



BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.

April 2023



Contact Information for National Executive Board

President: Stacy Anders ~ CA
president@bluestarmothers.us

1st VP: Rebecca Stafford ~ MO
1vp@bluestarmothers.us

2nd VP: Karen Stillwell ~ OH
2vp@bluestarmothers.us

3rd VP: Cheree' Barrett ~ TX
3vp@bluestarmothers.us

4th VP: Brenda Ternullo ~ CA
4vp@bluestarmothers.us

Recording Secretary:

Marisol Gonzalez ~ CA
recsec@bluestarmothers.us

Financial Secretary:

Sonya Kay~IL
Finsec@bluestarmothers.us

Treasurer: Alethea Tennill ~ MO
treas@bluestarmothers.us

Hello Ladies,

It has been a crazy time with so much going on with BSMA.

We have officers serving all over country, providing help to our sisters and their Chapters wherever the need arises. We have three National officers attending "Sisters in Action" in Michigan this weekend, three going to N/S in Ohio next weekend and two attending one for the Dept. MN at the end of the month. These ladies are so dedicated to our organization they have spent their own money to attend.

I am happy to announce we will be having a concert with Tim Maggart on Thursday afternoon at Convention, August 3rd, followed by a small reception. Tim has new songs to share, including all of our favorite, "A Piece of Home," written for BSMA.

I look forward to seeing you all at Convention!

God Bless,



Stacy Anders, National President 2021-2023

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KEYNOTE CONCERT



US ARMY VETERAN
TIM MAGGART

BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA
NATIONAL CONVENTION - NASHVILLE, TN



From Your Financial Team:

Best Accounting Practices for Non-Profit Organizations

Non-Profit Accounting is a unique process by which the non-profit organization plans, records, and reports upon their financials. The non-profit organization must be accountable to the public as well as the IRS and the State. Non-profit organizations have a legal and ethical obligation to members and to the public to conduct their activities with accountability and transparency. The non-profit should regularly & openly convey information to the public about their mission, activities, financial accomplishments, and any decision-making processes. In other words, sharing the financial reports with Chapter membership monthly is ideal, but should not be done less than quarterly.

Donors have a right to set restrictions on their donations. These funds will be labeled “restricted” (as in Veteran services). Donors also have a right to see the non-profit’s financial reports at any time.

Members have a right to see the financial reports as well. Not just presenting balances in the bank, (the Balance Sheet – or the Statement of Financial Position) but showing where the funds came from and went. This report is called a Profit & Loss Statement or Statement of Activity. These reports should be sent out to the membership at least quarterly. A non-profit must comply with all legally required reporting procedures, including filing the IRS form 990 (most of our Chapters will only need to file the 990N Postcard) and annual reports with their state.

Budgets

- Annual budgets must be prepared at the beginning of each fiscal year and must be approved by the membership
- During the fiscal year, the budget numbers do not change
- During the fiscal year, Budget vs Actual reports should be reviewed by the membership on a regular basis.
- Budgeted expenses can be paid without additional approval since the budget was approved by the membership

Profit and Loss Statements (Statement of Activity)

- This report has two sections: Income (Revenue) and Expenses (Expenditures)
- Income can be restricted or general. Income can be donations, grants, fundraising, and membership dues.
- Expenses should fall under one of these categories: Programs, Management, or Fundraising.

Balance Sheets

- Bank balances, with restricted funds separated from general funds
- List the Assets and Liabilities (if any)



Annual Audits

- 3 people not related to the Financial Secretary or Treasurer
- Provide the reviewer receipts (both income and expense), monthly bank statements and any P&L’s that are available

When making deposits, make sure to keep a copy of the checks. When reporting expenses, keep a copy of the check written and a copy of the receipts. Chapter Presidents are to have nothing to do with money.

Some helpful websites:

https://www.jitasagroup.com/jitasa_nonprofit_blog/nonprofit-accounting/

<https://www.minnesotanonprofits.org/resources-tools/principles-practices-for-nonprofit-excellence/transparency-and-accountability>

<https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/ethics-for-nonprofit>

<https://www.findlaw.com/smallbusiness/incorporation-and-legal-structures/nonprofit-financial-statements.html>



BE VIGILANT OF PACT ACT SCAMS

On August 10, President Biden signed the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act (PACT Act) into law. This law helps millions of Veterans and their survivors by:

- Extending VA health care eligibility for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and Post-9/11 (Post-September 11, 2001) eras
- Expanding benefits eligibility for Veterans exposed to toxic substances and their survivors



Tips to Avoid PACT Act Scams

Scammers are taking advantage of new opportunities to commit fraud. There's been an increase in PACT Act-related [phishing \(email\)](#), vishing (phone), and [social media scams](#) targeting Veterans to access their PACT Act benefits or submit claims on their behalf.

Veterans should be cautious of anyone who guarantees a lucrative financial benefit or service.

Do's

- ✓ You may submit your application securely [online](#) via VA.GOV or in person at any Regional Office. You may file your claim directly with VA and then, VA will assist in gathering evidence necessary to support it. There are no costs or hidden fees to apply.
- ✓ Be cautious of companies who advertise VA benefits can only be obtained with their help. These companies may not be recognized by VA and may be attempting to charge illegal fees.
- ✓ Be cautious of aggressive companies who may try to pressure you to sign their contract through frequent communications or by insisting "you must act now or lose your chance for benefits."
- ✓ Be cautious of companies who claim to be contacting you on behalf of VA or to have a special relationship with VA. Contact VA at 1-800-827-1000 if you are unsure about the authenticity of any message received.
- ✓ Validate: If you are interested in working with a Veteran Service Organization (VSO), agent, or attorney, use the Office of General Counsel [Accreditation tool](#) to confirm and validate their credentials.

Don'ts

- ✗ Do not sign a contract agreeing to pay an unauthorized company a percentage of your benefit payment in exchange for their assistance with your VA claim. If you need help filing a claim, there are representatives of VSOs, agents, and attorneys who have been [accredited by VA](#) to assist you.
- ✗ Do not sign a blank form for someone else to complete later. Always review the completed form before signing and keep a copy for yourself.
- ✗ Do not be fooled by companies who advertise they have special relationships with medical professionals and can guarantee your benefits award. If they are defrauding the Federal government, you could be held responsible for paying those benefits back.
- ✗ Do not provide your social security number, medical records, or other personally identifiable information to anyone offering claims assistance before confirming their credentials using the Office of General Counsel [Accreditation tool](#).
- ✗ Do not sign forms that are not [VA generated](#) or third-party authorization for someone to provide "behind-the-scenes" claims assistance.

www.VA.gov/PACT is the official source of PACT Act information.

We want Veterans and survivors to apply now for their PACT Act-related benefits.

To report suspected scams, please contact the VA Office of Inspector General ([OIG Hotline \(va.gov\)](#)). File a complaint with the [Federal Trade Commission](#). Visit the [Cybercrime Support Network](#) for additional [resources](#) to help Veterans, service members, and their families combat cybercrime.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Learn more and sign up at VA.gov/PACT
Download the [VA Health and Benefits App](#)
Call us at 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411)
Find a VA at VA.gov/find-locations/

Online Store

Beautiful Navy Vest Now Available



Color: Classic Navy

96% polyester, 4% spandex bonded with 100% polyester anti-pill fleece with water-repellent finish

- Inside storm placket with fleece chin guard
- Center front reverse coil zipper with auto lock slider and reflective toggle
- Audio port access through inside left pocket
- Lower pockets with zipper closures and reflective toggles

Sizes M—XL \$50.00

Sizes XXL—XXXXXL \$55.00

Order Now

<http;wwhttps://www.Bluestarmothers.org/>

Limited Availability



Beautiful Red Ruby
Only \$16.00
Click Now To Online Store

<http://www.https://www.bluestarmothers.org/>

VAVS



Veterans love Holidays and when they roll round they sometimes feel lonely and sad. Our VAVS volunteers combat that loneliness with celebrations at our VA facilities. Here are a few photos of how St. Patrick's Day was celebrated in Ohio. With Easter and Passover this month and so many holidays coming up, make chapter plans to work with the VAVS offices to set up tables, put thank you cards on dining tables and support our Veterans with love and shower them with fun. Send your VA photos to vavs.deputy@bluestarmothers.us for future Newsletter submissions.



Cleveland VA Baby Shower

OH 57 and OH 2



We partnered with our sister chapter OH2 to provide a drive-thru baby shower for expectant Veterans at the Louis Stokes VA Hospital in Cleveland and their satellite office in Akron.



Through donations we were able to stuff diaper bags full of essential items to help these expectant Veterans and their families.



**RAISE MONEY FOR THE VA HOSPITAL FUND
BY PURCHASING SPACE IN THE**



2022-2023 YEARBOOK



**DOES YOUR CHAPTER OR DEPARTMENT HAVE SOMETHING TO
SHARE IN THE YEARBOOK?**

**FIRST, DESIGN YOUR AD AND SEND IT TO
YEARBOOK@BLUESTARMOTHERS.US
BY JUNE 4, 2023**

**THEN, SEND YOUR PAYMENT TO THE NATIONAL FINANCIAL
SECRETARY OR SUBMIT YOUR PAYMENT ONLINE ON THE
BSMA WEBSITE AND NOTE "YEARBOOK VAVS AD" IN THE
MEMO SECTION**

**PAYMENT
MUST BE
RECEIVED BY
THE
NATIONAL
FINANCIAL
SECRETARY TO
BE ACCEPTED**



**AD SPACES
ARE OPEN TO
MEMBERS,
ASSOCIATES
AND
BUSINESSES**

**ONLY 10 PAGES AVAILABLE
FIRST COME - FIRST SERVED**

100% OF THE MONIES COLLECTED GOES TO THE VA HOSPITALS



Becky Stepp Mack
Proud Marine Mom
Blue Daisy, March 14, 2023



CA 9

Becky joined BSMA CA9 in 2009. Her son was on active duty in the USMC. She was a Proud Marine Mom and loved Blue Star Mothers. She also loved the San Diego Padres.

Becky was an avid quilter and collector and had encyclopedic knowledge of Feather-weight sewing machines.

Her strong personality and love of America and our military will be missed, but her loving memory will live on.

She is now resting in the arms of her beloved Larry who past several years ago.

God Speed our dear friend.



Blue Daisy Becky Stepp Mack



Roberta Ann Hall
1951 - 2023

Rest in peace our beautiful Blue Star Mother (Associate) "Bobbi Hall" 😞

Bobbi was a great example of a Blue Star Mother Associate. She had a heart for our military and always did what she could to support our chapter. She sewed many an hour to make "ditti bags" and lap blankets for our Veterans. She was always there at meetings to support our mothers and her loving heart and kind words will surely be missed ❤️



Associate Tribute OH 57



Blue Star Mother of America, Inc.



Android Mobile App

Below is the link to download the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. app for an Android phone. You are able to find by using your share link here:

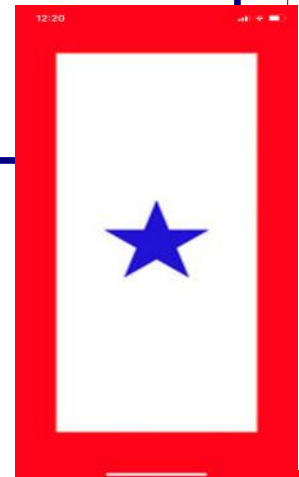
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.gc861c065d3b>

Apple Phone App

Blue Star Mothers of America! en App Store - Apple <https://apps.apple.com/es/app/blue-star-mothers-of-america/id1485901650>

If you search for the app you will need to look up “Blue Star Mothers of America” for it to appear

Any questions, email Anne Parker at pnpayne@bluestarmothers.us





March highlights: Packed up 21 boxes for our troops overseas, participated in the Lori Piestewa 20th Memorial / Challenge and celebrated the 50th Anniversary of our Vietnam Veterans.

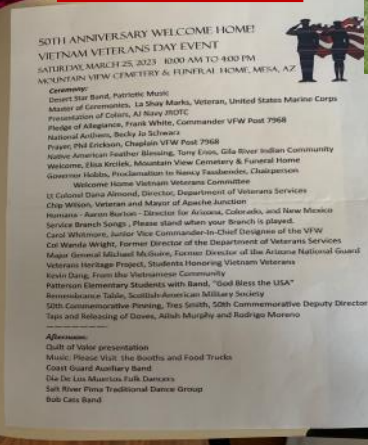
It was our chapter's honor and privilege to help plan and execute the Piestewa Fallen Heroes Memorial two-day event. The Memorial dinner included honoring our Gold Star families, Veterans, those wounded, and Tribal Leaders. The evening highlights included Posting of Colors, Guest Speaker Patricia Little-Upah, President of the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame, a Remembrance Table, Special tributes to the families of the fallen and TAPS.

On March 23, 2003, in the early days of the Iraq War, a unit of the 507th Maintenance Co. with a handful of trucks got lost in a sandstorm and took a wrong turn in the desert. The small convoy was attacked by Iraqi forces and some soldiers were captured. Among them were Jessica Lynch and Lori Piestewa. Piestewa succumbed to her injuries and became the first female service member to die in that war. She was also the first Native American woman to die in combat. May we never forget.



During the 50th Anniversary of Vietnam in March, we pinned our Veterans and gave them a certificate. "On behalf of a grateful nation, thank you for your service and sacrifice, Welcome Home".

75 Veterans attended with several hundred in attendance overall. It was a day of blessings and healing.



SACRAMENTO
BLUE STAR MOMS
CA 07

March 2023

Many Members Makes Light Work



Central Valley Blue Star Moms CA10



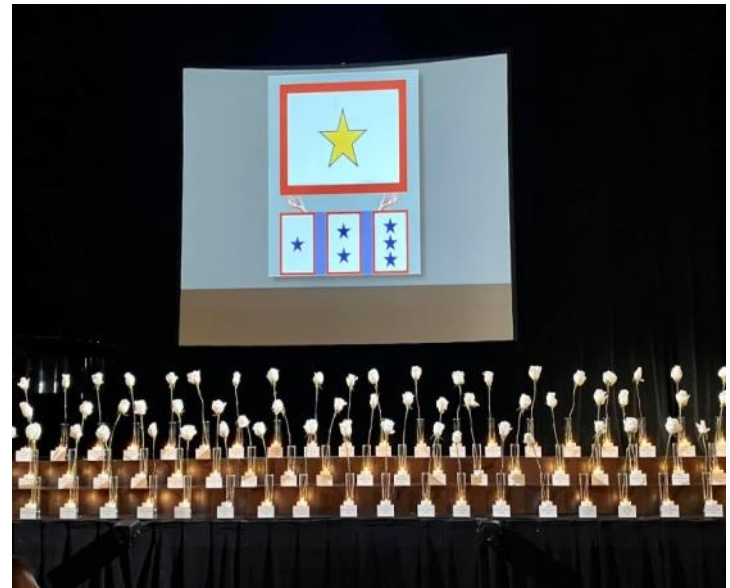
CA10 had another busy month! We participated in many events this month:

Served dinner to Veterans at 2 local VFWs, Participated in Family Day at our local base, Served lunch at a Strategic Veterans Hiring event, Had a member present her book at our monthly meeting, attended local VFW social dinner, held a Tahoe Joe's dinner fundraiser, supported our local Honor Flight at the Cowgirl Up fundraiser, participated in our local Vietnam Veterans Day event, participated in a local Murph Challenge fundraiser, supported local law enforcement at their Support Blue Run, helped our local VFW at their Retirement of Flags Ceremony, attend 4 funerals for local soldiers, turned a family from Blue to Gold, and participated in our communities You Matter Day

Next month we have another busy month. Stay tuned to see what we are up to next!



After missing two years because of Covid, the 16th Annual Gold Star Honor & Remembrance event was finally held at the Marines Memorial Hotel on March 2-3. Approximately 97 Fallen heroes were honored with 75 California Gold Star Families attending.



Western Slope Blue Star Mothers - CO8



April Chapter Happenings



We are all superheros as Mom's of our favorite military service members! Show off your pride by purchasing your very own shirt!
\$25.99

<https://www.bonfire.com/military-moms-are-superheroes-2/>

One of our local high schools hosted a Military Signing Day, honoring the seniors that have chosen to enlist in the Armed Forces after graduation. Western Slope Blue Star Moms was invited to this event to help show support to these kids and their families, who have made such an incredible decision about their future.



PINE CITY BLUE STAR MOM'S

MN 16

CHAPTER 16: A small but mighty group...

This April we dropped off one of the plastic benches we had made for Tobies in Hinckley, MN. We've had 7-8 Benches made for supporters of BSM. We collect and recycle plastics to not only make benches but, to help the environment. Our group is collecting more plastic this month. We will also be serving lunch at the Braham Spring Craft Fair later this month. We plan on having 9 members attend our state Spring Convention at the end of the month, should be a great time. Happy Spring too all!!!



HELP SUPPORT OUR MISSION
Text "Donate" to 518.351.7070

WHO

- Active Duty
- Veteran
- Military Families

WHY

- You Matter
- You're not alone
- We care



#HICKSSTRONG
SUPPORTING HEROES

WHAT

- Telehealth Therapy
- Up to 24 therapy sessions covered

HOW

- Donations
- Sponsorships
- Community Support

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR:

- PTSD • MST • TRANSITIONING • LIFE IN GENERAL • MARRIAGE
- FAMILY • ANXIETY/DEPRESSION • GRIEF • SURVIVORS GUILT

We are here to help

HicksStrong began its work in 2019 after the tragic suicide of Macoy Hicks, an active duty member of the US Navy who suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). At the time of his death, he was only 20 years old. In response to this loss, Macoy's parents and sister joined together with their friends and community members to create HicksStrong with a mission to save military lives. We do not want our service members to feel alone...**EVER!**



For information visit us at: www.HicksStrong.org

Suicide Prevention Resources

Are you in crisis?
Veteran Crisis Hotline
Call - 800-273-8255 Option 1

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Call - 1-800-273-8255 or Call 911

In Loving Memory of Sailor Macoy Hicks
07.12.98 - 02.11.19


At our last meeting we were honored to be joined by our guest speakers Michael and Jolee Hicks of #HicksStrong. Please check out their information above, they are on a mission to reach out and help those struggling with suicidal/PTSD/Service related issues whether Active Duty, Veteran, or their family members. Their hearts and souls are in their drive to make a difference in the lives of everyone they touch. We as Military Moms are proud to share their story with whoever will listen!



NY 13

OH 57



OH 59 President, Sharon Burns, was invited to attend an event to honor Dave Dilly. He was presented a proclamation for serving at 1000 funerals for Veterans. There are currently more than 30 Honor Guard members in Coshocton County. Many were in attendance. Dave is one of our chapter's associate members.



Claudia Bruening's son, Master Chief John Thompson and his wife Stephanie recently attended the Navy Ball.





**Southwestern
Pennsylvania**
Chapter PA16



PA Vet Pets Gala: Presenting Certificate of Appreciation to State Representative Tim O'Neal for legislation he authored to create a Blue Star Family license plate



**Information Table
DQ Breakfast Event**



**Attended Vietnam
Veterans Ceremony
North Shore, Pittsburgh**



Information Table: Vietnam Veterans Day



Attended Veterans Breakfast Club event: Vietnam Veterans Day - Heinz History Center



TN 7



USA



**Here in TN we mailed 124 care packages to our Military for Easter!
It was a great day!**





TX



Texas Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

On March 7, 2023, the Texas chapters gathered in Austin, TX to be recognized for the work they do in supporting our sons and daughters.

At present there are 10 chapters in the state, and all were invited to attend. There were 8 chapters represented that day. We started the day in the Texas House where Rep. Brian Harrison presented a resolution recognizing the Texas chapters. We then moved to the Senate where Sen Bob Hall presented his resolution. At the end there were other Senators who spoke with favor of the mothers. One of the State Senators made a motion to make it unanimous. We stood to applause in both houses.

After lunch a tour of the capital was arranged. At conclusion of the day we gathered to meet with Gov. Greg Abbott and had use picture made with him.

Challenge coins were presented to the House, Senate, and Governor. All of the mothers had a great time and also met each other for the first time.





BLUE STAR MOTHERS AT THE CAPITOL

On March 7th, The Blue Star Mothers Of Texas were invited to The Texas State Capitol and recognized on the floors of The House of Representatives and The Senate in honor of Blue Star Mothers Day. It was a beautiful day on the capitol.





WI Blue Star Moms Chapter 1



Veteran's Village BINGO



WI 1

BLUE STAR MOTHERS SE WI 2



APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Events

Honor Flights

April 22nd & May 20th

Cooking Class Fundraiser

May 1st

Pritchard Park Clean Up

Date TBD

Blue & Gold Star Byway Marker Dedication

May 13th at 10am

Field of Flags Service

May 29th at 6pm

Field of Flags Placement

May 22nd -May 24th (see
spread sheet for times)

Kenosha Brat Wagon & Car Wash Fundraiser

July 29th & Aug 19th

10am-3:30pm

At our March 2023 meeting (pictured below) we welcomed guest speaker Shennan, a member of a local DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) chapter. During her presentation we learned that she is a fellow Blue Star Mother, and has a daughter who is currently serving. She shared information about the organization, which is a women's service organization dedicated to promoting historic preservation, education, patriotism and honoring the patriots of the Revolutionary War, and highlighted how many of their volunteer goals and projects are similar to ours.



Earlier this month we attended the graduation of several veterans from Veterans Treatment Court. The Court is a year and a half to two-year program that serves veterans who have found themselves in the court system and are struggling with addiction, serious mental illness and/or co-occurring disorders.

Through this program, sobriety, recovery and stability are promoted. It is the Court's mission to honor veterans by restoring productive & healthy lives with evidence-based treatment as well as support.



2023 Yearbook

All Yearbook photos must be sent to the email:

Yearbook@bluestarmothers.us by June 4th

Include the following:

Recent Chapter group photos related to the mission; no more than four or five photos per Chapter

Send just one photo of your child, Active Duty

Or Veteran

Send Blue Daisies not already sent to the 2ndVP

Gold Star Mothers, please send a photo of your Hero

If you are a Veteran, send us your

Military photo then and now



See You In Nashville

Whenever you find yourself
doubting how far you can go,
just remember how far you
have come. Remember
everything that you have faced,
all the battles you have won
and all the fears you have
Ora
overcome.



Happy Spring



**Just give your
dreams a fertile
growing place**

