

Involved in rescue

HM3 J.F. Koval is shown here, third from right, with other members of the Kartaba medical team involved in a blizzard rescue in Lebanon. From left, HN M.J. Williams, HN K.R. Stribling, HM3 K.A. Ellis, HM3 J.M. Cross, HN R.A. Anderson LT G.A. Cope, MC; HN D.S. Stone, HM3 J.F. Koval, HN T.J. Kuehne, and HM 3 M.S. Mrusek.

Local man participates in Lebanon blizzard rescue

John F. Koval, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Koval of Owen St., Swoyersville, was one of the Navy medical personnel involved in an unusual challenge on Tuesday, Feb. 22 of this year.

As a member of the 22nd Marine Amphibious Unit "MAT" Koval's crew had relieved the 24th MAU in Beirut, Lebanon, 10 days earlier and were busy moving into the bombed out FAA building at the Beirut Airport.

It was the end of the rainy season in Lebanon but without warning the worst rain and snow storm in 100 years struck the war-torn countryside. Beirut sits among foothills which rise sharply to 5,000 foot mountains just east of the city, where over six feet of snow had rapidly accumulated, stranding remote villages and interrupting communications. A preliminary helicopter search found several cars whose occupants had already succumbed to hypothermia. The Lebanese Government requested American aid in a search and rescue effort and the Marines quickly responded.

column led by Lt. Col. D.F. Anderson, USMC Commanding Officer, Battalion Landing Team, 26 headed north along the coastline turning eastward near the historic town of Biblos. Ascent from the valley to the snowline was slow and resupply trucks were forced to remain at the halfway point due to the heavy snowpack. The remaining portion of the journey stands as a tribute to the amtrac drivers' skill in scaling the rugged Nab Al Kurum Mountains. Several times the huge vehicles swung out over ledges with an uninterrupted 1,500 foot drop.

After an exhausting 20-hour ride, the advance party arrived at the village of Kartaba and immediately set about the task of identifying the community's medical needs.

The following day, the medical team made individual house calls but walking in waist-deep snow at such a huge altitude was exhausting. Working with sparse medical supplies and overcoming the tremendous language barrier, the medical aspect evolved into a smooth team effort as over 20 patients were visited. As the day wore on and The medical team boarded an weather cleared briefly, helicopters the Navy Medical Department.

food, diesel fuel, and other supplies Consultations funneled into the ba talion aid station, set up in the loca police station via a network of sma

PRC-68 personal radios. The general health of the res dents was good. Mild dehydration superficial wound infections, an cold-aggravated arthritis accounted for most of the cases; however, tw patients required immediate medi

cal evacuation. Local custom for the doctor's house call meant an introduction t all members of the family, th medical evaluation, and then the offer of strong expresso coffee and American cigarettes.

The relief column departed or Thursday morning leaving behind grateful community. All those involved with HM2 Koval in this operation, received congratulations from Col. James M. Mead, USMO Commanding Officer, 22nd MAL for a job well done. Members of the medical team have been recom mended for the Navy Achievemen Medal, but the true motivation fo their work came from an inne commitment that is the hallmark of

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\$700. After 5 p.m. 825-

37-1-P

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Letters Testamentary have been granted in the Estate of Arthur F. Culver, late of the Township of Dallas, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, who died on August 6, 1983. All persons indebted to said estate are requested to make payment and those having claims or demands to present the same without delay to Lettie Lee Culver, Executrix, c-o John E. Morris, III, Esquire, 126 South Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18701, 35-3-P.

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