



Big Dipper Auxiliary Newsletter



August 2023

First of all, I would like to thank everyone for electing me as the President of the National Big Dipper. This is a very humbling honor which I will serve with pride.

I have been married to my husband Tony for over 40 years and we have 2 boys, Steven and Corey and our 2 wonderful granddaughters, Faith and Lizzie. I grew up with Navy, I married Navy and my Granddad was Army and Navy and my son, Co-rey went Army. When the Army/Navy football game comes on, I go shopping.

While eating out one night several years ago a woman came up to me and would not leave me alone until she had told me all about Blue Star Mothers and how I should join. She was very convincing. Thank you, Dee Visser, for almost accosting me that evening. You are still my dear friend and our chapter Chaplain. I knew about Blue Star Mothers as my mom had been one as my Air Force brother served during the Vietnam era. I already had my banner and so my journey began.

In 2016 joined Ottawa North Kent MI194 and immediately became active in all the events that they had planned. This organization gave me a supportive family that I never knew existed. Our Michigan Department Sisters in Action program and fundraisers and care package packing. I needed these sisters in my life.

Corey, my Army son, left home on Memorial Day, 2012, for Lansing, MI where he then headed south to then, Ft. Benning GA for Basic training. The next 8 years he traveled around the United States, came close to deploying three different times, his gear even made it to South Africa once, but every time, even as close as 24 hours, his orders were canceled. During those 8 years the Army beat his body up enough that they finally gave him a full medical retirement.

In 2017, I received our chapter's Shining Star Award and then our Department's Shining Star Award as well. I didn't even know about either one of them until I returned home as my husband and I along with 7 other friends were on a 2-week Alaskan retirement cruise, all of us retiring in the same year.

2019 brought the beginning of my work with the Big Dipper as I was elected as the 1st VP for the Dept of MI. As Covid hit in 2020. I remained as 1st VP until 2021 when I became the Michigan Big Dipper President, where I am currently serving until the Michigan Department Convention in October.

If you have any ideas and or suggestions for the Big Dipper, please send them to me, I look forward to seeing what you would like to see us do.

Don't forget that you too can qualify for an award from us if you are going back to school. We will have updated information out sometime early next year, possibly late this year, just stayed tuned and informed.

Lets go BIG and Lets have fun while we Educate,

Pat Lomonaco, National Big Dipper President



Contact information for Officers

President: Pat Lomonaco
president.bd@bluestarmothers.us

Vice President: Connie Moler Shuck
1vp.bd@bluestarmothers.us

Recording Secretary: Coni Brooks
recsec.bd@bluestarmothers.us

Financial Secretary: Gen Schindler
finsec.bd@bluestarmothers.us

Treasurer: Diana Vance
treas.bd@bluestarmothers.us

Michigan Dept. President:

President.bdmi@bluestarmothers.us

Ohio Dept. President:

President.bdoh@bluestarmothers.us

Chaplain

Carla Brodacki

Newsletter:

newsletter.bd@bluestarmothers.us

Editor: Jennie McFarling



Your Big DipperBoard 2023-2024



From left to right:

Berva Treat, Patriotic Instructor

Diana Vance, Treasurer

Connie Moler, 1VP,

Pat Lomonaco, President,

Coni Brooks, Recording Secretary,

Sylvia Gaxiola, Historian

Gen Schindler, Financial Secretary



Hello, my name is Connie M. Shuck (Moler)

I join Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. on March 11, 2018. My daughter had just departed for Boot Camp, and I was so lost and didn't understand military life. Even though we hadn't lived in the same household, we communicated daily before she left for Boot Camp. Jeanette Didway is the reason I became a Blue Star Mother.

Jeanette is Aviation Maintenance Administration Second-Class, Petty Officer (AZ2). I also have a son-in-law that is in the Navy, and he is married to my other daughter Krystin Moler Schei. They currently live in the state of Washington with my 2 beautiful grandkids, Kristofer, and Christyann. Chris Schei is Torpedoman 1st Class (TM-1) who aspires to become Limited Duty Officer (LDO).

I recently retired from Wells Fargo Bank, NA where I worked for 17 years, as an executive admin for Commercial Banking in our Downtown Los Angeles Corporate office.

Currently, I hold the position of Treasurer with CA46. Other positions that I have served are Chapter 2VP 2018-2020, Chapter Financial Secretary 2020-2021

I am honored to be your Big Dipper 1st VP,

I welcome your input, your questions.

Connie M. Shuck

1vp.bd@bluestarmothers.us

408-807-8564



Hello Sisters!

What a convention we just had. I can't think of a better way to end our year than to be with sisters from across the country. My soul was replenished this year on many levels. Seeing sisters, I have known for years now, just lights me up. The love and sisterhood are things that cannot be allowed to fade. Meeting new sisters and learning about them also adds to my soul.

I met so many amazing new women this year and I can't wait to see them again.

I joined BSMA in April of 2015, 2 years after my daughter, Renee joined the Air Force. Because of my daughter I have been able to not only meet so many amazing women but go and do things I would never have had the privilege of doing otherwise. A couple of years ago, I gained the best son-in-law, Zac and I now have two Airmen who serve.

I am humbled to have been elected as the National Big Dipper Recording Secretary this year. I have a lot to learn, but already the ladies I am honored to work with are guiding me in the correct way.

I look forward to this coming year and serving our National Big Dipper Board on your behalf.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me:

Coni Brooks

Recording Secretary 2022-2023
recsec.bd@bluestarmothers.us



2023 Nashville FUN Night Just a few fun pics...
next year, you can be here too.



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENT!!

If you joined Big Dipper after
June 1st 2023, including at
convention...

***THERE IS NO NEED TO JOIN
NOW!***

Your membership is good
through August 31, 2024

WHAT IS BIG DIPPER YOU ASK? Well, here is your answer

The “Big Dipper” Organization

The Big Dipper is an auxiliary of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., that came into being in Milwaukee, Wisconsin November 7 at the 1951 National Convention.

The objectives of the organization are threefold: 1) honoring outstanding members of the Blue Star Mothers, 2) sponsoring a “Fun Night” at conventions and 3) providing educational assistance. In the beginning membership was very exclusive.

To be a member of Big Dipper a Blue Star Mother (BSMA), all BSMA's in good standing are encouraged to become a member of Big Dipper. Membership is easily accomplished. You submit your name, address, application form (found on the National Website **AND IN THIS NEWSLETTER**).

The second objective is to sponsor a Fun Night which is held annually during Convention for both the National and Department. This event is held at the request or permission of the Big Dipper President and the President of the parent organization. This is a time to promote harmony, goodwill, cooperation and fellowship, not just among Big Dipper members, but among all BSMA. This event is also a way to garner more money for the educational assistance fund, which comes from the dues of Big Dipper members and any possible donations. Each event has a theme.

One of the most popular activities held on Fun Night has been a silent auction. Chapters and individuals are encouraged to collect items and donate them to be sold. The bidding goes on throughout the evening during the other activities and then about 30 minutes before the evening ends, the bidding is closed and the winners are announced.

The last objective is to provide educational assistance to a child(ren) and grandchild (ren) of a veteran or BSMA member; a veteran, active duty personnel, a BSMA member or the spouse of a veteran or active duty personnel are eligible to apply for educational financial assistance.

The educational assistance fund was dedicated to the memory of Josephine Calenda of PA 22 at the National BSMA Convention held in Lansing, Michigan in 1989. Josephine, after many years of active service in BSMA, died that year while holding the office of National Big Dipper President.

NEW MEMBERS AND RENEWALS, EVERYONE, PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND SEND IT IN SO WE HAVE A RECORD OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP.

This is the only application to use, Please check the mailing address.



BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC
NATIONAL BIG DIPPER Auxiliary
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL 2022-2023



NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

CHAPTER STATE & NO: _____ DEPARTMENT: N/A

**** If you belong to a Department please send form to Department Big Dipper Financial Secretary****

Date: _____ Check No.: _____

Send form and check for \$10.00 pay to the order of: Big Dipper Auxiliary. If paying through PayPal, please fill out this form and email it to finsec.bd@bluestarmothers.us

BSMA National Big Dipper Auxiliary

c/o Genevieve Schindler

PO Box 423

Coarsegold, Ca 93614

Finsec.bd@bluestarmothers.us

For Big Dipper Use Only: ↓

Processed: _____

Deposited: _____

NATIONAL BIG DIPPER AUXILIARY STORE GALLERY



Item #1 Big Dipper Guard Pin



Item #2 Eagle Pin

Item #3 Heart Earrings
Item #4 Heart Necklace



Item #6 Big Dipper Lapel Pin



Item #7 Proud
Veteran Pin



Item #5
Heart
Earrings &
Necklace
Bundle



Item #8
Star Earrings

Item #9
Star
Necklace



Item #10 Star Earrings & Necklace Bundle



Item #11 Patriotic Cross Pin

Item #12 Patriotic Cross Necklace



Item #14 Blue Star Hat Bag



Item #13 Flip Flop Necklace

Your order form is on the next page!

NATIONAL BIG DIPPER AUXILIARY STORE ORDER FORM

--PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY--

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ - _____ (Circle: Landline Cell)

Email _____

# Ordered	Item	Cost Each	Total Cost
	#1 Big Dipper Guard Pin	\$12	
	#2 Eagle Pin	\$7	
	#3 Heart Stud Earrings	\$12	
	#4 Heart Necklace	\$8	
	#5 Heart Stud Earrings & Necklace Bundle	\$18	
	#6 Big Dipper Lapel Pin	\$12	
	#7 Proud Veteran Pin	\$8	
	#8 Star Stud Earrings	\$12	
	#9 Star Necklace	\$8	
	#10 Star Stud Earrings & Necklace Bundle	\$18	
	#11 Patriotic Cross Pin	\$7	
	#12 Patriotic Cross Necklace	\$8	
	#13 Flip Flop Necklace	\$14	
	#14 Blue Star Hat Bag	\$10	
	Shipping for Jewelry Items (see below)		
	Shipping for Hat Bag(s) (see below)		
	TOTAL DUE		

Shipping Fees:

Shipping & Handling for Jewelry Items:

- Shipping & Handling for 4 items or less as \$4
- Shipping & Handling for 5-8 items is \$6
- Shipping & Handling for 9-12 items is \$8

Shipping & Handling for Hat Bags: \$5 each

Make Checks Payable to "National Big Dipper Auxiliary"

Mail this order form and your check to:

National Big Dipper Auxiliary
 c/o Genevieve Schindler, National Big Dipper Financial Secretary
 PO Box 423
 Coursegold, CA 93614

Chapter Donation information

Every year, chapters donate funds to the JCEA. This plaque/award goes to the chapter that donates the most money. Could this chapter be yours? It will be awarded at the 2024 National Convention in ??????????????.



Please send all donations to the Big Dipper Financial Secretary, Gen Schindler.

Be sure to specify where your chapter donation is to go, ie: JCEA fund or convention expenses. If no notation is stated, it will automatically go to the JCEA Educational Fund to be awarded at the end of the fiscal year.

*Be brave
enough
to be
yourself*

Hello Big Dipper Sisters,

When sending any monies to Big Dipper, as your 2023-2024 National Financial Secretary, I am sharing the following pointers to facilitate locating any checks:

- Please send all requests for missing checks to finsec.bd@bluestarmothers.us
- Include the following with your request:
 - The check number
 - The amount of the check
 - The approximate date the check was mailed
 - Your state/chapter number or state department
 - A working email (several emails have been returned as undeliverable)
- When issuing a check to the Big Dipper Financial Secretary, please make your checks payable to

National Big Dipper Auxiliary.

- Please mail your payments to:

National Big Dipper Auxiliary

c/o: Gen Schindler, Big Dipper Financial Secretary

P O Box 423 Coarsegold, CA 93614

By helping me with the above information, I will be able to help you as quickly as possible.

Thank you so much, Gen Schindler,,

2022-2023 National Big Dipper Auxiliary Financial Secretary

