

NDSWM



Conceptual design of the war memorial pending approval by US Federal authorities.

Operation Desert Storm story needs to be heard now more than ever: Stump

Memorial to honor fallen, educate future generations

By Cintra Fernandes

Arab Times Staff

Operation Desert Storm, the military operation by the US-led coalition, succeeded in expelling Iraqi forces occupying Kuwait in 1991. While the trauma of the Iraqi occupation and the Gulf War has been seared into the memory of Kuwait, Scott C. Stump, who served as an infantryman with I Marine Expeditionary Force during ODS, is working to ensure that the service and sacrifice of the many soldiers who fought in this war are not forgotten.

Stump is the chairman, president and chief executive officer of the National Desert Storm War Memorial Association. In this interview with the Arab Times, he discusses his efforts to construct a memorial in Washington, D.C. that will not only memorialize the fallen, but also educate Americans and future generations of this important historical event.

Arab Times: Can you start by giving us a brief background of the National Desert Storm War Memorial Association? What is the mission of your organization? How does it operate?

Scott Stump: The National Desert Storm War Memorial Association was something I initiated over 6 years ago. I came to the realization that many people had forgotten how important Operation Desert Storm was, what it accomplished, and those who died in Kuwait as well as on the battlefield. I recruited other like-minded Veterans to join me and assemble a team to accomplish our mission.

Our mission is very simple: To erect the National Desert Storm Memorial in Washington, D.C. to remember all who served and died back in 1990-91.

We operate as a Federally (US) Recognized Non-Profit, comprised of a 100% volunteer (Non-Paid) Team.

AT: Are you working with or do you receive support from any Kuwaiti institutions and entities?

SS: From the beginning I felt that it was essential to inform the Kuwaiti Government of our plans for this memorial. This was out of courtesy and respect for the Government and people of Kuwait. Desert Storm was such an important, albeit tragic event in Kuwait's history. Everyone in Kuwait was effected in one way or another. This is their memorial as well and we have to make sure that the story through the memorial is told properly.

I am honored to have the privilege of working with and communicating with Ambassador Al-Sabah and the wonderful staff at The Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Washington, D.C. for over the past 3 years or so.

AT: How is Desert Storm perceived by Americans today? What are the sentiments that veterans and civilians have towards it?

Biography

Scott C. Stump is Chairman of the Board, President, and Chief Executive Officer of the National Desert Storm War Memorial Association a federally recognized 501©3 organization. He assumed the role on July 30, 2011.

As CEO, Scott leads an all-volunteer Executive Leadership Team focused on the sole mission of constructing the National Desert Storm War Memorial in Washington, D.C. Under his leadership tremendous progress has been made in achieving this goal, including securing federal authorization by law, to build the memorial on federal land, as well as a recommendation for an Area I location from the Secretary of the Interior. He also



Stump

leads the \$25 Million Capital Campaign and continues to work with the various federal commissions while successfully navigating the 24-step process for memorials set in place and outlined by the Commemorative Works Act. He has testified before Congress as well as various federal commissions on multiple occasions while at the same time building strong and effective working relationships with these important and valuable partners.

Prior to his position with NDSWM, Scott worked fifteen years in the financial services industry and has spent the past six years as a serial entrepreneur. He holds a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Criminology from Indiana State University. Scott served with the United States Marine Corps as an infantryman during Operation Desert Storm as part of the First Marine Expeditionary Force. Scott resides in Waynesville, North Carolina with his wife Robin and two teenage children.

SS: A large number of Americans tend to overlook Desert Storm and how important it was. Some have the misconception that it was this video game war where nobody died. Veterans tend to have a much better understanding of Desert Storm. They appreciate the fact that over 600,000 Americans served, over 300 died, as well as the fact that a coalition of 33 other countries came together to do the right thing and liberate Kuwait after a murderous and horrific 7-month occupation.

AT: What is the purpose of war memorials today? How do you ensure they are not seen as glorifying war?

SS: The purpose of memorials in my opinion is two-fold. First to memorialize and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The second purpose is to educate. Future generations need to learn and understand virtues such as sacrifice, service, courage, and to keep those virtues alive 50, 100, 200 years from now. 20 Million people visit Washington, D.C. every year. Many from other countries. My hope is that these global citizens will keep the memory and spirit of Operation Desert Storm alive for many years to come. Hopefully, if they reside in one of the coalition countries, they will be able to feel a sense of pride in knowing that their country was a very important part of a very important mission — the Liberation of Kuwait!

AT: Why is now the right time to build this memorial?

SS: It's been 26 years since the Victory of Desert Storm. The time is now! In 2017 we find ourselves in a very negative and divisive world the story of Operation Desert Storm needs to be heard now more than ever. The coming together of these 34

erans and family members of Veterans over several months. We also want to incorporate aspects of the Kuwaiti desert landscape which will set this memorial apart from all others and reflect the Middle Eastern geography and topography where this war was fought.

AT: What are the challenges you face as an organization?

SS: Our challenges are probably no different than those of any other non-profit all-volunteer organizations. Finding people who have a passion for our mission and are willing to work as hard as if they were being paid, is the number one challenge that I, along with our team continue to face. Most everyone thinks what we are doing is great, and they jump in with both feet. Even though I warn them that what we are doing is not easy and

requires a lot of dedication and effort, once they find out how difficult the work really is, they tend to disappear rather quickly. Also, like most other non-profits we have to constantly work hard to raise the funding to cover all of our costs associated with the building of the memorial such as the site selection, engineering and design costs which will only grow larger.

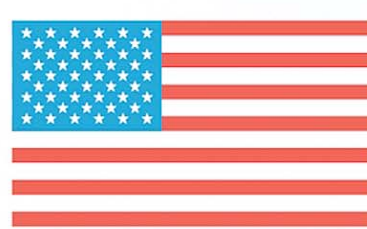
AT: If you had to estimate, how long do you suppose it would take for the monument to be built?

SS: We would like to have the memorial completed and dedicated sometime in 2019. Many things are out of our control, especially when dealing with the various commissions and various governmental agencies. However, we feel that this timeline is realistic based on where we are

currently due to the amount of progress, we have achieved thus far, which is significant.

AT: In what ways can people support the memorial?

SS: There are several ways people can support the memorial. First of all, they can help us spread the word so that everyone in Kuwait and around the globe are aware of what we are doing. As President George H. W. Bush stated a week after Kuwait was liberated, this was a victory not just for the U.S. but for the Kuwaitis, the coalition, and the world. Good triumphed over evil and this can never be forgotten. Also, since we are 100% privately funded, people who are so inclined may donate to the memorial effort at: ndswm.org or by mail: NDSWM P.O. Box 29091 Washington, D.C., 20017.



Wishing the people of Kuwait a

Happy Independence Day

FEBRUARY 25, 2017

from The National Desert Storm War Memorial

Washington, D.C.



The National Desert Storm War Memorial will be built in Washington D.C. and will be a tribute to the lives of the brave men and women of the United States Military who served during Operation Desert Storm, leading a Coalition of Nations to liberate the Nation of Kuwait in 1991.

If you have stories or photos from the time of Operation Desert Storm or would like to donate toward the building of the Memorial, please contact us at info@ndswm.org

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