

**“Buddy” ® Poppy & National Home for Children
2022 - 2023
Helen Steinberg**

Program Goals

1. “Buddy” ® Poppy Education and Community Outreach
2. National “Buddy” ® Poppy Display Contest
3. VFW National Home Education and Community Outreach

1) “Buddy” ® Poppy Education and Community Outreach

In keeping with our National President Jane Reape’s theme *“Hands that Serve, Hearts that Care”* and Department President Mary Anne Kreutz’s theme *“VFW Auxiliary Family, One Team, One Heartbeat”*, we as an organization must educate our communities to recognize and understand the significance of the Poppy and appreciate the many ways in which the “Buddy” ® Poppy Program benefits veterans and their families.

The use of the Poppy as a memorial flower was inspired by Canadian Army Col. John McCrea’s famous poem “In Flanders Field” and was first used near the end of WWII to commemorate military casualties of the war. The VFW was the first veterans’ organization to organize a nationwide distribution of poppies in 1922 and in 1924, registered the name “Buddy” ® Poppy with the US Patent Office and was granted all trademark rights. The “Buddy” ® Poppy has been an integral part of the VFW community ever since. It represents the blood shed by American Service members and reminds us to never forget their sacrifices.

The “Buddy” ® Poppy program provides financial assistance to Veterans and their families in various ways:

- It provides compensation to in-need and disabled veterans who assemble the poppies
- It supports our Department’s Veterans Service Fund, National Veterans Service

Fund and the National Home for Children as a portion of the cost of the poppies is donated to each.

- It supports many Auxiliary programs through disbursement from the Auxiliary Relief fund which is where proceeds from Poppy drives are placed. Programs such as:
 - Support for Veterans, active-duty service members and their families in need
 - The National Home for Children
 - Hospital work for active member of the armed forces, veterans, and their families
 - Promoting Patriotism
- You can increase awareness within your community by:

- Incorporating “Buddy” ® Poppies into everything you do.
 - You don’t have to wait for Memorial Day or Veterans Day! Distribute “Buddy” ® Poppies whenever you can include parades, patriotic events, membership drives, BINGO or trivia nights, dinners etc.
 - Work with other Auxiliary program leads to see how programs can work together
- Participate in the “Buddy” ® Poppy Display contest.
 - Ask community members or youth groups to participate
 - Ask community facilities to display the entries
 - Promote the contest in social or local media.

Information on how to order your poppies and tips for distribution can be found in the National Program book on the VFW Auxiliary Program & Publicity Resources page (log in to MALTA first).

2) National VFW “Buddy” ® Poppy Display Contest

- Takes place annually at National Convention
- Displays are judged in three (3) categories
 - Public Promotion of Poppy Campaign
 - Memorial or Inspirational Displays
 - Artistic or Decorative Use of Poppies
- At least one “Buddy” ® Poppy must be in its original form and color with label attached
- See the VFW’s “Buddy” ® Poppy Display Chairman’s Guide for rules, deadlines,

judging and awards of the National “Buddy”
® Poppy Display contest.

- Guidance for the Dept. of CA Auxiliary “Buddy” ® Poppy Display contest will be communicated separately.

3) VFW National Home Education and Community Outreach

For more than 95 years, the VFW National Home for Children located in Eaton Rapids, Michigan has helped military and veteran families who need a fresh start. Families can live there rent-free for up to four years and have access to professional case management services, on-site licensed childcare, life skills training, tutoring and other educational services, as well as recreational and community service opportunities. Families find healing in a safe and peaceful environment of tree lined streets, 42 single family homes, facilities such as a gym, library, computer and science labs, day care center, playgrounds, fishing pond, hiking trails and more!

The VFW National Home for Children serves as a living memorial to America’s veterans by helping our nation’s military and veteran families during difficult times and has met the changing needs of America’s military and veteran families.

Through it all, one thing has remained constant. The National Home’s commitment to honor our nation’s veterans and service members by providing help and hope for their children and families,

The National Home’s community is open to families of active-duty military personnel, veterans and descendants of members of the VFW and Auxiliary who are committed to making changes in their lives. To remain at the National Home, they are expected to demonstrate consistent progress toward family goals. Together in partnership with the whole family, the National Home is dedicated to helping each family reach its full potential.

The National Home Helpline also provides assistance to military families who do not live on the National Home campus. The Helpline is staffed by caring professionals who help callers with urgent needs seek solutions in their own communities. If you know someone who needs assistance encourage them to:

- Call the helpline at 1-800-313-4200
- Email help@vfwnationalhome.org
- Visit vfwnationalhome.org/help

The VFW National Home for Children a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation is governed by a seventeen-member Board of Trustees made up of VFW and VFW Auxiliary members who as life members of the National Home are dedicated to the mission of the National Home.

You or your Auxiliary can help to support the National Home by:

- Educating the community about the National Home
- Donating to the Health and Happiness Fund (through MALTA or mail) which supports
 - Christmas Gifts
 - Graduation Gifts
 - Maintenance of Auxiliary sponsored buildings
 - Emergency repairs and renovations
- Purchasing a life membership

For more information on these and other ways to support the National Home visit the National Home’s website at vfwnationalhome.org. or refer to the National Auxiliary Program Book.

**“Buddy” ® Poppy + National Home =
“Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes”**

“Buddy” ® Poppy & National Home for Children Program Awards NATIONAL AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

- For information about the National Awards available please refer to the National Program Book.
- Auxiliary entries must be sent to the Department Chairman by March 31, 2023.

DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES

- Citation to one Auxiliary in each program division for the best promotion to educate the community about both the “Buddy” ® Poppy and VFW National Home
- Citation to one Auxiliary in each program division for the best use of the “Buddy” ® Poppy in conjunction with another Auxiliary program

