



NATIONAL BIG DIPPER AUXILIARY NEWSLETTER



January 2025



Cheers to a Fresh Start!



Happy New Year! As we step into 2025, we're excited to bring you new opportunities, updates, and milestones. January is the perfect time to reflect on the past year's achievements and set our sights on exciting goals ahead. Thank you for being part of our journey. Here's to a year filled with growth and inspiration. Stay tuned for more updates we can't wait to share what's coming next!

We are setting a date for future publications of our newsletter. We want to focus on our monthly accomplishments so the newsletter we go out on the 27th of each month. That being said, if you have Big Dipper News to share, please send to our Editor, Sue Sanders, at newsletter.bd@bluestarmothers.us no later than the 20th of each month. We appreciate all who submit articles.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year!

Warm regards,

Connie M. Shuck,

Big Dipper President

Do you have Big Dipper news to share? Please submit your articles by the 20th of each month for publication. Submit to Sue Sanders newsletter.bd@bluestarmothers.us Put Newsletter in the Subject line.

New Year, New Me!

With a new year starting we tend to make New Year's resolutions. Before we do, I would like us to reflect on our achievements and challenges that we had in 2024 being a Big Dipper member. This year was my first for several Big Dipper experiences. First time as a member, first time attending a BSM convention, first time to attend "Fun Night" and first time to be on the Big Dipper board as your First VP.

I had no intention of becoming the Big Dipper 1VP. If I am being honest I didn't know much about it. As I was questioning friends around me about the mission and they felt as confused as me. My name was put into the hat by my chapter member. As I was sworn in this became an achievement and a challenge. First an achievement that was a true honor to be elected by fellow mothers. Mothers that I had met for the first time and hoped to continue friendships with, with this I was challenged to learn more about the rules and mission of Big Dipper Auxiliary. We had a brief crash course meeting the next morning with our new Big Dipper Board.

With that being said I came up with my resolutions as a Big Dipper officer. They are as follows:

1. Gain membership by expanding my social circle- I plan to reach out to every chapter and work with them to keep them informed of Big Dipper happenings.
2. Boost our JCEA Funds- Come up with new ways to raise money for JCEA.
3. Travel and Explore Michigan/Ohio- I would like to travel to Michigan and Ohio's Big Dipper meetings to support them in their endeavors.
4. Pursue Personal Development- On a personal note I will work on communication to be a better leader.

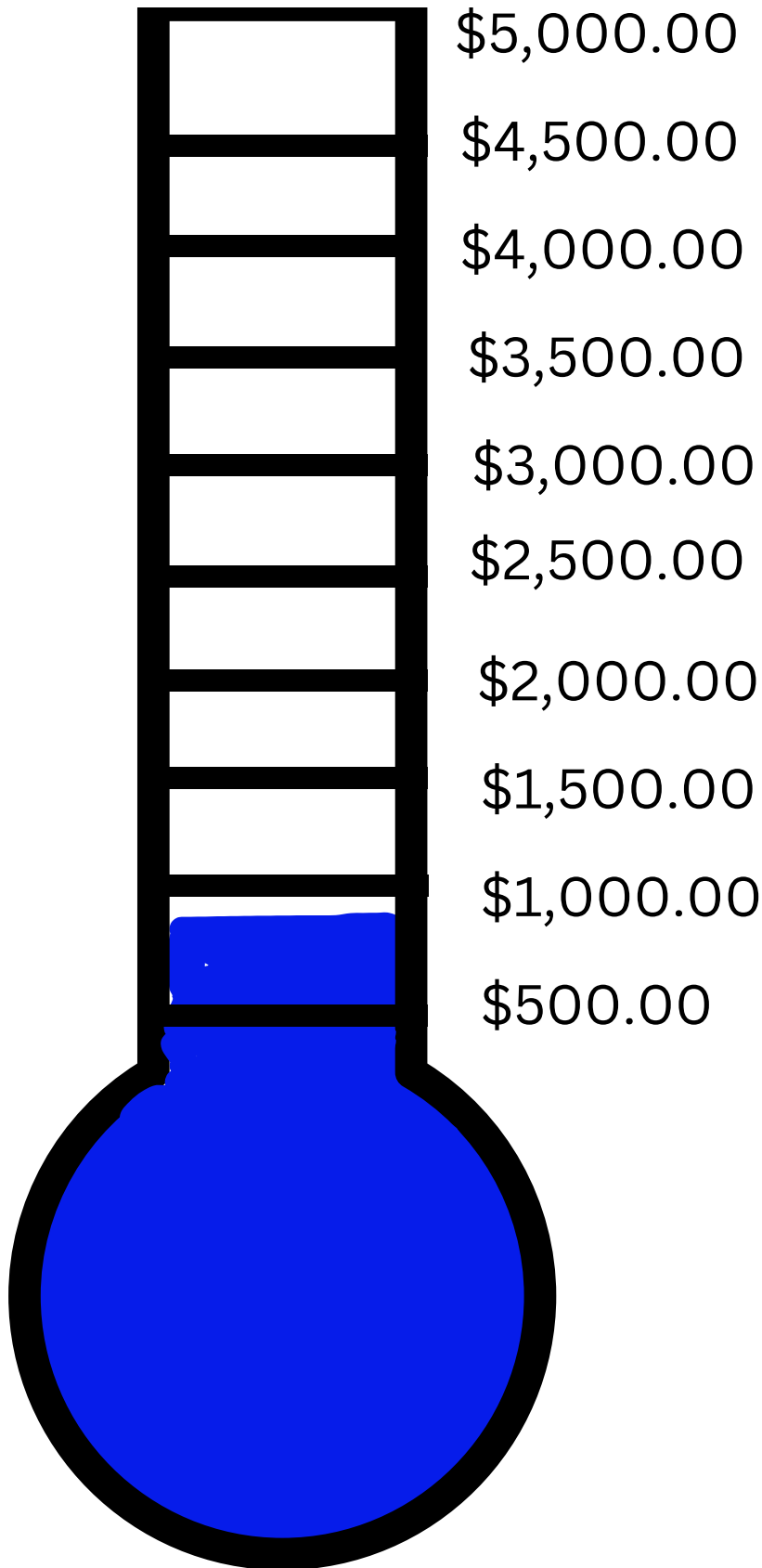
As you set your resolutions, be kind to yourself along the way, embrace the journey, and celebrate your accomplishments. The resolutions you establish now can contribute to a happier you!

When you help others and give back to your community, you create a positive ripple that affects many lives.

Respectfully Yours in Service,
Rebecca Collins,
1st VP Big Dipper Auxiliary 2024-2025
1vp.bd@bluestarmothers.us



JCEA Fundraising Goal



- Bonfire T-Shirts
\$136.55
- Cookie Dough
\$244.50
- JCEA Donations
\$600.00

Bonfire T-Shirt Fundraiser



Five colors to chose from

Charcoal Dark Heather Grey Midnight Navy

Red

Military Green

Chose from Eight different styles

Order your T-Shirt

Did you know Big Dipper will celebrate their 74th Anniversary this year?



Big Dipper was established in Milwaukee, WI on November 7, 1951. The theme that year for the First Fun Night was a Pajama Party.

The theme for the 2025 National Convention Big Dipper Fun Night will be Making Our Dreams Come True ~ Theme Song from Laverne & Shirley

To honor and celebrate our Big Dipper Anniversary we are having a Pajama Party this year for our Fun Night.

**PAJAMA
PARTY**

BIG DIPPER AUXILIARY 2024-2025 PRESENTS

Josephine Calenda
Educational Assistance
Opportunity

**NEED HELP GOING TO
SCHOOL?**

WHO CAN APPLY

- Active Duty US Military Member
- Retired US Military Member or Veteran
- Spouse, Child, Grandchild of Active Duty or Veteran
- BSMA paid Member
- Child, Grandchild of a paid BSMA Member



Applications available
in March 2025

Big Dipper Appointed Officers

Stephanie Manchen - Patriotic Instructor

Following a 20-year career in the Hotel Sales Industry, Stephanie Manchen shifted her focus to be a full-time Volunteer, concentrating on Military and Veteran Support organizations.

In 2021, Stephanie's only child Cooper, enlisted in the Navy as a Submariner. She eagerly began researching support groups for Military Moms and was introduced to Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. Stephanie quickly became active with a local Chapter and lead their Care Package Program through April 2024. Seeing an opportunity to expand the organizations outreach in North Texas, Stephanie and four other proud Military Moms chartered a new Chapter in May 2024. She is now the President of Blue Star Mothers of America, Yellow Rose TX20 and Big Dipper Patriotic Instructor.

Stephanie is also the Lead Volunteer for the USO at Dallas MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Station). She and her team took on the challenge of re-opening the USO location in May 2023, following a lengthy closure during the pandemic. Volunteers at MEPS have the honor of supporting our nation's newest Service Members as Recruits sign their contracts, formally take their oath of enlistment and ship-off to Bootcamp.

Stephanie resides in Frisco, TX with her husband, Frank, and their two pups, Abby and Leo. They are avid travelers and are always on the lookout for their next adventure.



Debbi Molen - Historian

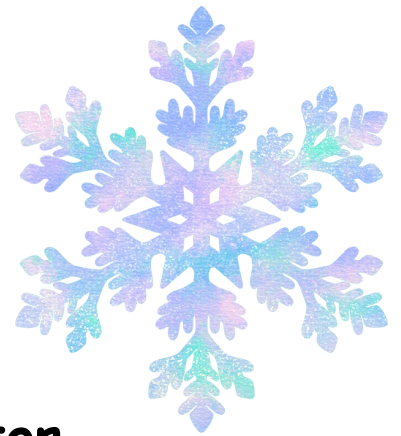
My name is Debbi Molen and I have been happily married to my husband Stan for 34 years (our anniversary is always during convention week, so I celebrate it with my BSM sisters each year). We have three sons, one daughter in love, Jamie, and six fabulous grandkids. Derek and Duane are Army Veterans and live in the PNW with their families. I did not hear about Blue Star Mothers until 2017, two years after my son Erik, joined the Air Force. He will be married in September 2025 to his fiancé Ashley.



I joined CA10 in 2017 and served on the executive board as financial secretary from April 2018 to September 2024. I am currently the Big Dipper Historian for 2024-2025 and feel honored to have been asked.

My hobbies outside of Blue Star Moms include time with my family (especially my grandkids), reading, walking and playing Bunco once a month.

I love all my Blue Star Mom sisters in CA10 and across the country, where we all serve military and Veterans in our communities. I can't wait for all the hugs in Milwaukee next summer.



Sue Sanders - Newsletter Editor

Hello Blue Star Sisters. I joined BSM in 2023 so I'm still a newbie. I live at Lake of the Ozarks, MO where I have lived for the better part of my life. I have two children and four grandchildren. My son joined the National Guard in 1999. I helped to raise my oldest grandson and I'm proud to say he is a Marine. I am so proud of them both.



Twenty one years ago after dating for a month, I married a Submariner. He is retiring at the end of December 2024 and we plan to start traveling. I am a Stampin' Up! ® demonstrator and love to make stamped greeting cards. Recently I started doing sublimation products to sell to support my other habits. I help my husband with his VFW Post and I am the 1st VP of my chapter, Central Missouri Blue Star Mothers MO5.

Big Dipper Membership

Are you a member of Big Dipper? It's not too late to join. You have two options to join and submit your payment of \$10 for the year.

By mail to:

National Big Dipper Financial Secretary Alethea Tennill
P.O. Box 313,
Columbia, MO 65205

Or through our website at: bluestarmothers.org

If you require further details, please feel free to reach out to me.

Best Wishes,
Rebecca Collins
1VP Big Dipper
1vp.bd@bluestarmothers.us

Contact the Big Dipper Board

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