

# THE CAPSULE

June 2023



Dear NARBW Members:  
The 79th NARBW National Convention in San Diego, CA was a great success. The convention was well attended and began on Friday morning with the Presentation of Colors by the San Diego Imperial Council. This presentation was followed by the Presidents Brunch recognizing our leaders, a Candidates Reception and Fun Night where we had a Beach Party and learned to hula by certified hula instructors. The theme for the event was “Beach Party”, which included a buffet dinner and entertainment provided by Mictlan Entertainment. Everyone was dressed in their lively fun Beach Party theme attire. It was an exciting time of laughter and fellowship. We hosted two excellent speakers: Mr. Darren Kettle, Chief Executive Officer Metrolink who shared his ex-

perience and his career growth in the railroad industry with Metrolink highlighting the advantages of Diversity in the Workforce and Mr. Otis Cliatt, II, President Pacific Harbor Line, Inc., whose presentation on “Don’t Allow Anyone to Control Your Narrative” was a great follow up to Mr. Kettle also emphasizing that every team needs to have diversity or the team will not grow. The banquet’s theme was “Old Hollywood” and some members and guests dressed reminiscent of the days in that era. At the banquet, eight (8) scholarship winners were announced and one of the winners was awarded the Doris Stemmer Scholarship.

As the host of this convention the San Diego chapter did an awesome job! They hosted a pre-convention tour which featured a yacht tour around the harbor of San Diego that sits near a naval military base. Ships were docked and training was in session at that time, so we had a chance to view glimpses of the exercises and fellow service men and women that protect our freedoms. We delighted in the little Navy’s Marine Mammal Program which trains bottlenose dolphins and California sea lions to detect, locate, mark, and recover objects in the harbors, coastal areas in

depth of the open sea. We ended the tour taking in the architecture of Coronado Bridge and later enjoying a scrumptious brunch. I am excited to report we have signed chapters to host the 2024 (Omaha) 2025 (Houston) and 2026 (Roanoke) conventions and am sure they will do a fantastic job. Hosting conventions has created challenges in the past but the commitment from the chapters shows the commitment to a strong NARBW future.

Continued, next page

THIS ISSUE	
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE	1-2
NATIONAL BOARD CORNER	3-4
WOMEN OF THE YEAR	5-9
SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS	10-12
CHAPTER NEWS	13-19
UPCOMING DATES	
Summer Board Meeting	July 8
Chapter Dues	Sep 10
Per Capita Reports	Sep 10
Capsule Deadline	Sep 30

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILWAY BUSINESS WOMEN

June 2023

The National Board will gather for our Summer Board Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada to plan for and to review the goals and accomplishments of our association. The Plans of Work will be accessible in early August, and I trust that each of our chapters will be planning for a momentous year with a focus on our goals: welfare, scholarship, and membership. Let us continue to revitalize our chapters by building on our strengths and reaching out to our railroad sisters. Listed below are the 2023/2024 Board and Committee Chairs.

Sylvia Long – 1st VP

Yolanda Barbosa – 2nd VP

Trischelle Baysden – 3rd VP

Jasmine Manley – Treasurer

Carol Gentilini– Secretary

Kay Leslie – Convention

Sandy Hall – Nominations

Nancy Von Dolteren – Publication

Peggy Cuellar – Scholarship

Dana Robles – Revisions/Jewelry

Rhonda Gomez – Welfare

Cynthia Chandler – Emeritus Council

I am continuing my goal of increasing communication between the chapters and the national level, learning from each other and motivating members to go out and recruit new members. Each of us was issued the challenge at the convention for each chapter to obtain two new members this coming year. I issue that challenge to each of you.

I continue to be so humbly honored and excited to be able to serve you as your National President. Thank you for your support and I am eagerly looking forward to another successful year.

Sincerely,

*Ida Carmouche*

National President

# NATIONAL BOARD CORNER



## National Association of Railway Business Women

### RESUME OF THE 79<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL CONVENTION SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA MAY 19-20, 2023

The formal opening was on Friday, May 19, 2023, at the Best Western Plus Island Palms. The invocation was given by Shamonda Jones of Southern California Chapter. Colors were presented by the San Diego Imperial Council, who also led the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. General Manager Barbara Thompson of the Best Western Plus Island Palms welcomed us to the hotel. Host Chapter Convention Chair Trischelle Baysden read the welcome on behalf of Chapter President Laurene Lopez. Past National President Theresa Harper gave the response. President Ida Carmouche introduced the National Board members and welcomed the Emeritus Council members present. Chapter Women of the Year were introduced by Cynthia Chandler of the Emeritus Council; three of the eight nominated women were present.

The Presidents Brunch was hosted by 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Rae Huebner. Presidents and chapter representatives read their activities for the past year. Past National Presidents/Emeritus members were introduced. Scholarship Chair Peggy Simon Cuellar reported on Scholarship Fund Donations. Welfare Chair Rhonda Gomez reported on chapter donations and presented guests Stephanie Nisan and Lauren Botticelli of The Animal Pad with a check for \$250 and several boxes of donated pet supplies, as our National Welfare Project for this convention. The National Woman of the Year was introduced: Congratulations to Melanie McKim of the Central Florida Chapter.

The afternoon Business Meeting opened with Credentials Chair Joyce Gutz announcing the voting strength at forty-five members, establishing a quorum. President Carmouche gave a State of NARBW address. Eleven of thirteen chapters were represented, along with two Members-At-Large. First time attendees were introduced. National Treasurer Jasmine Manley presented the Treasurer's reports which were discussed, amended, and approved as amended. Nominating Chair Melanie McKim presented the slate of officers for election; there were no nominations from the floor. Finance Chair Rae Huebner presented the Proposed General Operating Budget, adopted for 2023-2024. National Secretary, Dana Robles, and Jewelry and Revisions Chair Michele Williams presented their reports. President Carmouche recognized members Jacqueline Watkins and CleLeatha Shaw as honored in the Metra's Women's Hall of Fame.

On Saturday, a Memorial Service was presented by Membership Chair Renee Noble, honoring six members who passed away the past year, and two who passed in 2021. Nancy Von Dolteren gave the invocation and the benediction. Sandy Hall, Jacksonville, and Linda Taylor, Roanoke, gave remarks on those honored from their respective chapters.

The second day of business meetings began with a voting strength of forty-eight members. National President Carmouche asked Past National President Laura Gutteridge Anos to move for a voice election of the unopposed, nominated officers. Laura then performed the installation ceremony for the new officers: Yolanda Barbosa is the incoming National 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Trischelle Baysden is the incoming National 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, and Carol Gentilini is the incoming National Secretary.

At the Membership Luncheon 3<sup>rd</sup> VP and Membership Chair Renee Noble welcomed chapters and Membership Chairs in attendance. Convention Chair Trischelle Baysden introduced our guest speaker, Darren Kettle, CEO of Metrolink. Mr. Kettle was presented with a donation of \$100 to the California Transportation Foundation.

During the afternoon Business Meeting Treasurer Jasmine Manley introduced guest speaker Otis Cliatt II, President of Pacific Harbor Line, Inc. NARBW donated \$100 to The Fischer House of Long Beach on Mr. Cliatt's behalf. Emeritus Cynthia Chandler introduced our Public Affairs speaker, Brandi Childress, a consultant with Kimley-Horn. A donation of \$100 was made on behalf of Ms. Childress, to the Bill Wilson Center.

President Carmouche introduced 2024 Convention Chair, Kay Leslie, who spoke on the Omaha Chapter's plans. President Carmouche announced the 2025 convention will be hosted by the Houston Chapter and the 2026 convention will be hosted by Roanoke. Final business conducted included the first-time members addressing the body, and an introduction of the new National Board of Officers and Chair positions. The Courtesy Resolutions were read and the host chapter, Southern California, the Convention Chair Trischelle Baysden, and Southern California members were recognized and thanked. Chapter and National drawings and raffles were held; the meeting was adjourned at 3:41 PM.

At the formal Banquet, Scholarship Chair Peggy Simon Cuellar presented the Scholarship Program, honoring eight scholarship winners.

# NATIONAL BOARD CORNER



## National Association of Railway Business Women

### FOUNDERS DAY IS FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup>!

For our celebration this year, 2023, we choose to honor the past, celebrate the present and look forward to the future. Our founders were women who saw the vision of the organization and set themselves out on a mission to transform that vision into reality. NARBW has a long history – the vision began in 1921 with Hazel Cornell and became a recognized organization in Minnesota in 1925. The vision and dedication of the members continued to inspire more women to join from locations near and far. In 1941 NARBW attained even greater recognition and was certified as a NATIONAL organization.

Chapters were asked to write about their favorite charitable effort of 2022, and to identify a new charitable effort for 2023. At our convention, a random drawing was held of the 7 chapters who submitted entries. The Founders Day Medal for 2023 was won by the Philadelphia Chapter. Congratulations, Philly! The philanthropy of NARBW is clearly demonstrated by all of our chapters. You are all amazing women. Here is a synopsis of the submissions received this year.

**The Central Florida Chapter's** favorite charitable event was their Christmas Gifts for Children project. Members earn money throughout the year and member volunteers shop for the wish list gifts for the chosen recipients. Gifts are delivered to the families by members, all of whom receive much joy and satisfaction from participating in the project. For the future Central Florida would like to perform volunteer work at a local animal shelter as a group.

**The Houston Chapter's** favorite charitable effort was the God's Garage Crockpot Raffle. The chapter brought in over \$500 which they used to purchase 25 new crockpots for women enrolled in the program. God's Garage gives women the tools they need and the mentoring that teaches them how to cook and care for their children. The program provides hope and avenues for these women to succeed in life. In the future Houston plans on incorporating more hands-on volunteer hours helping in their community.

**The Jacksonville Chapter's** favorite charitable effort was adopting nine seniors and fulfilling their wish lists through Jewish Family and Community Services. Originally asking for six seniors, the chapter found the generosity of their members enabled them to add three more recipients. Only knowing the initials, age and gender of the seniors, it was enough to fulfill wishes such as a toaster, a blanket, Russian or Ukrainian cookies, books, and basic clothing items. In the future Jacksonville will be holding a Pet Supply drive and a drive to provide essentials to the homeless.

**The Omaha Chapter's** favorite charitable effort was their "Pass the Purse" where the chapter donates 200 gently used purses to the local domestic abuse shelter. 100 are delivered twice a year, spring and fall; members fill the purses with Kleenex, pens and pads, combs, manicure kits, ChapSticks, wallets, gift cards, etc. When the resident women "graduate" from the shelter's classes they are able to choose a purse. The chapter is so grateful to be able to help this community shelter generously. In the future Houston looks forward to supporting a new local charity called "Gifts from the Heart" which provides nursing home memory care units around Omaha with "shops" for seniors to "buy" items for friends and family. This year they hope to help this charity more than double the number of memory care units served.

**The Philadelphia Chapter's** favorite charity was the annual Holiday Toy & Gift drive at their Holiday Luncheon. This year the Eliza Shirley House, a Salvation Army emergency residence for women and children. This year over 40 families in residence over the holiday season were the beneficiaries of over 500 toys and gifts from members and their families and friends. When friends at a prominent local pottery studio heard about it they helped by donating gift cards and jewelry to benefit the women and teens. In the future the Philadelphia Chapter will be supporting a new charity, Hope for Hospice, a national charity that commemorates a railroad sister's daughter, a hospice nurse, who passed away weeks before her 2021 wedding.

**The Roanoke Chapter's** favorite charitable effort was buying refrigerators for their local Ronald McDonald House's guest rooms. Through their great traditional and legendary nut sales, the Roanoke Chapter has a head start to fulfill their chapter's welfare wishes in 2023. The chapter is looking forward to a great year ahead of giving, including fulfilling wish lists for seniors.

**The Southern California Chapter's** favorite charitable effort was their 2022 Holiday Drive for Elizabeth House (EH) a safe place for unhoused pregnant women and their families. They fulfilled their campaign through sales through their Amazon Wish List, choosing this charity to support the underserved. They surpassed their goal through members, family and friends, and were able to send 30 items to the organization. In the future "SoCal" intends to work with Dress for Success, to focus on a similar charity that empowers women to achieve economic independence with a network that includes professional attire, as well as many additional tools to help them thrive in work and life.

# 2023 CHAPTER WOMEN OF THE YEAR

## Chicago Chapter – Cleleatha Shaw

CleLeatha Shaw has been a member of the Chicago Chapter for six years. She has been Publications Chair, Vice-President, Convention Committee member, and is now Chapter President. While President, the Chapter has launched its first Scholarship Program. For the 2022 Convention, Cle created and moderated the "Breaking the Glass Ceiling" panel discussion, coordinated the logistics for the pre-convention tour and created the centerpiece, and secured Metra's Train and Crew Dispatch Operations Center Director, Greg Godfrey, to be a guest speaker.

In the Community, she participated in Chapter welfare projects including the Ronald McDonald House, Making Strides Breast Cancer Walk, Chicago Food Depository, and Knight Ministries, as well as fundraisers. She has recruited several members. Cle supports the Epilepsy Foundation, volunteers at Mt. Olive Baptist Church, sorting and distributing clothing to the homeless and underserved. She donates items to the homeless shelter "The Mission" and has cooked food for the "Tent City". Cle has 25 years of railroad service, beginning at Norfolk Southern. She held positions of Track Standing Order Clerk, In and Out Gate Clerk, Notifications Clerk, and Tower Operator. Cle broke the glass ceiling in the latter position by becoming the first African American female to qualify as a Tower Operator at Landers Yard. For the last 21 years, she has worked at Metra. She was a crew caller for 15 years, then moved into her current position as Manager-Crew Management. Cle manages 15 employees, leading a department that staffs over 1800 trains daily. She is a member of the Chicago Railroad Superintendent's Association (CRSA), where she was Secretary and is currently Vice President. Cle was selected as a Railway Age Magazine's 2022 "Women in Rail" Award recipient. She was inducted into Metra's first "Women's Hall of Fame".

Cle is the mother of two, a grandmother of 1, sister to two siblings, and an aunt. She is chairwoman of the Chicago Committee for her family reunion and has raised money to award four \$2,000 scholarships per year for family members.



## Houston Chapter – Cookie Grant

Cookie joined NARBW in 1985 but since she retired in 2015, she has been very active in the Houston Chapter. She has been Chapter President and is now Secretary and Co-Welfare Chair. This year, the Welfare Committee has completed numerous projects, including God's Garage, Little Free Library, 240 packages of snacks, bottled water, and socks for the homeless, Christmas Family and Houston Food Bank. She has been instrumental in the Chapter obtaining and retaining new members. Cookie was employed by the Missouri Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads for 35 years as a clerk and a train dispatcher. She was a *multi-year* Guardian Award recipient for achieving a record of zero safety infractions, served as a PEER trainer, and designated apprentice dispatcher trainer because of her excellent safety record and service to the UP. She mentored dozens of male and female co-workers; she especially cared for the young female dispatchers. She would invite new employees (especially those who might not have family close) to church or to her home, or even spend an afternoon shopping with them.

In the Community, Cookie works at and is a strong leader in her church. She has prepared hundreds of meals for numerous occasions or made a home cooked meal for someone who is going through tough times. Cookie is the Chartering President for the Altrusa International of Montgomery County, TX, a member of Padre Island Enrichment Club (P.I.E.), and Parrot Heads of Corpus Christi, whose monthly happy hour spotlights a charity of the month (i.e. The Texas Sealife Center, Casa for Foster Kids, Coastal Bend Food Bank, Ronald McDonald House, The Lost Dogs of Texas, Flour Bluff ISD, Timmons Ministry and Purple Door). Cookie has been married to her husband Joey Grant for 36 years. They raised four children, three of which were adopted. They are also raising their 13-year-old grandson. She is the Gigi of seven grandchildren, with one more on the way.

## Jacksonville Chapter – Richalyn Williams

Richalyn Williams has been with CSX Transportation for 17 years and is currently a dispatcher in Network Operations. She has been a dedicated member of the Jacksonville Chapter since joining in 2015, holding double duties as an Operation Lifesaver Chair and Interim Publications Chair. She was a Page at the 2022 National convention. Richalyn is also active in the CSX African American Inclusion Group (AAIG), supporting such programs as Black Expo, Edward Waters College Mentorship and Martin Luther King Service Day. She is a member of Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist Church.

In the Community, Richalyn volunteers at the MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation, working with youth to not only teach them how to play tennis, but to assist with homework; Operation Homefront, a program which gives back to those who serve our country and our communities, including service members, first responders, and their families. (through this program, she volunteers with the Star-Spangled Baby Shower, which makes it easier for our service members to welcome the newest patriot); American Cancer Society, where she gives rides to patients to chemo treatments (she does this because when her Mom had cancer, she was unable to take her due to her work schedule...ACS volunteers provided a ride to the hospital and Richalyn would join her after work); Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville, started 24 years ago to provide toys to children in need during the holidays; and American Association of Respiratory Care (AARC). Prior to working at CSX, Richalyn worked as a Respiratory Therapist for 13 years. She still has her license and volunteers for CPR classes once a quarter. As an Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteer (OLAV), sharing the rail safety message is her passion. Volunteer opportunities include a college career fair at the University of North Florida, William M. Raines High School, Rail Safety Week, and North Pole Express Day. She loves to share the rail safety message to keep citizens safe around railroad crossings and tracks. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her daughter, her son, and her grandson Trenton, who's graduating from high school this year.



## Omaha Chapter – Anne Menichetti

Anne joined the Omaha Chapter of NARBW in 2014. She was the Chapter Finance Chairman from 2014-2016 and has been Chapter Secretary since 2016. She was a member of the Chapter Bylaws committee and is currently on the Audit committee. She recruited her daughter, Tristen, who was the recipient of two national scholarships. Anne began her railroad career with the Union Pacific Railroad in 2004 as a customer service rep in the NCSC. She then worked in Timekeeping, Finance, and currently works in Engineering as a Manager II in the NonOps Bulletin and Assignment group. She manages five bulletin and assignment agreement clerks that process 21,000 BMW job bulletins a year and over 15,000 TRM trouble tickets a year.



In the Community, Anne financially supports Little Giants Foundation, United Way, Friend to Friend, Children of the Night, and Ashland-Greenwood Public Schools. She enjoys gatherings with her children, grandchildren and extended family members; reading; tropical vacations (especially Cancun, Cozumel, Cabo and Jamaica); camping (they have a spot on the Missouri river); hosting family and friends for parties; boating; and taking golf cart rides; attending car shows and entering their 2011 Synergy Green custom painted Camaro; and she recently discovered golf and even though she and her husband, Joe, stink, they really enjoy it! Joe is a post frame building territory salesman, and they have four daughters (Ashlee, Brittany, Chelsea, Tristen—a member of NARBW), a son Ryan, and nine grandchildren. They also have a cat (Noodle) and three Chihuahuas (Jose, Bella, and Bear).



## Philadelphia Chapter – Kathryn Bolich

Kay has been a member of NARBW for over 37 years and has held every office and chairwoman position in the Philadelphia Chapter (except Press & Publicity). Her sense of commitment and long-standing volunteering is amazing. She is currently the Ways and Means Chair, a position she has held for approximately 20 years. Kay handles the Chapter fundraisers and financials for social outings and the Holiday Silent auction. She attends all regular meetings, special events, and fundraisers.

In the Community, Kay generously gives of her time and money to NARBW charities including the Eliza Shirley Salvation Army Shelter for Abused Women and Children, Ukraine Relief Fund and St. John's Mission for homeless men. She visits shut-in members and reaches out to members who are unable to attend meetings. Kay was hired in 1956 by the Pennsylvania Railroad. She spent 18 years in an entry level position in the mailroom; she worked in various positions in finance and accounting (including statistics, mileage, and billing). She constantly built her skills, focusing on moving up within the company. Early on, Kay took advantage of any training offered, learning to use the comptometer (a calculating machine) which gave her the opportunity to use her skills and qualifications in the world of accounting and finance for her entire career. She especially enjoyed her time working in State Billing and Statistics. She taught co-workers what she had learned to help them move into other positions. Kay was forced to retire in 1999, at the age of 61, as the Secretary to the AVP of Finance, during one of the major shake ups with Conrail and CSX. Kay has enjoyed a well-traveled life. When she was 22, she took a 7000 mile, 5-week cross country trip with girlfriends. During her 39 ½ year marriage to Bob, she and Bob traveled to Bermuda, France, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Brussels, Holland, the Bahamas, US Virgin Islands, Jamaica, Mexico, and Canada, visiting several of these locations numerous times. Kay was widowed when she lost the love of her life, Bob, in 2006. Kay continues to this day to be a vital and very important member of the Philadelphia Chapter. Without her dedication and commitment, the Chapter would not be as successful as it is today.

## Roanoke Chapter – Gwen Kropff

Gwen has been a member of the Roanoke Chapter since 2014 and is currently serving as the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. Since joining the Chapter, she has been an active member, leading the Scholarship Committee as Chair prior to stepping into the 1<sup>st</sup> VP's position this past year. As 1<sup>st</sup> VP, she is also the Coordinating Chairman whose duties include coordinating the committee chairs to determine hosting duties and any other duties as assigned. Gwen's attention to detail and her organizational skills are just some of her attributes.

In the Community, Gwen is ready to volunteer and support our many endeavors as a Chapter by delivering tab tops, toiletries, and other supplies to the local Ronald McDonald House, the Local Office on Aging (LOA), the Rescue Mission and anywhere else she can be of assistance. Gwen is also very active in her community and church. At church, she is President of the Women's Fellowship. She and her husband sing in the choir. She helps with Bible School, is on the Nominating and Personnel Committees, and the Beautification Committee. Gwen is a member of the Busy Bees Sewing Group, which make quilts that are donated to the Rescue Mission and, if the group is made aware, to needy families (such as if a home burns, etc.). In addition to her church activities, Gwen is on the Board and is also Recording Secretary to The Giving Back Society, which is a local organization whose mission is to provide a wide variety of informational, social, and supportive services for underprivileged and underserved children, youth, and adults. Gwen's railroad connection is through her husband, Jim. She supported and moved with him from city-to-city and state-to-state while working in her nursing career (she has a degree in nursing) and raising their son. As a young girl, Gwen said she always wanted to be a court recorder but found nursing to be her true passion.





## Southern California Chapter – Ilyssa DeCasperis

As a member of the SoCal Chapter, Ilyssa DeCasperis has assisted in recommending affiliate links to help the Chapter in passive fundraising. She assisted in the first issue of the Chapter’s newsletter “ROW” (Right of Way) to modernize their communication. She is the current Sergeant-at-Arms and is working with Convention Chair Trischelle Baysden to make the 2023 Convention a great event.

In the Community, she is the co-founder of CompelAmerica, dedicated to eradicating bullying (childhood to adults); she started the “Canyon Lake 9/11 Tribute in Light” in memory and honor of those who died survived, or continue to live through illnesses acquired during search, rescue, and recovery. All donations go to an organization that aids vets and first responders. She contacted non-profit Tunnel to Tower to help a pregnant wife and her two sons get a mortgage free home after her husband, a deputy sheriff, died in the line of duty. Ilyssa supports the Southern California American Heart Association, is a member of the Forbes Human Resources Council, and Board of Advisors for Customer Experience at UC Irvine. Ilyssa is the first Chief People Officer at Metrolink/SCRRA. She represented Metrolink in APTA’s Racial Equity Pilot Program and developed a team of employees to discuss how diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility could be enhanced. As a hearing officer at the NYC Transit Authority Labor Relations, she created a program where staff from various departments could network. Ilyssa co-chaired the company’s annual giving event; she collected recipes from staff and published a cookbook “Cooking Your Way.” Over \$10,000 was raised, which was donated to various charitable organizations. As an HR exec, she has a solid background in Labor and Employee Relations. She practices collaboration to create trust, earn respect, build relationships, discuss issues, and find solutions to walk away with an understanding of what was accomplished. Then employees and employer are satisfied, creating a stronger and trusting workforce.



# SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

## 2023 NATIONAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR Central Florida Chapter — Melanie McKim



Melanie joined the Indianapolis Circle City Chapter in 2002 and was Chapter president from 2004-2005. Since then, she's held several National Board positions including National Scholarship Chair, National Convention Chair, District #2 Director, National Welfare Chair, 3<sup>rd</sup> VP, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, and National President for four years. She is very proud to have been able to help lead NARBW through the pandemic years while serving as the National President. She was able to help guide the organization through better communications with the use of Zoom meetings, conference calls and emails. She encouraged the local Chapters to continue to hold their meetings remotely as well.

She is currently serving as the National Nominating Chair and as the Central Florida Chapter's Membership Chair, a position she's held for 7 years. Melanie was the catalyst for starting the Central Florida Chapter. She was instrumental in helping the Chicago Chapter with its revival.

She has shown her community support by being involved with The Outreach Mission in Sanford, FL., The Pace Center for Girls Ormond Beach, The Neighborhood Center, the Salvation Army in DeLand, FL, and The United Methodist Children's Home in Enterprise, FL. She has hosted several chapter fundraising events at her home, including the Chapter's almost annual garage sale!

Melanie began her 33-year railroad career in 1990 as a Clerk. She was also a Timekeeper, a Material Control Clerk, a Foreman 3 Scheduling Overhauler and Manager Planner at the Amtrak Beech

Grove Facility. In 2011 she moved to South Florida as a Systems Specialist and currently works out of the Auto Train Facility in Sanford as a Lead Senior Business System Specialist. She won The Amtrak President's Safety and Service Award in 2006 for Sustained Excellence and is currently a member of Amtrak's Notch 8 Group. She has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Management from the University of Phoenix.

She is currently involved in a new work project entitled "Procurement Planning for Material Demand to Supply Integrated Business Product." She has spent many hours traveling and training other employees in different parts of the country sharing her knowledge and helping them to become proficient in managing and utilizing this program.

When not busy working and serving in her Board positions, she enjoys traveling with her husband Ray, taking walks, including walks for charities with her fierce teacup Yorkie Jax, and playing pickle ball three days a week with her lady friends.

Congratulations Melanie. NARBW's National Woman of the Year.

# 2023 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

## ALEXIA WICKERHAM

Alexia turned 18 years old in March! She currently works at Biggby coffee while completing her senior year of high school. She is beyond excited to continue her studies through a consortium program at Northwest State for the Occupational Therapy Assistant program. Throughout school she has participated in Cross country, basketball, FFA and serves on the yearbook staff. Upon completion of her associate degree, she plans to work at a local hospital or nursing home. Alexia recently purchased her first car which gets her to class and back. She is so grateful for the help this scholarship will provide in assisting with the cost of college. She is excited to begin this new journey which will allow her to fulfill her goal of helping others, something she has enjoyed doing her entire life. She looks forward to making new friends and continue on the path of realizing her dreams. Alexia is sponsored by her grandmother, MAL, Connie Hunt.



## ASHTEN ROSE



Ashten was born in Wichita, Kansas and has resided in Spring, Texas since she was five. Ashten feels extremely blessed to have grown up in a great community. Ashten participated in competitive and high school cheer most of her teenage years, where she grew. It was through her volunteer experiences in her community that she discovered her passion of caring for others. After graduating from Klein Oak High School, Ashten started working towards her goal of becoming a nurse. Her college journey began at Texas Tech in the Fall of 2021 where she became a member of the Pre-Nursing Association and a Certified Nurse Assistant. Ashten will start Nursing School in May and by the Grace of God she will complete the program in the Fall 2024. Once she passes the boards her plans are to work as a Registered Nurse in the Houston area, while furthering her education and ultimately becoming a Neonatal Nurse. Ashten is beyond thrilled and so grateful to have been awarded this scholarship. She feels the support is priceless. Ashten has previously received the chapter scholarship, but this is her first national award

Jason was sponsored by his grandmother Joan Mauro from the Albany Chapter. He was born and raised in Colonie, NY and comes from a family of people who have worked for the railroad. His great-grandfather worked for D&H, his grandmother worked for Conrail, and his dad is currently a locomotive engineer for CSX. Jason is currently a senior at Colonie Central High School. Over the past four years he has been in the high honor roll with a 98.9 average. Along with taking advanced classes at school, he has been involved in many activities which include National Science Bowl, Varsity Tennis, STEM Club, Math Club, and the E-Sports Club. His plans are to attend the University of Albany where he will obtain a bachelor's degree in computer science with a minor in Cybersecurity. Jason looks forward to

## JASON MAURO



## JOSEPH BOPPELL



Joseph Boppell is a 12th grade student at Springfield High School in Springfield, PA. He is sponsored by his grandmother, Katherine Bevilacqua, a member of the Philadelphia Chapter, and sister to Marianne MacLure, a 2022 Chapter Woman of the Year recipient. He has taken numerous honors and AP classes throughout high school and has consistently ranked in the top five percent of his class. He was a two-year varsity football player in both his junior and senior years of high school. Joseph was also the leader of the Operations committee for the Steve Stefani Dance Marathon, the second largest mini thon in PA. He will be attending Penn State University where he will study computer science. He plans to be involved with THON. Joseph enjoys playing sports, hanging with friends, lifting weights, golfing, and coding. He considers himself as a very passionate person. He continually gives one hundred and ten percent effort in everything he does. Joseph believes that being an active member of your community is one of the most important things in life.

## **ANEESHA MUMMAREDDY**

Aneesha is from Jacksonville, Florida and is currently a senior at Stanton College Preparatory School. She is an IB student and has a weighted GPA of 4.81. Along with a rigorous course load, Aneesha participates in many extracurriculars such as dance and flag football. She is part of the Multicultural Association at her school and is the school's Bollywood dance team leader. She is also one of the captains of her school's Varsity Flag Football team and they have been District Champions for two years in a row. Apart from these activities, Aneesha also loves to stay active in the community as seen through her volunteer work at local temples and her leadership role in a service-based club at her school. Aneesha will be attending the University of Florida this fall. She plans on majoring in Finance on the Pre-Law track!



## **JACOBI MORTON**



Jacobi is from Chicago, IL and will be in his second year at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Jacobi is majoring in Electrical Engineering and believes that obtaining a college education is essential in the world we live in today to be eligible for some of the most impactful careers to date. He is a young leader who has placed much effort on doing his best and motivating others to be their best. While in college Jacobi participated in a Community Service project by writing Valentine's Day cards to terminally ill children in North Carolina Children hospital. Jacobi has also joined the Midwest Aggies on campus to stay connected with peers from his region. He enjoys being social, spending time with friends and family, and working towards achieving his goals. Jacobi is thankful to NARBW for awarding him this scholarship to help him pursue his bachelor's degree.

## **MALLORY BATTISTA**

Mallory was born and raised in Tomball, Texas. Throughout her Childhood she tried many different hobbies, such as cheer, gymnastics, and dance. She continued to explore various other interests through high school such as dance, choir, and yearbook. *It was when she joined the yearbook staff that she fell in love with the different aspects of it, like photography and digital design, which is what she plans to major in while attending college. It was during her junior year that she got her first job at Chick-Fil-A, and she continues to work there. Working there has taught her about the rewards of hard work. She was promoted into a trainer position, which allows her to teach newcomers while utilizing her leadership skills to guide them in their journey at Chick-Fil-A. One of her favorite things to do is to spend time with her family, just being silly, sharing laughs and making unforgettable memories.*





*Recipient of the Clara Mayhall Scholarship*

## TERESA GUTTERIDGE

*Recipient of the Clara Mayhall Scholarship*

*Teresa is attending Florida State University in pursuit of a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology. She has been on the Dean's List for three (3) semesters since starting FSU in the Spring of 2022. Her ultimate plan is to earn a doctoral degree in Physical Therapy so she can become a Physical Therapist, with an emphasis on pediatrics. Teresa volunteered with the United Service Organizations (USO) all 4 years of high school and this year volunteered at the Foster Closet. She feels her experiences in servicing others has helped her to grow as a person. This is Teresa's second national award.*



Clara Mayhall  
National President  
1966 – 1968  
Mobile, Alabama



## MADISON MANLEY

### Recipient of the Doris Stemmer Scholarship

*Madison is a 12th grade student at Homewood Crossmoor High School. She is a unique and ambitious athlete (Cheerleading and Track & Field) with a self-discipline that has helped her succeed in her journey to this point and beyond. Madison has chosen to major in Veterinary Medicine and become a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, inspired to help improve animal care. She believes that animals are innocent, and they deserve to be treated with the best of care. Madison is a student ambassador and captain of her varsity cheer team. She enjoys track and field, culinary arts, mentoring fellow students, and taking on any leadership roles asked of her by school faculty. She also enjoys participating in community service projects with her team; and she is a faithful youth leader at her church where she participates in many ministries, choirs, events, programs, etc. She is sponsored by her mother, Jasmine Manley, of the Chicago Chapter. She is thankful to NARBW for helping her become Dr. Madison A. Manley, D.V.M.*



Doris Stemmer  
National President  
1996 – 1998  
Jacksonville, FL

# CHAPTER NEWS

## CHICAGO CHAPTER



### Sisters Connecting - It's Always A Good Time When NARBW Sisters Get Together

Past National President Melanie McKim (Central FL Chapter) was tending to business at the Chicago Amtrak Yard and met Chicago NARBW sisters for dinner at Lalo's Mexican Restaurants on Maxwell. A great time was had by all!

Pictured: Yolanda Barbosa, Sharon Davenport, Jasmine Manley, Paula Taylor, Cle Shaw, Melanie McKim, Michele Williams.

The Chicago Chapter would like to congratulate our two Scholarship Award recipients.

The Chicago Chapter is proud of Jacobi and Madison. We wish you great success!



NARBW sisters, Jenny Kane and Cle Shaw, helping out with the Metra Earth Week trash cleanup along the ROW!



Welcome aboard, NEW MEMBERS Quiana Dortch, LaTanya Powell, Bhakti Choksi, and Jenny Kane!

NARBW Chicago Chapter celebrated our elected Woman of the Year at our April members meeting. President CleLeatha Shaw went on to represent the Chicago Chapter at the National NARBW Convention in May for the opportunity to be voted NARBW National Woman of the Year. Well deserved, Madame President!



NARBW CHICAGO 2023/2024 BOARD

# CHAPTER NEWS

## CENTRAL FLORIDA CHAPTER



A Tastefully Simple Fund Raising Party was held at the home of Melanie McKim following our June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Chapter meeting.

Central Florida held their Chapter officer installation at their meeting on June 29, 2023.

Pictured right to left: Melanie McKim, President Gail Hendrix, Secretary and Madonna Neal, Treasurer. Not in the picture Ramona Sanmoogan, vice-president.



## JACKSONVILLE CHAPTER



### Courtney Charpiat

Courtney graduated from First Coast High School. She will be attending the Nursing program at University of North Georgia in Gainesville, GA. Courtney is the daughter of Debbie Charpiat.



### Trenton J. Williams

Trenton graduated from Victory Christian Academy where he was a member of the Bible Club and Victory Soldiers Varsity Basketball team. He has been accepted into the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department (JFRD) Apprentice Program. Trenton is the Grandson of Richalyn Williams.



### Clare Gutteridge

Clare graduated from Florida State University with a Bachelor of Science with major in Biological Science. She will be going to Nova Southeastern for optometry school in the fall. Clare, in addition to being an NARBW member, is the niece of Laura Gutteridge Años.



### Celeste Gutteridge Ater

Celeste Gutteridge Ater graduated from Chaminade University of Honolulu with a Master of Science in Counseling Psychology. Celeste is the sister of Laura Gutteridge Años.



Judy Covington Poole (new President) presents a gift to outgoing president Debbie Charpiat.

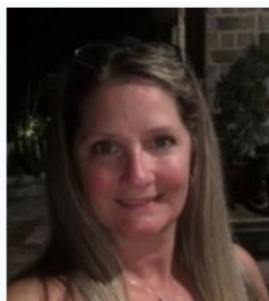


2023–2024 officers

- Laura Gutteridge Anos Treasurer
- Kim Perry Secretray (Nancy stood in for Kim at installation)
- Kathleen Gallavan Vice President
- Judy Covington Poole President

# CHAPTER NEWS

## HOUSTON CHAPTER



Houston Chapter held elections for our 2023-2024 officers. Pictured left to right above are President Bridget Hammons (keeping her seat), newly elected Vice President Brenda Bob, newly elected Treasurer Theresa Harper and newly elected Secretary Jeri Rose. The ladies are all very excited to serve our chapter and continue doing great work in the Houston area.

We were pleased to award our chapter Grace Nowlin Scholarship to Cookie Grant's niece Mackenzie Patrick. Mackenzie Patrick is from San Antonio, Texas and is a second-year recipient of the Grace Nowlin Scholarship. Mackenzie is sponsored by her aunt, Cookie Grant, of the Houston Chapter. With the support of NARBW, she is pursuing a bachelor's degree in biology with an emphasis in physical therapy at Grand Canyon University in hopes to one day be a Physical Therapist. During her sophomore year, Mackenzie volunteers on the Honors College Student Advisory board where she has been blessed to put on events and connect with students, as well as Honors VOICES, an organization at GCU where she has had the privilege of advocating for mental health on campus as well as connecting students with community service opportunities on and off campus.

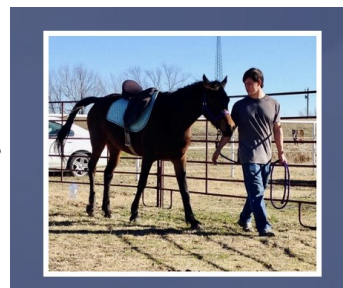
Mackenzie's favorite thing to do outside of school is explore Arizona and hike with her friends. In the upcoming year she looks forward to becoming more involved in her major specific classes and entering a role as a Resident Assistant at GCU. She is grateful for NARBW and the support they have shown in her continuing her education.

We had a devastating loss in our Houston Chapter family this Spring. Cookie Grant lost her son in law in a terrible motorcycle accident. But as we always do, we rallied together and helped where we could.

John Tyler Fitch, age 31, of Denton went to be with our Lord and Savior on March 23, 2023, in Lewisville, Tx. John was born on August 16, 1991, in Tomball, Texas to Darryl and Rhonda (Ross) Fitch. He loved life to the fullest and beat to his own drum. He attended the University of North Texas where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science of Intergraded Studies, May 2017. Just before graduating, John married his high school sweetheart, Amanda Grant on October 30. They began to grow their family and set roots. While living in Denton, John volunteered at Arabian Rescue Therapy, aka the Horse Farm. There he cared for foster horses, helped move hay that was donated and a multitude of repairs and maintenance



He is survived by his wife, Amanda Fitch, son, Devin Fitch, daughters, Evelyn Fitch and Ember Fitch, mother and father, Darryl and Rhonda Fitch, sister, Samantha Hom and her husband, Conrad and their children, and his mother in law and father in law with nephew, Cookie and Joey Grant and Derick Grant, brother in law Tony Grant, and brother in law Jerrod Grant and wife Twilla and their children.



# CHAPTER NEWS

## OMAHA CHAPTER

New officers were installed at the June meeting. Our thanks and congratulations to President. Anne Menichetti, VP Janet Anderson, Secretary Jay Nelsen and Treasurer Julie Nelson.

Our members have had a busy spring. Congratulations to Connie Prokupek. Her son Josh (past NARBW scholarship winner) graduated from Duke University on May 13 with his master's degree in business. And Connie's son Josh (another NARBW scholarship winner) and his wife Brittany have confirmed their first child will be boy, due in September.

Anne and Joe Menichetti just returned from a trip to Sturgis, South Dakota, where their 2011 Chevy Camaro took 1<sup>st</sup> place in class!

Tristen Menichetti graduated from UNO on May 19, Summa Cum Laude, Class speaker, MavPro, PRSSA, Honors Program, 2 time NARBW scholarship winner! Did we mention 1<sup>st</sup> generation graduate? Congratulations!

Cynthia Chandler had surgery on her wrist May 24. Hoping for a swift and complete recovery. And congratulations to her great niece Mallory Battista on winning an NARBW scholarship.

Julie Nelson is having surgery on her feet to help with the Plantar Fasciitis We are hoping for a successful surgery to stop the pain!

We are sorting and pricing items for our annual Garage Sale to be held in September.

We had 5 members attend the 79th Convention in San Diego. It was fun to win the chapter costume prize at Fun Night. We were inspired by So.Cal Chapter convention in San Diego and have started planning for the 2024 80<sup>th</sup> National Convention here in Omaha. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend May 17 - 18.

- 1) The Bodacious Beach Babes (Kadie Leslie, Kathy DuVall, Julie Nelson, Cynthia Chandler, Jay Nelsen)
- 2) Kathy DuVall passing the gavel to incoming President Anne Menichetti,
- 3) Best in Class Camaro belonging to Anne and Joe Menichetti
- 4) Convention pic of Omaha members (Cynthia Chandler, Kadie Leslie, Julie Nelson, Jay Nelsen, Kathy DuVall)





# CHAPTER NEWS

## PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

The Chapter won the 2023 Founder's Day Medal.

Summer is here! As always, the Philadelphia Chapter will continue to meet in person at a designated place or venue or via telephone conference.

Mother's Day Dunkin' Donuts gift certificates totaling \$400.00 were given out at the Salvation Army Eliza Shirley House.



We are so pleased to announce that Kathy Bevilacqua's grandson Joseph Boppell won a National scholarship.



On 6/17/23 we met at Pica's Italian Restaurant for a meeting, lunch, and the inauguration of our newly elected officers. We give thanks and appreciation for their service to Kay Bolich, Vice President; Renee Noble, Secretary; and Rae Huebner, Treasurer.



A group of us went to the Media Theater on 6/23 to "Million Dollar Quartet." It featured actors portraying Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Elvis Presley, and Johnny Cash. We really enjoyed their performances.



On Sunday, 6/25/23, Elnora (Ellie) Cain went to her 65th Paulsboro High School Reunion. Class of 1958.



Our chapter made a donation to the Railroaders Memorial Museum in Altoona Pennsylvania



National Association of Railway Business Women

June 22, 2023

Mark Frederick  
Railroaders Memorial Museum  
1200 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16602

Dear Mark:

On behalf of the National Association of Railway Business Women - Philadelphia Chapter, we are honored to give the museum a donation of five hundred dollars to help your fund-raising effort for your upcoming exhibit to honor women in the rail industry.

The NARBW has been stimulating interest and cooperation within the railroad industry and its affiliates since 1921.

A woman named Hazel Cornell from the Twin Cities worked for the great Northern Railway and in 1920 spent Christmas holidays with friends in Chicago. On her way home she found herself in the Union Depot crowded with holiday travelers. Hazel finally found a seat away from the main concourse and while seated she noticed men coming and going through a doorway across the walkway that said, "FOR RAILROAD MEN ONLY." For her full story please go to the NARBW.org website.

Thank you for letting us be a part of this endeavor to honor railroad women.

Sincerely,

Helena Funk

NARBW - Philadelphia Chapter President

philadelphia@narbw.org

# CHAPTER NEWS

## ROANOKE CHAPTER

Roanoke Convention committee led by Kathy Barbour is working on the 2026 convention planning.

Welfare Activities include the following—the Roanoke ladies are so generous!

On-going NARBW Welfare Projects: Tab tops for Ronald McDonald House; toiletries for Rescue Mission, RAM House, St. Francis House, Salvation Army; Used eyeglasses for the Lion's Club and greeting cards and remembrances for our Military Service personnel.

28 bags of Easter candy, 260 plastic eggs and a \$20 check were collected and delivered to the Salvation Army for the Turning Point Children on Monday, April 3, 2023 for our March project.

For our April project, several bags of food items and a \$30 check were collected and delivered to the Ronald McDonald House on April 11, 2023 for their "Wish List of Ongoing Needs".

Our May project was Angels of Assisi Wish List. The list includes dog and cat supplies as well as adoption center and office supplies. Examples of the center and office supplies are wash cloths, paper towels, dish soap, ink pens, Sharpies, post-it-notes, etc.

LOA Let's Give/Do Lunch Volunteer and/or donation opportunities and The Keystone Community Center will be our June projects.



Ronald McDonald delivery



Salvation Army delivery

Our May project was Angels of Assisi Wish List. Our chapter 19 members donated pet supplies, pet food, office supplies and a check for \$110 which were delivered to Angels of Assisi on May 10, 2023. Thank you fellow Narbies for your generous contribution to provide a safe and loving environment for the animals that are sometimes forgotten. You have great BIG hearts.



# CHAPTER NEWS

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER



It was truly a beach party at the 79th Annual NARBW Convention at the Island Palms Hotel and Marina in San Diego. 54 women, and some with their spouses, attended the annual gathering. For the Southern California Chapter, six members attended including Trischelle Baysden, Ilyssa DeCasperis, Shamonda Jones, Mary Toutouchi, Roya Toutouchi and Victoria Seitz.

The Pretour event was a delightful cruise around San Diego Bay. While looking at the sites that included Hotel Coronado and the Naval base, members enjoyed a delicious brunch. Many members got the opportunity to try The Hazel, a special drink that was developed just for this NARBW convention!

Thursday's hospitality reception at the pool couldn't have been more fun with hula dancers teaching many of the NARBW ladies the moves! Practice, practice, practice!



The new officers were installed by Laura Gutteridge Anos, Past National President (Jacksonville). The new officers were Carol Gentilini, Secretary, Trischelle Baysden, 3rd Vice President Chairwoman of membership, and Yolanda Barbosa, 2nd Vice President, Chairwoman of Chapters.



On May 19, National President Ida Camouche opened the meeting, followed by the presentation of colors and the Pledge of Allegiance directed by the San Diego Imperial Council.



We enjoyed speakers Darren Kettle (CEO Metrolink) and Brandi Childress ((Kimley-Horn).

NARBW's mission is to stimulate and foster cooperation, interest and a better understanding within the railroad industry and its affiliates, create good public relations and undertake charitable, benevolent, and social welfare projects on behalf of the industry. As a member you are part of something that provides you with a sense of camaraderie, being part of a group of women that share a common bond, being part of an association that contributes to the community and furthers the educational, social, and professional interests of its members. To that degree, the 79th Annual NARBW Convention in San Diego brought it all together.

Finally, hats off to Trischelle Baysden and the convention committee for organizing a fantastic conference! The participation provided by the So Cal Chapter attendees Ilyssa DeCasperis, Shamonda Jones, Victoria Seitz, Mary Toutouchi and her sister Roya Toutouchi.

**SEE YOU IN OMAHA MAY 17– 18, 2024**



2024 will be NARBW's 80<sup>th</sup> convention and Omaha is honored to be the hostess! Hallmark says the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary gift is wood. This seems appropriate as Nebraska is home of Arbor Day. We invite you to attend fun night as your favorite "board" game character. Relax at Embassy Suites in The Old Market as you slow down to the pace of the Midwest.

History abounds in Nebraska! Fort Omaha, construction of the first Transcontinental Railroad, Stockyards and Meat Packing Industry, Offutt Air Force Base, Strategic Air Command, Arbor Lodge Mansion and Farm. So, kick back and put your feet up...until the dancing starts! Yahoo!!!



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILWAY BUSINESS WOMEN

Please email Change of address, phone or Chapter Newsletter Info to:

[Publication@NARBW.org](mailto:Publication@NARBW.org)

Nancy Von Dolteren

National Publications Chairman

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