



From the desk of the National President

It has been an extremely busy month for me. I have been flying around visiting all our Departments for their state conventions. I have had the honor of going to all three Department conventions. Starting with Michigan and the wonderful hospitality of our Michigan sisters. I spent time with our National Financial Secretary Carla Brodacki, who graciously opened her home to me and shared her beautiful family. I very much enjoyed the time we had and getting to know more about her Air Force son Brad and an opportunity to get to know her beautiful daughter and grandson, who I just adored. Her husband who was so very sweet about me visiting. The Michigan convention was really a miniature version of what we do at the National level. It had all the pomp and circumstance and I wouldn't have expected anything less from the state in which Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., began so many years ago. At their banquet I had an opportunity to sit with the Department President Kathy Barnes' family, giving me a chance to speak with her wonderful husband, daughter, and one of her military sons, who by the way is extremely lucky. It was such a great experience and I am so very proud and humbled to have been a part of it. The opportunity to be able to spend time in a smaller venue sitting and getting to know our Michigan Sisters was amazing.

Next I was off to Ohio. Let me say these women have the heart. I had the pleasure of our PNP Judy Dorsey as my roommate; after all this is her state. Though their convention differed from Michigan it was full of everything that makes BSMA so very wonderful. We did crafts together, played bingo, and just had time to sit together and talk, giving me an opportunity to get to know the women from Ohio. Their convention was another experience forever etched in my memories, wonderful caring and giving women who touched my heart. After the completion of convention I had the opportunity to go to see a beautiful Memorial park. This park is cared for by a veteran, who is now a Judge. He cares for this memorial park all by himself, and it truly is a labor of love. If you are ever in the city of Massillon in the great state of Ohio, you must see it. During my entire trip in Ohio, Liz Coyle, a sister in arms, was my tour guide. I'm so very glad we had an opportunity to get to know each other a little better. On my way to the airport I had a chance to meet one of her military children. He has only been home a short month after the completion of his service in the Navy. What a joy that was to see and speak with her very handsome oldest son. Again another opportunity to be welcomed in to another sister's family, and to see just how much we as BSMA have in common.

This past weekend ended our department conventions with the state of Minnesota, and Jeanne Ullmer and Mary Johnson as my tour guides. Once again PNP Judy Dorsey was my roomie. Let me say they kept me very busy the entire weekend. Even though their convention

is only one day, it has every component that makes our organization unique to each one of us. At the completion of their convention I had the great pleasure of going with them to welcome home an Honor Flight. The Blue Star Mothers as well as the Patriot Guard Riders and many others were there to welcome home these veterans from DC and a trip they will always remember. We served cookies, water and lemonade and had a brief opportunity to interact and enjoy some of the warriors. The next day I went with Mary Johnson and other Minnesota Chapters to Fort Snelling National Cemetery. We visited with Mary's son Tom, a US Army soldier who now rests on those sacred grounds. Then we caught up with the chapters who were very busy placing wreaths on the graves of our fallen. These women from this state carry deeply the soul of our mission and another memory I will forever treasure.

Each convention was different and unique to the women of each state, but yet fulfilling the mission of our organization with grace and strength. My experience of what departments do for their chapters was wonderful to see and I learned so very much about their purpose and the support and education they bring to their chapters within their states. It was such an honor to be able to install each new Department and I was so very proud to be given the opportunity to be a part of their conventions. I wish great success to all three of our Departments and thank each of these states and their Chapter Members for their hospitality and kindness in making me feel so very welcome. This month I'm off to DC for Veterans Day can't wait to share this treasured honor with all of you.

Cyndi Ventura –National President



DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN



DEPARTMENT OF OHIO



DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA

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Your Blue Star Mothers
Online store is now
open. Please sign in and
check out some of the
new Items.



BLUE TO GOLD LIAISONS

If you have been newly appointed to be your chapter's Blue to Gold Liaison, and/or you have not been receiving the DoD casualty notifications the 3rd VP emails out, then you may not be signed up as a Blue to Gold Liaison, or subscribed to receive the E-list.

SIGN UP AND SUBSCRIBE:

Login to our National Website: www.bluestarmothers.org, >>My Profile >> Subscribe to Elists: **YES** >> Blue to Gold Liaison: **YES**

BLUE TO GOLD GUIDELINES:

Login to our National website
>> Files >>Gold Star Files
>>Blue to Gold Guidelines

Did you know you can print out a Gold Star Banner request form to help assist in gathering all-important information at once? You will find it just below our guidelines.

STATESIDE CASUALTIES

If there is a stateside casualty the 3rd VP may not have any information on the fallen hero; therefore, there will not be a DoD casualty notification sent out. When you gather the information to order a Gold Star banner for that fallen hero, please make sure they were Active Duty at the time of their death. Our organization must follow the DoD guidelines. If they were not active duty at the time of their death, their family will not receive a Gold Star Banner. The policy is more complicated when the deceased was a reservist, so once again, do the research before informing the family they will receive a Gold Star Banner. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at 3vp@bluestarmothers.us.

3RD VICE PRESIDENT – BLUE TO GOLD

I am honored to have been elected as your 3rd Vice President, and to represent our National Blue to Gold program. I have always had a passion for honoring our fallen heroes. When I was a child, my Grandma, Della Cromeenes, took me along to put flags on the graves of the fallen who were killed in action.

After Feb 19, 2010, I made it my personal mission to honor and remember our fallen heroes. On that fateful day, the Marine who stood behind my son on the battlefield in Afghanistan, was killed in action by a sniper. I realized that only a few feet had separated my son from his buddy, Joshua Birchfield (Westville, Indiana), and it could have been my door that received the dreaded knock from the Marines. Being your Blue to Gold allows me to honor and remember all our fallen heroes.

This year I have also become more aware and involved in Veteran suicide prevention, and would like to find a way to end the 22 PLUS 1.



74th annual Blue Star Mothers Department of Michigan Convention.

September 30th-Oct. 2nd. marked the 74th annual Blue Star Mothers Department of Michigan Convention. This year the event was held in Battle Creek at the Holiday Inn.

Mothers arriving on Friday were able to enjoy the evening at our Blue Star Mothers Auxiliary, "The Big Dipper, Josephine Kolenda Education Assistance Fund" fundraiser. The event theme was "The Olympics". A series of games were played by the "athletes" and they

were judged on their expertise. A silent auction was held and the bidding for these items was fast and furious! Following the silent auction nominations were accepted and a new Big Dipper board was elected. President-Debbie Rasmussen, VP Cathy Benson (Both from Chapter MI-188), Recording Secretary Shellie Page and Treasurer Penny Wright (both of MI-195) and Finan-

cial Secretary Kim Muller of MI-180. The state Big Dipper only had one applicant who qualified for funds. Applicants are Veterans, spouses of Veterans, children and grandchildren. Blue Star Mothers, their children and grandchildren-any of whom are seeking to further their education. In the state of Michigan applicants can apply at the state level and at the national level. For the state level, please contact Department Big Dipper President Debbie Rasmussen for details, 989-328-2981. To apply at the national level, please

email: Big Dipper National President Kade Rutherford at: president.bd@bluestarmothers.us.

Saturday's convention opened with Opening Ceremonies according to the ritual. The meeting was opened as is has been for 74 years with one new addition. It was respectfully requested that the sisters add the singing of our National Anthem. It sounded heavenly. The business meeting was conducted by Department President Kathy Barnes. In attendance there were also the National President of Blue Star Mothers, Cyndi Ventura, two Past National President, Mrs. Judy Dorsey & Mrs. Robin McCarthy. Also in attendance were National Financial Secretary Carla Brodacki & National 4th VP Lori Thueme.





Memo's from the Editor

All newsletter submissions are due the 15th of each month. If received after that date it will be saved for the next month.

Please remember all submissions should not be longer than a page and only 4-5 pictures.

When sending in your new chapter board pictures please list positions and names.

I will do my best to post what is sent in as is, But If the article is to large I will have to return it back for editing.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me at

2vp@bluestarmothers.us or call 831-236-9625

Peace and Love
Stacy Anders

VAVS National Representative

The holidays are approaching and lots of organizations will take this time to remember our veterans in nursing homes and hospitals but after the holidays it will be pretty quiet. If your chapter is considering doing something for the holidays, please take this into consideration. Instead of joining the many groups who will be there in November and particularly in December, why not plan a gift for the veterans in February when hospitalized veterans are honored and go all out for Valentine's Day.

You cannot imagine the smile on the face of a veteran receiving a Valentine as he/she cannot remember the last time someone presented them with one, particularly a handmade one. Be careful of candy because many of our veterans cannot have sugary treats. A few years an organization I belong to presented veterans with a baseball cap that we bought online which simply said "honoring our veterans" and the smiles were huge.

Anne Parker

annewparker@yahoo.com



Soaring Eagle Blue Star Moms CA22

On October 21, 2016, at 5:30 am, the Soaring Eagle Blue Star Moms CA22, sendoff 29 WWII and Korean Veterans on an Honor Flight with some love and snack bags. Each snack bag contains a Night light, Kleenex packet, napkin, fig bars, cookies, trail mix, nuts, crack-

ers, Jelly Belly Beans, hard candies (starbrights, butterscotch and Werthers) and Sugar Free candies for those who need it. For more information on Honor Flight Snack Bags contact Christine Boyd 3vp@bluestarmother.s.us.



Blue Star Mothers of Southeast Wisconsin, Chapter 2

The Blue Star Mothers of Southeast Wisconsin, Chapter 2, participated in a workshop decorating small Christmas trees that will be sent to our service members serving overseas. Trees from Home (treesfromhome.org) will send 3000 gift packages this year that includes the trees and a goodie bag. We were proud to have crafted 32 trees as well as sorted cards for mailing and filling out custom forms. Thrivent Financial sponsored a lunch during our work day and provided some funds for postage as part of a community action event.





Rhode Island Chapter 1

On a comfortable Friday afternoon I had the pleasure of meeting with Karen Dalton at her Dare to Dream Ranch on Snagwood road in Foster, RI. When you arrive at the ranch you are met by 2 super friendly dogs, Bear and Bella, who wag themselves silly while the 3 goats, Frick, Frack & Frank, are also bleating their hello's. As we walked through the barn with the fresh smell of shavings and hay Karen explained her vision for converting the barn into a woodworking workshop when they build their indoor riding arena with attached barn that would have a loft apartment above for a qualified veteran to stay for free as the caretaker for the property.

We arrived at the first paddock where a gorgeous Per-

I had the pleasure of watching Steve Frye, 2x Iraq Combat Vet, not only riding Sgt. Xander, but also learning to train him. Steve only began riding and working with horses 4 months ago! I was impressed to watch Steve's ease of haltering Sgt. Xander in the paddock, saddling him and especially riding him! 4 months is not a long time for someone to learn to ride, build trust with a horse who has trust issues and build your own confidence in the saddle. I was able to watch Steve achieve all of this and with such confidence and pride!

As Karen & I strolled through the wooded paths listening to the quiet we discussed her dreams for future expansion of the facility, the paddocks, the rings and the trails. She shared some of the positive results of Veterans, and their families,

cheron/Gypsy Vanner Draft cross named Seargent Xander and his sidekick Corporal Buzz. Xander sometimes is a bit skiddish with his own trust issues. So a slow approach and soft voice is the best approach for making friends with this beautiful huge horse. Next door is Captain Blue, named for his beautiful brilliant blue eye. He is as friendly as Seargent Xander is reserved. He was having fun moving the miniature horses, Freedom and Spirit, out of the way so he could their hay. Spirit enjoyed trying to nibble my hair through the fence while I was petting her and Blue. Hard not to relax and just chat with so much peace surrounding you. We visited the 2 senior, yet still very noble, Arabians names Ish-rab and Tabitha.

who have already visited the Ranch for equine therapy (equine assisted coaching/ground therapy) , yoga, horticulture therapy and nutrition education, woodworking, and fly tying/fishing.

On a quiet, sunny Friday afternoon we both Dared to Dream of our hopes for Veterans and their families who will visit in the future.



TUNNEL TO TOWER 5K RUN & WALK

We had the honor of participating in the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Tower 5K Run & Walk in New York City. Our team met at the local fire house on Van Burnt Street, Brooklyn and had the opportunity to speak with several Veterans before the start of the race. We were invited

to be at the early start of the race by members of Semper Fi Foundation, Hope for the Warriors and Homes for Heroes. For anyone who isn't familiar with this story Stephen Siller was a member of Brooklyn Squad 1 FDNY. On September 11, 2001 Stephen heard about the plane hitting the Twin Tow-

ers and instead of keeping his golf date he got his gear that weighed 60 lbs and headed into NYC. When the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel was closed for security reasons Stephen strapped his gear on his back and raced on foot through the tunnel to the Twin Towers Stephen Siller gave his life saving

others that day. Our team of Moms and Dads from our chapter were proud to participate in this event honoring Stephen Siller's legacy. For further

information please check out the website: www.tunnel2towers.org





Alameda, Piedmont Oakland, CA36



(L-R) Christine Free- Fin. Sec, Pat Darnell- 1st-VP, Linda Tubbs-Treas, Gloria Amaral-2nd VP, Jeannie Prince- Sec. & Gina Lewis-President



(l-R) Michael "Mickey" Ganitch, WWII Veteran (Pearl Harbor Survivor) & Amy O'Campo (N 1stVP)



San Mateo CA15, Santa Cruz CA26, and Soring Eagle's CA22 Spent the day together during Fleet Week in San Francisco .



Fleet Week 2016

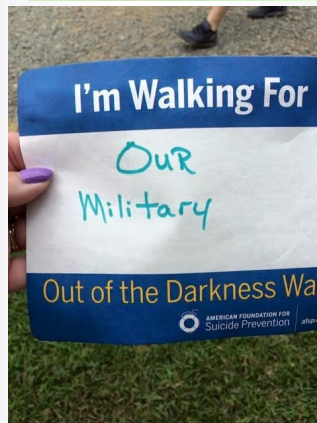


August 31st, we assisted Berea Fire Station #12 putting together over 700 back packs for needy children in our area. On Sept. 10th, we held our annual Picnic & Installed our new Officers. Please welcome our new Board: President: Teri Reece, 1st VP: Teresa Sumners, 2nd VP: Tammy Miller, 3rd VP: Margaret Neimann, Financial Secretary: Anne Cramer, Treasurer: Valeria Green, Recording Secretary: Colleen

Garrette. On Sept. 13th we attended A Tribute to World War II Veterans at the American Legion Post 320. Sept. 20th we guest spoke about our Missions at the DAV Meeting & presented 3 raffles – “A Home Cooked Meal by our Blue Star Mothers Chapter”, MRE’s. They loved it! On Sept. 24th we guest spoke at the Celebrate Veterans Group Meeting and again presented raffles

of MRE’s. They presented us with a donation towards our Homeless to Homes Veteran’s Baskets & postage for our upcoming Care Package Mailing in November. We also attended on that day, our local VFW Building’s monthly fundraising dinner & were presented with a donation towards our Homeless to Homes Veteran’s Baskets. On Sept. 25th we attended the Gold Star

Mother’s Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. On Sept. 25th our BSM Sister, Tammy, walked in the Suicide Prevention – Out of the Darkness Walk. She walked for our Military. On Oct. 29th, we delivered 8 new Homeless to Home Veteran’s Baskets.





Just because the Blue Water Chapter MI180 newsletter articles were absent for awhile, doesn't mean the ladies weren't on the go! Let's try to get caught up on all the summer activities of the chapter...

JUNE: The month began with NOSC Navy Family Readiness Day on the 4th at the Selfridge Air National Guard Base. This was a fun-filled day for young and old that gave us another opportunity to educate the public on our mission. June 7th was a somber day for some of our members attending a veteran's funeral at Great Lakes National Cemetery. On the 26th, our chapter spent a sunny day helping the veterans attending the Wolverine Harley-Davidson 2016 Ride for Freedom – Patrick Wisniewski Memorial. There were

over 400 bikes at this popular local event which benefits several worthy groups, including our friends at Vets Returning Home.

JULY: The Fourth was marked by a Missing in America funeral. This worthy project locates, identifies, and inters forgotten heroes. On July 30, there was another motorcycle run benefiting the John Dingell VA Medical Center. Our Jeanise Steenland presented a check from the chapter—she's a biker chick!

AUGUST: This was the month for making new friends and seeing old ones at the National Convention in Dayton, Ohio. It was a four days jam-packed with business, laughter, tears, and learning with our Blue Star sisters from across the country. Our attending members (Joyce Fabian, Barb Platz, Kim Muller, and Traci Horgan) were kept safe by our military room guard "Pat." Two of our own were elected to National offices: Lori Thueme is 4th Vice-President

and Carla Brodacki is Financial Secretary. Way to go, ladies! On the 5th, Chapter 180 members, Deb Kallas and Jeanise Steenland attended a fundraiser held in St Clair Shores for Stiggy's Dogs. This non-profit organization rescues dogs, trains them to be paired with a veteran with PTS and/or a TBI. Our monthly meeting for August was held at the Vets Returning Home site in Roseville. The BSM members were very moved by the passionate efforts of the staff and look forward to a mutually rewarding friendship with them.

SEPTEMBER: On the 16th, Joyce, Carla and Jeanise traveled to Davison to accept a generous \$2000 donation from the Spartan Nash Foundation. Others of our number (Judy Sinclair, Rochelle Saldana, Lisa Marshke, Tracy Grant, Barb Platz, and Traci) attended the opening ceremony for the Michigan Missing in Action Vigil at Resurrection Cemetery in Clinton Twp.

This moving evening was highlighted by remarks from Vietnam POW Donald "Digger" O'Dell and other local dignitaries. A new memorial to POWs and the 49 Michigan MI-As was unveiled. The Dearborn Veterans' Park and War Memorial rededication was held the 24th. BSMs from three Chapters- Lake Erie #184, Red White & Blue #198 and Blue Water #180 were in attendance. At the steps of their library, it's a lovely place to educate, meditate and pay respects to those that have sacrificed greatly. So, though summertime may be lazy and laid-back for most, the members of Michigan's Blue Water Chapter 180 won't let any grass grow under their feet!





Blue Star Mothers of America, Rochester, New York, Chapter 8

Gold and Blue Star Families Picnic The Wilson Soule home on the Asbury First United Methodist Church property was the perfect setting for the Gold and Blue Star Families picnic on Saturday, September 24. Gold Star Families brought pictures and mementos and shared remembrances of their heroes. It was a gorgeous fall day to enjoy the picnic lunch out on the porches, talk with new and old friends. Children attending the party played on the lawns and helped make a honor wreath for the Gold Star Family Memorial at White Haven Memorial Park

Gold Star Family Wreath Laying Ceremony Star Moms from New York 8 joined with their sisters from New York 1 to honor the Gold Star Families at this memorial. The Gold Star Families Memorial in White Haven was dedicated in June of this year so it was altogether fitting and proper that the first annual wreath laying ceremony was held on nationally recognized Gold Star Mothers Sunday, September 25, 2016. Gold Star Mother Sunday is the last Sunday in September each year. Yellow roses, the official flower of American

Gold Star Mothers, were given to family members to lay at the base of the memorial. Gold Star Mothers Dorothy and Ava placed the wreath of yellow roses at the conclusion of Gold Star Mother Rita's reading of the Gold Star Mothers' charter. Gold Star Children Camille and Catherine placed the children's hand wreath that had been made by Gold Star Children at the conclusion of the reading of the Blue Star Mother's Charter. Gold Star Child, Michael, held the flag high as he lead the group with an outstanding pledge of allegiance. As each of the Fallen's names were read a service member escorted the family member to the memorial to lay their fresh yellow rose at the base. We were honored to have James Moore's 90 year old mother travel here from Naples to hear her son's name read and place a rose in his remembrance. The sun shone brightly though the scattered clouds kept the day from becoming too hot, the seats were full with plenty left standing for the benediction and playing of Taps by Tom Allen from Bugles Across America. What a fitting way to honor and remember

these heroes gone but not forgotten.

Baking and Sending Love from Home Blue Star Mother Mary Anne Zani, an Auxiliary member of the Cottreall-Warner American Legion Post 942 in Webster, NY was able to reserve the kitchen at the post. We are grateful for the American Legion for their donation of the kitchen and use of the many extra large baking oven trays. The Blue Star Mothers NY8 received gift card donations to purchase ingredients from Hegedorns Market, Webster, NY and from Sam's Club, Henrietta, NY. Blue Star Mother Dory Braun expressed her gratitude for the responses she received when asked for a donation for ingredients, "It felt really good when I asked for a donation and heard the manager and store clerks thank me for my son's service to our country. People really care and want to help our sons and daughters." On Saturday morning, Oct 1, nine mothers walked into the American Legion prepared with mixing bowls, electric mixers and extra ingredients. It really was a lot of fun working together, laughing and tasting the cookies.

Al, the American Legion Veteran who runs the Legion Bar Lounge surprised us with a large thermos pot of coffee. After a cup of brew we were on task. Cookies cooled and were placed in quart size baggies while medium size priority boxes were secured with packing tape. We had the opportunity to write a quick letter to our sons and daughters to add to the boxes. Moms packed baggies of cookies that went into fifteen boxes filled with love with stateside and overseas addresses. When were finished we stood together praying for our sons and daughters, our blue star families and our veterans. Extra cookies were baked and given to the American Legion with appreciation. Al at the Legion told us how grateful they are for how much the Blue Star Mothers do for our military and veterans. It truly was a blessed day.

Wounded Warrior Dinner 2016 SEP 16, Friday night the Reserve Officers Association hosted their fourth annual event to support the Wounded Warriors and their participation in the Cape Ability Outrigger Canoe Race. Blue Star Mothers Mary Jean Carlson, Patricia Witt and Vera Mae Rudd-Young enjoyed a wonderful meal at Golden Ponds restaurant and the wonderful company of Tom, a Midshipman, enrolled in the Navy ROTC

