



**BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC**



**National Executive Board**

**President: Karen Stillwell – OH**  
[president@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:president@bluestarmothers.us)

**1<sup>st</sup> VP: Sonya Stowers – IL**  
[1vp@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:1vp@bluestarmothers.us)

**2<sup>nd</sup> VP: Beth Bruening – MO**  
[2vp@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:2vp@bluestarmothers.us)

**3<sup>rd</sup> VP Amy Jo Hutchinson – OH**  
[3vp@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:3vp@bluestarmothers.us)

**4<sup>th</sup> VP: Karla Keller – MN**  
[4vp@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:4vp@bluestarmothers.us)

**Recording Secretary: Leslie Majocka– PA**  
[recsec@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:recsec@bluestarmothers.us)

**Financial Secretary: Carrie Beck – FL**  
[finsec@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:finsec@bluestarmothers.us)

**Treasurer: Jacqueline Ransom – MI**  
[treas@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:treas@bluestarmothers.us)

**PNP Rebecca Stafford**

[pnpbecky@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:pnpbecky@bluestarmothers.us)

**PNP Anne Parker Pro-Tem**

[pnpanne@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:pnpanne@bluestarmothers.us)

**PNP Carla Brodacki**

[pnpcarla@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:pnpcarla@bluestarmothers.us)

**Chaplain Rebecca Stafford**

[chaplain@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:chaplain@bluestarmothers.us)

**Parliamentarian Patti Elliott**

[parliamentarian@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:parliamentarian@bluestarmothers.us)

**Dept. Of MI Linda Powers**

[president.deptmi@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:president.deptmi@bluestarmothers.us)

**Dept. of OH President Barb Cook**

[president.deptoh@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:president.deptoh@bluestarmothers.us)

**Dept. of MN President Sharon Skaro**

[president.deptmn@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:president.deptmn@bluestarmothers.us)



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## KAREN STILLWELL NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Hello Everyone,

Happy April – and hello, spring! As the days grow warmer and flowers begin to bloom, we are all energized by the same renewal in our organization.

The Ohio N/S Conference was a wonderful event this past weekend – great turnout, thoughtful planning, great food and clear action steps that will deepen support for our mission. We look forward to meeting in Michigan, this weekend and Minnesota the following weekend. I am sure, their meetings will be productive as well, strengthening our mission and bonding us together as one. Thank you to everyone who gave of their time and talent to make these Department meetings successful.

The National Convention in July is fast approaching and our anticipation and excitement continues to rise. This is our moment to amplify our voice, finalize National priorities, grow our organization, learn together and build the networks that will carry us forward. If you haven't registered, booked your rooms, arranged travel, or confirmed participation, please do so now – deadlines are near and early planning makes everything run smoother. When you return, plan to bring the knowledge and resources you gain at the Convention back to your Chapter so we can all benefit from fresh ideas and best practices.

How can you help!

\*Click on the red tab link, marked Convention forms on the website, and navigate through the forms you may need.

\*Complete your reservation and book your room

\*Bring one actionable idea from your Chapter to share during the Convention training.



## NATIONAL PRESIDENT CONTINUED

\*Volunteer or contribute to the Convention, either through a committee, Give Butter donation, the sponsorship form, the President's Project, and/or items for the Convention bag.

\*Chapters - send in the sweatpants or gift cards for the VAVS Project.

\*Chapter Presidents - don't forget to submit the delegate form.

\*Chapters - please consider sending an item to Convention for the Silent Auction.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Ohio this summer!

See the April press releases below and pictures from the Department of Ohio N/S Conference, honoring Military Kids with our Purple Up Shirts!

Wishing you sunshine, blooming gardens, and renewed energy this spring. Thank you for your dedication to our mission and our organization – together we'll make the 2026 Convention, a powerful step forward for our organization and those we support.

Respectfully Yours in Service,  
Karen

Karen Stillwell

National President 2025-2026

Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

614-893-1180

president@bluestarmothers.us





# OHIO NORTH SOUTH CONFERENCE





## 2026 Blue Star Mothers of America President's Project 6<sup>th</sup> Miles For Our Veterans – If These Boots Could Talk Virtual 5K Call for Department/Chapter Sponsors!

As mentioned in National President Karen's message, this year's event will be in support of **3<sup>rd</sup> and Goal**

It is time for you to send in your Chapter/Department sponsorships for this year's President's Project supporting 3<sup>rd</sup> & Goal! Each sponsoring Chapter/Department will have their CSN listed on the back of this year's neon green shirt! **Sponsorships are being collected now through May 15.**

The minimum sponsorship is \$50.

Sponsorship Levels – If you sponsor at these higher levels you will be recognized at Convention and on social media in addition to be on the shirt:

**Red Level Sponsors – \$500 - \$999**

**White Level Sponsors - \$1000 - \$1499**

**Blue Level Sponsors - \$1500 or more**

### **To submit your sponsorship:**

Go to [www.bluestarmothers.us](http://www.bluestarmothers.us)

For Chapter/Department sponsorships, please log in using your Chapter/Department login credentials.

Click on the Convention Information Quick Link in the list of red boxes.

Click on President's Project – Sponsorship/Donation

From there you will fill out the form, indicate the amount of your sponsorship, and then choose either Pay Now (if you are a financial officer paying for your Chapter/Department) or Invoice Me (if you are anyone else, you will get an invoice that you can send to your financial officers for them to pay). We will get an email from the system that you have submitted the form and paid and will add you to the list for the back of the shirt!

Donations can be made in the same way if you are a member, just login using your personal login credentials and follow the same steps.

**New this year!** Donations from those outside of BSMA are being accepted on our website as well! You will see two links on the homepage of our website – look for the words President's Project to donate and only use those links for this project. (Please do not use the Donate Now button in red.) Share this with your family and friends.

Please contact Sonya at [pcpsonya.il6@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:pcpsonya.il6@bluestarmothers.us) or Beth at [president.mo4@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:president.mo4@bluestarmothers.us) with any questions.

Thanks from your National President Karen Stillwell and your Sisters in IL6 – IL1 – MO4 – MO5 – LA7 – LA1





# SONYA STOWERS NATIONAL 1<sup>ST</sup> VP



## Membership Reminders

Happy Spring! I hope you are getting some nice weather days and getting to enjoy some outdoors time!

**New Memberships** – We are getting many new members in Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. – our organization continues to grow just like the flowers and trees outside. As you are meeting people who want to join, please encourage them to join online at [www.bluestarmothers.org](http://www.bluestarmothers.org). This is the preferred process – it is the quickest way to join and it provides for the fewest errors. If you do accept a paper application, please be sure it is legible and complete before uploading it with a Chapter Dues Submission or mailing it in. Remember that if you cannot read it, neither can I. If any information is illegible/missing it will take longer to process as we will need to collect that information before we can proceed.

**Profile Access** – Each of you has access to your profile on [www.bluestarmothers.org](http://www.bluestarmothers.org). You can login and do many things! You can see information about Convention, the President's Project, the Online Store and Spreadshirt, Big Dipper, Compliance, Financials, Governing Documents, and so much more. You can also update your personal information if you have had any changes to your contact information. Please email me if you have any issues accessing your profile, we can do a reset for you.

**Renewal Season** – Remember that renewal season will be coming up starting June 1<sup>st</sup>. Watch this space next month for more information! If you have any questions or need any help, please reach out. We are here to support you and your Chapter!

Yours in Service,  
Sonya Stowers, National 1VP  
[1VP@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:1VP@bluestarmothers.us)  
309-370-0712





# NATIONAL PRESS RELEASE



## Blue Star Mothers of America Announces 2026 President's Project Supporting 3rd & Goal Foundation

*6th Annual Miles for Our Veterans Virtual 5K unites communities nationwide to support veterans and military families through teamwork and service*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, March 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Blue Star Mothers of](#)

[America, Inc.](#) (BSMA), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting military service members, veterans, and their families, proudly announces its 2026 National President's Project led by National President Karen Stillwell. This year's initiative will benefit the [3rd & Goal Foundation](#), founded by former NFL quarterback Brady Quinn.



This project is about teamwork, determination, and working together to make a meaningful impact in the lives of veterans and military families"

*Karen Stillwell, National President, Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.*

The partnership reflects a shared commitment to teamwork, resilience, and service, values that mirror both military life and the spirit of the game.

"This project is all about teamwork, determination, and pushing forward together just like in football," said Karen Stillwell, National President of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. "By working side by side, we can make a meaningful impact in the lives of veterans and military families."

As part of the President's Project, BSMA will host the 6th Annual "Miles For Our Veterans If These Boots Could Talk" Virtual 5K, bringing together members, supporters, and communities across the country.

Event Dates: July 24 to July 26, 2026, the weekend prior to the National Convention. Participants are encouraged to wear neon green event shirts and organize local walks in their communities while inviting family and friends to join.

The 3rd & Goal Foundation is dedicated to improving the lives of veterans through three key pillars. Operation Home focuses on making homes handicap accessible for wounded veterans.



## NATIONAL PRESS RELEASE CONTINUED

Operation Education provides scholarships and educational opportunities. Operation Joy uplifts veterans through meaningful gifts, experiences, and community support.

All funds raised through the President's Project will be presented to the foundation at the 2026 BSMA National Convention.

BSMA Departments and Chapters nationwide are invited to participate as sponsors. Sponsorship commitments are due by May 15, 2026.

Sponsorship levels include Red Level from \$500 to \$999, White Level from \$1,000 to \$1,499, and Blue Level at \$1,500 or more. All sponsors contributing \$50 or more will have their Chapter or Department Service Number featured on the back of the official event t shirt.

To maximize impact, BSMA will offer multiple fundraising opportunities. Official event t shirts will be available through Gold Star family owned Mandy's Tees and More, with proceeds supporting the project. President's Project patches and year tabs will also be available for purchase, with all proceeds benefiting the 3rd & Goal Foundation. Community walks will take place nationwide to encourage local engagement and awareness.

All sponsorship payments and donations will be processed through BSMA and held in a restricted account to ensure transparency and streamlined contributions.

Departments and Chapters are encouraged to present sponsorship opportunities at upcoming meetings, vote to participate if not already included in their budgets, rally members and supporters to participate in the Virtual 5K, and promote shirt purchases and community involvement.

Together, through unity and purpose, Blue Star Mothers of America continues its mission of supporting those who have served and sacrificed.

About Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. is a Congressionally Chartered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1942. The organization supports active duty service members, veterans, National Guard, Reserve, and Gold Star families through local chapters across the United States. Through volunteer service, community outreach, and advocacy, Blue Star Mothers strengthens

military families nationwide.

### Additional Information

For more details about the President's Project or sponsorship opportunities, please contact [PCPSONYA.IL6@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:PCPSONYA.IL6@bluestarmothers.us) or [PRESIDENT.MO4@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:PRESIDENT.MO4@bluestarmothers.us)

Amy Zienta

Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

[public.relations@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:public.relations@bluestarmothers.us)

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Official logo of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., a congressionally chartered nonprofit supporting military families, veterans, and Gold Star families nationwide.



# NATIONAL PRESS RELEASE



## Blue Star Mothers of America Honors Month of the Military Child Nationwide

*National campaign highlights Purple Up Day and Purple Star Schools supporting military children and families across the country.*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, April 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.](#) (BSMA), a national nonprofit organization

“

Military children serve every day through resilience, adaptability, and strength. This month, we honor their sacrifices and the vital role they play in military families.”

*Karen Stillwell, National President, Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.*

dedicated to supporting military service members, veterans, and their families, proudly recognizes April as the Month of the Military Child, honoring the strength, resilience, and sacrifices of military children across the country.

Military children face unique challenges including frequent relocations, school transitions, and long separations from deployed parents. Despite these obstacles, they demonstrate remarkable adaptability, courage, and strength beyond their years.

“Military children serve in their own way every day through resilience, adaptability, and strength,” said Karen Stillwell, National President of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. “During the Month of the Military Child, we honor their sacrifices and recognize the important role they play in supporting military families.”

A key highlight of the month is Purple Up Day, observed nationwide as a way to show support for military children. Purple represents all branches of the military combined, symbolizing unity and the shared experiences of military-connected youth. Communities, schools, and organizations are encouraged to wear purple to show their appreciation and support.

In addition, Blue Star Mothers of America recognizes the importance of Purple Star Schools, a designation awarded to schools that demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting military-connected students and their families. These schools provide resources, transition support, and a welcoming environment for students facing the challenges of military life.

Throughout April, BSMA chapters across the nation will participate in community outreach, school partnerships, and awareness initiatives to celebrate and support military children.



## NATIONAL PRESS RELEASE CONTINUED

Blue Star Mothers of America encourages individuals, schools, and communities to get involved by wearing purple, supporting military families, and recognizing the sacrifices made by military children.

Together, we can ensure that military children feel seen, supported, and appreciated for the strength they show every day.

About Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

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Amy Zienta

Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

[public.relations@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:public.relations@bluestarmothers.us)

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So many parts of our country have had bad winter weather, and it was hard to get out and around. But now Spring has Sprung! With roads cleared and you are ready to get out again we have the perfect opportunity for you!

The local VA facilities are anxious for our Blue Star Mothers to be volunteers. There are so many opportunities for you and your chapter there. Use your talents, your compassion and ability to sit and listen to a veteran's story or your willingness to help a veteran and his family navigate the halls to an appointment. There is always something to do for our veterans using your talents.

We have openings for Regular Scheduled, Occasional and Chapter involvement.

The application for the VAVS is on our national website – [www.bluestarmothers.org](http://www.bluestarmothers.org) and under the VAVS tab. Apply today and speak with our National VAVS Rep, Anne Parker.

There is also a training booklet link for more information on what your volunteerism involves.

Remember we also have our CCC – Compassionate Care Corp – who makes phone calls to veterans and if you don't have a VA facility close to you, we have our Wish List Program for donations. Ask how all of this works with just an email to [vavs@bluestarmother.us](mailto:vavs@bluestarmother.us)

Come JOIN the VAVS today, we look forward to you being part of an important part of the mission – Our Veteran Care.





## A Message from Julie Straw National Finance Committee Chair



Can a Chapter Donate to Support Convention?  
April 2026

The short answer: Yes. ☺ In the nonprofit landscape, subordinate chapters can and frequently do contribute to their nonprofit parent organization (in our case, National BSMA). This can be done by various means: financial support, in-kind goods or services, or fundraising assistance, to name a few. But you may wonder why, or how, this aligns with our overall mission. Please allow me to provide a little backdrop so that you will understand the reasoning:

### **National BSMA responsibilities as our parent organization:**

- ★ **Control and Autonomy:** In an IRS group exemption setting, the parent organization must exercise general supervision or control over its subordinates. BSMA accomplishes this through governing documents, financial policies, and discipline procedures.
- ★ **Written Agreements:** The annual affiliation agreement details the legal and financial relationship between the department/chapter/auxiliary and the parent (national), in addition to providing written authorization to be included in the group exemption letter to the IRS..
- ★ **Purpose:** The parent is to direct the organization in support of its mission, in addition to making sure that all aspects of governing activities are carried out in compliance with the national charter\* and IRS regulations.

\*The BSMA Charter Section 6 defines what shall be the Governing Body of our corporation:  
“Sec. 6. The supreme governing authority of the corporation shall be the **national convention** (*emphasis, mine*) thereof, composed of such officers and elected representatives from the several States and other local subdivisions of the corporate organization as shall be provided by the constitution and bylaws: Provided, that the form of the government of the corporation shall always be representative of the membership at large and shall not permit the concentration of control thereof in the hands of a limited number of members or in a self-perpetuating group not so representative. The meetings of the national convention may be held in any State or Territory or in the District of Columbia.”

The mission of BSMA is “to perpetuate the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., and the memory of all the men and women who have served our country as members of the Armed Forces; the further object of this organization shall be patriotic, educational, social and for service . . .”

Since National is tasked with making sure that the corporation complies with its charter and its mission; and the charter requires a national convention; and the convention provides for elections as well as patriotic, educational, social and service (e.g. VAVS) activities; I believe you can follow the reasoning that subordinate chapters have a right, if not an obligation, to support the national convention by whatever means possible. This could be in representation by sending delegates, in fundraising, in donations, in contribution of ideas and feedback on governing matters, or merely in prayer for a successful convention.

I hope this aids in the understanding of why our annual convention, and support of it, is of utmost importance. Please let me know if you have questions.

Julie Straw, National Finance Chairwoman  
[FinanceChair@BlueStarMothers.us](mailto:FinanceChair@BlueStarMothers.us)



## Types of Insurance for Nonprofits

April 2026

### Navigating the Insurance Landscape for the Right Protection

There are several types of specialized insurance policies to protect your chapter against liability, property damage, and management-related lawsuits. A brief description is below.

#### Essential Types of Nonprofit Insurance:

- ★ **General Liability:** Covers third-party bodily injury, property damage, and personal injury (e.g., injuries at a fundraiser or damage caused by a volunteer).
- ★ **Directors & Officers (D&O):** Protects board members, staff, and volunteers against claims of mismanagement, discrimination, or wrongful termination.
- ★ **Commercial Property:** Protects physical assets like buildings, equipment, inventory, and office supplies from theft or damage.

#### Specific Coverage Types:

- ★ **Cyber Liability:** Protects against data breaches and theft of donor or volunteer information.
- ★ **Volunteer Liability/Accident:** Covers medical expenses for volunteers injured while working.
- ★ **Special Event:** Covers liability and cancellation risks for specific events, such as galas or walkathons.
- ★ **Product Liability:** Covers claims from injuries caused by products the nonprofit sells or distributes (e.g., food at a fundraiser).

*I have excluded the more common insurance types you may be familiar with: Business Owner's, Professional Liability (Errors & Omissions - E&O), Employment Practices, and Workers' Compensation, as they are more applicable to a nonprofit that has employees and/or provides professional services. These types of coverages are not applicable to most, if not all, of our chapters.*

Your chapter can purchase tailored bundles. Costs vary based on size, services, and locations. **Do not be intimidated** - make a check list of questions. Shop around - check insurers like the Nonprofits Insurance Alliance ( <https://insurancefornonprofits.org/nonprofits> ) or your local insurance brokers. By all means, do not be paranoid and over insure for activities that do not apply to your situation. Build a relationship with your insurance agent so that you can call them when you need to add coverage for a specific event or to review your coverages year to year. Be sure to include an amount for insurance expense in your annual budget. If this is a new undertaking for your chapter, have your members approve the expense the first year and then include it in your next year's budget.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Julie Straw,  
National Finance Chairwoman  
[FinanceChair@BlueStarMothers.us](mailto:FinanceChair@BlueStarMothers.us)





# NEW!!



RED FRIDAY



BUY NOW



 [www.https://blue-star-mothers-of-america.myspreadshop.com/](https://blue-star-mothers-of-america.myspreadshop.com/)



# YEARBOOK NEWS

## HELP RAISE MONEY FOR THE VA HOSPITAL FUND BY PLACING AN AD IN THE 2025-2026 YEARBOOK

Does Your Chapter or Department have something to share in the Yearbook? Design Your own ad and send it to [Yearbook@bluestarmothers.us](mailto:Yearbook@bluestarmothers.us)

Include your Email Address  
We will send an Invoice for Payment.  
Invoice MUST be PAID in 72 Hours.

**Ad Space is open to Members, Associates and Businesses**

**SPACE IS LIMITED !  
AVAILABILITY IS  
FIRST COME FIRST  
SERVED  
DEADLINE IS JUNE 8**



FULL PAGE \$100.00	1/4 PAGE \$25.00
	1/2 PAGE \$50.00

ANY QUESTION PLEASE CONTACT 2VP BETH AT 636-875-4914  
OR EMAIL: [YEARBOOK@BLUESTARMOTHERS.US](mailto:YEARBOOK@BLUESTARMOTHERS.US)

**100% OF MONEY COLLECTED GOES  
TO THE UNSUPPORTED VA HOSPITALS**

# Announcing the BSMA Online Store Spring Fling Bundle!

Get ready for Spring Our Spring Bundle  
New Blue Jacket, Umbrella  
And a 3-inch patch of your choice

**This is a \$75.00 value, all for \$65.00, offer ends May 15**

BSMA [Online Store](#)



Lightweight jacket with drawstring hood, lightweight lining, elastic cuffs and waist, size XSmall - 6Xlarge



Solid blue with a BSMA patch  
or  
Red, white and blue panels with a BSMA patch

Choose 1 of these patches





# BLUE DAISIES

## CHRIS BEACH CA22



**CHRIS BEACH CA22**  
Chris was dedicated to serving our troops, veterans, fallen heroes, and wounded warriors. She was a true patriot and a cherished friend to all who knew her.  
**FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS YOUR SOARING EAGLE BLUE STAR SISTERS**



## CA14 Linda Patterson

CA14 Linda Patterson passed away in the morning of April 6, 2026. Linda, has been our member, of CA14, since 2006. She is a Double Blue Star Proud Navy Mom. Plus a Air force daughter and Marine Corps sister. She has a nickname "Angel Lady", because she has made tons of those paperclip angels. Which she has passed out over 50,000 angels to our Servicemen and Women. This was her love.

We will miss her laughter, caring, and support. Heaven has really gained an Angel.







# Massachusetts Chapter 1



Vietnam Veterans Luncheon



Vietnam War Veterans Day

Members of the MA CH 1 participated in the Vietnam War Veterans Day at the Leominster Veterans Center. Holy Cross provided the Color Guard. Fr. Shaughnessy, a Navy Commander, gave the Invocation. VVA Chapter 116, President, Daryll Hopkins presented the program with guest speakers Gold Star Wife, Claire Freda, and Dan Joseph of the VVA. They gave the local history of the VVA Chapter and the Vietnam Monument. The Old Sturbridge Village Choir provided song. Sharon Bouchard, read the names and bios of the Leominster residents killed in action while Alisha Morelli-Mulvaney, helped to place a rose on each person's banner. Seen in the photo is David Hill's memorial banner. David was the son of our beloved Helen Hill, Gold Star Mother: We were honored to participate and remember our Vietnam Veterans and those who gave the ultimate sacrifice!



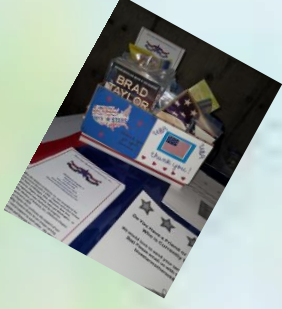
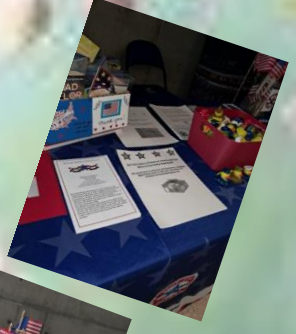


OK 1



OK1 packed and shipped 100+ grab n go breakfast, lunch and snack bags for the Tripler Fisher House in Hawaii.

OK1 enjoyed a night with hockey fans at the Tulsa Oilers Military Appreciation Night.



OK1 FinSec Marianna Moore and our most faithful member of all Mary Barnett, 92 years old and shows up every Saturday to open and close our office. OK1 loves these ladies!





FL 10

Mario County Honor Guard presenting colors at the Ocala Blue Star annual fundraising lunch where we had homemade cookies silent auction items and 50-50 as well as honoring all the Vietnam veterans present.





# PA 16



## Southwestern Pennsylvania

Chapter PA16

- Volunteered: Robin's Home event benefiting women Veterans and their children
- Presented: Red, white and blue graduation honor cords at 15 high school assemblies
- Participated: 2 Memorial Day parades
- Volunteered: Placed flags at multiple cemeteries in advance of Memorial Day
- Hosted: Guest speaker - Robert Morris University Center for Veterans and Military Families
- Meeting fun: Potato Bar dinner followed by Bead Bar craft project
- Volunteered and donated raffle baskets: Heroes Supporting Heroes Fundraiser
- Volunteered: Day of Hope and Smiles Shepherd's Heart Veteran's Home
- Hosted: Night at the Races event
- Volunteered: Honor Flight Pittsburgh
- Hosted: Guest speaker - Researching Veterans in your Family - Reuschel Research
- Volunteered and donated raffle baskets: Annual Armed Forces Golf Outing



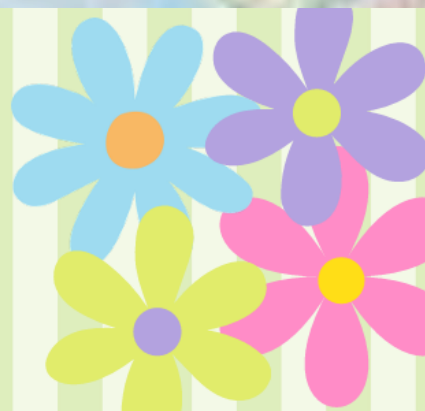


CO 8

# Western Slope Blue Star Mothers

# CO8

## US Army Jazz Ambassadors Field Band



We had the privilege of attending the concert and meeting the Servicemembers of the US Army Jazz Ambassadors. We also gave each of them thank you notes from our community and Enstrom Chocolates!

Honoring our

Enstroms Chocolate

## Vietnam Veterans



Our community honored our Vietnam Veterans with a ceremony on Vietnam Veterans Day. Our own Blue Star Mother, Sherry Verdick, sang the National Anthem



## Donation



Enstrom Chocolates donated boxed chocolates for our care packages that will be going to our local Active Duty Servicemembers


## New Recruit Send Offs



# TX 20

## YELLOW ROSE - TX20

April 2026

 Blue Star Mothers of America Yellow Rose TX20  
 BSMA Yellow Rose TX20



TX20 partnered with the University of North Texas' College of Engineering and Denton's VFW for Warm Feet, Warm Hearts sock drive. Between the VFW and TX20, we provided 1,000 pairs of socks that are going to be delivered to the Houston VA.



### Future Plans...

Our TX20 Board is dedicated! In March they gathered for a Board Meeting with planning for the next couple of months on the agenda. The best part of the meeting was each member sharing their "hot topic" item with the group. TX20 is ready to keep working the mission.



## Yellow Roses Making an Impact!

Presentation of a Quilt of Valor from the Denton Chapter to a Service Member home on leave that attended our meeting.



### OK20 visits TX20

We loved this surprise visit from our sisters in OK. We met 2 years ago at National Convention.



In January, TX20 had the joy of partnering with the Elks Lodge in Grapevine to pack & ship care packages. These awesome Patriots quickly stepped back up and asked, "What project can we work on next?" So, we quickly found a project that they could do at one of their gatherings. Introducing our no-sew patriotic pillows! These will be delivered to the Dallas VA in the coming weeks.



NY 8



## We are Here to Support Each Other!

The desire to be present and supportive for your child never fades, especially when your child is an adult serving in the military. As a parent, you naturally worry about their safety and well-being, feeling a mix of pride and concern. However, you may also experience feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and sometimes even helplessness, but it is essential to remember that your own emotional health matters too. By acknowledging and taking care of your own needs, you become an even stronger pillar of support for your service member.

Part of the Blue Star Mothers' mission is to provide support to each other. One of the most comforting and encouraging steps that you can take is to connect with other parents who are experiencing similar challenges. The Rochester Blue Star Mothers has a monthly support group called Strong Stars that meets the first Monday of the month from 7-8pm at various Panera locations in the greater Rochester area on a rotating basis. Come join us on a Monday night to have coffee and share in the support and pride of being a military family. Watching your child serve in the military can bring a range of emotions but we are here to support and encourage. If you find it more comforting to talk to another military mom one-on-one, we have several moms who have had their child deployed and have experienced the anxiety and worry surrounding their child's safety. Please feel free to reach out to Sue Louis at [seabeemom2003@gmail.com](mailto:seabeemom2003@gmail.com). She has experienced seven deployments combined between her two sons, one in the Navy and one on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Caring for your emotional well-being is not a sign of weakness - it is a crucial part of being the best support you can be for your child. Reaching out to other military parents and becoming part of a support group can provide comfort, understanding, and new coping skills. Together, we can navigate the unique journey of military parenthood, because you are not alone.



**March ended with a huge donation of filled Easter Eggs for our local Veterans Home. Claremore Veterans Home holds an annual community, Easter Egg Hunt. This year they had over 15000 eggs donated and we were proud to have helped collect around 500! Thanks to Miller Swim School and BA CrossFit.**

**The Egg Hunt was April 4th, and we heard it was so much fun!**

**We also shipped out care packages to 3 submarine crews. Thanks to BA CrossFit, OkARNG ACo based in BA & volunteers! Thanks to all who donate to our chapter to keep our items stocked and shipping paid for!**





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LAKE ARROWHEAD, CALIFORNIA  
CHAPTER 25

**On Tuesday, March 10, our Moms met at Rim High School to install 2 more photos in the military display case. Margie Whitten-Shingleton, Space Force and Caleb Livingston, Coast Guard, were added to our case.**



FROM LEFT: ANN BARANY, NADIA PHILLIPS, MARISELA GRANADOS, BRENDA SHINGLETON, LIN KOTICHAS, GABY WHITTEN



BRENDA R, ALMA, BRENDA S

**On Wednesday, April 8, our Moms had 3 Hometown Hero Banners installed in our Mountain Community. The banner installers, Ace Tree Enterprise Co out of Sacramento, volunteered their time and energy to install the following banners: 1) Caleb Livingston, Coast Guard, in Running Springs, 2) Andrew Newman, Navy, in Crestline, 3) Jeffrey Roberson, Gold Star Army, in Crestline, replaced due to damage.**



AMBER AND DAMIAN LIVINGSTON



NADIA, DENISE, SHARON, ALMA, AND BRENDA



AMBER AND DAMIAN LIVINGSTON



# TX 22



## April 2026 Newsletter



Big news! **Blue Star Mothers of America, TX 22** is officially chartered as of **Feb 3, 2026!** We are proud to serve the Capital of Texas area (Travis and Williamson counties).

In February we joined the Central Texas Friends of the Brave at their Valentines event and hosted a silent auction. We were able to raise funds to continue our mission; serving our active duty military, our veterans and Gold Star Families in the Capital of Texas!!



At our March Chapter meeting, Jim Levine from Survivor Outreach Services provided an OPSEC presentation to our members.

Easter weekend we visited Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery and surrounding area cemeteries. We had the honor of placing Easter lilies at the gravesites of veterans from Gold Star Families, remembering their sacrifice and courage.



Honor Flight WPB

FL 11



Honor Flight Melbourne



Honor Flight West Palm





# PA 201



## BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY PA201



*Spring into Service  
with PA 201*

Spring has officially sprung, and with it comes renewed energy and excitement for the Lehigh Valley Blue Star Mothers!

On Saturday, March 21st, PA Chapter 201 proudly participated in the Allentown St. Patrick's Day Parade Community Cultural Day. Our table was a hub of creativity and connection as our members helped children of all ages craft festive dancing shamrock people. With nearly one thousand attendees at the event, it was a wonderful opportunity to share our mission, engage with the community, and connect with several potential new Blue Star Mother members.

As we look ahead to the season, our chapter is eagerly preparing for a full calendar of spring events. We are especially excited for our annual bingo, participation in the beloved "Wheels on the Canal" event, and the opportunity to give back by hosting a picnic-style dinner for some local veterans.

With warmer days ahead, we look forward to continuing our mission of supporting our military, veterans, and their families—while growing our Blue Star Mothers community along the way.





# MN 16

Spring has arrived and our chapter is springing into action. Our annual craft show luncheon and bake sale fundraiser coincided with beautiful weather this year. Despite the sunshine tempting people outdoors, we served nearly 100 lunches and completely sold out of bake sale items.



After a brief rest, we launched into our April meeting, where we had the honor of welcoming Sharon Skaro, President of the Department of Minnesota. This was a wonderful opportunity to hear her message and for her to meet our members and associates. During the meeting, our chapter donated \$800 to the Minnesota state fundraising project, supporting the Fisher House Foundation—a “home away from home” for service members, veterans, and their families.



Fun was had by all at our bi-annual Dinner and Comedy Show fundraiser - with approximately 200 in attendance! Dr. Naomi Koenig, founder of Selah Wellness Clinic, served as emcee for the evening, and comedian Tim Harmston kept everyone entertained. The event also featured a variety of silent auction items that drew generous bids throughout the night.



# CA 7



## April 2026 Newsletter

Highlighting CA7

March 2026 Activities



### Sacramento Stand Down

Heidi Bacon, Dawn Schoenstein, Maureen Arney, Vivienne Yamamoto (not pictured)



### New Members

Lisa Gist, Cathy Mitchell, Martha Navez-Espinoza, Amour Perez



### Cattlemens Fundraiser

\$1600 Raised Just by Having a Good Time



### Loading the UHaul for Packing Event

Lots of Help From VFW, SBSM, SBSD, Associates and the Young Men Service League



### 330 Care Packages

Over 120 Community Volunteers packed 330 Boxes



### National Anthem

Vitalia Gonzalo Sang Like an Angel



### Care Packages

Love These Photos



### Dinner for VFW Post 1487

Too Much Fun Was Had Cooking for local VFW Post



### Gold Star Memorial Services

CWO3 Robert Marzan



LCpl Cody Palmer



President Kathy pinning a new member



We had a donation of over 150 cases of Girl Scout Cookies for the VA



Sandy Stockwell with a veteran



BSM's Welcoming Honor flight home

Kathy Renee and Deana



Geaux 7 Playing Bingo at the VA





## Greater Tampa Bay Chapter - FL3



The Greater Tampa Bay Chapter - FL3 had a busy month! We worked with a local Veterans organization to put together meal boxes for Veterans in need, provided dinner for families at the VA hospital, fulfilled a mission to provide goodies for our local USCENTCOM service members, and hosted a Future Heroes Banquet for High School Seniors entering the armed forces post graduation.





NV 3



## Truckee Meadows Blue Star Mothers NV3



April 2026



**Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial**  
NV3 along with NV5 and other community members removed trash, cleaned and polished the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial on the second Saturday of the month.



**Military to the Mountain**  
Early on a Sunday morning NV3 moms traveled to Palisades Tahoe to decorate the meeting room for veterans who attended this year's event. It is a week long event. At Palisades Tahoe, these military personnel are given the chance to experience the thrill of skiing and snowboarding in a beautiful and supportive environment. Military to Mountains is more than just a program for physical activity: it is a way to tell the stories of U.S. Veterans and first responders who choose to embrace goal setting and athleticism as a way to enjoy life and all of its challenges.



**Veterans Guest House**  
March 2026 - NV3 moms cooked and served and Irish Stew and other fixings. NV3 provides dinner bi-monthly. The Veterans Guest House began in response to the growing need for overnight lodging for veterans and their families seeking medical care in the Reno/Sparks area.





# PA 14



**3rd Annual Baskets & Bucks BINGO fundraiser event on 3/21/26. We had over 300 people in attendance with over 50 donated basket raffles on top of the bingo prizes. It was an amazing day!!**

**We held an ice cream social at the VA Medical Center in Wilkes-Barre, PA. We provided the Veterans with Canteen Cards at the center.**



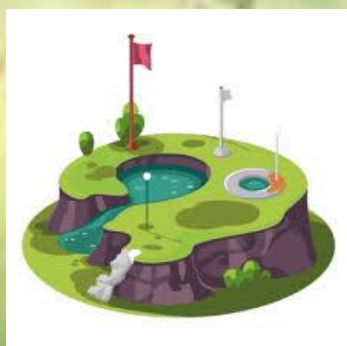
**Military Appreciation room at the Wilkes-Barre Scranton International Airport (AVP). It is like a mini USO. We restock it every 2 months**



**We got to meet 100-yr old WWII Veteran, Walter "Ferdie" Marek. He had cookbooks for sale with recipes that he had put together, and he signed copies for us!**



**This month TN4 decided to have some fun! We played miniature golf and grabbed some lunch at a local spot. There were many laughs and cheers. Even Tiger Woods couldn't swing this good!**





This month we are celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a Blue Star Mother Chapter.

April 2006 – April 2026



We continue to make meals at the Minneapolis VA Fisher House.



We were the recipients of over \$1000 worth of Easter Candy from Dollar Tree. So far, we have been able to donate about 152 pounds of it.

Several members and spouses attended the Pine City (MN Chapter 16) Dinner and Comedy Show. We greatly enjoyed the event and were glad to support another chapter.



We are sponsoring BINGO at the VA this month.





# MN 11



**Missing several members but it's always fun to get a group photo with our newest members!**

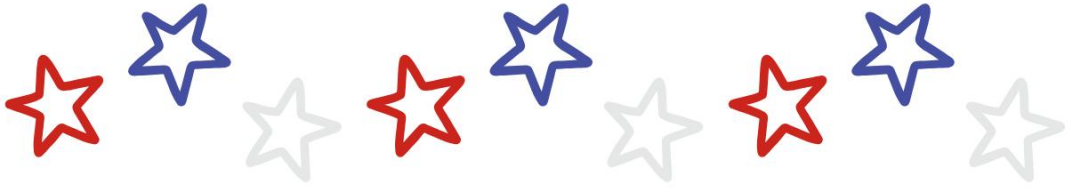
MN11 welcomed three new members at our April meeting. Welcome Kate, Jen and Michelle! Kathy/Chaplain and Donna/President installed them and FYI, Kate is a distant relative of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. founder, Captain George H. Maines! We are happy to have them all with us!



**Richard W. with his mother Benita after the ceremony promoting him to the rank of Colonel. Richard is a member of the Alaska Air National Guard.**



# OH 21



## LAKE ERIE SHORES OH 21



Nine members and Associates enjoyed the North/South conference in Amish Country



Come and Join us!



Our TENTH annual Spring Craft Show was another success!



Getting together with old and new friends to pack and send 35 boxes of love is great! We also donate items we cannot use to the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky.



Our First Vice -President Leslie Fritz spoke at the Bellevue Vietnam Veterans Day ceremony as Chapter OH21's representative.



Thank you Girl Scouts of Columbus and Fremont for your donation of cookies! We will use them in our boxes to service personnel and share them with Vets at OVH and other places.





# MO 4

This month, the Gateway Blue Star Mothers focused on supporting our local VFW in several meaningful ways. Since the Kohl-Jeck VFW serves as our home base for meetings and many of our events, it was especially rewarding to give back. Throughout Lent, several of our Moms volunteered at the Friday fish fries, where their efforts were greatly appreciated. We even received kind words of thanks from the Post Commander. In addition, the Moms voted to donate to help fund the painting of one of the VFW's event spaces, an area we also use for our meetings. It's wonderful to contribute to improving a space that serves both the VFW and our organization. Lastly (and certainly the most fun) several associate members and Moms either worked at or participated in the VFW's Golfganza event. All proceeds from the event go to support the Dream Factory, making it a day of both enjoyment and impact.



## Upcoming Event

**GATEWAY**  
**BLUE STAR MOTHERS**

**50/50 RAFFLES**      **QUARTER AUCTION**      **VENDORS**

**\$5 Paddles + quarters**  
**\$25 All In Paddles**

**Saturday, May 2, 2026**      **VFW Post 2866**

**Doors open 1pm**      **66 VFW Ln**  
**Auction starts 2pm**      **St. Charles, MO 63303**

**For more information call or text:**  
**Monica 618-696-9232**      **Jen 314-609-5363**



## GBSM Member Spotlight Monica Leon with her Army Veteran Hero Austin

Looks like our chapter president and associate member, Laura Downs, played a little hooky and made their way to the home opener for the St. Louis Cardinals!





# CA 30



0321 Marine  
Reconnaissance  
Fondation Fundraiser



We bid a heartfelt "Good-  
bye for now" to our 1st  
Vice President, Tina  
Buhrman



No-Sew Blankets  
Activity: 3/28/2026





CA 27

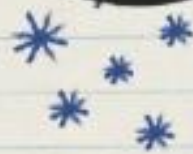
## MARCH 2026 HAPPENINGS



Second  
Sunday  
Breakfast



Eich Elem  
School-8<sup>th</sup>  
Grade  
Donation Drive



Rolling Hills Blue Star Moms-CA27  
[rollinghillsbluestarmoms.org](http://rollinghillsbluestarmoms.org)





# WI 2

## BLUE STAR MOTHERS SE WI 2



### APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER

#### Upcoming Events

**April 2026  
Chapter Meeting**  
April 21<sup>st</sup>

**Honor Flight**  
April 25<sup>th</sup>

**Sister Sarge  
Veteran of the  
Year Event**  
April 25<sup>th</sup>

**Veterans  
Treatment Court**  
April 27<sup>th</sup>

**May 2026  
Chapter Meeting**  
May 19<sup>th</sup>

**Field of Flags**  
May 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Union Grove  
Memorial Day  
Service**  
May 24<sup>th</sup>

**Honor Flight**  
May 30<sup>th</sup> &  
June 20<sup>th</sup>

**Volunteer @  
Boland Hall  
Family Picnic**  
July 11<sup>th</sup>

**Wreaths Across  
America**  
December 19<sup>th</sup>

Moving into spring, our chapter continues to stay active, connected, and committed to our mission of supporting our military, veterans, and their families. April brought meaningful updates, opportunities to serve, and time to come together as a group. We are currently at 62 members and were happy to welcome new member Laura who shared a little about her child. It's always special to learn more about the families we support and the connections that bring us together. We were also fortunate to have Jennifer and our own member, Faye, from Veterans Treatment Court join us and provide an informative and impactful presentation. They helped deepen our understanding of the program's mission, who it serves, and the structure that supports veterans as they navigate the court system and move forward in a positive way. Their work is truly inspiring, and we are grateful for the opportunity to learn from them.

Looking ahead, there are many ways to get involved. Honor Flights continue this spring, and Mail Call is always in need of letters and cards. Pictured below are cards our chapter prepared at a prior meeting that will be distributed at an upcoming flight.



This past week, members of our chapter (pictured below) spent time volunteering at the Milwaukee VA Fisher House, where they prepared and served a meal for the residents. It was a meaningful opportunity to give back and provide a small comfort to the families supporting their loved ones receiving care.





OH 9

Buckeye  
Military  
Moms  
OJH-9



North/South OH 9 - 2026





# NM 6

## Blue Star Mothers of Valencia County NM6



NM6 had another busy month! Several officers were honored to attend the 41st ANNIVERSARY celebration of the Tribute to Women in the Military. At the regular monthly meeting, NM6 welcomed a new member, who brought with her a donation from a local quilting group! On March 29, at the Vietnam Veterans Day program, members assisted sister chapter NM2 in providing flowers and serving lunch and snacks. Additionally, 2 members were guest speakers, including one who was the Kenote speaker sharing her experiences as the wife/widow of her Marine/Vietnam Veteran. Once again, NM6 assisted the local Valencia High School AJROTC serving brunch to those who were interviewed in the 3-year Inspection. To close out the month, several members packed away the ornament tree at the Belen Veterans Memorial. The tree began as a *just* a Christmas tree upon which people placed ornaments with the names they wrote of loved ones—past and present. Visitors enjoyed it so much that the volunteers in charge just change the theme during the year and keep the tree up! However, to make room for the Memorial's expansion, the tree has been carefully placed into temporary storage for safe-keeping.



# PURPLE UP FOR MILITARY KIDS

COURAGEOUS · JOY · KIND  
TOUGH · HONORABLE · RESOLUTE  
UNAFRAID · TRUSTWORTHY · RELENTLESS · NICE  
STRONG · CHIVALROUS · PASSIONATE · LIVELY  
**HONOR MILITARY KIDS**  
FRIENDLY · ADAPTABLE · ADMIRABLE · POLITE  
VALIANT · DARING · VERSATILE · GRACIOUS  
STEADFAST · FAIR · DEVOTED · ENERGETIC  
RESOURCEFUL · CARING · LOYAL · BOLD

AS A PARENT, WITNESSING THE RESILIENCE OF  
MILITARY KIDS FILLS US WITH PRIDE AND HOPE.



THEIR ABILITY TO NAVIGATE  
CHALLENGES WITH GRACE AND  
POSITIVITY IS TRULY INSPIRING.

LET'S HONOR THESE AMAZING  
CHILDREN WHO EMBODY  
ADAPTABILITY, DIVERSITY, AND THE  
DESIRE TO SERVE OTHERS. THEY  
ARE THE FUTURE LEADERS WE CAN  
ALL LOOK UP TO!

*Granddaughter*

