



## History of the Blue Star Service Banner

A Blue Star Service Banner displayed in the window of a family home is a long tradition in America. The Banner lets others know that someone from this home is actively serving in the United States Armed Forces. As the “War Against Terrorism” continues, this Blue Star Service Banner reminds us all that this war touches every neighborhood throughout our Land.

Early in America’s involvement in World War-I, the practice of drawing or sewing a Blue Star onto a white background and displaying that in a front window of a home, proudly announced to passers-by that a loved one was serving in the “War to End All Wars” and that those families took much pride in that Service. This led to the design and patent in 1917, of the Blue Star Banners that we know today, by WW-I Captain Robert L. Queissner of the 5th Ohio Infantry, who had two sons serving on the front lines.

On September 24, 1917 an Ohio Congressman read the following into the U.S. Congressional Record: “...The Mayor of Cleveland, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Governor of Ohio have adopted this Service Banner. The world should know of those who give so much for Liberty. The dearest thing in all the world for a father and mother – their children.”

During WW-II, the U. S. Department of War issued specifications on the manufacture of the Banners as well as guidelines indicating when, and by whom the Service Banners would be displayed or the Service Lapel Button would be worn. The Banner can be seen hanging in the front window of Mrs. Ryan’s home in the movie, “Saving Private Ryan”. The Service Banner is an 8x14-inch white field with a blue star(s) and a red border. Today, Blue Star Service Banners are displayed by families who have a loved one serving in the Armed Forces, including activated members of the National Guard and Reserves, whether the family member is a son, daughter, brother, sister, wife, husband, cousin, grandchild, etc. Displayed in the front window of a home, the Banner shows a family’s pride in their loved one serving in the military, and reminds others that preserving America’s freedoms demands so very much!

One Blue Star represents one family member serving in the Armed Forces. The Banners can have up to four (4) stars, signifying that four members of that family are serving simultaneously in military uniform on Active Duty. Sadly, war causes death!...When the Blue Star is replaced by a Gold Star, that signifies the “hostile-fire” death of a family member of that household. Blue Star Service Banners, while widely used across America during WW-I and II, but were not so enthusiastically embraced during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

The American Legion and The National Society, Sons of the American Revolution rekindled the tradition and spirit of pride in our military men and women following the horrific terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Our BLUE STAR SALUTE FOUNDATION, Inc., seeks to provide families of all military service members a Blue Star Service Banner to prominently display in their Honor for all to see.