

**Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.  
National Executive Board  
Minutes  
Regular Board Meeting  
Meeting Date: October 25, 2011**

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**Call to Order:**

The 10/25/2011 regular board meeting of the BSMA was held by electronic means (Go to Meeting) telephone and computer. The meeting convened at 8:32pm (EDT), President Robin McCarthy presiding and Charilyn Damigo, Recording Secretary. A quorum was present.

Roll Call of Officers -- (Recording Secretary)

**Attendees:**

**Members in attendance:**

President Robin Barnes-McCarthy  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Rev. Lin McGee  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Teresa Bullock  
4<sup>th</sup> Vice President Rose Ann Elliott  
Recording Secretary Charilyn Damigo  
Financial Secretary Anne Parker  
Treasurer Julie Roberts (joined at 10:16pm)

Dept of OH President Pat Pell  
Dept of OK President Cathy O'Shields  
Dept of MI President Kristine Wirgau  
PNP Susan Naill  
PNP Wendy Hoffman  
PNP Karen Stevens  
PNP Joyce Fulford  
Chaplain Gloria Cervantes (opening prayer)

**Absent:**

**Excused:**

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Janet Broussard  
Dept of MN President Pattie Kelley

Prayer -- (Gloria Cervantes)  
Pledge of Allegiance -- (Susan Naill)  
Blue Star Mothers Preamble -- (Wendy Hoffman)

**Business**

**Approval of Minutes**

- MOTION: Recommendation that the NEB Minutes from the 10/17/2011 meeting be accepted and posted to the website. Motion is seconded and passes on vote.

**Officer and Committee Reports**

Financial Report (Financial Secretary Anne Parker)

- MOTION: Recommendation that the financial reports be accepted and posted to the website. Motion is seconded and passes on vote.
- Coins are back in stock & hats should be back in stock by the end of the week. Sending hats to

**Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.**  
**National Executive Board**  
**Minutes**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
**Meeting Date: October 25, 2011**

---

Cyndi Ventura for those participating in the NYC parade. Needs to know what to do with candy bars.

- MOTION: Make candy bars available online store both individually & by the case. Motion seconded & passes on vote.

First VP

- No report

Second VP (Rev. Lin McGee)

- Newsletter update

Working on newsletter – department convention reports will be included

- Robin & Karen presented the following recommendation from the Finance Committee: FC recommends the purchase of new Publisher software to be used for newsletter (submitted to financial committee for consideration). It will be licensed to BSMA & will be licensed to 2VP so it can be transferred from one officer to the next. Cost is approximately \$129, which includes tutorial.

MOTION:

To accept the recommendation from the finance committee. Motion seconded & passes on vote

- Yearbook update  
Yearbook Committee: Wendy Hoffman, Joretta Pickard, Nancy Bentley-Wennberg (need corrected spelling), Christine Boyd, PDP Cindy Hood, NP Robin McCarthy.

Third VP (Teresa Bullock)

- Report of Fallen Heroes  
25 Fallen this month (no total on banners – some mixed in with last months)
- Wants to update Blue-to-Gold instructions on website – would like to work with Susan Naill to revise the instructions and explain why we are using Service Flags to provide the banners, as some chapters have reported difficulty in ordering and are unhappy with the quality of the banner – would like to work with another company
- Background: Service Flags has been working with us to provide Gold Star banners free of charge. The flags are made with same materials that were used when Service Flags were first issued, so they have historical significance. There are no plans to change providers.

Fourth VP (pro-tem RoseAnn Elliott)

- She has received CD from Lori Danby with forms, still has not received information from Pattie Kelley – some emails received do not contain enough contact information for her to be able to respond.
- Question about current charter applications filled in online as there is a spot to check foster mothers, grandmothers, etc. This was changed in the BSMA constitution at 2010 convention. If new legislation does not pass we would have to work backwards to correct this.
- New AZ chapter – check has not cleared, a copy of all paperwork & new check will be sent

**Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.**  
**National Executive Board**  
**Minutes**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
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---

directly to Rose Ann

- OK 21 put in application in July – currently listed on website – need to find check & make sure it clears before 6 month mark
- --Election (Ratification) of 4VP (Rose Ann left call to allow NEB to discuss)  
2/3 vote needed to ratify her as elected 4VP  
There may be a perception issue regarding concentration of power on the NEB with 3 members from Ohio. Our newly revised governing documents would allow this appointment.
- MOTION:  
Motion made to elect/ratify Rose Ann Elliott (OH10) as 4<sup>th</sup> VP. Motion is seconded. Motion defeated.
- Rose Ann will continue as pro-tem until NEB has elected a new 4th VP.

Department of Michigan (Kristine Wirgau)

- Waiting for details for how many chapters attended
- 47 attendees 26 voting delegates
- “Tailgate party” sports theme for fun night. \$688 raised (+ previous gifts). Big Dipper distributed \$2250 which was given to 7 applicants.
- Guest Speaker: Tracy Spader – Support Our Military Working Dogs
- 3 of 4 VA hospitals represented – presented opportunities for BSM to help
- Memorial service & Installation very formal, very moving.
- Of Interest: The granddaughter of the 1<sup>st</sup> BSMA NP (wrote the BSMA song) responded to a letter from one of the local chapters (Traverse City chapter – Diane Holman). She still has grandmother’s dress and pin. Kristine’s chapter has also had previous contact with one of the original BSMA’s and she was buried in her BSMA uniform.

Department of Minnesota

- Report attached. Note that a special election will be held 11/19/11 for election of department officers.

Department of Ohio (Pat Pell)

- Synopsis of Dept. Convention given. Full Report attached.

Department of Oklahoma (Kathy O’Shields)

- Department Convention overview: tried something new on Friday night (items for sale with 15% donation to Dept), not very successful.
- Great speakers: Maj. Gen Aragon, Edwina Luker (OK City VA) and Matt Stiner (Veterans Justice Outreach)
- Raffle was very successful
- NP Robin McCarthy was in attendance and installed new officers
- 15 of 19 chapters present, as well as 2 out-of-state chapters (from TX and KS)

**Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.  
National Executive Board  
Minutes  
Regular Board Meeting  
Meeting Date: October 25, 2011**

---

**Time-Sensitive Business**

- **11-11-11 WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Conference Call 11-7-2011 (8:30pm EST) to discuss details – logistics, transportation, lodging, etc.

- NP Robin McCarthy
- DC Rep--Kerri Kerce
- Janet Broussard, 1VP
- Linda Bayer, Patriotic Instructor
- Maura McGowan Yanosick, Historian
- Susan Naill, PNP
- Karen Stevens, PNP
- Wendy Hoffman, PNP

- **11-11-11 NEW YORK CITY PARADE**

Cyndi Ventura (NY6), continues to coordinate with BSMs who have signed contract.

Pennsylvania chapter may also participate. Service Flags has the jacket available online.

Chapters & individuals participating have signed an individual parade application. There are 7 quarter-century moms from Ohio are planning to participate; Robin will be driving them.

BSMA is not endorsing the parade as a national organization as the promised MOU was not forthcoming from the NYC parade chairman.

**MOTION:**

Motion made to pay Robin's expenses (transportation and gas) to represent the BSMA at the NYC parade. Discussion followed and the motion was withdrawn.

**New Business**

**PRESIDENT'S PROJECT**

Extreme Makeover: BSMA Communications Upgrade. This project would include the website, yearbook completely paid for, 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, new computers for officers' use, etc. – anything that falls under the category of “communications.” May be fully funded by a corporate sponsorship as explained below.

Background – one of the OH moms asked her company to support BSM. She won company's humanitarian award last year and the company agreed to support her request (major furniture chain - Value City Furniture/American Signature – located east of Mississippi River) Their support will be two-fold:

1. From Nov. 2 – 13 there will be a Veterans Day campaign. They will be asking customers for shoebox donations of care package items from customers. Donations will be coordinated with nearby chapters.
2. They will also accept charitable cash contributions (expected be \$35K - \$40K) Designated BSMA Communications Upgrade as the recipient of project. Only thing they are asking for in return is pictures

**Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.**  
**National Executive Board**  
**Minutes**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
**Meeting Date: October 25, 2011**

---

of packaging events, etc. that they can use in their advertising.

BSMA has had several recommendations to upgrade our website look/feel/design. Proposed new website design by a website designer (veteran) who has done websites for major political campaigns), would be completely customized. \$30K estimate for the website project is much lower than similar projects would usually cost with all the “bells & whistles” that would be included in this project. Every chapter would receive their own domain name (ex. Dayton.bluestarmothers.org); each would have 4-5 similar pages (so all chapters look/feel the same on the National page) and could then include a hyperlink to their current webpage. New design would be based on Wordpress (lots of free plug & play applications) for ongoing improvements to national website & offered to chapters. Other features:

- Roster page, membership renewals, reports can be done (split) online easily
- Dedicated server that could support up to 100K members
- Low cost to maintain (only \$15/yr for each of the two domains used).
- No downtime for transition to new website.

NP Robin McCarthy to submit all details to NEB in writing for further consideration. She believes this would be a tremendous opportunity to increase our support base and national presence.

NEB officers will be invited to a “working vacation” retreat with Robin in Florida at the end of January.

**Announcements**

Next meeting – **PNP/NP only** 11/15/2011, 8:00pm EST

Note: The BSMA logo will be removed from the minutes for less ink use when printing.

**Adjournment**

The president adjourned the meeting at 10:45 pm (EDT)

(Department Ohio & Department of Minnesota reports attached)

**Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.**  
**National Executive Board**  
**Minutes**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
**Meeting Date: October 25, 2011**

---

**Department of Ohio**  
**2011 Convention Meeting**  
**September 30 - October 2, 2011**

Our convention was held at the Hilton Hotel, which was located near the Columbus, Ohio airport. This location, which is centrally located within the state, was chosen in order to encourage as many chapter members to participate. 12 of the possible 15 chapters had a representative and there were 50 registered attendees. The accommodations and food were excellent, and it is our hope to hold our future 2012 North/South Conference and 2012 Department Convention again at this facility, as we received many positive comments from the attendees.

The theme for the convention was “we are bridges”, which meant that the Blue Star Mothers are bridges to our families and all our military personnel.

We had reports from all our committees, including an audit of the Department of Ohio financial books. The audit indicated that the books were in order and there were no discrepancies noted. Pat Pell gave Robin McCarthy’s apology for being unable to attend due to her attendance at the Department of Oklahoma Convention. We went over the changes to our governing documents, which were approved at the National Convention, and the revised documents were distributed to all the attendees. Updates were given by Pat Pell concerning the election of new National Officers, National Big Dipper, the bill before Congress to expand BSMA membership criteria, associates on the website issues, providing 60 day transitioning/mentoring for new officers within the chapters, insight on current issues facing chapters and tips on how to conduct chapter meetings. Discussions concerning chapter compliance, chapter rosters and dues, and website education were given by the financial officers. Throughout the convention, chapter reports were given and also VA/VS reports.

Our guest speaker was Ohio Adjutant General, Major General Deborah A. Ashenhurst. Major General Ashenhurst holds the distinction of being the Ohio National Guard’s first female Adjutant General. As a member of the Governor’s cabinet, she commands the Ohio National Guard, consisting of the Ohio Army National Guard, the Ohio Air National Guard, the Ohio Military Reserve and the Ohio Naval Militia, totaling over 17,000 personnel.

Big Dipper fun night, on Saturday, involved the Mardi Gras theme and was well attended. Masks, beads and “crazy” sunglasses were distributed to everyone. It was a very successful night, as \$915 was raised from the silent auction items. The games/ events of the night involved almost all of the participants and it was good to see so many mothers laughing and enjoying themselves.

**Interesting facts:**

Virginia Clark was our oldest member in attendance. She will be 90 on March 9, 2012. She joined Blue Star Mothers in 1965 and VAVS in 1985. Chapter 41 was chartered August 12, 1943. Joyce Sanford, Chapter President, was present at the convention.

Chapter 57-Geneva was chartered November 9, 1943. They had seven members and one associate present at the convention. Our youngest member present was Diane Spires, age 44, from Chapter 22

**Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.  
National Executive Board  
Minutes  
Regular Board Meeting  
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---

**2011-2012 Department of Ohio Officers**

President - Pat Pell (re-elected)  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Kris Dervin (re-elected)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Pam Mutchler  
Recording Secretary - Barb Funk  
Financial Secretary - Brenda Russell  
Treasurer – Marjorie Pizzino

**2011-2012 Department of Ohio Big Dipper Officers**

President – Anita Wagner  
Vice President – Marjorie Bryan  
Recording Secretary – Paula Lombardo  
Financial Secretary – Kris Dervin  
Treasurer – Jill Gibbs

On Sunday, a Memorial Service was held for the fallen soldiers and deceased Blue Star Mothers (Deborah Wick, Eva Morrison and Mary (Susie) Huffer)  
Installation of Department Officers and Big Dipper was held. Jane Tapassi and Virginia Clark assisted with the installation.

**Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.**  
**National Executive Board**  
**Minutes**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
**Meeting Date: October 25, 2011**

---

**DEPARTMENT OF MINNESOTA**  
**CONVENTION MEETING 2011**  
**OCTOBER 15, 2011**

The Department of Minnesota's 2011 Convention was hosted by our South Metro Chapter and held at the Hopkins (MN) VFW. The DEB provided morning snacks for the membership, and the Hopkins VFW made home-made meatless lasagna, a salad bar and breadsticks.

Our Opening Ceremony included Presentation of Colors by our MN NG, followed by a Flag Folding Ceremony and presentation of the U.S. Flag to our Department.

Following the reading of the Convention Rules, the Minutes from our Spring Meeting were read and adopted. Committee Reports were presented which included reports from our Department 1st, 2nd and 3rd VPs, and our FS/Treasurer. We also heard reports from our VAVS and our Finance Committee reporting our books had been audited and in order. This was followed by our Minnesota Chapters presenting their Chapter Reports.

Our National President Robin McCarthy was attending another Department Convention and unable to be present.

Our Guest Speaker was MN NG LTC Christine Ostendorf, daughter of our MN BSM Sue Stowe. LTC Ostendorf gave a slide presentation of and spoke to us about her most recent deployment, highlighting the effects deployments have on family members.

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> VP honored our Minnesota Fallen and presented our POW/MIA Ceremony, at which time we recessed for lunch.

At a point during our meeting, DP Pattie Kelley referred to our Department elections and explained while there were Member's present qualified to accept a nomination as Department President, at this point in time none were able to accept a nomination; however, she also stated there are others who are qualified, but were unable to attend today's Convention. Because of these unusual circumstances, the Department of Minnesota did not hold their elections. At this time, Pattie Kelley remains Department President, PDP Dottie Sills 1<sup>st</sup> VP Pro Tem, Sue Stowe 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, Denise Guerra 3<sup>rd</sup> VP, Brenda Kroulik Recording Secretary, Sally Hammes Financial Secretary, and Pam Pettit Treasurer.

DP Kelley presented Remarks for the Good of the Order, we held our Raffle, and our Department Convention was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by Pattie Kelley, President – Department of Minnesota

*Additional Comments: In keeping with our Governing Documents, the Department of Minnesota is holding another State-wide Convention for the purpose of DEB Elections only. This will take place on Saturday, November 19, 2011 and is being hosted by our Buffalo (MN) Chapter. We are honored that*



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Minutes  
Regular Board Meeting  
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---

*our NP Robin McCarthy will be our Guest for the day. Thank you.*