

# THE PATRIOT STAR



The Golden Star USA Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization headquartered in Fishers, Indiana.

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**Mission:**

To provide education, resources, and pre-through post-deployment support to our active duty and honorably discharged Armed Forces personnel and their dependents.

**Vision:**

To provide invaluable support to our nation's military families in order to assist them in dealing with the unique stresses placed



The Golden Star USA Foundation is holding their Annual Gala, Yellow Ribbon of Love. The Gala provides guests with the opportunity to bid on one of a kind memorabilia, vacations, baskets, etc. at our silent and live auction. Thank you to the auction donors and volunteers. We could not do this annual event without you.

Held at the Ritz Charles, **Saturday, March 24, 2012, from 7:00-10:30 pm**, the Gala features a plated dinner, cash bar, silent/live auction, surprise celebrities and entertainment. General admission tickets are \$100 per person.

Attire: Formal.

Tickets to attend the VIP Cocktail Reception and Gala are \$150 per person. The VIP Reception will be located in the Green Room from 6:30-7:30pm.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available— Contact 888-317-8423 Ext 0 or visit [www.thegoldenstarusa.com](http://www.thegoldenstarusa.com) for more Gala information.

**Inside this issue:**

Meet Autumn Letendre, GSUSA President	2
Patriot Hall I — Honoring Fallen Heroes	2
Spotlight on... Patriot Guard Riders	3
Coping During the Holidays	3
MRE	4

**Did You Know...**

Facts from <http://www.dosomething.org/tipsandtools/11-facts-about-military-families>

- "There are approximately 1.5 million children and youth today in U.S. public schools whose parents are in the military."
- "More than 1 in 10 Active Duty members are married to someone who is also in the military."
- "Almost 40% of recently returned deployed parents show elevated anxiety and depression."

## Autumn Letendre Honored with the Broad Ripple Service to Mankind Award

On Wednesday, October 5th, Autumn Letendre, GSUSA's Founder/President, became the recipient of Broad Ripple's Service to Mankind award for her efforts in supporting Blue Star families. The Broad Ripple Sertoma Club has served Indianapolis since 1958, sponsoring charities through casino parties. The Club has also submitted Autumn's name for the Regional Award.

For more information about this club, [click here](#).



## Know the Heart of the GSUSA Foundation—Autumn Letendre

“A passionate advocate for military families.” This is how First Lady, Michelle Obama described GSUSA President and CEO, Autumn Letendre, during her speech at Maria Shriver’s Women’s Conference in 2010. Her passion to help military families comes from her own personal experience as a spouse of a Marine, and later as a Gold Star widow.

Autumn entered the military life when she married the love of her life, Brian Letendre on April 21, 2001. Within weeks of their marriage, Brian was deployed to Okinawa, Japan shortly after they had moved to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. In that first year, Autumn knew first-hand the stresses of deployment as Brian deployed to Cuba,

then to Iraq, while she taught at an elementary school and made a home for his return and their new baby to arrive. As Brian and U.S. troops moved into Iraq, Autumn welcomed their son, Dillon, to their family. Brian was able to return safely from Iraq and celebrate his new family.

In 2006, Brian’s love of country and patriotic service led him to volunteer to go back to Iraq. Autumn and Dillon moved back to her hometown in Indiana to be near her family during this deployment. On May 3, 2006, Autumn received news that military spouses never want to hear—her husband was killed in action in Iraq. Autumn turned her grief into a passion to

help other military families during deployment and loss. Through speaking engagements, comforting other Gold Star widows, and The Golden Star USA Foundation, Autumn has dedicated herself to offering support to military families and serving her country in a manner that honors her husband and all the servicemen and women who have died for our freedoms.

## Patriot Hall — Honoring Our Fallen Heroes

Today is Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, a day to honor and remember all those who died in the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. U.S. flags should fly at half-staff until sunset in honor of these fallen patriots.

Another way to honor these heroes or the service of any U.S. veteran who serves our country is to recognize their service on *The GSUSA Foundation* website’s Patriot Hall.

Each month, this newsletter will recognize some of our country’s brave heroes who gave all for a better tomorrow.



Vietnam War Memorial—Jacksonville, NC

*For courage. For sacrifices. For freedom.*

(From U.S. Department of Defense News Releases)

**Cpl. Adam J. Buyes**, 21, of Salem, OR, died Nov. 26 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Okinawa, Japan.

**Sgt. 1st Class Dennis R. Murray**, 38, of Red Boiling Springs, TN, died Nov. 21 in Kandahar province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit with an IED. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, KS.

**Sgt. 1st Class Dennis R. Murray**, 38, of Red Boiling Springs, TN, died Nov. 21 in Kandahar province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit with an IED. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, KS.

**Cpl. Zachary C. Reiff**, 22, of Preston, IA, died Nov. 21 of wounds suffered Nov. 18 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twenty-nine Palms, CA.

**Pfc. Jackie L. Diener II**, 20, of Boyne City, MI, died Nov. 21 in Kandahar province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit with small arms fire. He was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 71st Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, NY.



[http://www.thegoldenstarusa.com/patriot\\_hall.asp](http://www.thegoldenstarusa.com/patriot_hall.asp)

## Spotlight On: Patriot Guard Riders



The roar of a motorcycle may not be a sound most people would consider comforting, but for many Gold Star families this sound produced by Patriot Guard Riders is just that—comforting and peace of mind. Since 2005, Patriot Guard Riders have been, as their motto says, “Standing for Those Who Stood for US” ([patriotguard.org](http://patriotguard.org), 2011).

One such Patriot Guard Rider, Jeff Davis (pictured above) shared his experience with us. “Gold Star families are why I am so passionate about PGR,” expressed Mr. Davis. He explained that the PGR mission was initially to honor our fallen heroes, their families, and community while protecting them from protestors in a legal and non-violent manner. “These days our mission has expanded and we not only stand for those killed in action during our country’s current conflicts, but we stand for any veteran when they pass away. All that is required is that the family request the PGR to participate. We only come when the family requests us to

and only participate in the manner the family desires us to. We have escorted the remains of those KIA from the airport to their hometown; we have stood with American flags flying high at visitations and funerals; and we have participated in welcome home celebrations for those veterans returning home from deployment.” Footage provided by Mr. Davis of a PGR escort mission can be found [here](#), honoring SPC Daniel Lucas Elliot to his final resting place at Arlington National Cemetery.

Jeff Davis is one of many Patriot Guard Riders across our nation who voluntarily give their time to honor our veterans and their families. Mr. Davis said this [video](#) by NRA Life of Duty. tv best “sums up why [he] rides.”

To learn more about this organization, visit <http://patriotguard.org> or to contact your state’s PGR Captain, click [here](#).

(Photographs and video courtesy of owner, Jeff Davis)

**“Gold Star families are why I am so passionate about PGR.”**  
- Jeff Davis

## Coping During the Holidays when a Loved One is Not There

The holiday season can be extremely difficult especially for military families who have lost a member of their family as they honorably served our country or military families separated by deployment. The added stress of the holidays can lead some to a dark place consumed by grief or depression.

Recognizing the signs and knowing how to cope in a healthy manner is key to being able to enjoy the holiday season.

[GriefNet Library](#) offers a list of coping strategies for the holidays. The main message from this list is to do what you feel comfortable in doing and seek the help of others—you are not alone in this.

[WebMD](#) offers guidance on the signs/symptoms of depression. If you or a loved one are in need of help during the holidays, there are several organizations that can help (listed to the right), but do not hesitate to call 911 if the need is immediate.

There to HELP Military Families:

[Military One Source](#) - face-to-face counseling; telephone and online consultations

[TAPS](#) (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors)

National Suicide Prevention Hotline—

1-800-273-TALK

[SOFAR](#) (Strategic Outreach to Families of All Reservists)

[Give an Hour](#)—supporting families affected by the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.



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## NEXT ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS: Helping Children Through Deployment New Year - Healthy You!



## MRE: Military-inspired Recipes to Enjoy!

This section will be a place for military spouses to share their recipes with one another. If you have a special recipe to share, please email it to [Info@thegoldenstar.com](mailto:Info@thegoldenstar.com)

### RECIPE for a MILITARY SPOUSE

2 cups patriotism

1 gallon love

1/2 cup pride

1 quart of courage

A pinch of compassion

Combine ingredients well. Stir in red, white, and blue food coloring. Mix in a few miracles to make sure everything is done on time. Marinate overnight with tears. Sprinkle with "me" moments. Bake until deployment is over or retirement—your choice. Serves—family and country.

The following are recipes from Cathy Dalimonte's recipe box. She is a GSUSA board member and is the daughter of a retired Marine. These recipes have been enjoyed during the holidays by many in her family who have served our country honorably.

### BUTTER COOKIES

1 cup butter or margarine, softened

3/4 cup sugar

1 egg

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

Cream butter; gradually add sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla; beat well. Combine flour,

baking powder, and salt; add to creamed mixture, mixing well. Press dough into desired shapes onto ungreased cookie sheets. Bake at 350° for 10 to 12 minutes.

### DIVINITY

2 c. sugar

1 c. nutmeats

1/2 c. corn syrup

salt (pinch, or to taste)

1/2 c. boiling water

whites of 2 eggs, well beaten

Boil sugar, corn syrup and water until it forms a hard ball when dropped into cold water. Then pour slowly into beaten egg whites and beat until cool enough to pour into greased platter. Add nuts just before it is cool.