



History of the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

On January 22, 1942 the Flint News Advertiser printed a coupon asking Mothers of servicemen to return the coupon after filling it out. The following February 1st 300 mothers met in the Durant Hotel, in Flint Michigan. Captain George H. Maines, who had conceived the idea for this group, acted as the chair of this first meeting. It was decided that after receiving 1000 responses from the ad to form a permanent organization.

On February 6th the organization was reported on Congressional record. Chapters then formed in Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, New York, Pennsylvania, Oregon, California, Iowa and Washington. In June of 1960 the organization was chartered by congress.

Mothers volunteered throughout the tough times of World War II. They worked in hospitals, train stations, packed care packages for soldiers and were an working part of homeland security during times our time of war. The organization waned in size over the years but has held together by mothers showing pride in both their children and country. In recent times we have began to grow in strength. Being attacked on our own soil has once again started mothers hanging flags in their windows at home proclaiming pride in the fact that we have children protecting our freedom during at time of war

Our organization not only provides support for active duty service personnel, promotes patriotism, assists Veterans organizations, and is available to assist in homeland volunteer efforts to help our country remain strong.

About the Service Flag

The Service flag is an official banner authorized by the Department of Defense for display by families who have members serving in the Armed Forces during any period of war or hostilities the United States may be engaged in for the duration of such hostilities.

The Service flag, also called the Blue Star Flag, was designed and patented by WWI Army Captain Robert L. Queisser of the 5th Ohio Infantry who had two sons serving on the front line. The flag quickly became the unofficial symbol of a child in service. President Wilson became part of this history when in 1918 he approved a suggestion made by the Women's Committee of the Council of National Defenses that mothers who had lost a child serving in the war wear a gold gilt star on the traditional black mourning arm band. This led to the tradition of covering the blue star with a gold star on the Service flag to indicate that the service member has died.

During WWII the practice of displaying the Service flag became much more widespread. Most flags were hand made by mothers across the nation. One of the most famous flags was that of the five Sullivan brothers who all perished on the U.S.S. Juneau.

The Blue Star Mothers was founded as a Veteran Service Organization and was part of a movement to provide care packages to military members serving overseas and also provided assistance to families who encountered hardships as a result of their son or husband serving in the war.

In 1960 Congress chartered the Blue Star Mothers of America as a Veterans Service Organization and in 1966, the Department of Defense revised the specifications for design, manufacture and display of the Service flag.

The Department of Defense specifies that family members authorized to display the flag include the wife, husband, mother, father, stepmother or father, parent through adoption, foster parents, children, stepchildren, children through adoption, brothers, sisters and half brothers or sisters of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States. The flag should be displayed in a window of the residence of persons authorized.

The Service flag may also be displayed by an organization to honor the members of that organization serving during a period of war or hostilities.

The Service Flag is an indoor flag and should be flown facing out from the front window of the home or organization.

If the U.S. flag is also displayed with the Service flag, the U.S. flag should be of equal or greater proportions and should take the place of honor above the Service flag.

Each blue star on the flag represents a service member in active duty. A gold star is displayed if a service member is killed in action or dies in service. If several stars are displayed by one family the gold star takes the honor of being placed at the top. The gold star should be slightly smaller than the blue star to create a blue border surrounding the gold star.

Display of a Service Star Banner is done during times of war. Once again families are displaying banners at home. Blue Star Flags may be purchased through the internet, at stores, or made by hand.

**Copied from the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. website