

Blue Star Memorial History

In 1946, National Garden Clubs, Inc. adopted a nationwide *Blue Star Memorial Highway Program* to be implemented as a living tribute to the men and women who served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. The Garden Club of New Jersey had begun this by planting 10,000 dogwood trees along Route 22 after WWII. The program was subsequently endorsed by all 50 states, including the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs. (FFGC). Later it was expanded to honor all those who have served, are serving, or will serve in the future.

The name commemorates the blue star placed in the windows or in front of homes during WWII to denote a member of the family was serving in the nation's Armed Forces. A silver star meant wounded, and a gold star signified deceased.

The Blue Star Memorial program has been expanded to include smaller By Way Markers for placement in public parks, civic and historical grounds. Another Blue Star Marker has been created for placement at Veterans Administration facilities, National Cemeteries, and other suitable civic locations. FFGC has installed this marker at every one of Florida's nine National Cemeteries.

To date, over 3,000 Blue Star Memorial Markers have been dedicated across the country, in all 50 states.

Special thanks to:

Matt Bagley & Bonita Bromeliads for his generous donation and cooperation with the planting.

David G. Hunter for the sound system and his special voice!

Members of Gulf Coast Garden Club and the Blue Star Committee who worked so many years to bring us to this day.

Our City of Bonita Springs for the continued cooperation of both Staff and elected officials.

Dedication of The Blue Star Memorial Marker

Old 41 & Reynolds St.
Bonita Springs, Florida

March 29, 2021 2 pm



Sponsored by
Gulf Coast Garden Club
&
The City of Bonita Springs



We are here today to pay tribute to our Armed Forces. While we go about our daily lives or while we sleep, the men and women of our Armed Forces fly the skies, sail the seas, and guard our shores. ensuring our safety. They stand ready at a moment's notice to defend our great country.

We must never take them for granted and we must never forget them AND WE DO NOT! With every step of the Honor Guard at the Tomb of thy Unknown Soldier and with every drumbeat on our nation's patriotic holidays,. WE REMEMBER. When we pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, WE REMEMBER At the sound of Reveille. WE REMEMBER, and as the last lingering note of Taps resounds in the distance, WE REMEMBER.

Today, WE REMEMBER all those who have set aside their personal goals and aspirations to preserve our way of life. We honor those fathers. mothers, brothers. sisters, sons, and daughters who have sacrificed their tomorrows for our todays.

And further REMEMBERING, we dedicate the Blue Star Memorial Marker being unveiled here today to the honor and glory of all those men and women who have served, are now serving or will serve in the Armed Forces of this proud nation so that we may continue to live in freedom. In life these loyal patriots give a full measure of devotion, and in death they gave their all for the land they loved... these United States of America.

Therefore. it is with great pride that we formally dedicate this Blue Star Memorial Marker in honor of our Veterans.

**This memorial shall stand as a symbol for *ALL TO SEE,*
*LEST WE FORGET THOSE WHO HELP KEEP US FREE.***

**WELCOME: Patricia Townsend-- President GCGC
Suzy Valentine--Chair- Blue Star Committee**

**PRESENTATION OF COLORS: American Legion Post 90
Cape Coral.**

NATIONAL ANTHEM: David G. Hunter

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Patricia Townsend

INVOCATION: Pastor Russ Winn

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS & OFFICIALS: Suzy Valentine

**HISTORY OF BLUE STAR MEMORIAL MARKERS:
Carolyn Lowry-Nation, Parliamentarian FFGC**

MILITARY RECOGNITION: Suzy Valentine

GOLD STAR FAMILIES TRIBUTE: Karen Faye

**UNVEILING OF MARKER: Rosita Aristo,
FFGC Blue Star Chair**

**DEDICATION OF MARKER:
Marge Hendon, Incoming FFGC President
Patricia Townsend**

**ACCEPTANCE OF MARKER: Patricia Townsend &
Our Entire Community**

**FLORAL TRIBUTE: Suzy Valentine, honoring David Southall,
our own GCGC Veteran.**

**GOD BLESS AMERICA: David G. Hunter
(All invited to join in)**

BENEDICTION: Pastor Russ Winn

TAPS: Tony Principato, Bugler BSA Troop 109, Bonita Springs

**HOSPITALTY: Refreshments offered by GCGC under the big
oak tree.**