

# Elks presents Blue Star Banners to military families

By Tom Betz

*The Goodland Star-News*  
The Goodland Elks Lodge added 14 names to its roll of families of servicemen and women serving on active duty Sunday afternoon, and presented Blue Star Banners to those who braved the snow storm.

This is the third year the Elks have presented Blue Star Banners, bringing the total up to 60 families.

Lisa Varney, wife of Specialist Bryan Varney, who is on active duty, was one of those present to receive a banner and certificate.

She said her husband, who is stationed at Fort Sill, Okla., was able to come home for Thanksgiving and had left Sunday to return to Oklahoma. She said he is hoping to be able to come home for Christmas, too, but that will depend on the scheduling, as the unit is to ship out for Iraq in early January.

She said Sgt. Lance Jones of Sharon Springs and Specialist Derrick Lutters also were home for the Thanksgiving holiday. Both are stationed at Fort Sill as part of the Kansas National Guard's 170th Maintenance Company.

Varney thanked the Elks, adding that it was wonderful to have her husband home for the holiday.

Accompanying her was Varney's grandmother, Gloria Kibel of Goodland, who received a banner to put in her window. His other grandmother, Darlene Walters of Goodland will receive a banner for her window as well.

Dennis and Lisa Malsom of Goodland received a banner as the grandparents of Pfc. Jeremy Sturges of the 52nd Air Defense Artillery, 6th Battalion, 69th Brigade stationed at Shipton Kaserne, Ansbach, Germany.

Ramona and Leonard Kashka and Leonard Kashka Sr. got banners for son and grandson Lee Kashka, a second lieutenant stationed at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida.

John Boyington accepted a banner on behalf of his grandson, Army Maj. Tracy Mann, an instructor at West Point in New York. Mann's mother, Toni Ackerman of Brewster, will receive a banner for her home.

Zona Price, secretary of the Elks Lodge and organizer of the program, said one family had been at the lodge earlier on Sunday, but with the storm they decided it was



Ron Barkley, (above) Elks Americanism chairman, explained the Blue Star Banner program at a ceremony Sunday, which added 14 names to the roll of families who have sons, daughters or fathers serving in the military. Lisa Varney, (right) son Blaine, 11, and daughter Shaina, 7, wore special T-shirts with their husband and father's picture on them. Lisa Varney accepted a banner on behalf of her husband, Sgt. Bryan Varney, from Exalted Ruler Dale Price.



better to head home.

That was Scott and Sandy Anderson of Kirk, Colo., who are the parents of Cyle Anderson, an Army private stationed with the 222nd Base Support Battalion at Baumholder, Germany.

Families who were not present will receive their banners later, and Elks Americanism Chairman Ron Barkley read their names:

- Specialist Paul Andrijesk, on active duty with the National Guard 170th Maintenance Company of Goodland. He is currently at Fort Dix, N.J., and will be deployed to Iraq in January. His mother is Kathy Vap and his grandmother is Evelyn Vap, both of Atwood.
- Sgt. Wayne Edward Coker has

served in Iraq with the U.S. Marines and is now stationed in California. His parents are Wayne and Michelle Coker and his grandparents are Glenn and Claudine Coker, all of Sharon Springs.

- Specialist Lutters will deploy to Iraq in January with the Kansas National Guard. His father is Chuck Lutters of Goodland. His mother is Marian Lutters of Burlington, and his grandmother is Nancy Dressman of Goodland.
- Lance Cpl. Jeffrey Saddler has served in Iraq with the Marines and is stationed at Camp Pendleton, Calif. His parents are Lyle and Nancy Saddler of Colby.
- U.S. Coast Guard Ensign Joseph L. Smith, who is in the Officer

Candidate School, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, Conn. When his training is completed, Smith will be stationed at Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Fla. His wife is Summer Smith, and his parents are Virgil and Jackie Baumfalk, all of Goodland.

- Petty Officer 3rd Class Jonathan L. Spain is serving on the aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy in the Mediterranean Sea. His grandmother is Karly Viehmeyer of Burlington.
- Sgt. Jones, on active duty with the Army National Guard 170th Maint. Co. of Colby. He is stationed at Fort Sill, and will be deployed to Iraq in January. His mother is Phyllis Bliss of Sharon Springs.

• Seaman Apprentice Jared Mann a new enlistee stationed at Lamore Naval Base, Calif. His parents are Brad and Sue Mann of Dighton. His grandparents are Darrell and Sharon Mann of Goodland.

Sgt. Mark Reasoner and Sgt. Ernesto Gonzales of the Kansas National Guard unit in Goodland presented the colors. Goodland Girl Scouts Dayelle and Trace Waugh led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Exalted Ruler Dale Price welcomed the audience and Special Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Walt Linthacum gave the Elks tribute to the flag. Rusty Renner of Goodland presented special patriotic music.

Barkley talked about the history

of the Blue Star Banner and how the Elks got involved in resurrecting the program, which was an American Legion program years ago.

The banner, a tradition dating back to World War I, is red with a white field with one blue star for each member of that family serving on active duty.

The Blue Star Banner was designed in 1917 by Robert Queissner, a captain in the U.S. Army, who had two sons serving on the front lines in France during World War I.

The banners are usually displayed in the front window of a home. No more than five stars can be on any one banner; after that a pair of banners is used.

# Christmas cookies can be special shapes, flavors, even for dogs

A Christmas cookie may be in a holiday shape or flavor, or keep well or just be extra fancy.

Dede Wilson in "A Baker's Field Guide to Christmas Cookies" talks about cookie type, country of origin, description, traditions or tips, variations and life span. Wilson includes symbols that show whether dough freezes well, cookies keep well, are fun to make with kids, quick to make and sturdy enough to mail.

The following recipes are from her book.

## Aunt Naomi's sacred dog biscuits

These are treats for your favorite canine companion. Bonemeal and either type of yeast can be found in a health food store. If your dog is sensitive to wheat flour, use rye flour. These keep one month in an airtight container at room temperature. Yield: 40 three-inch dog biscuits

8 ounces boneless, skinless chicken breast (about half a breast)



## pat schiefen

- postscript

3/4 cup chicken broth  
1 large egg  
1 tablespoon bonemeal  
1 tablespoon brewer's or nutritional yeast

1/8 teaspoon garlic powder (not salt)  
2 1/2 cups whole wheat or rye flour  
1/2 cup cornmeal

In a small saucepan place chicken and enough water to cover the chicken. Over high heat bring to a boil and reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until chicken is cooked through (approximately 10 minutes). Turn meat over at least once.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper.

Using a 2 cup measuring cup measure out broth. Add egg, bonemeal, yeast and garlic powder and stir to combine.

Finely mince chicken in a food processor. With machine still on, pour in broth mixture and process until evenly combined. Add flour and cornmeal and process until clumps appear and dough forms into a mass. Roll dough out to 3/8 inch thickness on a lightly floured surface. Cut into the shape of your choice. Place biscuits 1 inch apart. Prick all over with a fork.

Bake for 15 minutes, reduce oven temperature to 350 degree and bake until completely dry and golden brown, about 1 hour. Slide parchment onto racks to cool cookies completely.

### Cinnamon ornaments

To alter the smell you can also use allspice and nutmeg. You need a total of 2 1/2 cups of spices with 2

cups being cinnamon. Don't bother using homemade applesauce jarred works just fine. Yield: about 30 two to three-inch ornaments  
2 cups jarred no-sugar-added applesauce  
2 1/4 cups ground cinnamon, plus more for rolling out  
1/4 cup ground ginger  
10 yards 1/8 inch fabric ribbon, cut into 12 inch lengths

Have 2 cookie sheets ready.

Combine applesauce, cinnamon and ginger in a large bowl. Mix well until mixture is stiff enough to roll out. Add more cinnamon as needed.

On a surface lightly sprinkled with cinnamon roll dough out to 1/4 inch thickness. Cut shapes of your choice. Use end of chopstick or straw to form hole at top. Move to cookie sheets and dry 12 hours or overnight. Gently turn over and dry for 12 hours more. Repeat until completely hard and dry. It may take a few days.

Thread ribbon through hole and knot about 1 inch from the ends. The

ornaments are ready to hang.

**Night before Christmas mice**  
3 cups flour  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened  
3/4 cup granulated sugar  
1 teaspoon almond or vanilla extract  
1 large egg  
Decoration  
sliced natural almonds  
10 feet red or black licorice laces (thin, spaghetti-like strands), cut into 3 inch lengths  
6 ounces semisweet chocolate, melted and kept slightly warm

Whisk flour and salt together in small bowl.

Beat butter until creamy in a large bowl using an electric mixer on medium-high speed about 2 minutes. Add sugar gradually and beat until light and fluffy about 3 minutes. Beat in extract. Beat in egg. Add one-third of flour mixture and mix on low speed. Gradually add remaining flour and mix until just

blended. Scrape dough onto large piece of plastic wrap and cover completely with wrap. Refrigerate until firm enough to roll into balls about 2 hours or overnight.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper. Roll pieces of dough between your palms into 1 1/4-inch ovals. Slightly elongate one side to form nose. Gently pinch bridge of nose to form eye sockets. Place 2 sliced almonds behind eyes to make ears. Place mice 2 inches apart on cookie sheets.

Bake until light golden brown on bottom and around edges about 15 minutes. Place pans on racks and insert skewer into mouse's rounded posterior, about 1/2 inch. Remove skewer and insert length of licorice for the tail as far as it will go.

Place melted chocolate in parchment cone and snip tiny opening. Pipe small chocolate eyes and nose in appropriate places. Place sheet in refrigerator until chocolate has firmed up. Yield: 40 mice.

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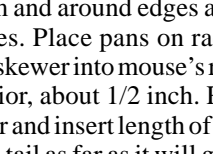
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