

GREATER TAMPA BAY BLUE STAR MOTHERS CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



June 2019

Threshers Host to Military And Veterans Appreciation Night and GTBBSM Is There As One Of Our Own Is In The Honored Line-Up

The Tampa Bay Threshers Minor League Baseball Team (Philadelphia Phillies Farm Team) threw a wonderful Military and Veterans Appreciation Night complete with Hometown Heroes Card Deck and fireworks. GTBBSM was there as Francine LeVine stood on the field to receive the honor of having her Marine Corps daughter be a part of the 2019 Card Deck. Following is Francine's recollection of the event:

It was such an honor to have my daughter chosen as a Hometown Hero for the Clearwater Threshers Salute to the Military. In her absence, I was able to represent her on the field before the game. I was privileged to join with veterans and active duty personnel and made me remember my dad, a WWII veteran (of blessed memory). It is heartening to know that my daughter will forever be a part of a special community, not only of fellow veterans, but also of the greater population that honors her service. A special bonus was having her picture printed like a baseball card! She was touched when we sent her photos from the event. I can't wait to see her and get her to autograph a few cards!

There were so many support organizations that set up tables before the game. I was proud that Blue Star Mothers had a lot of interest in our display and questions about our group. We got to reach out to moms of the new recruits that were sworn in on the field. It was a great night for baseball, topped off with an impressive fireworks display.

GTBBSM thanks the Threshers Organization for this wonderful night and opportunity to make other families aware of GTBBSM. We all had the honor of watching a large crowd of Air Force and Army new recruits take their Oath of Service on the field prior to the game. Godspeed to all and a special Thanks! To the Threshers for their donation of hand sanitizer for our Warrior Games Athletes Children's Backpack Project. We appreciate all this organization has done and continues to do to support our military and veterans.



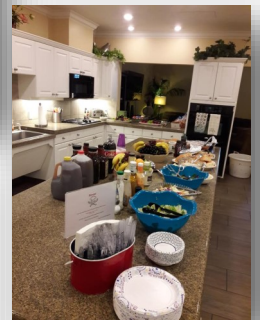
WARRIOR GAMES ATHLETES CHILDREN'S BACKPACK PROJECT UPDATE

Mission complete! Our intrepid group of packers packed 225 goodie bags for the children traveling with the Warriors competing in the DoD Warrior Games 2019 Tampa. Took 2 solid hours, but totally a labor of love. Many thanks to Barbara and Steve McGreal who turned their living room and dining room into a warehouse and assembly line. We also would like to thank the many donors of gifts monetary and tangible that went into each and every backpack; Hostess, Kelloggs, The Threshers Organizations, Oriental Trading Company, Heger Imaging, St. Marks The Evangelical Catholic Church, New Tampa Methodist Bible Study, Gold Star Mothers of Tampa Bay, just to name a few. Each child checking in will receive a filled backpack and a plush toy. Each family checking in will receive 4 bottles of Florida Orange Juice. Thank you so much to everyone who made this project possible!



GTBBSM FISHER HOUSE DINNER WELL RECEIVED!

Our annual Fisher House Dinner was a huge success—thanks Commander Michelle! Our dinner (moved from November to June) was a labor of love for the stalwart crew who cooked, bought, assembled, transported and served the residents of Fisher House at Haley VA. Truly another labor of love, the residents got to relax with a home cooked and scrumptious dinner in their own kitchen and living room. After spending hours supporting loved ones through treatments, appointments and long hours of “room time” a good meal they don’t have to figure out or buy is always welcome. Various organizations take part in providing dinner each Wednesday and GTBBSM is thrilled to be part of this group and give a little back to a group of caregivers and patients who have given so much and continue to give.





BARBARA'S CORNER

This month we're doing Barbara's Corner a little different. Lets get to know our GTBBSM on a more personal level. Whether she's representing GTBBSM at a Memorial Day Celebration, the Army Ball, or at various dedications and ceremonies, Barbara is first and foremost a Blue Star Mother just like us. So—who is Barbara McGreal?

Barbara is mom to SSgt Daniel C. Rutlege of the US Air Force. Daniel just re-enlisted for another 6 year tour serving as a medic with the 10th Medical Group, Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO. Neither Barbara, nor her husband are veterans however, Barbara's dad served in the Army in 1947. Her husband's side is all Air Force.

Barbara loves to go camping in their RV. She finds it extremely relaxing to get away from all the noise of the city. She's a voracious reader whose favorite authors include John Grisham and Sidney Sheldon. She loves most murder mystery books or drama involving lawyers, which could explain why she works for a law firm. Her favorites are the page turners you just can't put down until the end. She loves spending time in the yard pulling weeds and finds it a peaceful, mindful exercise. She also loves spending time on her lanai gazing at the lake and listening to the sea gulls, pelicans and other birds who share her space. Barbara also loves the Casino. To her its her Disney, the happiest place on earth—especially when she's winning!

Barbara also serves as Secretary to the Veterans Council of Hillsborough County, Inc. and attends the monthly meetings, takes notes, provides Minutes and Agendas to the council on a monthly basis. Barbara learned about Blue Star Mothers after her son joined the Air Force. She had no idea what the different stars signified. Once her son joined, she needed to find other people that were going through similar circumstances as her and that really understood how she was feeling. She feels her involvement with BSM does that and so much more.

So now you all know Barbara a little better and next month she'll return to speak in her own voice. We have a lot of exciting activities and events coming up—Barbara is always looking for your input, feedback and suggestions.



ABOUT THOSE SURVEYS...

Everyone should have received a survey from Barbara. If you haven't, please be sure to let her know because your feedback is very important! The first part of the survey is used to create a member profile so we can feature each and every one of us in our newsletter so all our members can get to know each other on a personal level since we don't always get the chance to do that at meetings and events. The second part of the survey is your chance to tell us what you think we're doing right, what other things you like to do or see, and suggestions for what you think we can do to improve communication, our reach in the community and opportunities to socialize and fundraise. GTBBSM is growing and we want to be as inclusive and reach as many new potential members who may need the club, want to support activities or just be a BSM. Your feedback is vital to us to do that and support our military and veteran children and our military and veteran community. National has asked each and every club no matter how big or small to have a Public Relations Chair. Unified messaging and ensuring we reach as many potential members as possible and continue to highlight BSM in the community is of paramount importance to them. To that end, Barbara has asked me to serve as Public Relations Chair and I have accepted. I have over 30 years experience in public relations, marketing and event planning and coordination as well 3 years as part of a local board for a non-profit close to my heart. I need your help making sure what I am writing and doing is reflective of our membership's goals and ideals. To quote High School Musical "We're all in this together". Please take the time to fill out your surveys. Your feedback and info makes a difference!

Cindy Thomas, Public Relations Chair (mother of 2LT Bobby Thomas, Airborne Ranger, 373 Cavalry Unit, Ft. Bragg, NC)

UPCOMING EVENTS

06/16/19 Deployed Troops Patriotic Packing,
American Legion Post 5

06/21/19 – 06/30/19 - Wounded Warrior Games

July—Athena House Ice Cream Social

07/04 19 - 4th of July Parade, Safety Harbor

July—Field of Honor – Tonja Dell-Anderson Family to
be recognized

August—BSM National Convention

August 3 @ noon, BSM Meeting Mission BBQ, 5602
W. Waters Ave., Tampa, FL (elections)

September—Patriot's Day, Veteran's Memorial Park

September 4 - BSM Meeting, American Legion Post
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October—Gold Star Mothers Appreciation Lunch

October—Field of Honor

October 2—BSM Meeting, American Legion Post 5



WE SALUTE YOU, VETERANS



Busch Gardens is proud to support military veterans with this exciting special offer. As a thank you for your service, we are offering veterans **one free ticket and up to three additional tickets for immediate family members**. Visit our website to verify your veteran status through ID.me and claim your tickets. Your tickets are good for one visit to Busch Gardens Tampa Bay now through July 15*.

You must claim your FREE tickets by June 9, so take advantage of this offer today!

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
WARRIOR GAMES

2019 Department of Defense
Warrior Games


<p><u>Friday, June 21</u> Golf Prelim, Eagles Golf Course 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.</p> <p><u>Saturday, June 22</u> Track, University of South Florida 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Golf Finals, Eagles Golf Course 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Mountain Bike Demonstration, Alafia State Park 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Opening Ceremony, Amalie Arena 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</p> <p><u>Sunday, June 23</u> Field, University of South Florida 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Wheelchair Tennis, University of South Florida 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Cycling Time Trial, Bayshore Boulevard 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</p> <p><u>Monday, June 24</u> Archery Prelim, Tampa Convention Center 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Powerlifting, Tampa Convention Center 2:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Wheelchair Basketball Prelim, Tampa Convention Center 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p><u>Tuesday, June 25</u> Archery Finals, Tampa Convention Center 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Indoor Rowing, Tampa Convention Center 2:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Wheelchair Basketball Prelim, Tampa Convention Center 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.</p> <p><u>Wednesday, June 26</u> Cycling Road Race, MacDill Air Force Base 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Wheelchair Rugby Prelim, Tampa Convention Center 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Sitting Volleyball Prelim, Tampa Convention Center 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.</p> <p><u>Thursday, June 27</u> Shooting Prelim, Tampa Convention Center 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Wheelchair Rugby Prelim, Tampa Convention Center 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Sitting Volleyball Prelim, Tampa Convention Center 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p><u>Friday, June 28</u> Shooting Finals, Tampa Convention Center 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Wheelchair Rugby Finals, Tampa Convention Center 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Wheelchair Basketball Finals, Tampa Convention Center 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.</p> <p><u>Saturday, June 29</u> Swimming, Long Aquatic Center 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.</p> <p><u>Sunday, June 30</u> Wheelchair Volleyball Finals, Yuengling Center 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Closing Ceremonies, Amalie Arena 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</p>
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NEXT

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Top Of What's Happening!**