

Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.
Blue Water Chapter 180 (MI 180)
National Convention Chapter Report
2011

A fast year ago, Blue Water 180 of Michigan had the honor of attending the send-off of troops from the 119th Field Artillery Unit based out of Port Huron, Michigan. We look forward eagerly to their welcome home shortly after our return from this convention.

In September of 2010, we hosted a USO-Themed dance at one of the last six original USO halls remaining in the United States. The hall currently serves as a senior complex for the citizens of Warren Michigan. We turned back the hands of time, back to its hey-day complete with typical USO dance refreshments and even a swing orchestra. Everyone had a great time.

The Department of Michigan Convention was held in Port Huron and many of our Chapter members attended, as well as took active rolls in hosting this historic annual event.

In June of 2010, St. Clair High School in St. Clair, Michigan lost one of its own graduates, Jeffrey Standfest in Afghanistan. In his honor, Blue Water 180 partnered with the students and staff to conduct a care package collection drive. The school-wide event was kicked-off with an assembly bringing awareness to the history of Veterans Day and the many hometown heroes from SCH that have proudly served through the years. Over \$1,000 was raised and over 60 packages were filled.

We were also asked to assist the Detroit Red Wings at their Veterans Day game in Hockeytown. Chapter members greeted guests as they arrived, collecting care package items and monetary donations. We also distributed "Cell Phones for our Troops" envelopes for fans to take home for donations. We're pleased that the Detroit Red Wings posted the details of this event and involvement with Blue Star Mothers on their website.

These two events, along with our Operation Rudolph shopping elves packaged and shipped well over 100 packages to our deployed troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

On December 19th, we partnered with Lake Erie Chapter in hosting a Christmas Party for the residents of the VA Hospital Domiciliary. These men and women are often forgotten heroes. It was our goal to once again this past year to make certain these Heroes knew we were thinking of them. We provided a luncheon, games with prizes, Christmas gifts and most importantly...lots of love from Blue Star Mothers.

The Department of Michigan School of Instruction held in March in Allegan, Michigan was attended by many of our Chapter members. Five of them presented information helpful to Michigan members from across the state.

In April, 2011, Blue Water 180 had the pleasure of participating in the swearing-in ceremony of Army Recruits at an Arena Football game of our hometown Port Huron Predators.

Members marched in two Memorial Day Parades, including the St. Clair Shores Memorial Parade which is claimed to be the largest Memorial Day parade in the state of Michigan.

The first weekend in June saw the Annual Quilt-a-thon which created 36 quilts all handmade with tender hands and loving hearts.

We continue to ship care packages throughout the year to our deployed through events such as Operation Peeps and Operation Rudolph and more. Quilts and other requested items are sent to our Wounded Warriors at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. Many items are also donated to the John Dingell VA Hospital in Detroit.

In July we conducted our Annual Operation Boot Loot Fundraiser at the Kroger Store in Richmond, Michigan. We raised \$1,500 in three days.

We're pleased that many of these wonderful events were captured by the media, promoting the mission, dedication and work of our Blue Water 180 members and the historic Blue Star Mothers organization.

Lastly, and most important....Blue Water 180 has had the solemn honor of conducting Blue-to-Gold presentations throughout this past year. We pray that last Friday night, was our last.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanise Steenland, President
Blue Water Chapter 180 (MI 180)