



**BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA, INC.
WE HAVE A NEW DEPARTMENT!!!**



WELCOME ARIZONA



Arizona is a wonderful, diverse state! We have mountains in the north where the winter snows fall heavy, desert in the south where the cacti reign supreme, and a mix of both in the middle where it all comes together!

We also have a great group of Blue Star Mother chapter members across the state! Several months ago the presidents of the Arizona chapters began a discussion about the benefits of forming a Department of Arizona. Coming from a state that has had a Department for years, and having sat on the Department board – I personally know the great advantages to be had in having a Department in your state.

After all the discussion, all the paperwork, and all the arrangements of time and location – we finally made it happen!

On April 21, 2012, the Department of Arizona was installed by Robin Barnes-McCarthy, NP. It was a privilege to have Robin here with us in person! We had a beautiful installation ceremony and then a great department meeting.

Department of Arizona Officers

**Rebecca Leatherwood, President
Brenda Searle-Sung, 1st Vice President
Theresa Koontz, 2nd Vice President
Laura Sutton, 3rd Vice President**

**Rachelle Hornby, 4th Vice President
Jeannie Warnke, Recording Secretary
Lisa Collins, Financial Secretary
Lori Atwater, Treasurer**

The Department of Arizona consists of members from AZ2, AZ3, AZ4, AZ5 and AZ6. (all our current chapters). So we have a good representation of all our chapter members from across the state. We will be holding our Department Convention the October 26th & 27th this year! We are looking forward to accomplishing much and expanding our chapters' outreaches! We also have concentrated goals of starting some sorely needed chapters in the Northern and Eastern regions, as well as adding a chapter in the Tuscon area. We are all committed to serving at the three beautiful VA facilities here in Arizona as well as helping at the VA outposts.

I know I speak for all the Department of Arizona members when I say we are honored to be able to serve in this capacity. And so...we begin.

Rebecca Leatherwood, President



**Kathryn Venable
National Bylaws Chair**

BSMA Governing Documents

Because the Governing Documents for Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. are “living” documents, they have evolved year after year with become the guiding documents for the management of all Blue Star Mother of America Chapters throughout the country. Because these documents are “living” all members of Blue Star Mothers of America have been entrusted with the responsibility and the task to propose changes for our governing documents to be voted on each year at the BSMA National Convention.

We are now at the time of year to ask our membership to submit their proposed changes to our Governing Documents and we will be using the following guidelines for submitting a proposed change:

- Clearly state the Document, Article and Section in **Bold** print
- Write out the current statement and identify the portions to be changed in **Red**
- Rewrite the statement with proposed changes in **Blue**

If your submission does not following the above formatting, it may not be included as a change to be voted on during the 2012 National Convention Body.

The deadline for submitting changes to the Bylaws Committee is *May 1, 2012*

All submissions must be sent through email bylaws2012@yahoo.com or through USPS to:
Kathryn Venable, Bylaws Committee Chairwoman
c/o Blue Star Mothers of America
724B Franklin Ln
Vista CA 92084

JOIN US FOR BIG DIPPER FUN NIGHT!!

HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN

- Dinner
- Silent Auction
- Costumes ~ prizes!
- So Brave CD
- 50/50 Raffle
- Patriotic Music
- Fun with Friends!
- Celebrating the USO!!



WHERE: Blue Star Mothers Convention in Ohio

REGISTRATION: Form will be online at our National website
www.BlueStarMothers.org soon!!

WHEN: Please arrive for dinner at 6:30 pm on August 2nd

DINNER: Begins at 7:00 pm

MUSIC: Angela Lashley will begin playing/singing at 8:00 pm

SUPPORT THE BIG DIPPER!!!!

**WE PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIP MONEY FOR THE CHILDREN OF
OUR MILITARY SO THEY CAN ATTEND SCHOOL!!!**

YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT IS NEEDED!!!

**ALSO, HAVE YOU APPLIED FOR A SCHOLARSHIP IF YOU HAVE A
SCHOOL AGED CHILD?**



Blue Star Mother 70th Anniversary Pins and Patches

To celebrate our 70th Anniversary in 2012, The Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. is offering a specially designed anniversary logo pin and patch for \$5 each.

We are offering these for sale to our members both through mail order and at the 2012 convention in Cincinnati.

The pins and patches are \$5 each plus shipping and handling.

We are offering **FREE** shipping and handling on orders of 11 or more items.

Pin and/or patch orders of 1 -10: \$5 per item plus \$2.50 S&H per order.

Pin and/or patch orders of 11 or more: \$5 per item, **FREE** shipping.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Pins: _____ x \$5 = \$ _____

Patches: _____ x \$5 = \$ _____

Postage & Handling on orders of 10 or less: \$2.50 per order

Postage & handling on orders of 11 or more: **FREE**

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

**Janet Broussard
First Vice President**

Number of **online** new members from April 1 to April 18, 2012: 28 new members and new associates.

Online Active Profiles: **11,995**

Online Member Profiles: **5,499**

Online Associates Profiles: **2,828**

Continue to update Master Compliance Spreadsheet.

Continue to update Chapter Officers Roster Spreadsheet.

Mailed 210 membership cards to various chapters.

Have been working with the membership chairs regarding moving applicants to member/associates groups.

Started working on convention delegate counts.

**Rev. Lin McGee
National Second Vice President**

NEWSLETTER:

- March newsletter was given in 'draft' to NP and Newsletter Committee on March 22.
- Completed copy of March newsletter was given to NP and Newsletter Committee on April 3.
- April 9 = NP asked me to make changes in March Newsletter.
- Most important changes were completed by April 11 and given to NP and Newsletter Committee so convention forms could get out quickly.
- April 11 = NP asked me to make the additional requested changes in the order the pages were in.
- April 16/17 (shortly after midnight of 16th) = March newsletter totally re-done and sent to NP and Newsletter Committee.
- April 21 = webmaster emailed NP with a CC to me that she had not yet received the March newsletter to post to the website.

YEARBOOK:

- Each member of the yearbook continues to work on the section of the yearbook that they are responsible for.
- NP is the main contact with the yearbook company and receives their correspondence.
- Pat Pell and Jean Duane believe additional time should be given for the Department submission of pictures -- NP said she gives permission.

NEWSLETTER THEMES:

May = Mother's Day; Military Spouse Appreciation Day; Armed Forces Day; Memorial Day

June = Father's Day; How Your Chapter Started; Chapters 'then and now'

July = Preparing For Convention; Independence Day

Teresa Bullock
National Third Vice President

The Department of Defense has released the names of fifteen (15) Army Casualties and seven (7) Marine Casualties, one (1) Navy Casualty and one (1) Air Force Casualty since my last report on 3/27/2012 during the Month of March.

Fifty-one (51) Gold Star Banners were ordered for presentation to twelve (12) fallen heroes parents and/or spouse.

Upcoming Event: BSM H.O.M.E. CA30 Mothers Day Event

On Friday May 11, 2012, Mothers Day Event. 3pm-7pm. On this day we will be honoring 200 Military Mothers, Blue and Gold. Tasteful Cakes in Corona, Ca. will be hosting the 4th Annual Salute to the Military Mother, Mothers Day Event. An amazing fun filled afternoon.

Each year the event has grown and we are excited to say this year is no different!

We will be having inspiring speakers, massages and hand treatments for the moms, refreshments and the return of our hero's wall. This is a wonderful way to "show off" your child.

US Heroes Who Have Fallen



Department of Defense Releases For April 2012



Spc. James E. Dutton, 25, Checotah, OK
Cpl. Michael J. Palacio, 23, Lake Elsinore, CA
Staff Sgt. Christopher L. Brown, 26, Columbus, OH
Cpl. Christopher D. Bordoni, 21, Ithaca, NY
Capt. Nicholas J. Rozanski, 36, Dublin, OH
Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey J. Rieck, 45, Columbus, OH
Sgt. 1st Class Shawn T. Hannon, 44, Grove City, OH
Cpl. Alex Martinez, 21, Elgin, IL
Spc. Jeffrey L. White, Jr., 21, Catawissa, MO
Spc. Antonio C. Burnside, 31, Great Falls, MT
Staff Sgt. Tyler J. Smith, 24, Licking, MO
Constructionman Trevor J. Stanley, 22, Virginia Beach, VA
Lance Cpl. Ramon T. Kaipat, 22, Tacoma, WA
Spc. Philip C. S. Schiller, 21, The Colony, TX
Lance Cpl. Abraham Tarwoe, 25, Providence, RI
Sgt. Tanner S. Higgins, 23, Yantis, TX
Staff Sgt. David P. Nowaczyk, 32, Dyer, IN
Cpl. Aaron M. Faust, 22, Louisville, KY

Capt. Michael C. Braden, 31, Lock Haven, PA
Staff Sgt. Joseph H. Fankhauser, 30, Mason, TX
1st Lt. Jonathan P. Walsh, 28, Cobb, GA
Pfc. Michael J. Metcalf, 22, Boynton Beach, FL
Chief Warrant Officer Nicholas S. Johnson, 27, San Diego, CA
Chief Warrant Officer Don C. Viray, 25, Waipahu, HI
Sgt. Chris J. Workman, 33, Boise, ID
Sgt. Dean R. Shaffer, 23, Pekin, IL
Spc. Manuel J. Vasquez, 22, West Sacramento, CA
Spc. Benjamin H. Neal, 21, Orfordville, WI
Spc. Jason K. Edens, 22, Franklin, TN
Spc. Moises J. Gonzalez, 29, Huntington, CA
Lt. Christopher E. Mosko, 28, Pittsford, NY
Staff Sgt. Brandon F. Eggleston, 29, Candler, NC
Sgt. Dick A. Lee Jr., 31, Orange Park, FL
Staff Sgt. Andrew T. Brittonmihalo, 25, Simi Valley, CA
Master Sgt. Scott E. Pruitt, 38, Gautier, MS
Pfc. Christian R. Sannicolas, 20, Anaheim, CA

**Rose Ann Elliott
National Fourth Vice President**

CHARTERING

- Actively working with five chapters (IN12, IL4, MO3, NY11, OK22, WA5)
- 20 additional people have requested information about chartering.
- Department of Arizona was chartered as a chapter on 4/21/12 . AZ2, 3,4,6 have all joined. AZ1 is under EIN revocation and AZ5 did not wish to join.

COMPLIANCE

- Reminder letters were sent in September and two in February.
- Letter and IRS form faxed to Taxpayer Advocate
- Chapters Needing Required Officers (2 Chapters)
- Chapters Indicating they are Closing / Closed (10 Chapters)
- Requested copies of charters from many chapters who did not have one in our books.
- Suspension letters sent on 3/14/12 by certified mail and emailed on 3/17/12 to chapter members. (41 Chapters)
- Chapters received suspensions on 3/28/12. (31 Chapters)

**Karen Stevens
Finance Committee Chair**

The Finance Committee met on April 9th, with all members in attendance.

1) We continue to work on issues with NM5 and AZ3.

2) The FC approved travel for our NP to AZ Dept mtg for the purpose of installing the officers; (we felt this is very similar to paying the President's way to attend other Departments' Conventions and since the NEB would not be meeting prior to the Dept mtg, we approved an amount not to exceed \$500.00).

3) The FC began the process of preparing a proposed 2012-2013 Budget.

4) It was moved/seconded and approved that the Finance Committee recommend that the NEB approve a price change of \$10 for the 2011 Yearbooks, making them available at a new cost of \$15.00. This comes to the NEB in the form of a motion.

5) The NP will update the NEB on our report of the NY City Parade.

6) The FC THANKS Nat'l 4th VP, Rose Ann Elliott, for obtaining a contact at the IRS in assisting with the IRS issues.

7) Next FC mtg, May 7th

Anne Parker
National Financial Secretary

I have continued to counsel with members of various chapters about matters pertaining to the form 1023 being completed by chapters who have lost their tax exempt status. I have also worked with members in educating them on how to complete the echeck.

I have worked with the accountant to complete our audit and the Finance Committee on the proposed budget.

I have countersigned too many to count checks and reconciled the checkbook, posting all charges and depositing many checks coming in for convention fees.

I have worked with the First VP on any membership applications and checks sent to our post office box.

I worked with Capital One to finally get our address changed so we will receive directly the checks received because of members who sign up for credit cards.

I continued to work closely with Rose Ann on compliance issues

Julie Roberts
National Treasurer

Starting Balance for March 01, 2012: \$124,057.91

Ending Balance for March 31, 2012: \$123,695.07

Number of checks written for March 2012:

Checks - 67

Bill Pay – 4

Debit Card – 4

Bank Charges – 2

Voided Checks – 0

Continue to work with chapters that have issues pertaining to membership dues not received from national and vice versa.

Prepared the Department Membership Dues checks for March

Prepared all Reimbursement Forms submitted and approved by 3 or more members of the Finance Committee.

Continued preparing the 2nd Quarterly membership dues checks for Chapters and Departments.

Working with 4th VP on complying letters/emails to go to the chapters that are not in compliant with the Governing Documents.

Kristine Wirgau
President, Department of Michigan President

Events attended

- School of Instruction – we had 31 attendees with 10 chapters represented (1 of them “grandmothered”), photos attached (we misplaced our photographer so needed 2 pics to include everybody – look close to see the differences). Topics covered included upcoming events (the conventions and FunD Day), yearbook submissions, sisterhood, officer duties and succession planning, Blue to Gold, Big Dipper, financial procedures and compliance. We ended the day with a Q&A period which rapidly turned into “what is your kid up to”.

Chapters visited

- The above mentioned 10 (they count right?)

Compliance status

- MI 174 – IRS revoked (working on paperwork)

Other

- Working with vendor (new owner) to get PDP pins – ongoing

Upcoming dates to remember

- Jun 23 FunD Day – Flat Rock MI - (DEB meeting prior)
- Oct 5 – 7 Department Convention – Clare, MI



Pat Pell
President, Dept of Ohio

The Dept of Ohio continues to work on the presentation for the educational (North/South Conference) which is scheduled for 4/28/12.

We have been following up with the chapters and as it stands...

OH4 still has not responded to calls for an affiliation agreement and most likely will be sent a letter within the next week if they do not respond to our calls and emails.

OH7 was about to be closed due to lack of 5 officers but due to a newspaper article announcing that they might close, they have received 25 phone calls and had a meeting last night in which 10 new members signed up. They are having another meeting on May 15th and I will be attending this meeting to see if they can hold an election and re-start the chapter. Will keep you posted.

It appears that all the other 14 chapters are in compliance.

Jean Duane
President, Department of Minnesota

The Dept of MN continues to work on the preparations for the Spring Meeting-School of Instruction on May 5th, 2012

We have been following up with the chapters and as it stands...

MN9 - All forms and documents completed for state of MN, waiting on document from state as it needed a correction on it, just checked mail box yesterday and it has not arrived yet. As soon as we receive this, copy will be sent to MN9 President so they can finalized their paperwork with the IRS and any others then they will be compliant. This Department Respectfully request of National to allow them this time to remain in tact at this time, giving them until May 31st to complete without discussion of closure.

Once they are complete all chapters will be compliant.

Cathy O'Shields
President, Department of Oklahoma

We are in the process of attending several of the Honor Flights that will be taking place in Oklahoma over the next few months. This is a special flight for WWII Veterans and they get to have a meal the night before and stay in the hotel and have a little ceremony for them to introduce them to others and then they fly to Washington DC for Free for the day and then back home. This is so that most that have not had the opportunity to go to Washington and see the moment that was made in their honor will get the chance to see it in person. These are awesome events for our veterans and it is very wonderful to listen and learn so much from these much deserving veterans.

Moving forward with our Department meeting on July 14, 2012 in Tahlequah and this will be a training event to go over all of the bylaw changes for the delegates and chapters so they can make sure they understand the changes that could be taking place if the vote is accepted.

Department convention is still moving forward for October 19-21 in Hulbert Oklahoma and we are getting the final details worked out on this with the committee.

Other items of interest would be the many Yellow Ribbon Events that taking place for the next few months. This is in support of our returning troops that were deployed to Afghanistan. This is a reintegration for the troops that were deployed to make sure they get the VA assistance needed and to make sure they can return to family life.

Gold Star Family event will take place on September 29, 2012 and this will be held as a luncheon again and will start at 11:00 and end at 4:00 pm. This is to honor the families that have lost a child in the service. This is a very moving event and it helps the families bond with other families.

DEPARTMENT OF OKLAHOMA

Cody Herandy with Mother Mary Herandy

Mary is the Department of Oklahoma 1st Vice President

For the Herandy Family from McAlester, these mother and son moments don't last long.



Mother, Marine Son Share Moment at Tulsa Concert to Honor Service Members

Green Country's military men and women were the guests of honor in Tulsa Tuesday night. ORU and Oklahoma's Blue Star Mothers hosted a military appreciation concert for troops and their families at the Maybee Center. Around a 1,000 people attended the free concert. Many people were celebrating the return from deployment, but one family was preparing to say goodbye. The United States Army Field band and Soldiers Chorus brought out families from all over Green Country.

For the Herandy Family from McAlester, these mother and son moments don't last long enough.

"This is probably the last time I'll be home in a year and a half," said PFC Cody Herandy, U.S. Marines. While some of the honored guests at the free concert just returned from deployment, PFC Cody will soon leave. He's heading to Afghanistan in a matter of months. "Going through boot camp and everything, they basically took my emotions away from me," he joked. "If I do have emotions it hasn't hit me yet." The 18-year-old Marine made the trip to Tulsa from McAlester with his mom. She's a Blue Star Mother coming to terms with watching her baby boy be brave far from home. "My oldest son served two terms in Iraq, and those were gut wrenching. But when we dropped our youngest off for boot camp I cried all the way home," Blue Star Mother Mary Herandy said.

That's why ORU and Oklahoma Blue Star Mother put the concert together: To thank those coming home, those leaving home and the families who endure the process. And support on the home front can go a long way. "There are some things I don't understand about how much people appreciate me, but it stills feel good," Cody Herandy said. The Herandys know nothing can stop the goodbyes, but right now their enjoying their time and music together. During the military appreciation concert there was a tribute to the families of Oklahoma fallen service members.

REMEMBERING OUR HEROES

Each year the American Red Cross Connecticut Region honors people who make a difference in their communities. This year the Military Hero Awards for Lower Fairfield County and Greater New Haven County were awarded posthumously. It is a privilege to be able to learn more about our heroes as we attend these events. These stars have turned to Gold.

Eric Soufrine was beloved and admired by family and friends and the 2009 Amity Regional High School graduate was rich in both. Pfc. Soufrine, who was two weeks away from completing a deployment in Afghanistan, was killed in action June 14 last year. Just two weeks before he was scheduled to return home. He had enlisted in the Army just a little more than a year earlier and had already received the National Defense Service Medal and the NATO Service Medal. His unit had just honored him as "Soldier of the Month." Coming from a family with a history of military service, Eric was patriotic and proud to serve. Eric played football at Amity and loved the outdoors. Relatives and friends told the many reporters covering the story of his death that Eric was an avid fisherman and hunter and loved boating and water skiing. The youngest of three

Eric Soufrine



children, Eric inspired his older sister, Rebecca, to join the military as well. She is in Army Intelligence. Before he deployed to Afghanistan in December of 2010, Eric gave her a package and told her not to open it until she got to basic training. When she did open it, she told the Connecticut Post, Rebecca found letters and Post-it notes containing messages of love and support. Eric's parents, in conversations with reporters, recalled Eric as having "a kind heart," with plans to attend college after his tour of duty and had hoped to pursue a career in forestry. Eric Soufrine is recognized today as a Military Hero, but it is only an after the fact affirmation of the place he holds in the hearts and esteem of his family, friends, comrades and community. He was already their hero.



Chief Petty Officer Navy SEAL Brian Robert Bill defines the category of Military Hero. His valor, honor and sacrifice place him among the finest soldiers to serve. His personal and military careers are filled with examples of his exceptional ability, commitment and bravery. From an early age, Brian "knew exactly where he was going and what he wanted to do," remembers his uncle, Jeffrey Davis. Brian was an Eagle Scout, a competitive swimmer and co-captain of his hockey team at Trinity Catholic High School. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Norwich University and, in 2001, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy to fulfill a life-long dream to become a Navy SEAL. Brian was the only one of 241 classmates to receive the "First Time, Every Time" award for passing every dive on his first attempt. He ultimately was assigned to the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, for which fewer than five-percent of SEALs successfully screen. Brian deployed eight times and was highly decorated, receiving four Bronze Stars, each with a distinguishing V for Valor, and one noting extraordinary heroism. Brian died August 6, 2011 on a dangerous mission in Afghanistan for which he had volunteered. His uncle remembers Brian's many interests outside of

Brian Robert Bill



the military. He was a fly fisherman, skier, marathoner, rock climber and mountaineer with successful summits of Aconcagua in Argentina and Mt. Elbrus in Russia. Brian was also a tandem skydiver and had obtained his commercial pilot's license. He "played guitar and piano beautifully, independently studied Russian and became fluent in French," Davis adds. Davis also recalls comments from about Brian from those at his memorial service, including a classmate who remembered, "[Brian] was my friend when nobody else would be." Brian was posthumously awarded the George Van Cleave Military Leadership Award from the USO. His nomination by Captain Drew Bisset USN SEAL (Ret) reads, "SOC Brian Bill was a gallant warrior who fought with valor and died with honor."

OKLAHOMA 5 ~ PEOPLE TO PEOPLE



The “People to People” movement was launched in 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. For 56 years, “People to People” Ambassador Programs has served as “People to People” International’s global educational travel provider, organizing and promoting opportunities for bridging cultural and political borders through direct interaction, unparalleled access, and unique experiences.

This year the group will be traveling to France & England ~ visiting Parliament, experiencing the Changing of the Guards, visit Normandy, and the Eiffel Tower are just a few of their stops this year.



March 3rd was a very busy day for us. A group known as “People to People” came in. This is a group of high school students that does fundraising & community service. This group helps us annually with our March monthly packing. When they come, watch out! They do it all. They are an awesome group of students, leaders, and parents. This year we had about 40 folks.



OHIO 10 RECEIVES PROCLAMATION!!



Pictured above is Rose Ann Elliott, President of Ohio Chapter 10 with Mayor Smith of Lancaster. He attended the Chapter's April 12 meeting to present them with a proclamation which declared May Blue Star Mothers month!!

WELCOME HOME!!!



Oklahoma families are welcoming home their heroes from the war in Afghanistan. While many families are reuniting, another is just beginning. SPC Bethany Pierce recently returned from 7,000 miles away to find SGT Warren Fairleigh, whom she met while they were both deployed, waiting for her in the crowd. He had returned home first and he was there to greet her with a sign with a welcome home message on one side and a proposal of marriage on the other! Her reply was, "Yes!".

"She was one of the medics and there were a lot of women, but she went to Bible study and I actually had a chance to run Bible study and one thing led to another.", said SGT Fairleigh. "I never expected to meet my future husband in Afghanistan," SPC Pierce said.

Oklahoma still has 1,400 soldiers serving in Kuwait and Afghanistan.

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER 8

March 10, the elementary students of "People to People" spent the day with OK8. Arrangements were made by Carol Farmer for the group to share their community service project with the chapter. 22 students worked on fundraisers and the collecting of care package items to bring that day. Two fully loaded pick-up beds were delivered along with \$200.00 for assisting to send the items. They assisted OK8 in packing 45 boxes that day with plenty left over for additional pack outs.



APRIL IS: MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD!!!

The Defense Department and communities throughout the world continue to celebrate the 26 year tradition of recognizing the importance of military children during the month of April. April was first celebrated as 'The Month of the Military Child' in 1986, is especially important today, as their moms and dads are serving our country in the US Armed Forces during such dangerous times of war and conflict. Please remember our military children!

For The Second Time in Less Than A Year, Connecticut Honors A War Hero Long Awaiting His Purple Heart!

On April 2, 2012, Connecticut resident, Jerry P. Winn, was honored at a ceremony at VFW Post 296 in Winsted as he received ten medals and ribbons which included the Purple Heart. In 1970, at age 19, Winn pushed a fellow Marine out of the way of a landmine while serving in Vietnam; Winn himself sustaining injuries which resulted in multiple surgeries and rehabilitations. The honors came 42 years after Winn, a Corporal in the United States Marine Corps, had originally been injured.



Above, Congressman John Larson pins Winn's Purple on him as CT Commissioner of Veteran Affairs, Linda Schwartz, and the Post's Commander, Neil Hunt, look on. As Winn was immediately airlifted out of Vietnam after stepping on the landmine, Winn had never received his medals.

To the right is National Second Vice President, Rev. Lin McGee (also a Winsted resident) and life time friend of the Winn family.

This marks the second time in less than a year that Connecticut has honored their heroes from past wars by presenting them their due medals. Marine PVT George Haddad finally received his Purple Heart on September 21, 2011, 66 years after being injured in the Battle of Iwo Jima.

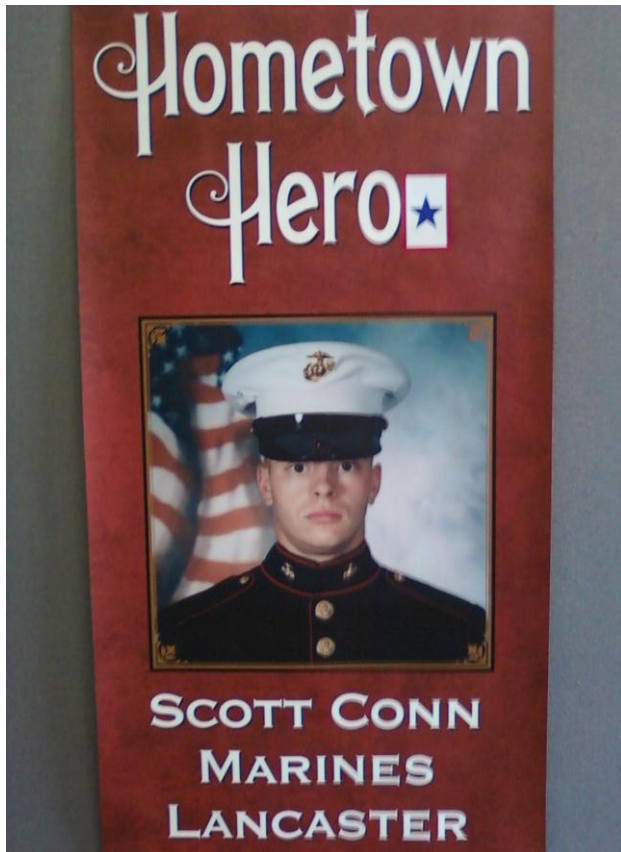


OKLAHOMA CHAPTER 19

Care Packages are packed, loaded, and handed off to the USPS.
"NO CHARGE TODAY"..... said the postal worker
It seems that an anonymous donor paid the postage!
A Special Thank you to our Earthly Angel



Local soldiers to be honored with downtown banners Lancaster, Ohio



Lancaster, OH, will be displaying flags honoring individual soldiers from the Fairfield Country from the first week of May until November. The faces of 14 local soldiers will line Broad and Columbus streets in Lancaster to serve as a visual reminder to others of the sacrifices service members are making for their country. The flags were bought by the members of Blue Star Mothers Chapter Ohio 10, and contain each soldier's picture, branch of military service, and hometown. Rose Ann Elliott, the Chapter's President, said the idea for the banners came from a similar project undertaken by a California chapter of Blue Star Mothers.

Rose Ann said she hopes the banners will remind residents of the sacrifice local servicemen and women are making for their country and also raise awareness of Blue Star Mothers. The Chapter is assisting homeless veterans through the Arthur B. Keiffer Veterans House in Lancaster and, of course, our troops.

Dates to Remember, Celebrate, or Observe in May

- May 3, 1898 = Marines land at Cavite, Philippines, and raise US flag
- **May 13, 2012 = Mother's Day**
- May 8, 1884 = Birth date of US President, Harry S. Truman
- May 8, 1911 = Birthday of Naval Aviation
- May 8, 1945 = VE Day, Germany's unconditional surrender to the Allies
- May 11, 1958 = Minnesota becomes a US State
- **May 11, 2012 = Military Spouse Appreciation Day**
- May 13, 1908 = Birthday of the Navy Nurse Corps
- **May 19, 2012 = Armed Forces Day**
- May 23, 1788 = South Carolina becomes a US State
- **May 28, 2012 = Memorial Day**
- May 28, 1980 = First women graduates from US Naval Academy
- May 29 1790 = Rhode Island becomes a US State
- May 29, 1848 = Wisconsin becomes a US State
- May 29, 1917 = Birth date of US President, John F. Kennedy
- May 30, 1868 = Decoration Day (now Memorial Day) observed in the United States for the first time

Remember.....

www.ServiceFlags.com

1-866-887-6678

For all your patriotic purchases.

When ordering, use your discount code: "BSM" for your 15 % discount.



HAVE YOU JOINED BIG DIPPER YET?

The Big Dipper is an auxiliary of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., which honors outstanding members of the Blue Star Mothers, sponsors the 'Fun Night' at convention, and provides educational scholarships to students. Membership is only \$5.00 a year. Please contact the Big Dipper President, Paulette Golden of MI 180 for any questions you may have about joining pgloden60@hotmail.com



Robin Barnes-McCarthy National VAVS Rep

National President Robin Barnes-McCarthy is presently serving our organization as the National VAVS Rep per recommendation of the Director of Volunteer Services for the VA in Washington, DC. This is a procedure followed by several other Veterans Service Organizations. Susan Calhoon, who took the VAVS Rep assignment earlier this year, is in process of forwarding to her the paperwork she had received from Patsy Varnell, previous VAVS Rep.

As National VAVS Rep, NP Robin represented our organization this year at the Charleston, SC, VA National Advisory Committee Conference. Also attending was VAVS Deputy Rep Lynn McMillien (PA201), as budgeted by the NEB.

National Financial Secretary, Anne Parker, was asked by NP Robin to join her and Lynn during the week, as her schedule might allow, since she lives in South Carolina.

A full VAVS report will be coming soon for this important program!