



# THE GOLD STAR MOTHER

Perpetuating the Noble Principles for Which They Fought and Died

ISSUE NUMBER 229

MAY-JUNE 2024



30 May 1868

First observed as  
Decoration Day to honor  
and mourn Military Personnel  
who died while serving in the  
United States Armed Forces

## *Memorial Day*

27 May 2024



28 June 1968

President Lyndon B. Johnson  
signed legislation creating the  
federal holiday to be observed  
on the last Monday in May



*National Moment  
of Remembrance*  
3pm Local Time  
Encourage America  
to Pause and  
Remember



# From the Desk of the National President

*Pam Stemple, National President*



Spring has sprung! The Eclipse is over! The trees and flowers are peeking their heads out! All the little baby animals are being born. It is a wonderful time for new beginnings.

I am so looking forward to Memorial Day. Not because of the BBQs and the beginning of summer, but because it is a special time to thank our Partners, those who honor our Children and the Children before ours, helping ensure they will not be forgotten. AGSM gets

so much support from the AMVETS, AMVETS Riders and a special shout out to David Page and the Susquehanna Valley Riders. In DC, there will be special remembrance ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, World War II Memorial, World War I Memorial and the Korean War Memorial, and across the Country, there will be beautiful events with tears shed honoring the Fallen Children of America. Please remember to say their names. I hope you find a Cemetery to place a flag in honor of those we have lost.

## **WE MUST NEVER FORGET OUR HEROES!!!**

June 20th is just around the corner. I hope to see you in Colorado Springs for the 2024 National Convention. After researching historical documents and as we prepare for our Centennial Celebration in 2028, we are honoring our past with a few changes to this year's schedule. We will have our Memorial Service to honor those Members and Associates who have passed since our last Convention on Friday morning. This will give us an opportunity to

celebrate their contributions to AGSM throughout the weekend. Also, after our workshops on Friday afternoon, I will be hosting a tea for our Past National Presidents and Department Presidents to provide them with a networking opportunity. Invitations for the tea will go out after registration closes on May 18th. We have lots of wonderful things prepared for Convention, and we hope you will join us!

In February of 2023, we signed a MOU with the Library of Congress to memorialize our partnership to preserve some of the most important historical documents of AGSM. During the NEB meeting this February, we provided over a dozen boxes of documents to the Library. The history of this organization is so precious, and I am honored to continue to put our documents in the safe hands of the Library for all of America to see.

Finally, I want to share a recent conversation with someone outside of AGSM. It was distressing for me to be told this information. In dealing with an AGSM member, this gentleman was verbally attacked by the member. Her comment to him was until he loses a child, he would not know how she felt. Although he has not lost a child in the military, he is a Veteran and lost many battle buddies and friends during this long 23-year war and has had many interactions with the families of the Fallen. His comment to me was "How many members of AGSM are you losing instead of helping?"

Ladies, we must help each other and not be about yourself. Words do hurt. I have also heard this comment: "I've lost more friends in AGSM than I ever have outside of AGSM."

Let us have a fresh start this Spring and know your words matter! I hope to see you Memorial Day Weekend in DC and Colorado Springs in June!



*Join us in Colorado Springs, CO  
20-23 June 2024*

*American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.  
87th National Convention*

*The Antlers, A Wyndham Hotel*

*Register today at [AmericanGoldStarMothers.org](https://AmericanGoldStarMothers.org)*

*Welcome Reception and AGSM Store  
Memorial Service at Fort Carson  
Guests "Just Spectacular" Tour*

*Boogie Nights Banquet  
Sunday Breakfast & Installation of the  
2024-2025 National Executive Board*

*Registration Deadline: 18 May 2024*



# Welcome to our **NEWEST MEMBERS**

*“No one wants to become eligible to join American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. However, we find strength in the fellowship of other Gold Star Mothers who strive to keep the memory of their beloved sons and daughters alive by serving the Veteran, Military, and Gold Star communities.”*

— National Executive Board

First Name	Last Name	Chapter	Department	Type of Membership	Date of Membership
Marie	Brown	AZ - Central Arizona GSM - Phoenix, AZ	AZ	Member	4/3/24
Joann	Madorran	CO - Pikes Peak GSM - Colorado Springs, CO	CO	Member	4/7/24
Tiphane	Downs	FL - Gulf Coast - Largo, FL	FL-PR	Member	3/15/24
Lisa	Senesi	FL - Indian River County, Vero Beach, FL	FL-PR	Member	3/14/24
Kelly Rose	Barnes	KY - Kentucky GSM	KY	Member	3/5/24
Linda	Masters	NY - Western New York AGSM - South Buffalo, NY	NY	Member	2/18/24
Carol	Ransom	TN - Middle Tennessee - Nashville	TN	Member	3/5/24
Samang	Bruck	TX - Central/Eastern OK, Edmond, OK	TX-OK	Member	3/28/24
Kristi	Hughes	TX - North/West TX, Ft. Worth, TX	TX-OK	Member	4/7/24

## The White House Historical Association Partnership Agreement

*Patti Elliott, National 1st Vice President*

We are excited to announce that AGSM has signed an affiliate partner agreement with the White House Historical Association to be a point of sale for the Official White House Ornaments. The White House Historical Association has created the Official White House Christmas Ornament since 1981. Each ornament sequentially focuses on a president's time in the White House or a significant White House anniversary. This year's ornament is in the shape of an anchor and reflects on President Jimmy Carter's service in the U.S. Navy and various aspects of his presidency.

The public may purchase the 2024 ornament, along with many ornaments from past years by going to our link at: [AmericanGoldStarMothers.org/ornament](https://AmericanGoldStarMothers.org/ornament). AGSM will receive a donation from the White House Historical Association for every ornament purchased through this link.

The White House Historical Association was founded in 1961 by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy to support her vision to restore and preserve the Executive Mansion and its legacy for generations to come. Mrs. Kennedy sought to inspire Americans, especially children, to explore and engage with American history and its presidents. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that has contributed more than \$115 million to the White House in fulfillment of its mission.



**Available NOW in the AGSM Store**  
[AmericanGoldStarMothers.org/ornament](https://AmericanGoldStarMothers.org/ornament)

# CHAPTER NEWS

*The mission of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., is to serve our Military and Veteran Communities, support our Gold Star Mothers and educate our communities on the price of freedom. In an effort to showcase the events our Chapters and Departments are planning and executing highlighting these areas, our Department & Chapter News pages will only include stories and photos of service projects and activities that embody the AGSM Mission.*

## DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA/PUERTO RICO

### SOUTHWEST FLORIDA CHAPTER

At our 4th Annual Salute to Women Veterans event, we had the opportunity to celebrate 22 brave women as they prepare for the next exciting chapter in their lives, Motherhood! In partnership with the Cape Coral VA and other local organizations, we “showered” the moms-to-be with things they will need to bring home their bundle of joy.



## DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA/PUERTO RICO

### TAMPA BAY CHAPTER

Evelyn Brady, newly elected Chapter President of AGSM, Inc., Tampa Bay, is pictured serving our veterans and their families at the Fisher House at James A. Haley VA Hospital. Evelyn is a retired Navy Veteran, currently is employed at Bay Pines VAHCS, and yet makes time to volunteer at the Fisher House. She sets up the dinners that our community partners, such as Lockheed Martin, Operation Patriot Support, Black Dagger Military Hunt Club and others provide each Wednesday night for the Families lodging at the Fisher House. She serves these delicious meals, then cleans up and puts any leftovers away for the FH families to be enjoyed for lunch the next day.

Thank you, Evelyn, for the great example of a leader who serves and volunteers well.



## DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS/ RHODE ISLAND

Massachusetts Gold Star Mothers gather yearly to make ribbons bearing the names of Fallen Heroes which will be carried on rucksacks during the annual Tough Ruck which raises funds for active military and Gold Star families in need.



Families of the fallen were invited to join Boston's St Patrick's / Evacuation Day Parade on March 17. Gold Star Wives joined Gold Star Mothers Robin Abbott, President, Doris Syrakos, Historian, Irene Richards & her son.



## DEPARTMENT OF MARYLAND/DELAWARE

### MARYLAND CHAPTER

On February 3, 2024, after their bi-monthly meeting, Maryland Gold Star Mothers Chapter members were joined by American Legion Post 60 Auxiliary members who assisted with the assembly of gift bags for hospitalized veterans at three Maryland VA Medical Centers: Baltimore, Loch Raven and Perry Point. The Maryland Chapter members included Janice Chance, Donna Robinson, Paula Davis, Theresa Karlson, Khadija Keita, Sandra Johnson Carter, Tracy Miller and Synthia Carter. Auxiliary members included Denean Robinson, Denise Person, and Peggy Purcell. Gift bag items included spiral notebooks, patriotic pens, word puzzle books, toiletry items, stress balls and stuffed bears. A total of 240 bags were assembled (80 Baltimore, 80 Perry Point and 80 Loch Raven). The bags were distributed during the “National Salute to Veterans Week” from February 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>. Maryland Gold Star Mothers are grateful to Commander Luby





for allowing them to use the Post to have their bi-monthly meetings as well as a place to prepare for our service project and to have special events. The members are also grateful to the Auxiliary members for their continued support.



The Maryland Chapter moms seized the opportunity to visit hospitalized veterans at all three VA Medical Centers during their annual National Salute to Veterans Week. The moms visited the Veterans at the Baltimore VA Hospital on February 13, Loch Raven Medical Center on February 16, and Perry Point Medical Center on February 14. Synthia Carter and Paula Davis represented

the MD Chapter at Perry Point Medical Center. Synthia and Paula distributed the gifts along with a Perry VA Voluntary Specialist staff member. The Moms rendered the MD Chapter's special "Moms Salute" as they distributed gift bags. The veterans smiled as they expressed their thanks and rendered their official Military Hand Salute. The veterans were gifted with a Valentine's Day stuffed bear and balloon, a colorful stress ball, a Find a Word book, a toothbrush, and mouthwash. They wished the veterans a Happy Valentine's Day and thanked them for their service. The MD Chapter members look forward to continuing to serve and support our Heroes and their families. We HONOR THROUGH SERVICE!

## DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS/OKLAHOMA

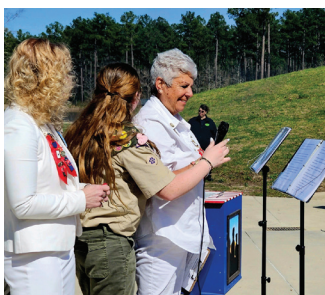
### GREATER HOUSTON CHAPTER

On Saturday, March 9, 2024, Grace Kotalik (Associate Member of the Greater Houston TX Chapter of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.) held a large Flag Retirement Ceremony to honor fallen heroes of our United States Armed Forces.



406 American Flags were retired in the ceremony at Scouts BSA Camp Strake's Outdoor Amphitheater, after being placed into the fire rings by more than 20 Scouts. Names and stories of fallen heroes were shared as each flag was retired by Scout volunteers.

Some Gold Star Families attended the ceremony to personally hand worn flags to the Scouts for retirement after stories were shared about their loved ones. Members of local VFW and American Legion Posts were in attendance.



After the first 50 flags were retired, Grace invited officers from the Greater Houston TX Chapter of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., to assist with a special pinning ceremony for Vietnam Veterans, during which 11 Vietnam Veterans who served in various branches were recognized.

## DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA

### HAMPTON ROADS CHAPTER

In March, the Virginia Hampton Roads Chapter hosted a St. Patrick's Day dinner called "We Are Lucky to Have Our Veterans" at VFW Post 4809, Norfolk, VA. The Gold Star Mothers served corned beef and cabbage dinners with beautiful desserts. The veterans were very appreciative.



### How do you serve your community?

Share your stories in The Gold Star Mother  
Chapter Projects  
Department Projects  
Individual Projects

Large or small we want to hear them all!

Submit your story of service today

[publications@AmericanGoldStarMothers.org](mailto:publications@AmericanGoldStarMothers.org)

## AGSM Store



Window Sticker  
\$7



Logo Magnet  
\$6



Banner Decal  
\$5



To see these products and more,  
stop by the AGSM Store at the  
**2024 National Convention**  
20-23 June 2024

[AmericanGoldStarMothers.org](http://AmericanGoldStarMothers.org)

# Scholarships

In partnership with Columbia Southern University and Waldorf University, American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., will once again offer scholarships to members of our organization. Each institution will offer one scholarship, and the application period will open on June 15, 2024, and close on August 31, 2024. The scholarship will cover up to one online degree program (associate, bachelor, or master). The scholarship will be applied directly to the recipient's tuition for up to 60 semester hours or 36 consecutive months in the selected online degree program, whichever comes first. This scholarship covers tuition and course technology fees only.



We are excited to announce that Waldorf University has expanded the scholarship for 2024.

The American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., Patriot Scholarship will be open to any AGSM Member or Associate Member of AGSM. The recipient must have been a member in good standing for at least two years, and they must maintain membership throughout the period of the scholarship. Those eligible to be an Associate Member of AGSM are traditionally an underserved population in the Survivor community, and this will be a groundbreaking opportunity for them. The application link and promotional flyer for Waldorf University will be available at National Convention and distributed to membership soon via e-mail and on our website.

Columbia Southern University will continue to offer the Grace Darling Seibold Scholarship to AGSM members who have been a member in good standing for at least two years. The recipient must maintain membership throughout the period of the scholarship. Applicants must submit an essay, along with supporting documentation to verify their status. Please visit [ColumbiaSouthern.edu/GDS](http://ColumbiaSouthern.edu/GDS) for application materials and additional information. Additional information is available in the promotional flyer published in this issue of the newsletter. More information will be posted on our social media sites, but we need everyone's help to get the information in the hands of our Associate Members who may not get our newsletter. If you have questions or need more information, please e-mail our National Service Officer at [nso@americangoldstarmothers.org](mailto:nso@americangoldstarmothers.org).

## May / June Calendar of Events and Important Dates



<i>May</i>	<i>National Military Appreciation Month</i>
<i>1 May</i>	<i>Silver Star Service Banner Day</i>
<i>8 May</i>	<i>Victory in Europe (VE) Day</i>
<i>12 May</i>	<i>Mother's Day</i>
<i>11-18 May</i>	<i>Armed Forces Week</i>
<i>15 May</i>	<i>Peace Officers Memorial Day</i>
<i>18 May</i>	<i>Armed Forces Day</i>
<i>27 May</i>	<b><i>Memorial Day</i></b>
<i>6 June</i>	<i>D-Day</i>
<i>12 June</i>	<i>Women Veterans Day</i>
<i>14 June</i>	<i>U.S. Army Birthday</i>
<i>14 June</i>	<i>U.S. Flag Day</i>
<i>9-15 June</i>	<i>National Flag Week</i>
<i>16 June</i>	<i>Father's Day</i>
<i>19 June</i>	<i>Juneteenth</i>
<i>20-23 June</i>	<b><i>2024 AGSM National Convention</i></b>
<i>23 June</i>	<i>Coast Guard Auxillary Birthday</i>
<i>27 June</i>	<i>PTSD Awareness Day</i>

*For details on these events and more go to*  
***AmericanGoldStarMothers.org***



The American Gold Star Manor/Home was incorporated as a charitable, non-profit corporation for the purpose of assisting in the support of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. and providing a national home for American Gold Star Mothers.

The Manor is located in a quiet section of beautiful Long Beach, close to shopping centers, churches, and medical facilities. Freeways provide easy driving to downtown Long Beach and Southern California points of interest.

If you are interested in living at the American Gold Star Manor, please contact the administration office at (562)426-7651 or you may visit The American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. website for more information.

***GoldStarManor.org***



Join  
**AMERICAN GOLD STAR MANOR**  
Friday 24 May 2024 at 10am  
for a memorial dedication  
and reception as they Honor  
Gold Star Mothers and  
Remember Their Heroes







**COLUMBIA  
SOUTHERN**  
UNIVERSITY

# Grace Darling Seibold Scholarship

## Honoring Mothers of Fallen Heroes who continue the service of their sons and daughters

Columbia Southern University is partnering with American Gold Star Mothers to offer a scholarship to one of its members. The scholarship will cover up to one online degree program (associate, bachelor, or master). The scholarship will be applied directly to the recipient's tuition for up to 60 semester hours or 36 consecutive months in the selected online degree program, whichever comes first.

This scholarship covers tuition and course technology fees only.

### Eligibility

An American Gold Star Mothers member in good standing for the last two years and must retain membership while on scholarship.

### Application Essay Questions

Applications and essays will be evaluated exclusively by three senior staff members each of CSU and verified by members of the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. National Executive Board, whose decision is final.

1. How are you currently serving Veterans and how would this scholarship further your opportunities to serve the Veteran community?
2. What are your projected goals for the next five years and how do you see college contributing to the achievement of these goals?
3. How would receiving this scholarship change your life?

### Verification Documents

1. Military Service Member's Name
2. Military Service Member's Branch of Service
3. Military Service Member's Rank/Title

**Apply Now**

The deadline to apply is **August 31, 2024**.

Please visit [ColumbiaSouthern.edu/GDS](https://ColumbiaSouthern.edu/GDS) for application materials and additional information.



### Important Dates

#### Applications Accepted

June 15–August 31, 2024

#### Award Presentation

The award presentation will coincide with the Gold Star Mother's Day activities each September in the National Capital Region (Washington, D.C.)

### Online Degree Programs at CSU (and many more)–

- » Business
- » Military Studies and Leadership
- » Fire Administration
- » Criminal Justice
- » Education
- » Health Care Administration
- » Occupational Safety and Health
- » Human Resource Management
- » Public Administration



# Proposed Bylaws Change – National Executive Board

**\*NOTE: Underlining and strike-through text is added for emphasis only to draw attention to specific proposed changes and will not appear in the final, approved version.**

## 40. Current:

Chapter Bylaws - Article I - Organization

Sec. 3. Those who desire to form a Chapter shall make application for a charter to the President of the Department in which they reside. The charter shall be issued by the National President and National Secretary upon receipt of the application properly executed by the charter members of the proposed Chapter.

## Proposed:

Sec. 3. Those who desire to form a Chapter shall notify the Department President and make application for a charter to the National Service Officer. The charter application shall be reviewed by the National Executive Board to ensure it is properly executed by the charter members of the proposed Chapter. If approved, a charter shall be issued and signed by the National President and National Secretary.

**Rationale:** Applications for charters are submitted to the National Service Officer and approved by the National Executive Board.

## 41. Proposed:

Chapter Bylaws - Article I - Organization

Add new Section 6:

Sec. 6. Each Chapter, by vote of its members, may designate the amount of its annual Chapter dues.

**Rationale:** To allow each Chapter to determine if they will have Chapter dues.

## 42. Current:

Chapter Bylaws - Article II - Officers

Sec. 2. The Chapter President may appoint a Corresponding Secretary, Historian, Custodian of Records, Community Service Chairman, VAVS Chairman, Americanism Chairman and, if deemed necessary by the Chapter, a Parliamentarian and Legislative Chairman.

## Proposed:

Sec. 2. The Chapter President may appoint a Corresponding Secretary, Historian, Custodian of Records, Community Service Chairman, VAVS Chairman, Americanism Chairman and, if deemed necessary by the Chapter, a Parliamentarian and Legislative Chairman.

**Rationale:** Only one Chapter and one Department currently lists this as a role they staff. As Chapters operate, this is no longer a role currently utilized.

## 43. Proposed:

Chapter Bylaws - Article III - Duties of Officers

Replace paragraphs delineated by alphabetic designation with Section numbers. Thus, it will be:

Sec. 1. The Chapter President ...

Sec. 2. The Chapter First Vice President ...

Etc.

Sec. 15. The Chapter Community Service Chair ...

**Rationale:** Clerical/administrative changes to be consistent with the section designations throughout the remainder of the C&BL document.

## 44. Proposed:

Chapter Bylaws - Article III - Duties of Officers

With the clerical change listed above, add the following sentence at the end of the description of duties of Sections 1 through 15.

“She shall perform other duties as assigned and at the request of the National President.”

**Rationale:** The listing of duties describes the general nature of each officers' duties and responsibilities. However, they should not be construed as an exhaustive list. All Department Board members may be required to perform duties outside of their normal responsibilities as needed for the operation of the organization.

## 45. Current:

Chapter Bylaws - Article III - Duties of Officers

With the clerical change listed above, the duties of the Department President becomes new Section 1.

(a) THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT shall perform the duties and exercise the powers usually incident to the chief executive's office. She shall preside at all meetings of the Chapter. She shall appoint all committees and is an ex officio member of same, except the Nominating Committee. She shall act as judge at all elections and obligate new members. She shall sign all checks drawn on the treasury for appropriations of money. All questions of debate shall be decided by vote of the Chapter.

## Proposed:

Sec. 1. THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT shall perform the duties and exercise the powers usually incident to the chief executive's office. She shall preside at all meetings of the Chapter. She shall appoint all committees and shall be an ex officio member of same, except the Nominating Committee. She shall act as judge at all elections and obligate new members. She shall approve all expenditures and



~~sign checks drawn on the treasury for appropriations of money. All questions of debate shall be decided by vote of the Chapter.~~

**Rationale:** It is important for the President to approve all expenses. The procedure for handling debated issues is covered in Robert's Rules of Order, which governs all AGSM meetings.

**46. Current:**

Chapter Bylaws - Article III - Duties of Officers

With the clerical change listed above, the duties of the Chapter Treasurer becomes new Section 6.

(f) THE CHAPTER TREASURER shall receive and disburse all funds of the Chapter, keep accurate accounts and give a statement of the financial condition of the Chapter at each meeting and at the end of her term. She shall pay all claims approved by the Chapter. She shall screen all new membership applications and send the application fee to the Department Treasurer. She shall notify all members when dues are payable and shall send annual Department and National per capitulas to the Department Treasurer by January 15th of each year. She shall have the books audited before the end of her term by three members of the Chapter, appointed by the President. Three signatures are required on all bank accounts, namely: Chapter President, Chapter Treasurer and one other officer, with any one signature required on Chapter checks.

**Proposed:**

~~Sec. 6. THE CHAPTER TREASURER shall receive and disburse all funds of the Chapter, keep accurate accounts and give a statement of the financial condition of the Chapter at each meeting and at the end of her term. She shall pay all claims approved by the Chapter. She shall screen all new membership applications and send the application fee to the Department Treasurer. She shall notify all members when dues are payable and shall send annual Department and National per capitulas to the Department Treasurer by January 15th of each year. She shall have the books audited before the end of her term by three members of the Chapter, appointed by the President. Three signatures are required on all bank accounts, namely: Chapter President, Chapter Treasurer and one other officer, with any one signature required on Chapter checks.~~

**Rationale:** The Chapter Treasurer does not screen new membership applications. That is the function of the National Service Officer. With new compliance procedures, Chapters should address who will be signatories on their checking account in the Chapter's Standing Rules.

**47. Proposed:**

Chapter Bylaws - Article III - Duties of Officers

Section (h) - Custodian of Records - eliminate this paragraph.

**Rationale:** Only one Chapter and one Department currently lists this as a role they staff. As Departments operate, this is no longer a role currently utilized.

**48. Current:**

Chapter Bylaws - Article III - Duties of Officers

With the clerical change listed above and the elimination of Sec. (h), the duties of the Chapter VAVS Chair becomes new Sec. II.

(I) THE CHAPTER VAVS CHAIRMAN shall render such services as the

Chapter directs to hospitalized veterans through the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Representative and in other facilities through the proper authorities.

**Proposed:**

Sec. II. THE CHAPTER VAVS CHAIRMAN shall render such services as the Chapter directs to coordinate and encourage volunteer service for all agencies in the VA system and render a report of such activities to the Department VAVS Chair.

**Rationale:** Service to Veterans within the VA system has grown to include more than just hospital-based services (e.g., Vet Centers, nursing homes, clinics, etc.).

**49. Proposed:**

Chapter Bylaws - Article IV - Duties of a Chapter

Add the following new Section 4.

4. To maintain compliance with all financial reporting requirements as shall be promulgated by the Internal Revenue Service, the state within which the Department operates and the National Executive Board.

**Rationale:** To add the requirement to maintain compliance with IRS and state regulations going forward.

**50. Current:**

Chapter Bylaws - Article V - Meetings

Sec. 2. The quorum necessary to hold a business meeting shall be determined according to the membership of the Chapter by vote of the Chapter.

**Proposed:**

Sec. 2. The quorum necessary to hold a business meeting shall be determined according to the membership of the Chapter as outlined in the Chapter's Standing Rules.

**Rationale:** To allow the Chapter to determine their operating procedures based on what works best for them.

**51. Current:**

Chapter Bylaws - Article VI - Conventions

Sec. 1. Each Chapter President, by virtue of her office, shall be a delegate to Department and National Conventions with one vote. She shall have no alternate. In addition, the Department President, Past Department Presidents and VAVS Representatives have a vote at Department Board Meetings and Department Conventions.

**Proposed:**

Sec. 1. Each Chapter President, by virtue of her office, shall be a delegate to Department and National Conventions with one vote. She shall have no alternate. ~~In addition, the Department President, Past Department Presidents and VAVS Representatives have a vote at Department Board Meetings and Department Conventions.~~

**Rationale:** This language pertains to Departments and not Chapters.

**52. Current:**

Chapter Bylaws - Article VI - Conventions

Sec. 2. Each Chapter in good standing is entitled to be represented

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

## PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE - NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

by one delegate and one alternate for every five members or major fraction thereof.

### Proposed:

Sec. 2. Each chartered Chapter in good standing is entitled to be represented by one delegate and one alternate for every five members or major fraction thereof.

**Rationale:** Members are "in good standing," not Chapters. Chapters are chartered.

### 53. Current:

Chapter Bylaws - Article IX - Dues

Sec. 2. (d) Members requesting a transfer from one Chapter to another must be in good standing in the Chapter she is leaving. The Chapter receiving such a transfer must vote in favor of the transfer for the transfer to be effective.

### Proposed:

Eliminate this subsection altogether in this section of the Chapter Bylaws.

**Rationale:** The process for transfers between Chapters is a function of AGSM National and is proposed to be moved to Article III of the National Constitution, as outlined above.

### 54. Current:

Chapter Bylaws - Article XI - Discipline

Any Chapter failing to meet its obligations as outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws or ceasing to function for six months as a Chapter of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., or refusing to pay any Department and National per capita shall upon order of the National Executive Board surrender its charter for cancellation. Upon failure to surrender such charter, immediate steps may be taken by the National Executive Board for its revocation, suspension or cancellation. See Article XI of the Constitution.

### Proposed:

Discipline shall be outlined in Article XI of the National Constitution and Code of Procedure of the same Article.

**Rationale:** The procedure for discipline is outlined in Article XI of the National Constitution and Code of Procedure of the same Article. The procedure for discipline should be consistent across both Departments and Chapters.

### 55. Current:

Chapter Bylaws - Article XII - Standing Rules

A Chapter may adopt Standing Rules at any regular business meeting, providing said Standing Rules have been read at the previous business meeting or have been mailed to each member of the Chapter at least fifteen days prior to the date of meeting at which the vote will be taken on them. All proposed Standing Rules must be approved by the Department Board as not being contrary to the Constitution and Bylaws.

### Proposed:

A Chapter shall adopt Standing Rules. The Standing Rules should be reviewed annually and proposed changes voted on at a regular business meeting. Standing Rules shall be submitted for approval to the Department Board as not being contrary to the National Constitution and Bylaws. Once approved, a copy of the Chapter Standing Rules shall be submitted to the National Secretary to be included in the Chapter's files at Headquarters.

**Rationale:** To address new compliance requirements and how each Chapter will handle compliance, Standing Rules will outline the procedures they will follow. As part of the duties of a Department to manage Chapters, they are the proper entity to perform the review of the Chapter's Standing Rules.

---

## Additional Proposed Change – NEB

### Current:

National Bylaws - Article IV - Eligibility and Membership  
Sec. 7. - Gold Star Fathers, Gold Star Siblings and Gold Star Grandparents are eligible to join as Associate Members. They pay no dues, hold no office and have no vote, but may be appointed as a Deputy to the representative at the VA Medical Center

### Proposed:

Sec. 7. - Gold Star Fathers, Gold Star Siblings, Gold Star Grandparents and Gold Star Stepfathers are eligible to join as Associate Members. They pay no dues, hold no office, and have no vote, but may be appointed as a Deputy to the representative at the VA Medical Center.

**Rationale:** For many years, Stepfathers have been accepted as Associate Members. This change is proposed simply to codify what is already being done.



## Giving Grace Grant

*Applications are being accepted*

The Grants Committee is currently accepting applications for the AGSM Giving Grace Grant. Qualifying events eligible for grant application include utility expenses (heating, electricity, water, etc.), housing (mortgage/rent), emergency housing repairs, food, medical/health care needs, and transportation issues (car repairs).

Grants will not be processed 1-30 June 2024 in order to prepare for National Convention. You are welcome to submit a request, but it will not be processed until 1 July 2024

To review Eligibility Requirements and complete an application, go to:  
[AmericanGoldStarMothers.org](http://AmericanGoldStarMothers.org)  
More... > Grant-Opportunities

### Questions?

Please contact the  
Giving Grace Grant Committee Chair at  
[AGSMGrants@AmericanGoldStarMothers.org](mailto:AGSMGrants@AmericanGoldStarMothers.org)





# 87<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention Rules

1. The 87th Annual National Convention will officially begin Saturday morning.
2. The printed program is the official order of business, subject to change as need may arise.
3. All Delegates, Department Presidents, Chapter Presidents, Past National Presidents and Officers, National Officers, Members, Associate Members and Guests will be required to complete the proper registration form.
4. Proper identification badges will be required for admission to all official Convention functions.
5. Only Members and Associate Members with proper identification badges shall be admitted to the business meeting.
6. Registration will close at 7:30 a.m. Saturday. If a Delegate is unable to vote due to illness or any other reason beyond her control, the Alternate may have her badge changed from Alternate to Delegate provided she does so before 8:00 a.m. local time on Saturday.
7. All cell phones and other mobile devices should be turned off during the meetings of the National Convention. Ring of a phone will result in a donation of \$50.00 to the charity of the National Presidents choice. This year's charity shall be for Mount Carmel Veterans Center.
8. There shall be no voting by proxy.
9. There shall be no electronic recording of any portion of the business meeting except as directed by the National President.
10. Delegates, Alternates and non-voting members present in the Convention room will be seated in assigned sections.
11. A member wishing to speak shall raise her hand or stand, as directed by the National President, to be recognized. After being recognized for the first time, she will address the Chair as "Madam President," state her name in full and identify her Chapter and Department before proceeding. If she is a National Officer, she shall give her name and the office she holds.
12. Anyone speaking without being recognized by the National President (or other presiding officer) will be asked to sit down. If the third request is not complied with, the person will be escorted from the room by the Sergeant-at-Arms and will not be allowed to return to the meeting.
13. No more than one (1) minute will be allowed for any Delegate, Alternate or Member to speak from the floor. No Delegate, Alternate, or Member may speak more than twice on the same subject, except by consent of the National President.
14. All Resolutions presented by the Resolutions Committee shall be read and voted upon following the reading and discussion. Delegates may also present Resolutions from the floor of the Convention.
15. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall present proposed amendments which have been reviewed by the National Executive Board and printed in the National newsletter with at least thirty (30) days' prior notice. Proposed amendments may be presented from the floor of the Convention but must receive a unanimous vote to pass.
16. The Nominations Committee shall present the slate of nominations at the Saturday business meeting of the Convention. Any nominations from the floor shall be presented immediately following.
17. Candidates nominated from the floor must be prepared with a letter of endorsement for the Chair of the Nominations Committee. Such letter of endorsement shall comply with all criteria set out in the 2024 Convention Call published in the March-April National newsletter. Letters of endorsement will not be returned.
18. A nominee whose name is on the slate presented by the Nominations Committee who has opposition from the floor shall have her qualifications read by the Chair of the Nominations Committee.
19. All votes will be submitted electronically, using the login information provided to all registered Delegates in advance of the opening of Convention.
20. The National President shall appoint an election judge and tellers. In the event paper ballots are necessary due to extenuating circumstances, only the judge and tellers will be allowed in the room where such paper ballots are being tallied.
21. All messages and communications shall be carried by the National Sergeant-at-Arms to the proper recipient.
22. No publicity, pictures or screenshot capture of information shall be released except through and as authorized by the National President.
23. White is the preferred official dress code of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., to be worn to the meetings of the National Convention.
24. Once the opening ceremony and business meeting starts, no one shall be permitted to enter or leave the room. If there is an emergency, a Page will escort you out of the meeting.
25. Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern all meetings of the National Convention.



# Vietnam War Veterans Day 29 March 2024

Lee-Ann Forsythe, National Historian, National IT Chair

On 29 March 2024, The Vietnam War Commemoration hosted a wreath-laying ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The wreaths represented each branch of the service as well as the National Guard and POW/MIA.

As we approached The Wall, we saw our friend Patrick Hughes, USMC, filming a man as he told the story of his father, who is still missing in action. Rick Holland is the son of TSgt Melvin A. Holland, USAF (Panel 44E Line 21), who became listed as MIA on 11 March 1968 while serving with Detachment 1, 1043rd Radar Evaluation Squadron. When we asked Rick about his father, he pulled out a small framed photograph and said, "That's my dad and this picture was taken on my 8th birthday." Each one of the more than 58,000 names on The Wall has a story, and each Vietnam Era Veteran holds a piece of those stories. On this day, we honor them and share our gratitude for their devotion to family and country.



Rick Holland introduces us to his father



Our escorts to lay flowers at The Wall



Patrick Hughes, USMC Vietnam Veteran places Never Forget flowers at The Wall

PHOTO CREDIT: PATRICK HUGHES



POW / MIA Wreath



Jan Scruggs, former Army Infantry in Vietnam, and Founder of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund

PHOTO CREDIT: PATRICK HUGHES





*Tsgt Melvin A Holland, USAF, MIA*



*The Vietnam Veterans Memorial 29 March 2024*



*Richard A Azzaro, USA, Vietnam Veteran, Honor Guard Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*



*National 1st Vice President, Patti Elliott, places Never Forget flowers at The Wall*



*National President, Pam Stemple, places Never Forget flowers at The Wall*



*Remembering Cpl Michael J. Crescenz, USA, Medal of Honor*

During the ceremony, each wreath was approached by a Vietnam Veteran or Gold Star Family Member paired with a junior enlisted service member with the haunting sounds of “Amazing Grace” played a short distance from The Wall. As we stood for a moment of silence, it seemed as if the sounds of the city faded away and the quiet was only broken by the low hum of the bagpipes playing Taps.

After the ceremony, we were invited to place Never Forget flowers at the apex of the wall with a small group of Veterans. It is truly a gift to stand at The Wall with a Vietnam Veteran. To see their faces reflected in the names of their friends and family and hear the stories, comfort the tears, and share the laughter is a singular experience. On behalf of a grateful nation, thank you for your service.



# Honoring Our Legacy

*Lee-Ann Forsythe, National Historian*

Each year, when the excitement of Convention subsides, the National Historian works with the National President to select a project for the year. The choices are endless, and it is hard to pick just one. This year, we focused on the impact of the Centennial of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., in 2028 and how the Gold Star Mothers of the past will impact the Gold Star Mothers who will build our future.

We have all heard the stories of Eleanor Boyd, Emogene Cupp, Theresa Davis, and Georgie Carter-Krell, but would you recognize the names of Elizabeth Millard, Anna Hagerty, or Betty Bryce? All these women and many more served as National President and each one made a lasting impact on our beloved organization and each one needs to be honored for their willingness to serve.

On Memorial Day weekend, the National Executive Board will unveil 4 plaques that will contain the names of the women who have served as American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., National President from 1928 – 2028. There will be 4 blank name plates where the names of the 24-25, 25-26, 26-27 and 27-28 National Presidents will be engraved at the end of their term in office. We hope that having these women's names in a place of pride at AGSM Headquarters will remind us of the 100 years of strength, resilience and dedication of each Member of AGSM and encourage us to continue their legacy for the next century and beyond.

---

## Are you a Chapter or Department VAVS Representative or Deputy?

*By Pam Stemple, National President, National VAVS Chair*

Are you a Chapter or Department VAVS Representative or Deputy? In addition to having a National VAVS Chair, we have the opportunity to appoint a National VAVS Deputy. The 2024-2025 National President will be appointing the Chair/Representative and Deputy. If you are currently serving at your local level and are interested in serving at the National level in this important role, please let us know at Convention. Generally, the VA prefers to have the National VAVS Representative and Deputy commit to serving at least a two-year term.

This year, the VA's CDCE National Conference is in St. Louis May 13-17. These meetings are informative and an opportunity to learn about new changes happening in the Voluntary Services area throughout the VA system. I will be attending to represent AGSM National, and I hope to see other local Representatives and/or Deputies.

### **Memorial Day Weekend Schedule Washington DC 24 - 27 May 2024**

#### Friday 24 May

6.00pm-8.00pm Dinner with Susquehanna Valley Riders

8.00pm Candlelight Vigil at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

#### Saturday 25 May

11.00am-1.30pm Rolling to Remember Reception at Women in Military Service for America Memorial (WIMSA)

#### Sunday 26 May

10.00am - 12.00pm Meet & Greet Pentagon Parking Lot

12.00pm Rolling to Remember

12.30pm-2.30pm Lunch with Susquehanna Valley Riders

#### Monday 27 May - Memorial Day

9.00am Memorial Day Observance at the National WWII Memorial

11.00am National Memorial Day Observance at the Memorial Amphitheater, Arlington National Cemetery

1.00pm Memorial Day Observance at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

4.15pm Memorial Day Observance at the Korean War Veterans Memorial

[AmericanGoldStarMothers.org](http://AmericanGoldStarMothers.org)





# Heartfelt Appreciation TO OUR DONORS

*American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. could not continue our work as a Veterans Service Organization without the continued support of our generous donors.*

## FEBRUARY 8 – MARCH 7, 2024



Sons of Norway  
Auxiliary Post VFW 2788  
VFW Auxiliary to CW5 David R. Carter

Military Order of the Purple Heart

Deborah Payne  
Castle Rock Chapter National Society of  
Daughters of the American Revolution



## We Hold in Loving Memory

*“I don’t think of all the misery, but of all the beauty that remains.” – Anne Frank*

Name	Date	Chapter	Department	Membership
Peggy Darington	2/14/24	Red River	TX/OK	Associate
Bethany Henderhott Sanford	3/18/23	Michigan	MI	Member
Jean Lensby	2/18/24	Milwaukee	WI	Member
Barbara Saba	12/19/21	Burlington	NJ	Member
Virginia Svir	11/15/22	Grace Siebold	DC	Member
Debra Ann Etheridge	10/14/23	Central PA	PA	Member
Edith Matthews	3/22/24	Albuquerque	NM	Member

*‘A good name is better than fine perfume,  
and the day of death better than the day of birth’*

**Ecclesiastes 7:1**

### Note to all Chaplains - All Death Notices go to:

Cathy Bordeaux, National Chaplain  
chaplain@americangoldstarmothers.org  
AmericanGoldStarMothers.org/chaplain





American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.  
2128 Leroy Place, NW  
Washington, DC 20008-1893  
202.265.0991  
www.americangoldstarmothers.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 557  
HARRISBURG, PA

**Address Service Requested**

**OBLIGATION OF AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, INC.**

IN THE PRESENCE OF ALMIGHTY GOD AND THESE AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS, DO, OF MY OWN FREE WILL AND ACCORD, MOST FAITHFULLY PROMISE THAT I WILL COMPLY WITH ALL THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THIS ORGANIZATION.

THAT I WILL NEVER WRONG, OR PERMIT A WRONG TO BE DONE, TO ANY MEMBER OF THIS ORGANIZATION IF IT IS IN MY POWER TO PREVENT IT.

SHOULD MY AFFILIATION WITH THIS ORGANIZATION CEASE IN ANY WAY, I SHALL CONSIDER THIS PLEDGE A LIFELONG OBLIGATION.

I WILL BEAR TRUE FAITH AND ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF MY COUNTRY'S HONOR.

ALL THIS I PROMISE ON MY HONOR AS A TRUE AMERICAN.

## *\$200 AGSM Chapter Grants are Available!*

Does your Chapter need financial assistance to help local veterans?  
National may be able to assist!

The grant application form is found in the "More" section on the AGSM website  
[AmericanGoldStarMothers.org](http://AmericanGoldStarMothers.org)  
Click on "Grant Opportunities" for the guidelines and online application.

There will be 5 Chapter Grants awarded at the end of every quarter!  
March, June, September, and December.

If you need assistance, please contact The Grant Committee at  
[AGSMGrants@AmericanGoldStarMothers.org](mailto:AGSMGrants@AmericanGoldStarMothers.org)

Grants will not be processed 1-30 June 2024 in order to prepare for National Convention.  
You are welcome to submit a request, but it will not be processed until 1 July 2024

*Apply for the Chapter Grant TODAY!*  
**AmericanGoldStarMothers.org**