

Official Newsletter of the Beirut Veterans of America

Root Scoop II

Vol. V, Issue 5

"The First Duty is to Remember"

August/September 2007

2007 Remembrance Plans

Root Vets, Families Remember Heroes

For the 24th consecutive year Beirut Veterans, families and friends will gather in Jacksonville, N.C. to remember the 270 servicemen killed in action in Beirut, Lebanon between 1982-84. The event also remembers 3 KIA's who died during action in Grenada in October 1983.

Each year, in the days surrounding October 23rd, hundreds gather in Remembrance and camaraderie. October 23rd has significance because, on that day in 1983, 241 of those heroes died in one terrorist act and hundreds more were wounded.

On that day, a terrorist truck bomb carrying explosives wrapped around compressed gas cylinders crashed into a barracks housing more than 400 service members. When the dust had settled, 220 Marines, 18 sailors and 3 soldiers were dead, and many more were wounded. For the Marines, it was the largest loss of life in a single day since Iwo Jima in WWII.

This year's event will feature a traditional candlelight vigil at 6 a.m. at the foot of the Beirut Memorial. The memorial bears the names of all those killed in Beirut and Grenada. Each name will be read aloud by veterans or family members. Each will, for a brief moment, live again as his name is spoken.

Later in the morning, about 10



a.m., a more formal ceremony at the Memorial will include military music, pageantry and commemorative comments from key military and community leaders. A wreath will be laid at the foot of the lone Marine statue who stands perpetual guard at the site.

Within eye sight of the Beirut Memorial is another memorial that shares a common bond. A piece of steel girder salvaged from the Twin Towers after Sept. 11, 2001 also stands under constant guard by the stony Marine statue. The girder was donated by members of the New York Fire Department who were also Marines.

Coordination Information

The Comfort Suites will be the preferred hotel for this year's Remembrance. The hotel is located on U.S. Highway 17 north (across the street from the Holiday Inn). Rooms are \$70 plus tax per night. Call 910-346-8900 and mention the Beirut Veterans Remembrance to get the special price. A Hospitality Suite will be set up here and will be

opened at 8 p.m. Oct. 21 and 22nd for camaraderie.

The Holiday Inn has quoted a price of \$89 per night. Call 910-347-1900 for reservations. Other hotels in the area are: Innkeeper, 910-938-0800; Super 8, 910-455-6888.

A nearby campground is available for those with RV's or wishing to camp. Call 910-620-5064 or 910-619-1855.

The Jacksonville USO will again be the site for a command post that will be opened Oct. 21 from 2 to 4 p.m. and Oct. 22 from 2 to 6 p.m. The USO is located at 9 Tallman Street, phone 910-455-3411. It will also be site of the Annual Meeting at 6 p.m., Oct. 22. See the official BVA website, beirutveterans.org, for up to the minute Remembrance info.

24th Remembrance Itinerary

Sat. Oct. 20, 2007—

8 p.m. Hospitality Suite, Comfort Suites

Sun., Oct. 21, 2007—

2-4 p.m., Command Post, USO,

8 p.m., Hospitality Suite

Mon. Oct. 22, 2007

2-6 p.m., Command Post, USO

6 p.m., Annual Meeting, USO

8 p.m., Hospitality Suite

Tues., Oct. 23, 2007

6 a.m., Candlelight Service @ Memorial

10:30 a.m., Formal Event @ Memorial

2:30 p.m., Devildog Ceremony, Camp Geiger

From the BVA President**Every Remembrance Year is Important**

2008 will mark the 25th year of Remembrance for Beirut Veterans, families and friends. The BVA board, officers and members are expending much effort to ensure that this milestone is appropriately marked.

However, it is important to recognize that each and every annual Remembrance is equally important in terms of carrying out the BVA mission of keeping America aware of the sacrifices made by U.S. servicemen and families in Beirut.

We tend to make every 5th year a more pronounced Remembrance, and that's ok. It provides an opportunity for us to highlight to the external world the actions of Americans in Beirut with an expectation to get more media and public attention. This is something we should strive to continue doing. But internally, as an organization, we should treat each and every year with the same reverence and dedication. Our BVA motto is "The First Duty Is To Remember." That means always, not just every 5th year. So I hope you all will plan to join us for this 24th Remembrance.

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Board of Directors Appreciate Members Who Support BVA

We would like to thank each of you who have kept true to our Motto "THE FIRST DUTY IS TO REMEMBER" and have helped to keep the BVA moving forward. Some of you have sent us emails containing information or news that the BVA needed to know, some have offered ideas and or suggestions. We also have members working on committees and in groups. To each of you who have committed to helping the BVA, we thank you. The BVA needs this continuing support from you, the members.

The Officers and the Board of Directors of the Beirut veterans of America have been working to accomplish some set goals. We are looking at having a BVA flag for this year's service in Jacksonville, just to name one of them. The Officers and the Directors are here for you and this organization, so if you feel we can be of help, or have knowledge of anything that we need to know or that could help this organization, please contact us.

This years Remembrance Ceremony in Jacksonville, NC will again held on Oct. 22-23 2007. For those attending we look forward to seeing you again. Several hotels have been booked for our use and stay. If you call in for reservations tell them you are with the Beirut Veterans for a discount. Not all hotels have been contacted by us, so keep that in mind when calling.

The last few years some of our members have held their own reunions in different areas of the U.S. because Jacksonville, NC is too far for them to travel. If you are planning or know of one, send it in to us with all the information and we will post it on our web site for others to see. Also take some pictures at the event and write up an article and we'll get it in our newsletter.

Next year for the 25th Remembrance in Jacksonville we expect to have a big turn out. Plans are already in progress so start now by making yours. Contact your old buddies now and see what their plans are. This will be a good year to run into them as they may be planning on being there.

On the same note, some of the individual units, companies, or groups may also be planning for their own organized gathering during this time. If you do know of this happening please inform us so that we can work together to coordinate our events.

***Thank you for your Support
Craig Renshaw and the Board of Directors***

ROOT SCOOPS

Seven BVA Members March in 2007 D.C. Memorial Day Parade

BVA Member Bill Kibler reports that seven dedicated BVA members marched in the 2007 Washington, D.C. Memorial Day parade.

The members were: Garrett McKenzie (playing bag pipes); Tim McCoskey; Gary McCarty; Jeff Haskell (family member); Bill Kibler; 'Preacher' -- on motorcycle; 'Boots' - on motorcycle

Kibler reports a long wait in the sun/shade for the BVA parade unit to get activated (they were #140).

"The parade kicked off at 2 p.m., followed by a moment of silence at 3:00, and we started into the parade at 3:30," he reports.

The unit received thunderous applause as they went down Constitution Avenue, lots of thumbs up, and continuous 'thank-you's.' Garrett McKenzie lead the unit playing the bag pipes, the only bag piper in the parade, followed by the 3 Veterans and Family Member on foot, then the two bikers bringing up the rear.

"We had a local JROTC Color Guard directly in front of us and behind us," said Kibler.

Bravo Zulu on a job well done.

Root Vet Needs Help

Root vet Ken Spencer (Truck Co., 24th MAU) was recently forced to retire from the Sidney OH Police Dept. because of a lung condition called COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease). The doctors say that his lung capacity is diminishing, but don't know the cause. He was in Beirut in 1983 during the BLT bombing and says he was very active in the rescue/recovery/clean up efforts. Has anyone heard of any other Marines who were in Beirut having lung problems? If so, he needs to hear from them. He is currently trying to schedule an appointment with the VA hospital. His email is jcspencer@aol.com.

In Search of a PAO

BVA Seeks PR, Marketing Rep

BVA President Randy Gaddo is seeking volunteers to assist with public relations and marketing in order to prepare the organization for the 25th Remembrance in 2008.

This is a follow-up item from the 2006 annual meeting, where it was initially discussed.

"I think it would be a good idea to have someone focused on obtaining national attention to the upcoming 25th Remembrance," says Gaddo. "If we can start now we can use the 24th Remembrance as a launching point and have things in full gear for the 25th."

A primary focus of this volunteer position would be to develop national level media and other organizational contacts in order to shine a national spot light on the lessons learned in Beirut.

"Our BVA motto, 'The First Duty is to Remember,' should serve as a guide," Gaddo stressed. "We have a message that the country needs to hear."

The other focus for this volun-

teer would be to develop materials that can be used by BVA members to tell the BVA story in hometowns nationally.

"This could be in the form of flyers, three-fold brochures or news releases," Gaddo says. "Local BVA members could use these as collateral material to inform local populations either through media interviews, presentations to community groups or one person at a time."

While this is an unpaid, volunteer position, associated expenses such as printing would be considered for payment from the BVA treasury.

Gaddo emphasizes that he would like a person or persons with background in this sort of work. However, a motivated and capable person willing to learn can be equally effective.

Interested parties may contact Gaddo as shown below.

Interested In Being An Editor?

Gaddo is also seeking someone to be editor of the Root Scoop II. He has edited it since it's inception in 1992. However, he could better use that time on duties as BVA President. For more details contact Gaddo as shown below.

Son Seeks Info on Dad

U.S. Air Force MSgt. Kevin Coker is interested in anyone who knew his dad, Marine GySgt. Scipio Williams Jr., who was killed on Oct. 23, 1983 in Beirut. Reach him at email: britta.moore@langley.afb.mil or phone 757-225-5402

Beirut Veterans of America

BVA President - Randy Gaddo
Vice President - Richard Ray
Secretary - Michael Fullarton
Treasurer - Steve Godfrey
Membership/ - Debra Reisert
- Bill Yontz
"Scoop" mailout - Jeff Bucchi

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.

Directory Is Enclosed

BVA Members Can Send Contact Info

In order to keep BVA members in contact with each other, the enclosed directory has been developed with pertinent contact information.

Membership chair Debra Reisert did the grunt work on the directory, which will eventually be available on line. It will include names, phone numbers, addresses and/or emails of all BVA members who wish to contribute information.

"One of the primary reasons for the BVA existence is to keep members in touch with each other, to support each other," said BVA President Randy Gaddo. "It will be beneficial to have a central directory to help with this mission, and I thank Debra for volunteering to help with it." The directory will be periodically updated.

Members can send their info via email to beirut-veterans@yahoo.com or to Debra at 696 Pickett Level Road, Elloree, S.C. 29047

Author Plans New Book About Beirut Looking for Input From Root Vets

The BVA Board of Directors approved support for an author planning a new book about Beirut.

Author Harold Wise is just starting a book about the U.S. military in Lebanon between the years 1982-84. His first book, "Inside the Danger Zone," will be published by the Naval Institute Press in Spring 2007. It is about the Persian Gulf war in 1987/88.

Wise plans to interview a large number of veterans and use them as the main sources for the book. His writing style features a strong oral history component using the personal stories of veterans woven into a historical narrative.

The author intends to be at the 24th Remembrance this year and would like to talk with Root Vets. He has obtained good oral histories from the Marine Historical Center as well.

BVA members who wish to contact Mr. Wise can call him at (h) 252-473-2610, or (w) 252-475-5835, email tankerwar@hotmail.com or write him at 150 Scuppernong Road, Manteo, NC 27954.

Second Beirut Book Being Planned; Seeks Root Vets Input

Another author has approached BVA leadership with a request for support for a book he is planning.

Journalist Alasdair Soussi is planning a book that would be a comprehensive history of Lebanon, including American interventions. Soussi is of mixed Lebanese (father) and Scottish (mother) descent.

The 27-year old journalist specializes in North African/Middle Eastern affairs.

"I've covered many issues, ranging from street children in Cairo to Hezbollah in Sidon and Beirut," he wrote in a letter requesting support. "I've written for the Christian Science Monitor, the Toronto Star,

BBC online and the Sunday Herald and Herald (Scotland's national newspapers), among many others."

The book, says Soussi, is intended to look at Lebanon as far back as possible (the Phoenicians, for example) and trace its journey (through the Ottoman Empire and the 20th and 21st century) to uncover why Lebanon is the way that it is today. Why does such a small country have so many religions? Where, in history, does Lebanon begin to collapse? And why?

The BVA Board of Directors have considered his request and have authorized support. Interested members can email Soussi at

allysoussi@hotmail.com.

BVA Board support does not imply endorsement of anything written in this book or otherwise by Mr. Soussi or any other writer. It merely means that there appears to be merit in the proposed work and BVA members should exercise their own discretion in speaking with this or any author.

Root Vet Dies at Age 49

William Ed Hadley Shutz, 49, of Falmouth, Va., died at his home in July. The Marine survived the Beirut bombing and received a Purple Heart. He was also a veteran of the first Gulf War and Panama.

Special Note: The official BVA Website has changed from .com to .org - The Website is www.beirutveterans.org



They Came In Peace

Beirut Stamp Initiative

California Reporter Supports Issuance

Reprinted from website, *The Reporter*,
Vacaville, CA, April, 2007:

On Oct. 23, 1983, some 241 Marines, sailors and soldiers were killed, and hundreds of others wounded or disabled, when a truck carrying the equivalent of 20,000 pounds of TNT was detonated on the ground floor of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 1/8 Headquarters' barracks in Beirut, Lebanon.

Other service members perished from sniper fire and other atrocities from 1982 to 1984, while still others died years later or are permanently disabled as the result of their wounds. In all, 270 Marines, sailors and soldiers died in that "peacekeeping" mission.

Beginning in 1986, a contingent of Gold Star mothers, wives, and family members of the 270 fallen heroes began a push to have a postage stamp issued to honor America's fallen heroes. This initial endeavor proved fruitless for the contingency.

In 1993, they gathered more than 20,000 signatures from American citizens, family members and comrades, and repeatedly over the last 14 years they have pushed for consideration of a stamp. They have been met with opposition and excuses - hundreds of reasons not to issue and honor the fallen and the peacekeepers with a commemorative postage stamp.

Some of the reasons for declining the stamp, as stated by the stamp committee, include:

- "We try hard to honor positive things."
- "People want non-controversial stamps."
- "Beirut lacked significance in American history, and not enough



people were killed."

Through the years, stamps have been issued in series and individually for Santa Claus, musicians, flowers, birds, politicians and love. The list is endless. I cannot understand how the U.S. Postal Service and the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee can feel that these topics are worthy of providing a tribute stamp, while those Americans who were felled while serving in this peacekeeping mission are not equally worthy.

I am fully aware that there are stamps that honor many of the issues we hold sacred in the military and veterans community: Purple Heart, POW-MIA, military leaders, dedication of the Vietnam Memorial. Yet in my opinion, the years that it takes to get these approved to honor our military and our veterans - those who undergo the triumphs and tribulations in war and peacetime - has been excessively long, bogged down in red tape. And when a stamp finally is issued, it seems to be available for too short a period of time.

I support the Beirut Stamp Initiative and I strongly encourage the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee

and the Postal Service to stop holding up issuance of this stamp. They also should issue stamps that honor our military men and women, their service and sacrifices, their heroism and pain, and make them more available throughout the year, especially during the months of May and November (Memorial Day and Veterans Day).

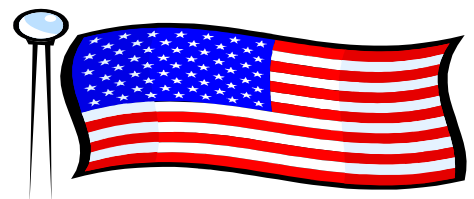
Let the postal customers decide what they want to put on their mail, remove those stamps that do not sell well during a trial run, and keep those that are in high demand.

We are fortunate to live in a country where the rights of others are treasured and protected by rules of codified law. In Beirut in 1983, and since that time, good men and women have stood ready to protect those laws and the people who live under them, including the people who decide who and what deserves a stamp.

The push is on to have the stamp commissioned on or before Oct. 23, 2008, which will be the 25th anniversary of the death of those brave and courageous Americans who did nothing more than come in peace.

Please join this national effort to secure the stamp and honor their memory.

More information about the Stamp Initiative can be obtained online at www.beirutstamp.com, while information about the memorial that honors those who died that day can be found at www.beirut-memorial.org.



Fall In!

BVA Board Chair Seeks Historic Root Vet Formation

To ALL Beirut Veterans who were in Beirut during the time frame of June –Nov. 1983 and were with or attached to the Marines of the 24th MAU, 24 MSSG, Air Wing, Charlie Battery, and any other unit not named here.

We are trying to set up a formation to take place at Camp Lejeune on the 22nd of October 2008. Since it will mark the 25 year Remembrance of the BLT 1/8 bombing in Beirut, we expect to have a very big turn out for the Remembrance Ceremony. There are two key reasons for this formation. First, it will help to bring all of us together at one place and at a dedicated time. By doing this it will help to make it easier to find old friends and buddies.

A second and the main reason is to have this formation in honor of the BLT 1/8 commander, Col. Larry Gerlach. As you know he never had the opportunity of being in or having a “Change of Command” ceremony for our BLT C.O. because of the injuries he sustained in Beirut.

I have spoken to Mrs. Gerlach and she feels he would appreciate this very much from his men. At this time we have decided to try to do this in secret without his knowledge of it. But if she feels it would be too hard on him, she may have to tell him of this beforehand.

What we are looking at doing is having a military type formation set up in sections or platoons. We would like to have each set up with its command in place (or as near it as possible) and ready to give an attendance report when asked to



“REPORT.” At this time we are still working out the rest of the matters that will take place due to the fact that we don’t know if this will still be a surprise for the Colonel. We are also including our MAU commander Col. Timothy Geraghty during the formation.

I want to make sure that each of you understands: this formation includes ALL who landed in Beirut from May to November 1983. BLT 1/8, MSSG, MAU, Air wing and any others.

To assist you can contact everyone you know who was there and have them send their email address to blt.18formation@yahoo.com so that we can contact them as this progresses and keep everyone informed. Or you can send in their email address if you like. We also need to know their name, and what section, group, platoon and company they were with. Example:

BLT 1/8 Alpha com. 1st platoon.

We are trying to compile a list of names for each. We hope by starting this now, this early, we will be able to reach as many of our brothers as possible and have a great turn out. If you will please forward this on to others that you know it

will help the effort. Exact location of the formation will be announced as a later date.

For those of you that have not given it much thought I hope you will consider going to the 2008 Remembrance in Jacksonville, N.C. Planning is already going on and we expect it to be a full 2, possible 3 day, event in October 2008. More details will be given out as plans are made.

Also for your information the Beirut Veterans of America organization (BVA) is going strong at more than 1,000 members. We send out this newsletter every quarter to keep members abreast of what is going on. If you happen to be reading this online and want to receive this newsletter go to www.beirutveterans.org. That is our web site and look around. You can also fill out a form and become a member.

Also the BVA is in the process of compiling a members directory to be given out. It also needs each members’ contact information. If you wish to contact the BVA you can send a email to beirutveterans@yahoo.com. The BVA is also looking for members who want to help out and volunteer to be on planning groups and committees, so send in your name to the email address above if you are willing to help.

Well this has got lengthy enough so I’ll quit here. I hope to hear from many Root vets.

Semper Fi
Craig Renshaw
BVA Board Chairman

News Release Is Tool for Root Vets

The news release attached to this newsletter announces the 24th Remembrance of the Beirut and Grenada service. It is provided here in this reproducible form so that BVA veterans may make copies of it and disseminate it to their local news media sources. Also provided, below, are some tips about how to go about getting the Bei-

rut story published in local media. BVA veterans who wish to get the word out in this way are encouraged to begin providing this news release to media around the beginning of October.

Good Luck
Editor

Media Training 101: Getting the BVA Story Out

Talking with the news media can be a daunting task.

Some Beirut Vets may have a negative attitude about media, and in some cases that attitude might very well be justified. Anyone who has gotten burned by an inaccurate quote or a mishandling of information can be reluctant to talk with media.

However, the best way to get the BVA story out to the public is by way of the mass media. Whether it's print or electronic, that's how most people still generally get their day to day information.

There are definitely right and wrong ways of approaching media representatives. Following are some tips that can serve as a guideline for Root Vets to take their story to local media.

- ⇒ First determine which local media is military friendly. Who has editorials supporting the military? Who does frequent features on military activities. These are probably the local news outlets to visit first. Your chances of success will be greater.
- ⇒ Precede the visit with a phone call. Find the right person to talk with. Ask first for the mili-



- tary editor or reporter. If there isn't one, ask for the features editor or writer. Set up an appointment to visit.
- ⇒ Be yourself. Don't try to be what you think a reporter expects to see. Just be cordial, calm and act naturally.
- ⇒ What do you tell them? Here's an example: "I'm Joe Vet and I want to provide you with this news release concerning a very important story about terrorism, the military and Beirut, Lebanon." Any news person worth their salt will want to know more. Tell them.
- ⇒ Only talk about things you know to be true and factual. Avoid speculation and don't talk about areas with which you aren't familiar. For example, if you were a radio operator in Beirut, don't talk about being a sniper, unless it is in general

terms. Don't get caught up in the moment and try to be an expert in an area where you're not one.

- ⇒ If a reporter asks a question to which you don't know the answer, but which is an important question, try to find the answer and get back with them.
- ⇒ Refresh your memory before you talk with a reporter. Read old news accounts or reference materials and bone up on the history of the U.S. Root experience. Take notes and don't be reluctant to take them with you.
- ⇒ Last, suggest the media get more firsthand knowledge by attending the 24th Remembrance. Emphasize that 2008 will be the 25th Remembrance and that they can get a head start on competition by getting to know the story this year.
- ⇒ Feel free to contact me if you have questions: 770-631-4074 or email cwo4usmc@comcast.net

The editor was a public affairs enlisted Marine and chief warrant officer.

Spirit Wear !

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

#1: T-shirt w/full-front silk screened BVA Logo; temporarily discontinued, will attempt to get reprinted: Only 20th Remembrance t-shirts for sale, \$15 **S, M, XL, 2XL & 3XL; colors: white, black, ash gray and sand**

#2: Sweat Shirt 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, 2x, 3x\$23 (3x in white, ash grey, hunter green only)**

#3: Golf Shirt 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, 2X, 3X - \$27**

#4: Sport Cap; 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:** Price.....\$15 each

#5: BVA Bumper Stickers...\$3 each

#6: BVA Mousepads (blue), \$5 (8" x 9")

#7L Round Cloth Patches, \$7.50 (3.5x3.5")

BVA Bronze Challenge Coin, \$6.50 each

Shipping Charge rates:

Subtotals up to \$14.99.....	\$3.00
Subtotals from \$15 to \$49.99.....	\$5.00
From \$50 to \$99.99.....	\$10.50
\$100 to \$199.99.....	\$18.50
\$200 to \$300.....	\$25.00
Over \$300, call Cliff Walling for cost	
Orders routinely shipped USPS	

New Item: Static Window Clings: \$3.00

T-Shirt: Quantity _____ Size _____ Color _____	\$ _____
Golf Shirt: Quantity _____ Size _____ Color _____	\$ _____
Lapel Pins (\$2): Quantity _____	\$ _____
Cap: Quantity _____ Size _____ Color _____	\$ _____
Sweat Shirt: Quantity _____ Size _____ Color _____	\$ _____
Mouse Pads: Quantity _____	\$ _____
Bumper Stickers: Quantity _____	\$ _____
Patches: Quantity _____	\$ _____
Challenge Coin: Quantity _____	\$ _____
Static Window Cling: Quantity _____	\$ _____
	Subtotal \$ _____
	Shipping: \$ _____
	TOTAL ORDER \$ _____

Please Tell Us Your:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

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

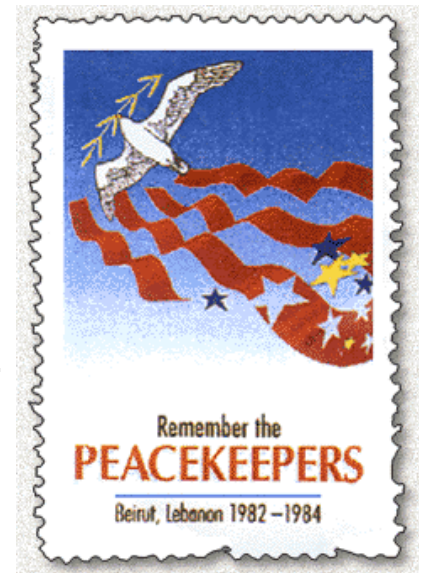
Email: wallingclan@msn.com

Official Newsletter of the Beirut Veterans of America

Root Scoop II



Aug/Sept 2007



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