

"Buddy"[®] Poppy & National VFW Home for Children

La Verne Wilson

"Buddy"[®] Poppy



Program Goals

1. "Buddy"[®] Poppy National Display Contest
2. "Buddy"[®] Poppy Education and Community Outreach
3. VFW National Home Education and Community Outreach

The "Buddy"[®] Poppy has been an integral part of the VFW community for more than 95 years. As the VFW's official memorial flower, the Poppy represents the blood shed by American service members. It reiterates that we will not forget their sacrifices. The Poppy movement was inspired by Canadian Army Col. John McCrae's famous poem, "In Flanders Fields". Poppies were originally distributed by the Franco-American Children's League to benefit children in the devastated areas of France and Belgium following World War I. The VFW conducted its first Poppy distribution before Memorial Day in 1922, becoming the first veterans' organization to organize a nationwide distribution. The VFW resisted the name "Buddy Poppy" with the U.S. Patent Office and May 20, 1942 granted the VFW all trademarks in the name of Buddy under classification of artificial flowers.

These small but mighty memorial flowers have raised millions for the welfare of veterans and their dependents. "Buddy"[®] Poppies are still assembled by disabled, hospitalized, aging and needy veterans in five locations, with the VFW providing compensation to the veterans who assemble the Poppies. The Poppy program also provides financial assistance in maintaining state and national veterans' rehabilitation and service programs and partially supports the VFW National Home for Children.

Keeping with our National President Sandra Onstwedder's theme "**Honoring our Mission to Serve Veterans**" and our Department President Robyn Kuznik's, theme "**Soaring with Service to our Veterans**", we as an organization must educate our communities to recognize Buddy"® Poppies and to understand and appreciate the benefits veterans receive from our "Buddy"® Poppy Drives. We can soar as an **(Eagle)** getting the word out about our "Buddy"® Poppy Drives and placing orders from national at least 8 to 12 weeks in advance of your events. The "Buddy"® Poppy Drives are very essential in support to our veterans, VFW National Home for Children and our Relief Fund.

How to Order:

- Contact your VFW Department Headquarters to order Poppies in quantities of 1000. Contact the Department Auxiliary Office for smaller orders. (Poppies do not need to be ordered through your Post).
- Request the order form from your Department Headquarters at least two to three months (8 to 12 weeks) in advance of your distribution date.
- Brochures, "Buddy"® Poppy distribution supplies and promotional items can be purchased from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org or by calling 1-833-VFW-VETS.

Buddy"® Poppy Distribution Tips

- Contact your city/town clerk's office to see if a permit is required for your distribution event.
- Get permission from the desired distribution location(s) store managers/owners prior to promoting your "Buddy"® Poppy distribution event.
- Make sure all Auxiliary members know the time, day and place of your distribution event.
- Share information about your distribution event with your local paper and on social media. Post fliers in high-traffic areas such as grocery stores, coffee shops, the post office, etc.
- Ask for assistance from youth groups such as VFW and/or Auxiliary youth, JROTC, after-school clubs and faith-based youth.
- Ask volunteers to wear Auxiliary and/or VFW branded clothing to both promote the Auxiliary and VFW and connect the distribution of poppies to the organization.
- Remind volunteers they are NOT SELLING "Buddy"® Poppies, but DISTRIBUTING them for donations.
- Never refuse someone a "Buddy"® Poppy because they are unable to donate. A "Buddy"® Poppy honors all veterans.
- See the VFW's "Buddy"® Poppy Chairman's Guide for further assistance in setting up a "Buddy"® Poppy drive, as well as other helpful resources. The guide can be found at vfwauxiliary.org/resources.

Honor the Dead by Helping the Living

- At the Auxiliary and Post level, all proceeds from Poppy drives are to be placed in the Relief Fund with receipts and expenditures in accordance with the Treasurer's Guide and the *VFW Auxiliary Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual*. (Sec. 904)
- "Buddy"® Poppy drives can be done at any time during the year - not just Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Try doing one at least once a quarter. If you have enough volunteers, host a monthly Poppy drive.
- Distribution of "Buddy"® Poppies should be included in every Auxiliary, District or Department activity including parades, patriotic events, membership drives, BINGO or trivia nights, etc.
- There are many creative ways to distribute the "Buddy"® Poppy including window displays, posters, wreaths, remembrance walls, hats, event centerpieces, etc.

National VFW "Buddy"® Poppy Display Contest

- Takes place annually at National Convention.
- Displays are judged in three (3) categories:
 1. Public Promotion of Poppy Campaign (Window, booth, parade, poster displays, campaign promotions, etc.)
 2. Memorial or Inspirational Displays (Wreaths, memorial tablets or plaques, patriotic or devotional themes)
 3. Artistic or Decorative Use of Poppies (Post Home displays, table centerpieces, corsages)
- At least one Poppy used in the display must be in original form and color, with label attached. This applies to all three (3) categories listed above.
- See the VFW's "Buddy"® Poppy Chairman's Guide for rules, deadlines, judging and awards of the National "Buddy"® Poppy Contest, as well as other helpful resources. The guide can be found at **vfwauxiliary.org/resources**.

National VFW Home for Children

For more than 90 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 child care, 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!

Founded in 1925 as a place where the families left behind by war-mothers and children, brothers and sisters - could remain together, keeping the family circle intact even when their serviceman didn't come home. 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.

Reintegration, post-traumatic stress, high unemployment, rehabilitation from battlefield injuries, emotional wounds, financial stress, fractured family relationships, hopelessness and more can be the outcome for families with a parent serving our country- now, recently, or from earlier generations. Over the years, the National Home has met the changing needs of America's military and veterans' 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 recognizing that the effects of war can last for generations-descendants of members of the VFW and VFW Auxiliary. The family can be one or both parents with one or more children.

Even military families not living on the National Home campus can receive invaluable assistance through the National Home Helpline, which 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@vfnationalhome.org, or
- Visit vfnationalhome.org/help.

The VFW National Home for Children, a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, is governed by a seventeen (17) 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.

One way the Auxiliary supports the National Home is through gifts of 10 cents per member to the **Health & Happiness Fund**. Contributions are critical since the campus and its programs receive no government funding.

Donations can be made online in MALTA or by mail. Visit vfwauxiliary.org and select MALTA and Member Login: Log in to MALTA - Select "Make a Gift" from the Main Menu - Select the "Make a Gift" button – Enter the amount you would like to donate - Enter payment information - Select the "Make Gift Payment" button - You will receive confirmation your gift has been made.

To donate by mail, send a check earmarked Health & Happiness to: VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters Attn: Health & Happiness Donations 406 W. 34th Street, 10th Floor Kansas City, MO 64111.

Another way to offer support is by becoming a Life Member of the National Home. **There are two types of membership:**

VFW and VFW Auxiliary members and organizations are eligible to become Life Members.

Life Members may vote for the Trustees who represent their National Home District and approve any proposed changes to the bylaws and articles of incorporation.

Any individual or organization wishing to support the National Home's mission can become an Associate Life Member. Associate Life Members do not have voting privileges.

The cost of becoming a Life Member is a one-time fee of \$50 and includes a membership certificate, a wallet card and a Life Member pin. (more information)

- Life Membership application
- To purchase a Life Membership

For more information, visit the National Home's website at vfwnationalhome.org.

"Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home for Children

Program Awards

AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES:

1. Most outstanding community education of the "Buddy"® Poppy.

- Citation to every Auxiliary that educates their community about the "Buddy"® Poppy. Criteria and entry form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman by March 31, 2021.
- The Department "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must send a copy of all submitted entry forms to National Headquarters by April 30, 2021. Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.
- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding community education of the "Buddy"® Poppy.

The Department "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Ambassador by April 30, 2021 for judging.

2. Most outstanding promotion encouraging the purchase of a Life Membership to the VFW National Home for Children.

- Citation to every Auxiliary that promotes the purchase of a Life Membership to the VFW National Home for Children. Criteria and entry form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman by March 31, 2021.
- The Department "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must send a copy of all submitted entry forms to National Headquarters by April 30, 2021. Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.
- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding promotion encouraging the purchase of a Life Membership to the VFW National Home for Children.

The Department "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Ambassador by April 30, 2021 for judging.

3. Citation to each Auxiliary that contributes a gift of 25 cents or more per member to the Health & Happiness Fund based on June 30, 2020, membership statistics.

AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN:

1. Citation to each Department "Buddy"[®] Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman for participation in this Program.
2. \$25 VFW Store Gift Certificate to one Department "Buddy"[®] Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion to educate the community about the "Buddy"[®] Poppy.
3. \$25 VFW Store Gift Certificate to one Department "Buddy"[®] Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion encouraging the purchase of Life Memberships to the VFW National Home for Children.
4. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of Program Goals on Page 18 in the VFW AUXILIARY NATIONAL PROGRAM BOOK

DEPARTMENT AWARDS:

1. Award to the Auxiliary with the most outstanding community education of the "Buddy"[®] Poppy.
2. Award to the Auxiliary with the most outstanding promotion encouraging the purchase of a Life Membership to the VFW National Home for Children.

DISTRICT & AUXILIARY AWARDS:

1. **Citations** will be awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd for Best Overall promotion/execution of the Program within each **Auxiliary Membership Division**.
2. Citation to each District/Auxiliary with 100% participation promoting / involved with the "Buddy"[®] Poppy Education and Community and the VFW National for Children Education and Community Outreach.
3. Award to the District/Auxiliary Chairman who has the best promotional material with the "Buddy"[®] Poppy Education and Community and the VFW National for Children Education and Community Outreach.

"Buddy"[®] Poppy Facts:

"Buddy"[®] Poppies are assembled by veterans in need and disabled veterans, affording them additional income and a form of therapy.

For each "Buddy"[®] Poppy purchased by your Department for distribution:

- One-and-a-half cents go to the Department's Veterans Service Fund.
- One cent goes to VFW National Headquarter Veterans Service Fund.
- One cent goes to the VFW National Home for Children.

When the Auxiliaries host or co-host a "Buddy"® Poppy Drive, the money collected goes into the Auxiliary Relief Fund to be spent*:

- Aiding Auxiliary members in need of financial assistance.
- Meeting obligations or sending monetary gifts to the VFW National Home for Children.
- On Hospital work for all veterans, members of the armed forces, Auxiliary members and their families.

Learn more by visiting the VFW website at vfw.org/community/community-initiatives/buddy-poppy.

*See the Booklet of Instructions for more information.

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**The Story of the
VFW "Buddy"® Poppy**

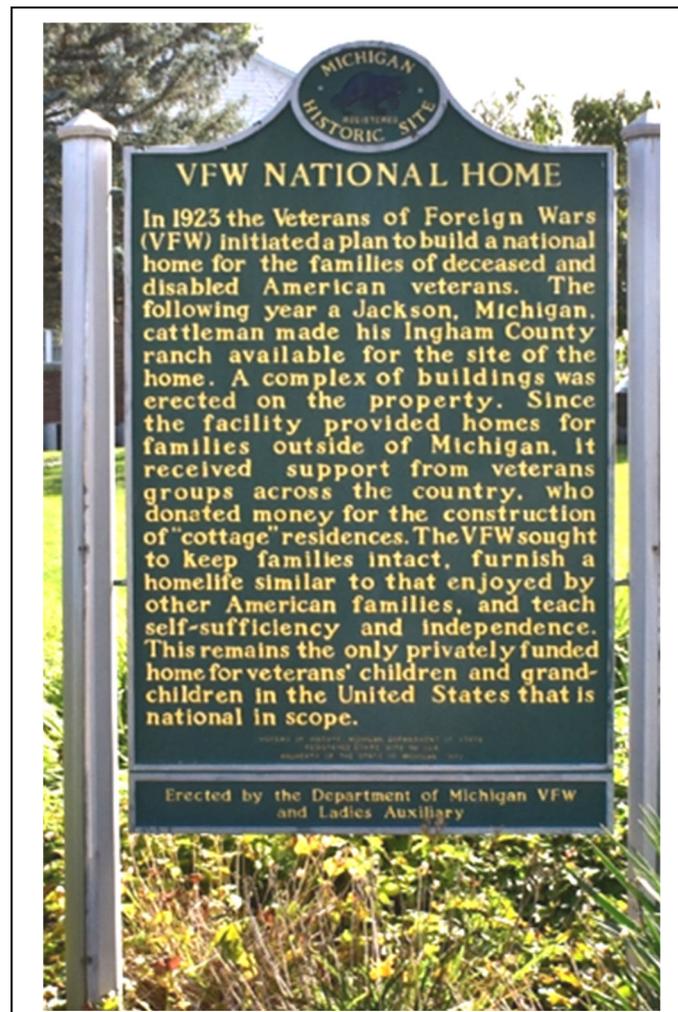


***"In Flanders fields the
poppies blow..."***

These are the opening words of Col. John McCrae's immortal poem dedicated to the memory of the men and women who served, fought and died in France during World War I, the poppies of which he wrote have become the true symbol of all those who have given their lives in our nation's wars.

The poppy has become recognized as the memorial flower in countries throughout the world. It is distributed by veterans organizations in Europe, North America, and in most of the countries of the British Commonwealth.

Since 1922, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States has conducted an annual distribution of the "Buddy"® Poppy to raise funds for its charitable programs on behalf of the needy and disabled veterans, and the surviving family members of deceased veterans.



Need Help: Call the Helpline at 1-800-313-4200 - Email help@vfnationalhome.org or Visit vfnationalhome.org/help.