



BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.

January 2024

A message from our National President

Happy New Year!

As you know, this is a Governing Documents year, and we are doing things a little differently. The Committee has been reviewing ALL of our documents, from the very first letter to the last period, noting “housekeeping” changes that need to be made, and creating a list of “suggestions” in order to make our organization more transparent, streamline the processes, be clearer on how the Departments and Chapters are to follow National, and be fair for all Members.

The National Executive Board will review and provide some additional thoughts during our mid-year meeting. The Committee will then be sending these documents out to the entire body. This is NOT the Convention Draft. This will be an opportunity for all of you to read the documents, see the suggestions, and provide YOUR input back to the Committee. Once the Committee receives all your suggestions/comments, they will put clean documents together that will be our official proposals for Convention. As in past years, the proposals will be sent out prior to Convention so everyone has the opportunity to read through everything and come prepared to discuss. Our intent is to make this process a little less painful for everyone. Our Convention attendees really don’t want to sit for hours every day “debating” when we can have the opportunity for discussion ahead of time, then come together to ask final questions/make final comments, make a few adjustments where needed, and vote.

The end goal is to get all of our Governing Documents cleaned up so when we review them again 3 years from now, there will be little, or no changes needed. We have been “piece changing” here and there, over the years so everything has gotten a little out of whack. A good organization creates a solid foundation with their Governing Documents and makes very few changes; only those necessary when laws are changed, or as we experienced several years back, a national pandemic or disaster.

As always, my door is open to anyone who has questions or just wants to chat. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to me or any of our National Officers as we are here to serve everyone.

Yours in Service,
Becky
Rebecca Stafford
National President



Contact Information for National Executive Board

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Membership Reminders



- *Prioritize the Mission of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.
- *Work together while respecting each other; we all contribute in our own way.
- *Officers—please use @bluestarmothers emails; it helps your members and all of us trying to support you; most importantly it displays a professional image
- *Contact me if you are having any difficulties accessing your profile, I will assist you with a reset.
- *Encourage mothers of Veterans to stay active; they make us stronger.
- *Keep the line of communication open and frequent with your members.
- *Encourage new Members to join online; it is the easiest and most efficient.
- *If you are submitting an application be sure it is complete and legible.
- *Contact your new members ASAP; provide a Welcome letter and an information packet -including a membership card.
- *Officers —Please check your emails often and answer questions promptly.
- *Keep in mind - In a Military Family, we all serve!

Respectfully Yours In Service,
Karen Stillwell, National 1stVP
1vp@bluestarmothers.us



From the Finance Committee

Chapter and Auxiliary donations are a wonderful thing! We love receiving donations!

Fees are not as good, there are always fees when we use payment services like PayPal. Recently, more and more donations intended for Chapters and Auxiliaries are coming into the National PayPal account, usually from the Donate Now button on the National website. We do really love donations, especially to our Chapters and Auxiliaries in support of our Mission, but since the number coming through the National PayPal is growing, National can no longer process those donations on to our Chapters and Auxiliaries without recouping the costs involved as we have been doing up until this point.

Beginning January 1, 2024, funds intended for Chapters/Auxiliaries received through the National website's "Donate Now" PayPal button will be subject to all transaction fees and a \$2.50 processing fee.

Any funds intended for a Chapter/Auxiliary received by National in this manner will be processed and the funds received minus the fees above will be sent on to the Chapter/Auxiliary. This includes donations and payments of any kind that come through PayPal. Currently, PayPal fees to receive donations are 2.89% plus a \$0.49 fixed fee per transaction. Thus a \$100 donation typically results in \$3.38 in fees. In the past National has sent the full \$100 on to the intended Chapter/Auxiliary and incurred the cost of the fees itself. Now the Chapter/Auxiliary would receive $\$100 - \$3.38 - \$2.50 = \94.12 in this example. The PayPal fee will vary based on the amount received and is subject to change.

Please make sure your amazing donors are donating to your Chapter/Auxiliary in whichever manner you feel is best for you and this will allow you to keep more of your donation rather than having it go to fees. The Donate Now button on the National website is for donations to our National organization only.



Donate Now

Valentine Bundle

Receive the Tote, Cell Phone Card Holder, Branch Patch and Nail File for only \$25.00 plus shipping.

Go to the National Website and click on "Online Store"

Order before February 7th to be sure you receive by Valentines Day. You can order until the end of February.

*****Reminder: Online Store will be open but orders will NOT be shipped out between March 4-25.**



Is your Chapter having a Fundraiser?

Do we have news for you!

There is a special Facebook page set up for just that reason!



This is what the page looks like.



Like and follow so you don't miss all the wonderful opportunities to support your sister chapters.

We aren't putting fundraisers in the newsletter so here is your chance to promote your fundraisers and others can "share" to their pages to drive even more income for your fundraiser!

We want to give you the best "Opportunity" possible to promote your great fundraising ideas!



From the desk of

Anne Parker, VAVS Representative

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Happy New Years from your VAVS team. Thank you for all you did for our veterans in 2023 and we are so excited to work with you all for another successful year honoring and respecting our veterans while planning fun events, donations and more... So here we go.

Planning is everything... So although this is January let's talk about February and Valentine's Day... Please talk with your chapter so you can plan and this year send in photos so we can share what is being done.

February is the month to celebrate Valentine's Day. But, what emotions does this holiday bring up to our veterans?

We have veterans of all ages from Korean War to our recent conflicts. Veterans have lost spouses, friends, family, and acquaintances. We need to respect their feelings but at the same time let them know they are remembered.

So, how do we do this? A simple card, signed Blue Star Moms – and your area.

Be sure the cards are generic and not too personal. Another way is to bring packaged snacks to the volunteer office so they can be put with the cards on the dining trays. Remember allergies to peanuts is not just for preschoolers!

If your VA allows you to serve popcorn or have fresh fruit at a decorative table in the lobby area that would be a great way to interact with veterans coming in for their appointments.

Not too soon to think about St. Patrick's Day in March. Everyone is Irish one day a year and that could be a fun holiday to plan for.

Always ask the Volunteer Office what is on their wish list too.

Your Volunteer Team wish all of our volunteers a Happy Valentine's Day and know that you are appreciated.

♥ Happy Valentines Day ♥



Dates

Happy New Year!!

1. NEB will be together February 22-26, working on important items for the organization. Please, continue to email but there may be a delay in response,
 2. The Online Store will **not** be shipping orders March 4-25th, you can still place orders but items will not be shipped until after the 25th.
 3. Many Blue Star Mothers will be traveling to DC over Memorial Day. Again, there may be a delay in responding to emails.
 4. Watch for Convention Chatters for updates and information regarding Convention!
Don't forget to follow the **"Blue Star Mothers of America Convention" Facebook Page and Blue Star Mothers of America App!
 5. National Convention July 29th through August 2nd, Oklahoma City!
- **Please have patience if you do not receive an immediate response to your emails. Things get very busy at times, we will do our best to reply as soon as we can.

Department of Minnesota

Happy New Year from the
Department of Minnesota!

The Department of MN participated
in Wreaths Across America at
Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

It was an honor to participate again
this year, especially with the
beautiful and unusually warm
weather.



BLUE STAR MOTHERS SE WI 2



JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Events

**Blue Star
Mother's Day-**
February 1st, 2024

**Fundraiser
Cooking Class-**
June 3rd at 6pm

In December Blue Star Mothers of SE WI 2 gathered for a brief meeting, followed by our annual Holiday celebration! We ate, opened gifts and shared updates about family; from moves to new additions and everything in between. We had 32 members in attendance and even had a new member join us. We look forward to new member installations in January!



Official Proclamation shown below from WI Governor recognizing February 1, 2024 as Blue Star Mother's Day.

Just before Christmas we fit in a final fundraiser for 2023; our 3rd Annual Flower Workshop! Pictured below are members, associate members and friends working on creating beautiful arrangements that were sure to be shared at holiday festivities.



PA203



PA203 Chapter has been very busy. We have held a Home Run for Heroes softball tournament, attended a Nursing Home Veterans Day ceremony, been asked to speak with two different organizations, packed and delivered goody bags for our veterans in 7 different Nursing Homes, packed 32 backpacks for our veterans school aged children, packed 180 care packages for our deployed troops, held two different Hometown Heroes Banner ceremonies, held two Military Appreciation Nights at two local football games, participated in a Be Well Warrior event hosted by our YMCA, and brought Wreaths Across America to one local cemetery. We were able to raise enough money for 482 Veterans gravesites. We are excited to see what this next year brings for us.





Southwestern Pennsylvania

Chapter PA16

- Baked: 60 Dozen cookies for Legacies Alive tailgate party for Gold Star families attending the Army Navy game
- Hosted Watch Party: Army Navy game
- Participated: Wreaths Across America at multiple locations
- Wrapped gifts: Adopt-a-Veteran Butler VA
- Volunteered: Heroes Supporting Heroes Operation Santa - HUGE winter carnival for military families





**Wreaths Across America
December 16, 2023**

Blue Star Mothers
Lynn Merrick,
Lisa Melaragno, and
Jennifer Reshetar



Our President Jennifer Reshetar participated in the service



Blue Star Mothers Lisa Melaragno, Jennifer Reshetar, and Amy Hutchinson



Blue Star Mothers, Blue Star Dads, The Veteran Service Commission, and some of our kids and grandkids joined to lay wreaths



Blue Star Mother Lisa Bowers



Blue Star Mother Christine Regnier, Deedee Gibson, her Veteran Daughter Chelsey Truesdell, (son Theo), and Jennifer Reshetar



We honored our local Veterans by participating in "Wreaths across America"



We sponsored a Christmas tree at the WNY Freedom Lounge for all military members and their families at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport.



We assembled over 300 "We Care" packages for our troops and several volunteers from local schools came to help. Local TV channels interviewed volunteers and Blue Star Mothers.



We participated in the Veterans Day Parade. It was a huge success!

Four Corners Blue Star Mothers

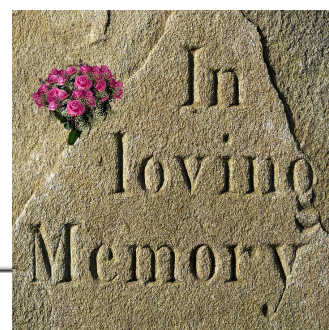
NM 1

Care packages were prepared and we volunteered at today's National Guard Christmas party 🌲

Christmas party 🌲



Wreaths Across America 2023



PINE CITY BLUE STAR MOMS CHAPTER MN16

Happy New Year!!! We have been a busy group lately.



The Braham Craft Show was November 11th. We supplied lunch for the shoppers and vendors. The proceeds we made went to the cost of our care packages.

Then it was time for shopping, lots of shopping for Care Packages for the Troops and the



November 12th was packaging day! 116 care packages were mailed out to our Service Men and Women all over the world.

Our group continues to recycle plastic into benches for supporters. The most recent bench donation was made to Kwik Trip of Rush City. December 4th we had our Christmas Party/Potluck and December 9th we supported the Second Brigade Motorcycle Club event, "Christmas at the Armory."

Wright County Area Blue Star Mothers MN Chapter 13

We decorated our tree at the annual Wright County Historical Society Festival of Trees in December. Our chapter took second place. We had a red, white and blue tree this year and we decorated it with red, white and blue ornaments and photos of our children.

We also decorated a smaller white tree in honor of our Gold Star Mothers, sisters and their families.



On January 8 our very own Blue Star/Gold Star Mother Stella turned 105 years old! A "Stellabration" was held in her honor on January 6. The local American Legion Post and Auxiliary hosted the event. There was an Elvis impersonator who performed, the same one that performed at her 100th birthday party. Elvis' birthday is also January 8.

Stella had two military sons. Her first son Steven served in the Air Force. Her second son Wayde served in the Army and was killed in Vietnam in August of 1969.



Stella with chapter members Alan Pecarina, Ray Helgeson, Pam Dickson, Helen Helgeson and Cecilia Wolford.

Blue Star Mothers MN11 St. Paul

We have been busy serving our veterans over the holidays. Some of our members participated in Wreaths Across America and Meals From the Heart (bagged foods for the veterans.) We continue to work the meat raffle, for Bayport Legion, twice a month (our major fundraiser.) Our chapter has grown by three members! We welcomed and installed one of the new members at our December meeting/ Pot Luck party.



North Metro MN7

Our chapter continues to make meals for the Fisher House once a month. In January we made what Minnesota is famous for – Tater-Tot Hotdish. Preparing meals for the residence at the Fisher House is a fun and fulfilling activity.



Several members from our Chapter attended the VA S.A.V.E. Suicide Prevention Training.

Chapter members delivered 17 holiday/gift bags to the residence at one of the MACV (Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans) apartment buildings. This is our 2nd year of doing this. We are always honored to help make the holidays of these veterans a little bit nicer.



We are looking forward to participating with other MN Chapters in the Winter Carnival Parade in a couple of weeks and preparing Valentines Cards for our local VA and several assisted living facilities in our area for our veterans. We will have our Chapter Holiday Potluck and dice game gift exchange in January also.

LOUISIANA GEAUX SEVEN CHAPTER

DECEMBER 2023

Several of our members attended the Lighting Ceremony at the LA Veterans Memorial Park on December 4th to honor Louisiana's fallen military men & women. Below they are pictured with our Governor John Bel Edwards.



On December 11th our Chapter held its annual Christmas Party, we enjoyed great food, amazing company and we had our Secret Sister reveal. Pictured below are members, associates, guests and spouses.



December 16th – Wreaths Across America – Our Mothers were very honored to attend the “2023 Wreaths Across America Ceremony”.
The weather may not have been the best, however; this is where we all wanted to be!!!



After delivering 192 stockings/ toiletry bags to one of our local Veteran homes, we wrapped up 2023 with the help of our community at Wreaths Across America. We then kicked off 2024 by grabbing our gloves and rakes for wreath cleanup day and had the humble honor of presenting 2 Gold Star flags. As our numbers continue to grow, may we continue to serve and teach.



TREASURE COAST BLUE STAR MOTHERS, FL11



For FL11 Treasure Coast Blue Star Mothers December was a time of giving. We were blessed to be able to hand deliver packages to the troops at the Coast Guard Station, the Space Coast Station and the sailors at Naval station AUTEC in addition to sending to the deployed. We were also honored to be involved with Wreaths Across America. Despite the pending storm we were able to place wreaths at two local cemeteries. We were proud to provide a Christmas dinner for the Blind veterans wing at the West Palm VA.



County Blue Star Mothers-CT-3

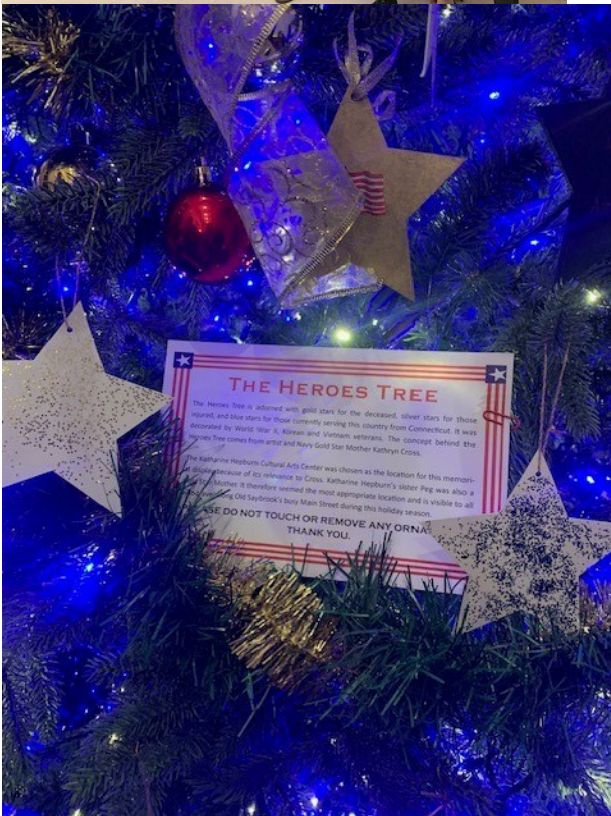


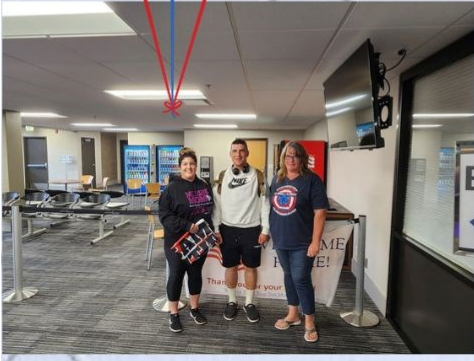
DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS

We held our holiday dinner at Mission Barbecue. We collected food for the local pantry.

We had a holiday party for the Rocky Hill Veteran's Home.

We attended the Gold Star Mother's tree light and tea. We had a card signing tent.





Sent off a couple recruits

Western Slope BSM C08

2 Airports that we welcomed home at and one we surprised at home



DAR/Kathy Cutchin with BSM/Cheyl TI Mom and





LAKE ARROWHEAD,
CALIFORNIA CHAPTER 25

VOLUME 3: WINTER 2023 PG 1



DECEMBER WAS A BUSY MONTH FOR OUR RIM BLUE STAR MOMS! ON SATURDAY THE 2ND, MOMS MARCHED IN THE ANNUAL BLUE JAY CHRISTMAS PARADE.



AT OUR MONTHLY MEETING ON THE 4TH, WE PACKED 17 CARE PACKAGES FILLED WITH GOODIES AND CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR OUR DEPLOYED AND ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY KIDS. ON SATURDAY THE 16TH, WE PARTICIPATED IN THE WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY AT RIVERSIDE NATIONAL CEMETERY.



CENTRAL VALLEY BLUE STAR MOMS

January 2024

This month CA10 will be focusing on Sisterhood and building relationships! Our January meeting will include putting packages together for the troops to provide a wonderful Valentine's Day surprise!



IMPORTANT 2024 EVENTS

- May 18th: Gold Star Mom's Tea
- June 20th: Tahoe Joes Fundraiser Dinner
- Sept 12th: 4th Annual CVBSM Golf Tournament
- Dec 1st: CVBSM Holiday Package Drive event

FOR MORE INFORMATION

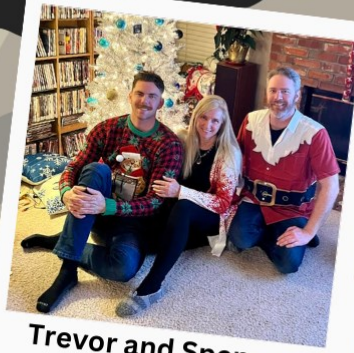
centralvalleybluestarmoms@gmail.com
[CA 10 Website](#)



Sacramento Blue Star Moms CA7



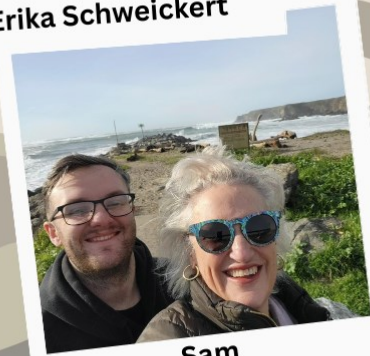
**Dustin
Erika Schweickert**



**Trevor and Spencer
Robin Burns-Marshall**



**Emiliano & Taika
Monique Castellano**



**Sam
Buffie Lynch**



**Branden
Corrie Little**

Holiday Happenings
1st time holding son
Wedding
Engagement
Doing What They Love
Family Visits
Grandbabies
Brief Visits
Delayed Travels
Good-byes



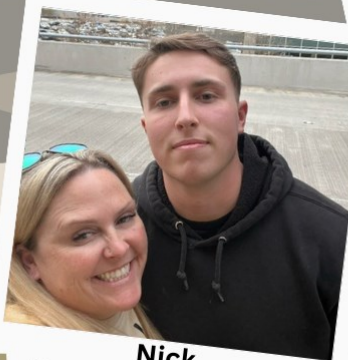
**Jarod
Juli Traylor**



**Kayley
Robin Burns-Marshall**



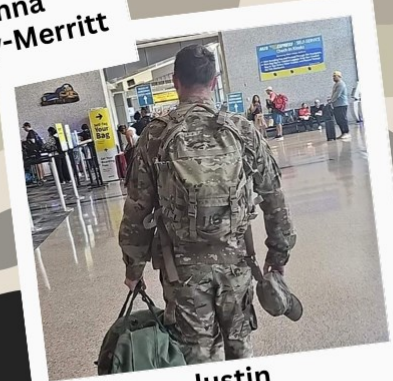
**Amelia & Molly
Laurie Bettencourt**



**Nick
Yvonne Allphin-Bell**



**William & Hanna
Debbie Mahoney-Merritt**



**Justin
Karen Ferreira**

Boots In The House!



December 2023 and January 2024
Happy New Year!

The Blue Star Moms of the Southwest Valley participated in Cookies 4 Troops. We supplied 4,100 home baked cookies, combined with Salt River Project Company for a grand total of 6,300 cookies. 75 boxes were packed up for that event. We partnered with PC Links and held a Luke Air Force cookie drive for everyone stationed there at the base. For Wreaths Across America our chapter sponsored 200 wreaths and we had volunteers lay the wreaths. 5 moms marched in Litchfield Park Christmas parade showcasing the Operation Playhouse. At the Patriot All American Golf Tournament we assisted with the packing party. All of the collegiate golfers were very excited and eager to participate. Our hand warmers were a huge hit! We met Danielle Green, a Purple Heart recipient and the winner of the 2015 Pat Tillman Award given at the ESPYS. She was a very humble and compassionate woman. We helped supply and pack 200 boxes, and volunteered at the various booths. This event serves the wounded, our fallen, our veteran's community and we were pleased to participate. We held a joint Christmas Party and meeting, and celebrated sisterhood together over the holidays. Other highlights: Flag Raising for Space Force, made donation toward mom and baby program for VAVS and our Memorial Garden was weeded and cared for.




Happy 2024!

A NEW YEAR



A fresh start
and infinite
possibilities.

© Positivity Toolbox



"This New Year, let's
make a promise to
cherish every moment
we have together.
Wishing us all the best
in the year ahead!"

gentwenty