

NEWS RELEASE
For immediate release

New book details American mother's gripping tale of family survival during Middle East civil war and sheds light on today's tragic events in Lebanon

A Beirut Heart: One Woman's War written by Eau Claire resident Cathy Sultan

MINNEAPOLIS, OCTOBER 28, 2005 – Scarletta Press, a Minneapolis-based publishing house, has released *A Beirut Heart: One Woman's War*, a unique memoir about an American woman's struggle to raise and sustain a family during the civil war in Beirut, Lebanon, before being evacuated to the United States in 1983.

The book recounts Cathy Sultan's 14 years as an American living in Beirut – the last eight years of which took place during the brutal and destructive fighting in the city she loved. It shows how, during the worst of the conflict, she became a combatant herself in her determination to provide support for her physician husband and comfort for her children, often relying on the gentle art of cooking as her tranquilizer – even after a bullet pierced her apron that hung in the kitchen.

“Cathy Sultan has written a poignant account of her life in a country that few of us can relate to and yet she does it in a way that enables all of us to understand the sacrifices that women around the world face every day,” said Ian Graham Leask, managing editor of Scarletta Press. “She has successfully and dramatically exposed the domestic side of war and in doing so provided a window into the effects that this sort of conflict has on our world today.”

Sultan, who moved to Lebanon in 1969 with her Lebanese husband and two young children, provides a unique illustration of the unsung heroes of war and the women who assume the task of keeping the family united during wartime.

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Throughout her time in Lebanon, Sultan lived on the “green line,” the dangerous divide between warring factions in East and West Beirut. Cooking became her therapeutic act of resistance, her means of maintaining sanity. In between consoling her husband who spent his days treating wounded civilians and comforting her children, she would retreat to the kitchen to prepare meals for friends and families.

“This is a war story from the perspective of a wife and mother,” Sultan said. “I wrote this book because I wanted to show how the horrors of war traumatize a family even after the fighting stops.”

National Peace Foundation President Sarah Harder praised the book for its timeliness and significance given the dangerous issues that are occurring and recurring in the Middle East.

“As the media once again echo reports of Beirut violence, this memoir offers well-researched insight into ongoing Middle East conflicts and the United States policy errors that compound them,” Harder said.

While Sultan expected to spend the rest of her life in Beirut, which at the time was called “the Paris of the Middle East,” the civil war intervened in 1975 and dramatically changed her life. She and her family spent the next eight years living amid bombings and chaos, before being evacuated to the United States. Sultan now lives in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

A Beirut Heart: One Woman's War (ISBN 0-9765201-1-5) is available at fine bookstores, on Amazon.com, or direct at www.scarlettapress.com. It sells for \$15.95.

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