685) told us they are still looking for stories, pictures, artifacts and materials of interest to help them in their endeavor to tell our story for generations to come.

Deborah Fisher, Interim Director, USO of North Carolina, Jacksonville Center, introduced herself and her staff

and thanked the BVA for using the USO. She informed us of the remodeling the USO was doing to the Beirut Room (which should be done by the time you read this). Lowe's Home Improvement and Freedom Furniture are donating materials and furniture, plus employees are also volunteering their time to rebuild and remodel the room. **They are asking for Beirut vets and family members to be there when they have the grand opening of the Beirut room Jan. 14th, 2-4 p.m.** This room was established around the 10th anniversary of the bombing. In it are some pictures of the men who gave their lives to tried to help establish peace in Beirut, Lebanon, along with other mementos, paintings and pictures.

What they would like is 5x7" pictures scanned to a computer so that they

FYI- "The USO is asking family members and veterans ... to mail a picture or pictures to be used in the Beirut room." -

Craig Renshaw, BVA President

can have the pictures printed but they will receive them in any form that they can get them. They ask that you send the name, service branch, rank and any other info pertaining to that person. Send all pictures and info to Deb Fisher, dfisher@uso-nc.org or mail: USO, 9 Tallman St., Jacksonville, NC 28540, phone (910) 455-3411.

Dan Joy agreed to maintain and put up a Christmas tree each year with the "Doves of Peace"

ornaments inscribed with the name of those lost in Beirut, at the USO each year.

BVA will donate \$500 to the Gold Star Mothers foundation, to help build their monument in Washington, D.C.

Judith Young is asking for help and asks all individuals to contact their Congressmen and ask them to approve a site for the monument as requested in HR 4197.

See the GSM website at www.goldstarmoms.com

The BVA had four regular Board of Directors and one Next of Kin position open this year. Members of the BVA voted to restore three of the BOD members - Mark Hacala, Pat Metcalf, and Glen Dolphin - and to reappoint NOK member Mary Ellen Jackowski. The fourth position to the Board went to new board member Bryan Ayres, Weapons Co., 1/8 Marines. For those of you who know Bryan contact him and congratulate him. Thank you Bryan, for stepping up.... Semper Fi.

Military Order of the Devil Dogs: It was brought to our attention by Allen Opra that the Military Order of the Devil



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30th Remembrance, 2013

BVA President: Not Too Early To Start Planning

This year we will begin planning for the 30th Remembrance in Jacksonville, NC in 2013. We hope to make this one of the best by starting now.

If you have any ideas as to what would make this one great, please forward them to me and we will discuss it and see if it would be possible to do.

As an organization we are a small group and being so we do not receive much in the way of funds other than the membership dues and the little that is made from our spirit wear sales. So I now have to ask for your help.

The last couple of years we have asked for email addresses and updated contact info so that we can keep good records on each of you in hopes of keeping you better informed of the organization and the news.

As for the Email address, the BVA is trying to cut our cost of printing and shipping the Root Scoop II. This would be a great savings to the Organization if we could bring the mailing cost down as close to zero as possible. We do understand that for some people, mailing out the RSII is the only way you can receive it and for those few we can do that. We are

asking for those of you who can receive the RSII by email, please contact Bill Thompson at bva.membership@gmail.com and tell him to send your copy of the RSII by email. If we can, we would like to have better than 90% of our newsletters go out in this way as soon as possible. It would save the organization a lot of money and manpower to be able to do so.

Times are hitting hard on many of us right now; some of our members are even without jobs. It is hitting so hard on our members that many of the dues have been placed on the back shelf and we understand. What I am asking (as you probably guessed) is for those who can, please send in your dues to the BVA. You can go to our website and pay using PAYPAL, or send it to: **Beirut Veterans of America - Bill Thompson P.O. Box 68, Avenal, CA 93204-0068**. While you are doing that please make sure to send your name, your current mailing address, phone number and email address, along with saying YES to email my Root Scoop II and if there is no way you can receive it by email please state "SnailMail RSII".

For those of you who can, we will also accept donations to the BVA. Maybe you know someone who would be willing to donate.

If you need to, contact me at: Craig Renshaw, President BVA for any reason, email me: renshaw62@yahoo.com or beirutveterans@yahoo.com or call 912-496-2710 (home).



2011 BVA Board of Directors

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

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

Beirut Veterans of America

BVA President - Craig Renshaw
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"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.

ROOT SCOOPS

Condolences to BVA Board Chairman Mark Hacala, whose father passed away in early November.

Root Vet Stephen Wells is looking for fellow vets. Wells says he was a 1983 MSSG-24 vet, an HM3 Corpsman assigned to perform medical logistics functions. He is looking for anyone he served with, preferably in the MSSG Supply or Battalion Aid Station. He wrote that he is currently having some medical issues that he believes stem from his time in Beirut and he needs contact with shipmates to get buddy letters for his VA package. His contact info is: Stephen R. Wells, 2111 Terrace Drive, Copperas Cove, TX 76522. Home phone 254-547-4781, cell phone 254-535-6821.

Looking For Wayne Carson Marine Robert Betz from Monmouth, N.J. is looking for Marine Wayne Carson. "I talked with him right before he went to Beirut and I never heard from him again," wrote Betz in an email requesting assistance. He said he last knew Carson, who was in H&S Crypto, to be living in West Palm Beach, FL. Anyone with information can contact Betz at home phone 732-495-5032, cell phone 732-921-6050; email schultzsavage@aol.com; or mail 16 Georgia Avenue, Port Monmouth, N.J. 07758.



Pearl Harbor, Beirut Bombing

Both were American Wakeup Calls

By Randy Gaddo, RSII Editor

I had an OMG (Oh My God!) moment on Sunday, December 5th, that I think Beirut veterans and families might appreciate.

I was at a Pearl Harbor remembrance event sponsored by our local Dixie Wing of the Commemorative Air Force. I had the honor of talking with the only Pearl Harbor survivor in attendance, Mr. Roy Mooney. The other survivor who was scheduled to attend fell and broke his hip and couldn't make it.

As I asked Mr. Mooney question after question about his view of that Day of Infamy, I kept making mental correlations to it and the Beirut Day of Infamy, October 23, 1983.

Then Mr. Mooney said something that brought it all home.

He was telling me how he and his infantry unit had been put on full military alert an entire two weeks prior to the sneak attack on Dec. 7, 1941. He said they were guarding fighter aircraft at Wheeler Airfield, about a mile from their quarters at Schofield Barracks until the afternoon of December 6th, when they were relieved by another unit, sent back to their barracks, secured their weapons and ammo in the armory, paid their \$30 monthly salary and given liberty in Honolulu.

Next morning, he got up at 7 a.m. to get breakfast because, "If you didn't get it by 8, you didn't

eat," he recalled. "'We were eating and suddenly heard 'boom, boom, boom' as the Japs started bombing Wheeler Field.'"

He recounted how they ran outside to see the carnage a mile away. "If we had been allowed to keep our weapons and ammo we could have shot many of the enemy airplanes down, that's how low they were flying," he recounted as he fought to keep his voice steady and eyes free of tears. "That is why I continue to tell the story of what happened," the 87-year-old hero told me. "Somebody has got to continue telling the story or the American public will forget," he said.

That's when it struck me that these two sneak attacks, one in 1941 and one in 1983, were connected, if not by historical facts, then by the magnitude of their impact on the American consciousness. Pearl Harbor pulled the U.S. into WWII; The Beirut Bombing pulled us, unknowingly, into the Global War on Terror.

So if BVA members, families and friends ever question why we do what we do, you can quote a Pearl Harbor hero, Mr. Roy Mooney, "Because somebody has got to continue telling the story."

The First Duty Is To Remember



Wheeler Field, Hawaii, 1941



Beirut Int'l Airport, 1983



Carry On: A Forum for Beirut Families

Information of, for and by Families of Beirut Vets

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

VOICES FROM BEIRUT: The Peacekeepers Speak

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 Peacekeepers, 1982-1984, overcomes this very real concern, say the collection's compilers. "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 peacekeeping 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



27th Remembrance Review

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Dogs had founded the first monument at Camp Geiger then planned and performed a Beirut ceremony each year since the first anniversary of the bombing. He requested the BVA acknowledge them with a donation and a plaque. The members voted for a plaque and \$500 to be given.

USO: The members asked to give a donation to the USO for providing the building to the BVA each year. Kevin Krier stepped in and started walking around the room with a hat and donations quickly filled his cover. \$256 dollars was collected and with \$150 dollars collected from the raffle a total of \$406.00 was presented to the USO.

The meeting was adjourned.

That evening we all met up at the Holiday Inn Express and had a great time. Local business donated beverages and snacks, with some guys bringing in their own. The Holiday Inn gave us the lobby room to meet in, but most stayed outside where the weather was cool but great. I don't know what time the last few closed it down because I wimped out about 2130 hrs.

Saturday Oct. 23rd at 6 a.m. about 75 people gathered for our Candlelight ceremony at the Beirut Memorial. Major Bob Jordan asked DAV chaplain Bentley Black to open with a prayer and then he spoke of the sacrifices that were made so that Beirut may be given the chance for peace. He recounted how the families have suffered and given more than most people will understand and about how this act of terrorism should be recognized as the first against this great Nation.

At the conclusion, family members and veterans began to read the names inscribed in the wall. At 6:22 a.m. the last name was read and Major Jordan asked that we all pause for a moment of silent prayer. Major Jordan then spoke a few words and asked Chaplain Black to close with prayer.

At 10:30 all gathered at the Beirut Memorial for the Remembrance ceremony hosted by the city of Jacksonville, NC. The 2nd Marine Division Band was on hand and the Brewster Middle School Choir.

About 500 people attended and the guest speaker was Lieutenant General Dennis Hejlik, commander, U.S. Marine Forces Command, who was a Captain with 2/8 in Beirut after the bombing.

He stepped up to the platform to deliver the speech he had written, paused for a moment and looked across the crowd and folded up the speech and said, "I came here today ready to deliver this speech, but I'm not going to read



this." Then he started to speak from his soul. In his words he told his story about the feelings he himself felt at hearing about the bombing of the battalion and how within a week he was there looking at the destroyed remains of the building.

There in and around the rubble he saw "memorials" the men of the 24th MAU had left and built in honor of the losses and memories of their brothers. He went on to say how that has stayed with him through these years and how it has guided him to where and what he is today.

His words, though unplanned, struck the heart of every veteran and family member there as I'm sure it was delivered from his own.

The end of the ceremony was performed with a precision that I have witnessed only a few times, by the Color Guard and rifle detail of 2/8. These young Marines were so sharp and in time that many in the crowd commented. I am very proud of them and honored that these Marines shared their day, this day, with us. To the city of Jacksonville and the Marines of 2/8..... Semper Fi and thank you.

With a few hours to burn before the next ceremony there was time to eat and go to the Exchange to browse and shop before we gathered again on Camp Geiger at 2 p.m. to attend the memorial services hosted by the Military Order of the Devil Dogs.

This ceremony has been running now since the first anniversary, making it the 26th. Although fewer people attend, it is the one I personally like attending the most other than the Candle Light. The service is of a smaller scale compared to the city's, which is only because those attending consist of family members and veterans and others who have personal reasons.

The guest speaker was Col Brown, Acting Chief of Staff for the 2nd Marine Division. At the conclusion, Rolling Thunder formed two lines and gave honor to the Beirut Veterans and the family members by honoring us and the memories of our brothers as we walked between the columns. Semper Fi and thank you Rolling Thunder and especially to the Military Order of the Devil Dogs.

That evening we once more and for the last time said a few

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Georgia Marines Hold 1st Beirut Memorial 5K



(Above) A Patriot Rider on his flag-bearing motorcycle leads the field of 200 runners in the first Beirut Memorial 5K in McDonough, GA. (Below) 12-year Marine veteran Chuck Conkle and his wife, Keri, await the start of the race. (Photos, Alex Gaddo)



Marine Corps League Detachment 1339 in McDonough, Georgia held its first Beirut Memorial 5K Run on October 23, 2010.

At 5 p.m. on a sultry southern day, race organizer and Det. 1339's junior vice commandant, Jeff Owen, announced to the 200 runners the purpose of the run.

"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."

Owen also introduced BVA founding vice president Randy Gaddo and Beirut veteran Chuck Conkle who attended the event. Conkle, a scout-sniper, looking sharp in his dress blues, started the race.

"This was a very special tribute to our brothers killed in action in Beirut," said Gaddo. "The fact that this group of Marines chose the 23rd of October as the date of their race and recognized it as the date of the terrorist bombing validates the BVA's efforts in keeping the memory of our fallen heroes alive in the American con-



BVA Founding Vice President Randy Gaddo (right) presents a \$250 check to MCL Det. 1339 Commandant Tom Oakes on October 23, 2010.

sciousness."

The BVA became a sponsor of the event by donating \$250 to the cause. 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. It is intended to become an annual event.

Detachment #1339 of the MCL is commended for an outstanding effort. The young detachment was just formed in September of 2009 so it is an especially impressive feat to pull together an event of this size. Of special note is Jeff Owen's contribution, as this was the first run he had ever organized and he quickly learned there are many moving parts to such an initiative.

27th Remembrance-

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goodbyes to those who had to leave. At 5 p.m. we gathered at the Holiday Inn for a Bar-BQ dinner. The meal was great with all you could eat pork and chicken and all the trimmings. When all was eaten that could be fit into our stomachs, the 30-40 of us left stayed to finish off what was left from the night before. As the hours passed so did the crowd slowly start to dwindle. By midnight only a

steadfast few remained and once again I can't say as to the time the last one left. Sunday morning brought a warm and beautiful day. As good as it was I hate this day each year. For now, I have to leave, only to wonder what this coming year will bring and who will we see at the next, and who will we not.

I would like to thank each of you who attended and I hope to see you again next year. As President of the BVA I want to thank each of you who helped

pull this 27th Remembrance together and the work that you did. There are many of you and I hate to name names, as I know I would leave someone out, but there is one I have to mention, Dan Joy. Your commitment to the BVA has made traveling to Jacksonville so easy, for us to enjoy and attend these past two years. Thank you Dan and thank you everyone for your commitment. Semper Fi,

Craig Renshaw
President, BVA

Ohio Remembers the Peacekeepers

Marine Corps League, Family Members, Veterans Pay Tribute



The Peacekeepers Memorial in Struthers, Ohio was the site of an annual event held this year on October 17. At 6:22 a.m. all of the names of those killed in Beirut were read aloud, followed by the solemn notes of Taps. Later, at 1 p.m., a remembrance ceremony was held at the memorial. The Tri-County Marine Corps League presided over the event. Speakers included BVA members Donald (Gunny) Inns and Alan D. (Big Al) Opra, with keynote speaker Helen Montgomery. The event featured family members laying memorial wreaths escorted by Beirut Marines and a Gunnery Sergeant from the local recruiting office. The Marine Corps League rendered a rifle salute. Struthers Mayor Terry Stocker commented in his weekly report to the community that the service members killed in Beirut will never be forgotten.



Spirit Wear !

Photos of all updated Spirit Wear items can be seen at the official BVA website: www.beirutveterans.org

- #1: 25th Remembrance T-shirts, \$12:** youth large, S, M, L, XL: \$15 for 2XL, 3XL
- #2: Sweat Shirt \$23;** w/ full-front embroidered BVA Logo; 95% pre-shrunk cotton available in white, ash grey, hunter green, maroon, black, light blue. Adult sizes S, M, L, XL; \$25 for 2x, 3x (3x in white, ash grey, hunter green only)
- #3: Golf Shirt \$27** w/embroidered BVA Logo; 6.5 oz., 100 percent combed cotton pique golf shirt w/quarter sleeves; welt collar and cuffs; side vents w/2" dropped tail; red, purple, blue (bimini & corporate), true royal, true navy, black, white, sports gray, putty, butter, tangerine, mango, wine, jade; **Adult Sizes: M, L, XL; \$29 for 2X, 3X**
- #4: Sport Cap; \$15** brushed cotton twill, 6-panel, soft crown, low-fitting, adjustable strap, front embroidered logo, script on back; available in Maroon with green visor; Tan or Chestnut w/black visor:
- #5: New: BVA Christmas Ornament, \$5**
- #6: BVA K-bar: regular, \$50; Gold Edition, \$100**
- #7: BVA Family Rocker, \$4; rocker & patch, \$10**
- #8: BVA Bumper Stickers...\$3 each**
- #9: BVA Mousepads (blue), \$4 (8" x 9")**
- #10 Round Cloth Patches, \$7.50 (3.5x3.5")**
- #11: Static Window Clings: \$3.00**
- #12: BVA Bronze Challenge Coin, \$6.50 each**
- #13: 1/8 sticker, \$2**

Shipping Charge rates:

Subtotals up to \$9.99.....	\$3.50
Subtotals from \$10 to \$49.99.....	\$5.50
From \$50 to \$99.99.....	\$7.50
\$100 to \$199.99.....	\$12.50
\$200 and up	\$15.50
Over \$300, call Cliff Walling to confirm	

25th T-Shirt: Quantity _____ Size _____
 Color _____ \$ _____

Sweat Shirt: Quantity _____ Size _____ Color _____ \$ _____

Golf Shirt: Quantity _____ Size _____ Color _____ \$ _____

Cap: Quantity _____ Size _____ Color _____ \$ _____

Christmas Ornament: Quantity _____ \$ _____

BVA K-bar: Regular, # _____; Gold Edition, # _____ \$ _____

BVA Family rocker: Quantity _____ Patch + rocker _____ \$ _____

Please Tell Us Your:

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Make check payable to BVA. Send order form and check to:

Cliff C. Walling

123 Prentice Avenue

South River, N.J. 08882-2210

Expect Delivery in 4-6 weeks. For more information

Call Cliff @ (h) 732-613-0441

Email: wallingclan@msn.com

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