Chapter Women of the Year

Central Florida – Madonna Neal

The amazing, quietly strong Madonna Neal is the 2020 Woman of the Year for Central Florida Chapter 83. She grew up in Indianapolis, IN and it's no wonder she loves auto racing and even considered driving in the Powder Puff Derby! She graduated from Arsenal Technical High school, one of the largest in its day in a class of 762!

Amtrak came into her life in 1975 when she was the first new hire at the Amtrak Beech Grove Facility. Starting out in Material Control she held positions in the Payroll, Safety and Technical Training Departments. In 1986, she moved into a management position in the Claims Department until her retirement in 2001. Madonna also actively participated in The Operation Life Saver program for 20 years, where she would help promote railroad safety and awareness annually at the Indiana State Fair.

Madonna joined the Indianapolis Circle City NARBW Chapter in 1983. She served as Treasurer and Sunshine Lady while a member there. In 2015 after moving to Florida, she joined Central Florida Chapter 83 and was elected Treasurer. She has been serving in that office ever since. She actively participates in helping purchase and deliver Christmas gifts for the Chapter's annual Christmas Welfare project for children. Along with meal preparation when the chapter is serving food at the Sanford Outreach Mission, she helps put together the Mother's Day Tote bags for the ladies of the Mission each year. If there is a chapter fund raiser going on like the annual Halloween Bake Sale or yearly yard sale, she's right there pitching in to help. Madonna hosted a Chapter fund raising Tupperware Party last year. Her newest endeavor is collecting plastic grocery bags to be woven into sleeping mats for the homeless.

Madonna enjoys volunteering at her church including helping with The Life Groups and making blankets for local hospitals to be given to infants and the elderly. Her neighbors know they can call on her when they need a ride to the Doctor's office among many other things!

One of her greatest joys is being a rescue dog Mommy. She has provided a loving environment in her home to abandoned dogs since 1970.

Madonna likes to put on her traveling shoes whenever possible and has had the privilege of visiting the countries of France, Australia, Italy and Greece. She has also lived in the states of IN, MI, OR, TX, CA and FL.

You have to wonder how she has time for her hobbies of reading, gardening and playing games on the computer to stay mentally sharp!

When asked what her biggest accomplishment in life is, she'll tell you it was raising her two beautiful daughters Shelly and Melanie as a single Mother, with the Lord's help she adds. She is also very proud of her two grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Madonna sums up her strength in getting to this point in life with: Family, Friends and her faith in God!

Chapter Women of the Year (Cont'd)

Chicago – Yolanda Barbosa

Yolanda joined NARBW in 2016 and was one of the core members responsible for re-launching the Chicago chapter. Yolanda is currently the chapter's Scholarship Chair and also sits on the National Board as Secretary. Since joining, she has been very active. Yolanda has never missed a chapter meeting and participates in all chapter activities and welfare projects, even organizing last year's breast cancer walk and fundraiser. At the first meeting after the chapter re-launch, when everyone was new to NARBW, Yolanda stepped up and volunteered to serve as Vice President. After serving for a year, Yolanda was elected as Chapter President. During her tenure as President, the chapter had many "firsts". Some of these include a coat drive for school age children, Avon Breast Cancer Walk, Homewood Rail Fest, a movie and bowling outing, and a host of other activities that built camaraderie among members. Yolanda is also a member of the 2020 Convention Committee and has been a co-chair of the Hospitality Night planning committee.

Yolanda is the top fundraiser for the Chicago chapter. One of the fundraisers is the NARBW Scholarship Program; she has raised $2000 since becoming Scholarship Chair of her chapter. In addition, Yolanda has sold over $600 in Bakers Square pie cards, raised nearly $1,000 for the Avon Breast Cancer Walk, $236 for the Chicago chapter Popcorn fundraiser. She also sold over $1000 of the 50/50 convention raffle tickets.

For the past 10 years, Yolanda has been employed at Amtrak and is a member of Notch 8 (Women of Amtrak) Leadership Program. Yolanda also stays informed on the railway industry news by attending various meetings and events including Public Transportation Subcommittee meetings, Western Railway Club events and NUTC Sandhouse meetings discussing new Midwest rail projects. Yolanda is married to her husband Jimmy, and they have three children, Joseph, Ashley and Jonathan. They have two grandchildren and another one due in May 2020.

Chapter Women of the Year (Cont'd)

Houston – Bridget Hammons

Bridget comes from a heritage of railroaders. Working for the railroad was not her ideal career path, however she says, "It has been rewarding in so many ways!" For 2019, joining the Houston Chapter of NARBW has not only allowed Bridget to utilize her gifts and talents as publication chair, but has also provided opportunity for The Houston NARBW Chapter to grow and reach other women in the railroad community. Bridget says, "It has been a true blessing to be associated with a group of ladies who are so passionately involved and dedicated to the Houston Community. I pray that I can provide the same inspiration and mentorship to other young women who work in or aspire to work in the railroad industry."

Bridget graduated from Lindsey Wilson College where she was a collegiate soccer player. She had many honors including; Player of The Year, All District and All Region Teams, NAIA Senior Bowl East Team. During college, she served as a Head Resident Assistant, Treasurer of the United Rainbow Coalition Club and President of the Health and Fitness Club on her campus. Her final year of college Bridget was a Student Assistant Coach to the Woman's Soccer Team, where she recruited and mentored many female athletes.

Bridget's degree is in Human Services. Her aspirations were to be a Marriage and Family Counselor until her brother Sean (UP Train Dispatcher), had told her about an opportunity at Union Pacific for position as a Train Dispatcher. Bridget put her Marriage and Family counseling career plans on hold for the adventure and challenge of dispatching trains. This was the beginning of so many opportunities. Bridget dispatched trains for 5 years and she remembers, "I couldn't have done it without the support and mentorship of the many talented women in the industry who helped me along in my career." At Union Pacific, Bridget has not only been a dispatcher, but was a Manager of Manpower Planning, and is now a Safety and Rules Manager for Train Dispatchers in the Spring Dispatching Center. Bridget has participated as a member of LEAD (the woman initiative organization at Union Pacific) and her innovative thinking caught the attention of the leadership at UP where she lead a UPWAY continuous improvement project which changed the way Union Pacific managed training for all Train Dispatchers. She has spoken as guest speaker representing the Dispatch Center at UP's Engineering Conferences and thrives where she can be innovative, making changes that enhance the workplace. Her greatest accomplishment was leading a team with ideas that transformed the Annual Dispatcher Training at Union Pacific from a 8 hour class of text and rules, to an interactive class that integrated the rules in with topics such as Emotional Intelligence, Risk Perception and the human factor behind dispatcher incidents. Bridget says, "The class was a huge project. She came up with the idea as the current rules review class did not talk about the "why" behind incidents. Part of her duties as a Rules Manager were to investigate Train Dispatcher incidents which almost all the rule incidents did not occur because the Dispatcher didn't know the rules, but because of some type of distraction. We need to help bring awareness to more than just "how" to follow the rules, but having overall situational awareness, which also includes "how or what" a person is feeling, etc. We must be in touch with the whole person. What truly touched my heart with our training initiative was the countless number of employees who told me that the training impacted their everyday life outside of work, which is huge."

Bridget is a member of Altrusa International of Montgomery County where she has volunteered at the Montgomery County Library and Willis Nursing home. Bridget served as a member of the Family Ministries Committee at her church, volunteered as a guest speaker at the annual PINK Defying

Chapter Women of the Year (Cont'd)

Philadelphia – Maryann Pettit

Maryann Pettit has been a member of the Philadelphia Chapter of the National Association of Business Women for 40 years. She has participated in dozens of fundraisers and events and has been a constant supporter of the Philadelphia Chapter's charitable efforts. During a campaign for hats for underprivileged children who were being provided a train ride at Christmas, Maryann knitted several dozen hats to be donated. At one time Maryann performed the duties of secretary to the chapter. She has been a faithful attendee at chapter monthly meetings and charitable and entertainment events. Maryann has held meetings in her home and provided a beautiful retirement dinner/meeting for a retiring chapter member.

Maryann started her railroad career with the Pennsylvania in the later 1950's. After graduating high school and completing a course at comptometer school, Maryann began her career in Philadelphia at 30th Street Station in the General Accounting Dept. She later transferred to 32nd Street and into Revenue Accounting. As information, comptometer was the first commercially successful key-driven mechanical calculator. It had dozens of keys and was a very complicated machine to use. She spent the remainder of her career in this department where her duties continually increased to include administrative and personnel functions, payroll management and roster updates in Revenue Management. Maryann's employment covered the transition from the Pennsylvania Railroad to the Penn Central Railroad and later to Conrail. She has been retired for close to 20 years.

Chapter Women of the Year (Cont'd)

Philadelphia – Maryann Pettit (Cont'd)

Lest you think that Maryann has been relaxing and watching television over these past years, let me explain to you how she spends her time. She has been volunteering at a local hospital in Delaware County, Pennsylvania for over 50 years spending an average of 20 hours a month to various volunteer capacities there. She is also a volunteer at a local thrift shop which supports the Bernadine sisters. She knits prayer shawls each month for a local church and also has recently begun knitting preemie hats for another local hospital.

Maryann was born and raised in Norwood, Pennsylvania a small town outside of Philadelphia. She has one sister and two nephews. Until the past three years, Maryann lived and cared for the home where she was born. She held a position as a committee person in her community for several years and performed work at voter pools and at other civic entities. She has since moved to a retirement community in the area where she has again offered her services as a volunteer in many of their activities. For many years Maryann served on the Norwood 4th of July committee and she continues to do so, even though she no longer lives in Norwood. Maryann has received the NARBW Good Samaritan Award for as long as the current President Monica Rodan has been the Welfare Chairperson of the Philadelphia Chapter. We believe she is an ideal candidate to be our chapter's Woman of the Year.

Chapter Women of the Year (Cont'd)

Indianapolis Charter – Ann Carrico

Ann Carrico considers it an honor to be elected Indianapolis Charter Chapter 2020 Woman of the Year. She has been a member since 1999. Ann became active in our chapter early by hosting and co-hosting monthly meetings. Since 2010, she has been Scholarship Chairman. She is in charge of our annual Christmas basket raffle that benefits the National Scholarship fund. Ann also makes sure our members are aware of the scholarship opportunity and provides the applications when requested. Our raffle has been a very successful fundraiser.

Ann looks forward to "ringing the bell" every year for the Salvation Army as a chapter activity. She steps in to volunteer wherever she can in any other chapter events. She finds it very rewarding to help those less fortunate. She also participates in their Christmas program that arranges to provide gifts for over 250 children. Ann is kind and generous and has a loving and giving heart.

Ann worked for Conrail for 24 years and the Indiana Railroad for 7 years. She is enjoying her retirement and having the time to spend with her grandchildren, who are the light of her life. Her youngest daughter, Becky, has two children ages 12 and 9 to whom she dedicates as much time as they will allow her to be a part of their lives. Her 9 year old grandson is a special needs child and she and her husband Bill participate in fundraising projects that benefit his needs.

Ann tells us that she is fortunate to have a very full life and is glad that NARBW is a part of it. We are fortunate and glad that Ann is part of NARBW!

Chapter Women of the Year (Cont'd)

Roanoke—Joyce Mills

Joyce Mills has been a member of the Roanoke Chapter 19 since June 4, 2011. Her husband, Harold, worked with the Norfolk & Western Railway and Norfolk Southern Cooperation, combined for 38-1/2 years in the Mechanical Department. Joyce's family history with the railroad dates back to the Virginian Railroad where her grandfather and almost every male member of her family worked for the railroad. Her father started out as a water boy and retired after 43 years as an Overhead Crane Operator.

Our Woman of the Year was born in Roanoke, Va. Joyce has been married to Harold for 51 years and they are the proud parents of two sons, Jeffrey and Jeremy. Their two grandchildren, Noah and Olivia, give them unspeakable joy and love. On June 6, 2020, Noah plans to marry Ginny, the love of his life.

Joyce has served in many roles since joining our Chapter and has been able to attend 4 conventions. She has served as Chapter Secretary, Nominating Committee Chair, Publications Chair, Ways & Means Committee and is currently 2nd Vice President. She will move to 1st Vice President for 2020-2022. As Publications Chair, she created our "Special Moments" section which features a chapter member and their family.

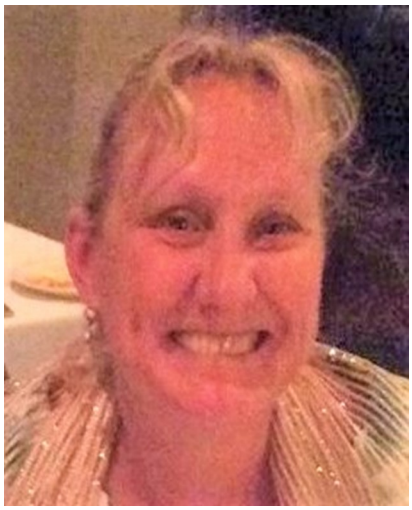
Joyce's work career included clerical, sales and administrative duties with local governments and for the past 14 years, her passion for travel developed into a travel business. She received her Associate's degree in Travel and Tourism and has been able to fulfill travel dreams for others by creating affordable and unique, individual and group travel. Joyce has graciously planned many of our NARBW outings.

Joyce volunteers at our local Rescue Mission with NARBW's many projects including stuffing envelopes, yard sales, nut sales, Halloween party at the VA, donating clothing and jewelry, etc. to support our local Rescue Mission, Veterans Hospital, Ronald McDonald House Walk-a-thons as well as donated generously to the Scholarship Fund through her travel business.

Joyce has made some amazing friends during her life's journey. She loves to make people smile. Her hobbies include writing short stories, painting interior homes, Travel anywhere, anytime! She also enjoys storytelling for children, baking and candy making.

Our Woman of the Year – Mrs. Joyce S Mills

Chapter Women of the Year (Cont'd)



St. Louis—Deborah Michler

Deborah Michler "Debbie" has been a member of St. Louis Chapter NARBW since 2012 and has attended 5 conventions. She has served on several committees within the Chapter (Nominating, Welfare, and Scholarship). For the last year and a half, she has been Treasurer of the Chapter.

Debbie is an eligible member since her mother, Margaret, is a NARBW member because of working for Missouri Pacific Railroad and then Union Pacific Railroad in St. Louis.

When the St. Louis Chapter hosted the 2016 Convention, she was a great supporter and helper with organizing the bus tour of the City. She was a Delegate at the Convention and has been a Delegate at other conventions after the 2016 Convention. She has sold tickets (head to toe) for a Raffle at the conventions and sold jewelry as a Fundraiser for the St. Louis Chapter.

She has helped with other Chapter projects, such as raffles to raise money for a Chapter donation to Christmas Charities-Salvation Army, Feed My People and Sunshine Ministries.

Debbie was Vice President for 3 years plus handling Welfare and Scholarship Chairman jobs.

Debbie has a job working as a care-giver for the elderly. In addition, she volunteers to take care of a 97 year old World War II veteran. She takes him grocery shopping and to doctor appointments. She even drove him to South Carolina to attend a wedding for his neighbor's son. She has a new neighbor across the street who had a bad accident and needed transportation to doctor appointments. Debbie has been taking her neighbor to the doctor appointments.

Debbie has also volunteered for her church. She helps out with Bingo night one night a month and assists with chicken dinner activities and other special occasion fundraisers during the year.

Debbie maintains a house with her husband, Walter, and 2 dogs and 2 cats.

The St. Louis Chapter is proud to name Debbie Michler as Chapter Woman of the Year for 2020.

Chapter Women of the Year (Cont'd)

Jacksonville—Barbara Miller

Barbara Miller joined the Jacksonville Chapter of NARBW in 2000 and immediately became a very active member of the Chapter serving as Membership Chair, President and District Secretary/Treasurer. She has served as Chapter Treasurer since 2009.

Barbara is an active volunteer for the Chapter at PACE (a school for at risk girls supported by the Jacksonville Chapter) and most recently served as Co-chair of Silent Auction fundraiser a Fashion Show Fundraiser for PACE raising $6,500!

Barbara served as chair of Volunteers at the annual Jacksonville JDRF One Walk that recruited 130 volunteers for Walk Day! She also served on JDRF Procurement Committee for Annual Gala Event providing 300 silent auction items

2020 National Woman of the Year

Omaha Chapter

Kay Leslie

Kay began her career with Union Pacific Railroad in March 1971 in the Accounting Department at UP Headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska. She worked various jobs before being promoted to management in the Finance Department. While still working, she went to night school to complete a degree in Business. In August 1988, Kay transferred to the St Louis, Missouri office, where she worked as a Project Manager in Quality Control. The position allowed her to interact with personnel at all levels and in numerous departments to ensure that billing accuracy, timeliness, and cash flow issues were adequately addressed. Kay developed a system that monitored daily, rather than monthly, billing accuracy of shipments, thus allowing Marketing and Finance personnel to adequately address issues affecting cash flow.

Kay left the railroad after twenty years to return to college and pursue her dream to study horticulture. After establishing her own landscaping company, Leslie Landscape, she branched out to manage an established Nursery & Landscape company in southern Missouri. But friends and family beckoned her to return to her roots back home in Iowa and Nebraska. She returned to Union Pacific Railroad in Omaha in 1997, where she held various management positions before retiring in 2010, with thirty-three years of service.

During her career, she was involved with The United Way, Racing for the Cure, Ronald McDonald House, Habitat for Humanity Restore, Toys for Tots, collection of scarves, hats and mittens for Salvation Army, Salvation Army bell ringers, and the Pass the Purse initiative.

Joining NARBW in June 1999, Kay jumped right in as District Scholarship Chair in 1999-2001. She also served as Omaha Chapter Finance and Scholarship Chairs. As Chapter President from 2001-2005, Kay's first act was to organize a fifty year anniversary celebration for the Omaha Chapter. Current and previous members were invited, with numerous retired women in attendance to renew old friendships and share memories.

As President, Kay organized a successful clothing drive that resulted in a huge donation to a local women's/family shelter. Members were also encouraged to 'pick up a friend' on the way to the meeting, so that those who had no transportation could attend.

Kay served the Omaha Chapter as Chair of Press and Publicity 2001-2008, and she has been Golf Tournament Chair since 2009. With help from the membership, the ten years of golf tournaments have allowed the chapter to raise thousands of dollars, thus enabling them to give back to the community. Kay currently also serves as Nominating Chair.

In 2016, Kay worked with other members to organize a sixty-fifth anniversary recognition party for the Omaha Chapter, where they also held a membership drive. National Emeritus and Omaha Chapter member, Cynthia Chandler, attended to present a Resolution from National President Laura Gutteridge Años and the National Board. The effort to make people aware of Omaha NARBW and our community involvement, resulted in nine new members that day and eight more new members in the days before and after the membership drive.

Kay served as National Secretary 2015-2017, and she is currently National Revisions and Jewelry Chair. Kay is quick to tell you that she believes serving on the local and national boards are very rewarding.