



BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.

December 2021

Hello Sisters!

I hope everyone had a blessed Thanksgiving. It was a joy having our family and friends around during this time.

As most of you know, I have always just “done it to get it done” Not always the best choice, which I recently discovered.

I am very grateful for the family and friends that I have, and all of you would fall under family!!!

I have received so many Get Well, Thinking of You and Your Family, Merry Christmas, and Happy Holidays cards that I can’t keep up, you all mean the world to me.

Please keep our sisters, who have been affected by the tornados, in your thoughts and prayers.

I know all of you have been patiently awaiting convention news. I am happy to announce we have booked our 2022 National Convention at the Hilton Long Beach Hotel, located in beautiful Long Beach California, for July 24-29.

We are still being very cautious so our Convention will follow the CDC mandates which are in place during that time.

There is still lots of planning and work to be done but I want to say THANK YOU to our Convention Tri-Chairs, Sylvia Gaxiola, Amy O’Campo, and Penny Estrada, for working so hard to get us started.

Additional details will come out once we finalize and confirm our plans. This will be a great convention and I look forward to seeing you in California!

Have a blessed and Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, Kwanzaa and Happy New Year!!!

Stacy Anders—National President 2021—2022



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National Chaplain and PNP

Carla Brodacki



I have served on the National Board serving in multiple offices. First in 2008 through 2010 as the Department of Michigan President. In 2015 I was elected as the National Financial secretary where I served two years. Then in 2017 I was elected as the National Treasurer also serving two years. In 2019 I had the amazing honor to serve as your National President, it was truly an honor. I am now blessed and honored to serve as your National Chaplain.

I am a third generation Blue Star Mother. I didn't know back in 1968 when my Grandfather showed me the Gold Star Banner which had once hung in his Mother's window, in honor of my Uncle John, that I would also become a military mom and be a part of a beautiful sisterhood and organization. I joined this organization when my son Brad answered the call of his country as a senior in high school in 2001, when news came of the attack on New York and the Pentagon. My son swore in three days later. He continues to serve today, but is gearing up now to retire on July 1, 2022; Whoot Whoot I will have my dancing shoes on!! I am very proud he made me a Blue Star Mother. I also have a daughter Tiffany who also makes me proud every day and grandson Tyler who is my little hockey player.

I pray for all our children serving this country as I do all our moms. I pray for our Gold Star Families as they continue their journey of grief because of the sacrifice paid by their loved ones. Thank you for serving this amazing mission with all of us on the National Executive Board, it could not be done without you. I love all of you and my journey would have been consumed with worry, but because of my sisters I have been productive in service, making a difference while my son serves.

I pray God's blessings on you and your family. I pray his blessings on our Military Children and our Country.

Your Sister,

Carla Brodacki, National Chaplain

PNP and National VAV'S Representative

Anne Parker

Anne Parker is the mother of Lt. Colonel Leigh Lechanski and Major William Swafford as well as the mother-in-law of Major Andrew Lechanski and Major Meghan Swafford. She believes her greatest accomplishment is raising children who chose to serve their country. She is married to an Air Force veteran, Gordon, and they have seven grandchildren ranging in age from 1 to 17. Anne has served on the National Executive Board as National Financial Secretary, National Treasurer, National 1st Vice President and National President (2018-19). She has also served as National VAVS Representative for 10 years and National Finance Chairman for several years; she continues to be a member of the current National Finance Committee. As a Past National President Anne enjoys working with new chapters and providing training to them prior to chartering and assisting chapters as a mentor and a guide during compliance. She resides in Ocala, Florida, and is the current President of Ocala Blue Star Mothers and the VAVS Representative at the Gainesville VA Hospital along with Gordon. She is also an active members of the Ocala Rotary Club, the Ocala Woman's Club, the American Legion Auxiliary, and the VFW Auxiliary. She sits on the board of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation, Interfaith Emergency Services, and North Strand Housing Shelter. She and Gordon love to travel and stay away from Ocala approximately 90 days a year either at a timeshare, in their travel trailer or cruising. Anne also has a non-military son, Mike, who did not join the military due color blindness. He is a financial advisor and father of her five grandchildren.

Pictured on the left, Anne and husband Gordon Parker. On the right is Anne, Gordon, their children, and a long time family friend and Blue Star Mother, Patti Doty.



Hello from the desk of your National 1VP!

I have received several emails asking how a member can transfer to another Chapter. With this very transit world we live in, it is very common for a member to move and wish to move their membership as well. Below are the necessary steps:

- Transferring Member completes the application, marking transfer, and completes **ALL** information
- Application is given to the current Chapter Financial Secretary
- She will verify the member is in good standing, then she will send the application and email to the National 1VP
- National 1VP will verify the member is in good standing at the National level, then make the change within the system
- National 1VP will send the application to the transferring Chapter President and Financial Secretary, copying the transferring member, and the “old” Chapter President and Financial Secretary of the change.

I hope this helps. I am happy to assist with other membership questions or hiccups you may be having. Please email me at 1VP@bluestarmothers.us

Wishing all of you the very best holiday season!

Rebecca Stafford

National 1VP



From Your National Treasurer and Online Store

Friendly
Reminders

- Everyone: When placing an order in the Online Store, please check the mailing address and zip code on your order.
- Everyone: Thank you for your patience regarding our uniform hats being out-of-stock for so long. The vendor has shared that the fabric used for our hats had been difficult to obtain. The *Good News* is that they will be in stock again very soon, so keep your eye out. There are some on their way to me as I type this, and I will ask the Webmaster to make the hats “live again” once they arrive. Fingers crossed.
- Chapter Officers: Please, check your PO Boxes weekly if it all possible. Once a check is received, deposit it within a few days. Please do not leave checks uncashed for a month or more. BSMA, Inc. has an uncleared check policy. After 200 days, any uncleared check from national will be voided and your chapter will lose access to those funds. With donors, uncashed checks call into question the chapter’s fiscal responsibility or need.
- Chapter Officers: When communicating with your national financial officers, please be as complete as possible – include as much information as you have (e.g., check number, date, purpose, chapter state and number, etc.). It speeds up the process and helps us respond to you more quickly.
- Membership chairs: Please double check your dues reimbursement checks from national as soon as they are received. If there are any errors, please contact your National Treasurer immediately. If you know you have a new member and you don’t receive dues reimbursement for her after the quarter during which she joined ends (June-Aug; Sept-Nov; Dec-Feb; Mar-May), please contact your NT promptly. Lost checks will not be replaced after 200 days passed when they were written. We want you to have the funds that your chapter is entitled to have.



National VAV'S Message

Another year is almost behind us with great appreciation for all our VAVS folks. The year presented many challenges and yet many victories. Our volunteers, across the country, has stepped up in new ways to support, encourage and engage with our veteran community.

As the monthly reports come in the VAVS team is in awe of the creativity shown and the opening of doors as others closed. Without knowing how the new year will play out we are ready! VAVS is strong and growing with many new moms stepping up.

Our work is not done and although so much has already been done we know the new year we are needed more than ever. Our VA facilities are overwhelmed, and the staff over-worked which is where we step in. We volunteer so the staff can concentrate on their jobs as we can fill the gaps. Our moms are talented in so many ways and can do jobs needed, support where it is missing and jump in at the last moment. That is what moms do and no one can do it better than a Blue Star Mom!

What are your talents – working in one of the offices – taking a role as Ambassador to greet and help veterans and families – staff the welcome desk? Your smile and support is appreciated but we need more... More volunteers!

The new year opens new opportunities to become a VAVS Blue Star Mom.

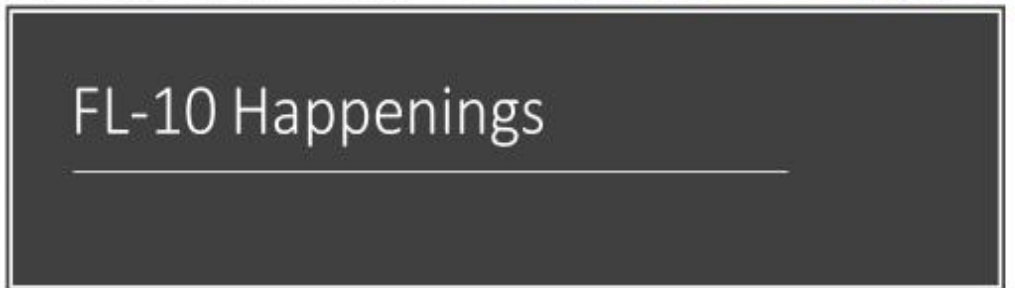
If you would like more information on what openings are in your area please contact our National Representative, Anne Parker - vavs@bluestarmothers.us

Our team wishes all moms and families peace and health. For the holiday you celebrate we hope it is joyful. For the missing person at your table, we all join in the prayers for their safety and happiness.

Ocala FL-10 Happenings

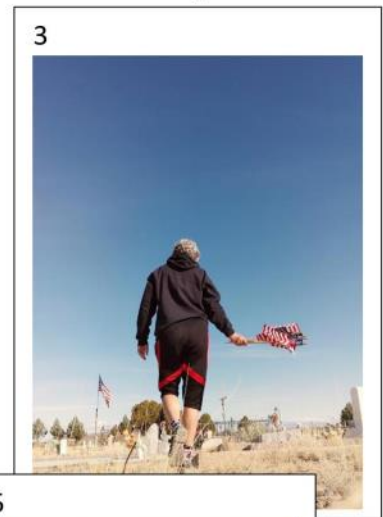
It's snowing in Florida! Well, not really, but if you saw all the snowmen moving out of Ocala, FL, you might think so! We have been experiencing a snowman frenzy these past few months. We have sold over 700 and are still making more. We had to stop taking orders and started a wait list due to the overwhelming demand (they are so darn cute!). Our FL-10 elves have also been making RED Friday shirts, ornaments, Christmas stockings and tea towels.

We are a small chapter and achieve our sales largely through the internet and Facebook. Mostly because of our craft sales, we were able to donate over \$12,000 to 18 military and veteran organizations in the 2020-21 fiscal year. This year, we are on target to do even better. We have pinned hundreds of local veterans in our role as Vietnam Commemoration project partners. We also teamed with Operation Homefront to share thousands of school supplies and toys with our local National Guard. We are an awesome team dedicated to the mission and we look forward to doing even more in the coming year.



**Blue Star Mothers of Valencia County
NM6
November 2021**

We are so blessed to live in this county that demonstrates such love, respect, and admiration for our military, especially for our veterans. Our chapter was invited to attend many events this past month, and we assisted in some of them. While months like this one wear down our bodies a *little*, at the same time, they fill our hearts up a *bunch*. 1) MOAA donation, 2) helping Los Lunas HS JROTC on Veterans Day, 3) placing flags at cemetery with VFW, 4) awaiting dedication of new bridge honoring local Medal of Honor recipient, Daniel Fernandez, 5) Los Lunas' Veterans Day ceremonies & lunch 6) Girl Scout Troop 10128 food drive, 7) VFW Post 9676 recognizing our chapter's communities' service. We are grateful for all our awesome supporters.



Troy, Michigan 198



2021—2022 Michigan—198
Board Installation



Enlisted Heritage House Fall Clean Up
Lunch was served following the activity



Quilt Raffle: “Mother of Freedom” lap quilt, donated by Barb Sucher, raffled off on December 11, 2021.



Heroes Appreciation Breakfast—MI 198 has participated annually for the past three years to honor and recognize Veterans.

Southwestern Pennsylvania PA16

Chartered October 19, 2017



Gift Card Drive and Donation
Veterans Place - Pittsburgh, PA



9/11 Remembrance Parade - Coraopolis, PA



Food drive donation made to
USO Military Families Thanksgiving Outreach



135 Packages for deployed troops



140+ notecards
delivered to the
VA Hospital



Veterans Day Parade
Pittsburgh, PA



Veterans Leadership Program - Veterans Day Breakfast
Seated with Gold Star Wives we met at 9-11 parade

Leslie Majocka, President ; Cindy Lauderbaugh, 1st Vice President ; Debra Ridgway, Financial Secretary ;
Sue Selga, Treasurer ; Beverly Majocka, Recording Secretary ; Leslie Stewart, Corresponding Secretary

TEXAS 13

Chapter TX13 annually takes their November meeting to give thanks for each other, our Chapter and our children. We each bring potluck and have a wonderful meal together. We didn't get to do in 2019 and felt like something was missing. So glad we were able to do again this year.



Geaux, LA 7

Geaux Seven chapter had a December garage sale that raised over \$1,000.00! We rode with the VFW in the local Christmas parade and had our annual Christmas Dinner! Merry Christmas to all our Blue Star Sisters and their families!!



Houston, Texas—Chapter 2

What a busy month our Blue Star Moms have had here in Houston Texas the Houston Chapter TX2 has been very active with no signs of slowing down any time soon!

On October 23, we participated in the 10th annual Kingwood Fallen Heroes Golf Tournament. This is hosted each year by the Mitchell family in remembrance of 3 killed in action heroes from Kingwood, Texas. This kind family honors those lost from their community and make donations to several organizations in their name. Our chapter is one of the recipients. A long but very humbling day for all of us each year. Thank you, Mitchell family, for your continued support.



We followed that event with a day at the Military and First Responders Day at the Kemah Boardwalk. Long days but yes, another good one.

On Veterans Day we were split up into multiple events and groups for things all over the city. We had several moms that rode on a Firetruck in the City of Houston Parade. They had a great time.



Our President, Vickie Schultz was set up with a table at Ernie's Restaurant, who not only allowed her to collect donations and talk with others about our organization, but then donated 25% of all sales for Veterans Day to our organization. What a blessing that was.

We then had another board member who attended a ceremony honoring veterans at Kingwood's Creekwood Middle School. An event that had Congressman Dan Crenshaw as the guest speaker.

We ended that week with a very long day at the first annual Texas Memorial Illumination, where we participated with many other organizations in honoring all fallen heroes from the great State of Texas by placing 21,500 luminaries at the San Jacinto Monument and the Texas Battleship. There was a ceremony in the evening and then all volunteers were allowed to drive through the exhibit before it opened to the general public. What a breathtaking experience that was.



We followed this week with our monthly meeting where we also held our annual Christmas Box packing party where we packed 176 boxes to be sent to heroes deployed to combat zones. Now on to the Christmas Holidays!!

We Give Thanks For The Blessings In Our Lives CA-07

We Show Our Pride - 60th Annual Roseville Holiday Parade



We Serve Our Missions - November Packing Event - 400 Care Packages Shipped



We wear RED



We Volunteer



We Fundraise - Spooktacular Bunco



We Support Veterans: Veterans Day Lunch, Sierra College Vet Fair, Heritage Oak Memorial



OH 9

We are glad to be able to be meeting in person, although we are following our town's local mandate of wearing masks while inside. We continue to be busy and work on meeting our mission goals. As our hard-working president (Diana Evans Vance) stated: "Our work is never really done." With that thought in mind, our months of November and December have been full but always, fun and rewarding.



On November 13, we helped the Westerville Rotary with their Veterans *Freedom Fun Run*. We worked an outreach table as well as served drinks to the runners. We even had a member participate and run in the race (Go Suzanne Hughes)! We were then lucky enough to be a beneficiary for the run and received a wonderful donation from the Westerville Rotary! We also had several members represent us in a local Veterans Day parade.

Our VAVS representative, Deb Waltz, organized numerous volunteers to help at a Flu Shot Clinic at our local VA medical center as well as getting donations for the VA Thanksgiving Meal that was donated to the veterans. We also donated and packed bags of candy and treats for their holiday party.

We packed and mailed 263 boxes for deployed troops (one of our favorite activities in the Chapter). This takes a bit of organizing as we can still only have so many members in our building, but over several days, we got those completed!



We had a wonderful time at our Holiday Painting Party (Paint for a Cause)! This was also a fundraiser for our chapter, while getting to paint, socialize and have a bit of a feast. We definitely want to do this again!

We will be participating on December 18 with the Wreaths Across America, we continue to garner donations that will help us for future packing events, and we are already planning upcoming activities, such as an Italian Dinner Fundraiser for our local American Legion Post for January.

Here is to a great, safe and healthy 2022!

Blue Star Families of Richmond, VA2



On Veterans Day at the Virginia War Memorial, our President, Denise Alderman presented a wreath alongside Virginia's first lady, Pamela Northam.



We all got together for our annual Treats for Troops packing. We packed 75 care packages.



One of our favorite events is the decoration of the Hero Tree at the Virginia War Memorial. This year, in addition to the ornaments of our heroes, we added Blue Star angels to our tree in honor of our sisters that have passed.

Nutmeg State, CT5

Nutmeg State Blue Star Mothers-CT5 have been very busy over the past several weeks. The day after Thanksgiving members decorated the Christmas tree at the Greater Middletown Military Museum. The tree and decorations were donated to the Museum last year by CT5.

The same day CT5 members attended a Quilt of Valor presentation to Army CSM (Retired) John (Jack) Botti.

CT5 is blessed to have several talented ladies who went above and beyond at the two recent Holiday on Main craft shows. A huge thank you goes to moms Cathy Hodlin - for pulling it all together - and Jackie El-Hachem for their beautiful creations and to all the CT5 ladies who contributed cookies and craft items. Handmade with Love says it all.

And CT5 again adopted a CT National Guard family in need this holiday season anonymously through the CT National Guard Operation Elf program, donating toys, clothing and gift cards.





December Happenings – CO8 Western Slope Blue Star Mothers

We're proud to send our new recruits off with style! This month we sent Army, Navy and Marine recruits off to boot camp with the thanks they deserve and the good wishes of their community (and a few cookies for the road!)



2021 is bringing lots of our kids home for the holidays! It's our honor to make their homecoming a special one!



We do love ourselves a parade! Thrilled to be part of Montrose, CO Parade of Lights in 2021!

Cape Fear, NC 16

Cape Fear Blue Star Mothers of America NC16 had a very busy November! A local bakery created beautiful Blue Star cookies that they sold as a fundraiser for our chapter. The cookies looked great, tasted delicious and raised funds! We were invited to several Veterans Day events. We attended one at the invitation of the Gold Star Mothers of America and met some wonderful ladies. We were invited to a second event by the Wilmington, NC Garden Club at which they dedicated a new Blue Star Family Memorial. We held our first ever flag retirement ceremony and were able to retire over 100 flags! The ceremony was presented by the sons of our VP, Davida Schnebelen. Our chapter held our first Wreaths Across America fundraiser. It was extremely successful and over 250 wreaths were sponsored. We are looking forward to laying the wreaths on Dec. 18 at Wilmington National Cemetery. Our final activity for November was packing holiday care packages to be sent to troops that are going to be stationed out of the country during the holidays. A great time was had by all! Happy Holidays from all of us to all of you!



BSM Thumb Chapter MI 178

laid wreaths for our local heroes November 28th. Pictured are Donna Wolschleger, Marcia Janik, Sherry Kramer, Linda Elandt, Nicole Stermer, Grace Rosenthal. This is a busy time of year for the Blue Star Mothers Thumb Chapter MI 178. December 10th we held our second annual Christmas party for our Veterans at Fiddler's Green in Bad Axe, MI. Thanks to Santa and Mrs. Claus who joined us and passed out the Christmas gifts and joined in the bingo games. Meijer deli in Bad Axe made everyone happy with their delicious sandwich trays and, of course, the Blue Star Mothers baked lots of Christmas goodies.





HOLIDAY NEWSLETTER

TX18



What We've Been Up To

WOW! Spring Creek Area TX18 Blue Star Mothers have been busy for the Holiday Months of November & December.

We joined forces with Honor Cafe, Conroe, Texas to Celebrate Veteran's Day with live music, free breakfast & lunch for local Veterans & Disabled Veterans (Hospice), Stars for Heroes, Thank You Cards, Community Gift Giving Bags, Private Dining with local Gold Star Families, and several Tributes to All Branches of Service throughout the day!



We teamed up with VFW Post 4709, Conroe, Texas to collect retired US flags for our TX18 Chapter to assist with retiring local flags and to create more Stars for Heroes.

Check out our collection barrel that Recording Secretary, Che'ryl K., and Treasurer, Cara J. donated for us in December- Its Like Christmas!

Cara J., Treasurer/ Now 1stVP designs & creates each barrel with lots of love. We do have a super creative group of Blue Star Mothers- Don't We?



(below) A Beautiful Tribute Display for a Fallen Son by a local Gold Star Family- We were very blessed to be able to spend time with a family that continues to give back to the community



Plus this December, We're Shipping Out 203 Care packages to a local deployed unit, Sending Out 228 Thank You Cards & Stars For Heroes for Local Veterans & Deployed Soldiers, Delivering 25 Christmas Gifts to Local Veterans, and Celebrating Our Members with a Christmas Party!



BLUE STAR MOTHERS
SE WI 2
DECEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER



Operation Home
Baked 2021

Operation Home Baked is a volunteer effort that is in its 15th year and is dedicated to ensuring our armed forces receive holiday cheer while away from home protecting our country.

On December 10th several members of our group helped with the effort. Over 43,000 cookies were packaged, 294 boxes of baked goods were prepared to be shipped and over 30,000 cookies to be sent to Fort McCoy!



As 2021 winds down the Blue Star Mothers of Southeastern WI Chapter 2 continues to welcome new members, support our troops and share awareness of our organization in the community! Below is a photo taken at our November meeting where 2 new members became official!



After 2020's event was put on hold, the historic Pabst Mansion was decorated for Christmas this year with an invitation for all to see. Touring the mansion has become an annual holiday tradition for many in the area and has been a must see display for the last 40 years. This year our group had the honor of decorating one of the rooms! The room we decorated was a bedroom with a military theme.



OH 21 Lake Erie Shores

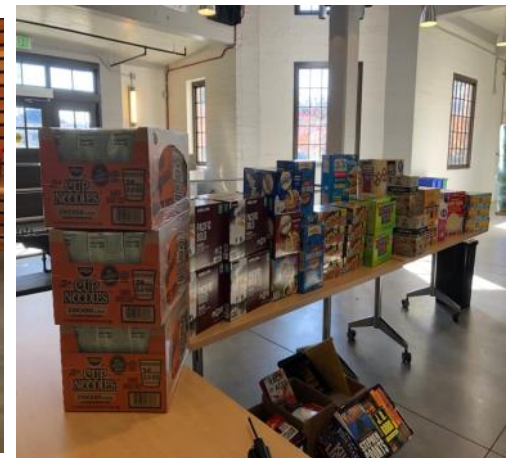


- We participated in the Bellevue, Ohio, Christmas parade on Thursday evening, December 2. A trailer was decorated with the chapter banners, a patriotic Christmas tree, and Christmas music. Members walked beside the trailer handing out plastic red, white, and blue toy soldiers with a card attached containing the chapter information.
- The honorable presentation of the Gold Star Banner took place on December 3 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Soviak, parents of Navy Corpsman Maxton Soviak, in Berlin Heights, Ohio; Soviak was killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan on August 26. The banner was presented to Mrs. Soviak by member, Renee Schneider, who is also a Gold Star Mother.
- The annual Veteran of the Year Dinner was held December 4 at the Bellevue VFW with almost 250 attending. Veterans received a free prime rib meal with sides and dessert. Members decorated the hall with live flower arrangements, fresh linens, American and military flags; processed attendees at the check-in table; and helped clean up. President Barb Cook awarded a Quilt of Valor to former Marine, John Cook. Outside the VFW hall, members and guests were thrilled to see the handmade service boards lit up.



San Mateo Blue Stars

On Monday, 12/10, our San Mateo County Blue Star Moms delivered household items, books, and food to the Colma Veterans Village. This is the second year we have made a big, pre-Christmas delivery. Below are pictures and a link to information about the residents in Colma Veterans Village. The village opened in 2019.





Happy Holidays from CA46!
November was a busy month for CA46 - Santa Clarita, Ca. Starting with Veterans Day where our 2nd VP, Sylvia Gaxiola, sang the National Anthem at Santa Clarita Veterans Day Ceremony. What an honor, and her voice is beautiful to match! Members of our chapter then attended a Veterans Military Ball hosted by Coffee 4 Vets. A wonderful organization for senior veterans that meets twice a month to bring veterans together for camaraderie and help with services. We also had an opportunity at the beginning of the month collecting items from in front of Sam's Club as well as gathering a plethora of halloween candy from our local community to go into our care packages that we sent out for the holidays. We have also begun our Convention Fundraising with personalized Mugs, Wine Coolers and Tumblers, Check us out on Facebook @ Blue Star Mothers of SCV and Check out our flyer!





News... December 2021

www.bluestarmomsroc.com

Blue Star Mothers Rochester, NY 8. The chapter was officially chartered in 2011.

We are mothers of children who are currently serving in the military or have honorably served

Lights of Honor, December 11th

Honoring our Military past and present held at the Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial. Ornaments with photos of military and veterans were placed on trees including stars signifying wars and conflict eras. Keynote Speaker: Nick Stefanovic, Director, Monroe County Veteran Service Agency. Special thanks to Vera Mae RuddYoung, Blue Star Mother and Recording Secretary. Photos Courtesy of Glenn Peck, Photographer



Gold Star and Blue Star Banners



Trees with lights and photo ornaments



Gold Star Mothers, Gold Star Spouse and son



JROTC and Gates Keystoe Club Poice Pipes & Drums and the Patriot Guard



Blue Star Mother President, Amy VanDerwerken and Master of Ceremony: Command Sergeant Major Larry Linville



Veterans placing military stars on tree



Keynote Speaker: Nick Stefanovic



Veteran Womens Coffee House members & 209th Regiment of Cadets

Four Corners Blue Star Mothers / Wreaths Across America

Christmas wreaths are here! Robert Graves from Royston, Georgia drove and delivered wreaths for our veterans' final resting places at Greenlawn Cemetery and Memorial Gardens. Mr. Graves, along with so many others, volunteer their time to drive across the US for Wreaths Across America ❤️ Four Corners Blue Star Mothers will host the wreath laying ceremony on Saturday, December 18th at Greenlawn Cemetery, led by Mistress of Ceremonies Judy-Sinclair-Leczal.



Christmas care packages will be heading out soon! Merry Christmas from Blue Star Mothers and Dads 🌲 We packaged and sent out a total of 19 overflowing care packages utilizing our own items and gifts, along with a variety of donations from local companies and schools!

Veterans Day Parade





Happy Holidays from the Contra Blue Star Moms!



First Coast Blue Star Mothers, FL 15

First Social



BSM at Jacksonville National Cemetery supporting ribbon cutting ceremony naming Gold Star Family



City of Jacksonville Veterans Day Parade





The National Executive Board wishes you and your family a joyous Holiday Season, a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanzaa, Happy Holidays and a very Happy New Year.

Best Wishes!

Stacy, Rebecca, Karen, Cheree', Paula, Brenda, Lucie, Diana, Carla and Anne



May the magic and the wonder of the holiday season stay with you throughout the coming year