

**Chaplain's Corner**  
**Bulletin #2, September 21, 2018.**

I recently learned more about our Gold Star Families, so here is some information you may find interesting . . .

What is a Gold Star?

The term Gold Star originated during World War II, when the war was ever present, and widow's and their families were not well supported. This was an era that had a financial hardship due to the depression, and funding to assist them was not available. As times changed, Congress saw a need to support those living family members and many organizations developed to give support. One of them was developed as a non-profit organization named "Gold Star Wives, WW II", in 1945. Two years later they became the "Gold Star Wives of America, Inc." They were granted a Federal Charter by Congress in New York, in December 1980, recognizing them as a unique organization providing a service that was not available from any other organization.

The Gold Star spouses are military widows/widowers who lost their loved one due to either an active duty death or a service-connected disability, awarded by the Veterans Administration, that caused and resulted in their death. Both categories are governed by United States Code Title 10 for an active duty death or USC Title 38. This organization lobbies before Congress to maintain support of those Gold Stars and their family members. To join this organization and become a member, one must meet the two criteria above. However, that does not preclude anyone from supporting a surviving military spouse or their family members. Being a Gold Star means being a survivor of someone who made the ultimate sacrifice in serving our country. Now, it's a matter of banning together and supporting them on their life journey.

"Gold Star Wives of America, Inc." is a national organization located in all 50 states. Here in Washington, you may contact the past Tahoma Chapter president and past National Board member Arlene Murray for more details, at "[a.murray2293@gmail.com](mailto:a.murray2293@gmail.com)". She is a surviving military spouse who has a wealth of information about survivors benefits and is more than willing to offer her support.

We also want to remember our Department President's Special Project, Captain Joseph House, in Port Angeles. They will provide respite for Gold Star Families on the journey from grief to survivor; from military community to civilian life. The Captain Joseph House Foundation is a one-of-a-kind non-profit corporation created to lend support to the Gold Star Families of our military's Fallen Heroes. The house offers them a place to start rebuilding while reflecting on things past and future, and to share their experiences with other Gold Star Families. They want the family members to know that they are committed to helping them rebuild, and they care deeply about their daily challenges. It's important that they know the sacrifice of their loved one – their Gold Star – will not be forgotten.

For information go to: [CPTJosephHouse@cjh.org](mailto:CPTJosephHouse@cjh.org). Or call Betsy Reed Schultz @ 360-460-7848. Loyally, Barbara Heston-Moore, Dept. Chaplain