

TAMPA MARINE PARENTS ASSOCIATION TO HOST WALK/RUN WITH THE RUN FOR THE FALLEN

By Jenny O'Donnell



REGISTRANTS AT LAST YEAR'S FUN FOR THE FALLEN EVENT. THIS YEAR'S EVENT TAKES PLACE ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 21, AT E.G. SIMMONS PARK IN RUSKIN.

The Tampa Area Marine Parents Association (T.A.M.P.A.) wants those who have sacrificed so much for our country never to be forgotten.

In conjunction with the national fourth annual Run for the Fallen, in which participants travel one mile for each U.S. soldier who died during the Middle Eastern conflicts, T.A.M.P.A. wants to show its support here in the Tampa Bay area.

On Sunday, August 21, at E.G. Simmons Park, it will host a 5K and one-mile walk/run to commemorate soldiers from the state of Florida who have died on duty. Participants in the event will represent the 293 fallen soldiers, receiving bib cards with the soldier's name and information. Gold Star family members along with active military from MacDill Air Force Base, the USMC Fourth Amphibious Reserve Center, recruiters and veterans organizations will be in

attendance.

The Florida Fallen Memorial will be displayed during the morning of the run. In addition, Tampa Bay Technical High School's JROTC, Ye Mystic Air Krewe and the Riverview Marine Corps League are expected to perform during the opening ceremony.

In 2008, the first Run for the Fallen recruited thousands to run 4,000 miles from Painted Rocks, California to Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia. The event was founded by Jon Bellona after his friend, Lieutenant Michael Cleary, was

killed in Iraq in 2005, and has successfully raised awareness and donations each year.

T.A.M.P.A. has supported the cause ever since, hosting people from all over

Florida. The organization was founded by seven Marine parents in the Tampa area as a support group for those who have loved ones during service. "My son lost his two best friends in Iraq and I promised their families at their funerals that I would do whatever I could to make sure they were never forgotten," said T.A.M.P.A. member Cyd Deathe. "People should attend because it is the very least we could do for the families of the fallen."

The park entry fee is \$2 per vehicle for up to eight people and \$1 for each additional person. To register, visit www.USMCFamilySupport.org or call 965-2682. To contact the event coordinator, e-mail R4F@USMCFamilySupport.org. The event is free, but donations are encouraged.

