



Pages in Time



Individual Supporters:
Lyn & Joe Rowden, Fairfield

The Blue Star program: what it's all about

submitted by Chick Ciciotte

The Blue Star Service Banner was designed and patented in 1917 by World War I Army Captain Robert L. Queissner of the 5th Ohio Infantry who had two sons serving on the front line. It quickly became the unofficial symbol of a child in the service.

On September 24, 1917, an Ohio congressman read the following into the Congressional Record: "...The mayor of Cleveland, the Chamber of Commerce and the governor of Ohio have adopted this service flag. The world should know of those who give so much for liberty. The dearest thing in all the world to a father and mother—their children."

During World War II, the Department of War issued specifications on the manufacture of the flag as well as guidelines indicating when and by whom the service flag could be flown or the service lapel button could be worn.

The Department of Defense updated the guidelines on December 1, 1967, with DoD Directive 1348.1, which implemented an Act of



This blue star flag hangs on the wall in the American Legion at Unity Post #50. Notice also the gold stars. This banner shows the number of those people from the Unity area who served during WWII. The gold stars represent those killed in action.

Photo submitted by Chick Ciciotte

Congress authorizing a service flag and a service lapel button (U.S.C. 179-182).

The Blue Star Service Banner typically displayed in windows is an 8.5 by 14-inch white field with a blue star(s) sewn onto a red banner. The size may vary but should be in proportion to the size of the United States flag.

Today Blue Star Service Banners are displayed by families who have a loved one serving in the armed forces including the National Guard and Reserves of all military departments. The banner displayed in the front window of a home shows a family's pride in their loved one serving in the military, and reminds others that preserving America's freedom demands much.

The blue star represents one family member serving in the armed forces. A banner can have up to five stars, signifying that five members of that family are currently in military uniform on active duty.

If the individual symbolized is killed or dies while serving, the star representing that individual will have superimposed on it a gold star of smaller size so that the blue forms a border. On flags displaying multiple stars, including gold stars, when the flags are suspended as against a wall, the gold star(s) will be to the right of, or above the blue star(s) a place of honor near-

est the staff.

Blue Star Mothers and Gold Star Mothers organizations were established during World War I and remain active today.

Blue Star Service Banners, while widely used across

providing banners to families in communities across the nation. Static cling versions for home and automobile, as well as lapel pins, are available from The American Legion National Emblem Sales at www.emblem.legion.org.



Blue star salute. Anthony Jordan (Vassalboro) past national commander of the American Legion presents a blue star banner to State Senator Carol Weston (R-Waldo) recognizing her son's military service. Assisting with the presentation is Ron Cropley, 11th district commander (Waldo) American Legion. Senator Weston along with State Representative Michael Thibodeau (R. Winterport) presented legislative sentiments to Legion posts in Waldo County: Belfast #43, Unity #50, Winterport #138, Stockton Springs #157, Palermo #163, and Brooks #183. The sentiments recognize posts for their participation in the American Legion's blue star program. Photo submitted by Chick Ciciotte

America during World Wars I and II, were not embraced during the Korean or Vietnam wars with nearly the same enthusiasm.

The American Legion is rekindling the spirit of pride in our military men and women following the horrific terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The American Legion is

org. The American Legion also has a special Blue Star Banner Corporate Flag for government and corporate America to show their support for employees called to active duty. For more information, contact your local American Legion Post.

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Seeking histories on American Legion and VFW posts
by Lyn Rowden
In our special feature, "Pages in Time," we focus each week on an aspect of local history. I am looking for brief histories of the various American and VFW Posts in our area, which I would like to feature in May.
A small piece of about 250 words would be wonderful. No worries about "perfect" writing and editing, we will take care of that for you. An old photo, if available may be sent in jpeg format or mailed or brought in to the paper for scanning. You will get your photo back as long as you include your address.
Please send me your information along with a reliable method of contacting you, by email to townline@fairpoint.net or mail to P. O. Box 89 Jonesbrook Crossing, South China, ME 04358.
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