

“BUDDY”® POPPY / NATIONAL HOME



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VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Education / Outreach * National VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest

In 1922, the Buddy Poppy was adopted as the official flower of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, to symbolize the ultimate sacrifice made by those who defended our country. The VFW “Buddy”® Poppy is worn as a profound gesture of respect to honor the valor and sacrifice of those who laid down their lives for our country.

The first VFW “Buddy”® Poppy distribution was held on Memorial Day, 1922. Distribution of VFW “Buddy”® Poppies should be included in every Auxiliary, District, or Department activity, or other activities in which you participate throughout the year. Membership drives, patriotic events, funerals and VFW events should all include distribution of VFW “Buddy”® Poppies. Remember, all monies from VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Drives go into your AUXILIARY RELIEF FUND and are not to be moved to other funds. The Poppies are assembled by Veterans in need and disabled Veterans. This offers them a form of therapy, as well as some additional income. From its inception, this program has helped the VFW live up to its motto, “to honor the dead by helping the living”.

HOW TO ORDER:

- Contact your VFW Post to order Poppies
- Request the order form from your VFW Department Headquarters at least two to three months (8-12 weeks) in advance of your distribution date

**“Thankful & Grateful for the Sacrifice”
“From Our Roots to Our Branches, Extending Service to Our Veterans”**

- Brochures, VFW “Buddy”® Poppy distribution supplies and promotional items can be purchased from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org, or by calling 1-833-VFW-VETS

VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Distribution Tips:

- Talk to your VFW Post about a joint drive and splitting the proceeds
- Remind volunteers they are NOT SELLING VFW “Buddy”® Poppies but DISTRIBUTING them for donations
- Never refuse someone a VFW “Buddy”® Poppy because they are unable to donate. A VFW “Buddy”® Poppy honors ALL Veterans.

HONOR THE DEAD BY HELPING THE LIVING:

- REMEMBER – 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 Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual. (Sec. 904)
- VFW “Buddy”® Poppy drives can be hosted 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 VFW “Buddy”® Poppies should be included in every Auxiliary, District or Department activity including parades, patriotic events, membership drives, BINGO or trivia nights, etc.

When you have a VFW “Buddy”® Poppy distribution, you are honoring the dead by helping the living, and you are also bringing awareness to some who may not understand who and what we are. Donations collected during your VFW “Buddy”® Poppy distribution will be allocated to the Relief Fund per our Bylaws. There are now TWO options for the VFW “Buddy”® Poppies, the traditional VFW “Buddy”® Poppy and the metal “VFW “Buddy”® Poppy. The new metal Poppy is nice for a collar or suit jacket. Each VFW “Buddy”® Poppy purchased by a Department for distribution contributes to the following:

- One (1) cent goes to the VFW National Home
- One (1) cent goes to the VFW National Headquarters Veterans Service Fund
- One and a half (1.5) cents go to the Department’s Veterans Service Fund

Unofficial VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest:

- If your Department decides to hold an unofficial VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest, for example, holiday tray favors, please ensure that all participants and judges understand the rules and guidelines. The winners of an unofficial contest will not be forwarded to National for judging.

Statewide VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Project:

- Your Statewide “Buddy”® Poppy Project will be a display of Department President Karen Jeffrey’s logo, a cross with the State of Texas
- Each Auxiliary winner will be judged at a District meeting before Mid-Winter

- The winning cross from each District will be taken to Mid-Winter in January to be judged
- REMEMBER – one VFW “Buddy”® Poppy must be kept in original form with stem, flower and label attached
- Entries can then be entered into the Statewide VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Contest in June
- Those winners will advance to the National contest

Official National VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest:

- Takes place annually at National Convention
- Displays are judged in three (3) categories
 - Public Promotion
 - Memorial or Inspirational
 - Artistic or Decorative
- This is an official National VFW contest. Contest rules and judging guidelines, etc. are available in MALTA-Member Resources. As with all National VFW contests, the rules cannot change. If you have further questions after reading the rules and guidelines, please contact Lynn W. Rolf III at lrolf@vfw.org.

VFW NATIONAL HOME

VFW National Home Education and Community Outreach

One hundred years ago, a 23-year-old woman’s mission was to help Veterans, and we are still doing it today. On January 7, 2025, the VFW National Home will turn 100 years old! The VFW National Home was the FIRST National Program for the VFW Auxiliary.

When you support the VFW National Home, you honor the SACRIFICES of America’s Veterans by helping military and Veteran families in times of crisis. We call our community in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, “Small Town America”. Your donation makes an immediate impact for deserving military and Veteran families, providing them with free housing for up to 4 years, professional case managers to help them find a new path forward, 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 on tree-lined streets, 42 single-family homes, facilities such as a gym, library, computer and science labs, day care center, playgrounds, fishing pond, hiking trail and more! We operate on a very modest budget, so your donations truly make a significant impact for families who are working to rebuild their lives.

Social Media & Websites – see exciting events and current happenings along with photos of the families on campus:

- vfnationalhome.org
- VFW National Home Facebook page (make sure and FOLLOW!!)

SOME EXCITING CHANGES TAKING PLACE:

- **Guitars for Vets Program** – Ten free lessons for the Veteran and then a new acoustic guitar for completing the program.
- **The Veterans Tribute Tree** – To honor our living, deceased or deployed, by placing a ribbon on the tree at Christmastime.
- **VFW National Home Birthday Celebration** – Each Auxiliary will send a heartfelt birthday card to the VFW National Home in celebration of its 100th birthday. Please have the cards to the National Home by the beginning of January so they can be displayed for the birthday party. Each Auxiliary could also make a donation to help with costs of the 100th celebration in June.

OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL HOME:

- National Home's Amazon Wishlist
- Become a Life Member
- Donate to Health & Happiness
- Become a Hometown Hero contributor
- Purchase a brick for the Tribute Path - \$100
- Purchase a Centennial Garden Brick - \$500
- Centennial Life Membership - \$100

Over the course of the year, we will have many events and special activities for the National Home, and I hope Auxiliaries will participate and help with all the celebrations. Our biggest celebration will be when we hold our event on the National Home grounds in June 2025.

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. The Health & Happiness Fund supports the following at National Home:

- Christmas gifts
- Graduation gifts
- Maintenance of Auxiliary-sponsored buildings
- Emergency repairs and renovations

Donations can be made online or by mail. Gifts can be made by an Entity (Auxiliary, District or Department) or by individuals. For an Entity (Auxiliary, District or Department) to make an online gift in MALTA:

- The Treasurer logs into MALTA
- Go to the Duties tab for the entity you are making the gift on behalf of
- Select the Make a Gift shortcut icon
- Click on the Make a Gift blue box
- Choose program and enter amount
- Click on “I hereby agree to the terms and conditions of purchase”
- Click on Pay Now

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. 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. There are two types of membership:

1. VFW and VFW Auxiliary members and organizations are eligible to become life members.
2. Any individuals or organizations wishing to support the National Home’s mission can become an Associate Life Member. (Associate Life Members do not have voting privileges).

For more information, visit the National Home’s website at vfnationalhome.org/membership for:

- Life Membership application
- To purchase a Life Membership

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 **National Home Helpline at 1-800-313-4200**
- Email help@vfnationalhome.org
- Visit vfnationalhome.org/help

Statewide Project:

Purchase at least one Lifetime National Home Membership and donate to VFW Commanders' & Auxiliary Presidents' "Team Texas" Department Level Joint Project.

AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES:

1. A Plaque for Most Outstanding Activity and/or Event using the VFW "Buddy"[®] Poppy to educate their community about VFW "Buddy"[®] Poppy.
 - Citations for 2nd and 3rd, in each membership division
 - Entry form required for each award and available in MALTA-Member Resources-"Buddy" Poppy & VFW National Home-Award Forms. VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry forms to their Department VFW "Buddy"[®] Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman by March 31, 2025, for judging. The Department VFW "Buddy"[®] Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry forms to the National VFW "Buddy"[®] Poppy & VFW National Home Ambassador by April 30, 2025, for judging.
2. A Plaque for **Most Outstanding Activity and/or Event to recognize and celebrate the VFW National Home's 100th Birthday.**
 - Citations for 2nd and 3rd, in each membership division
 - Entry form required for each award and available in MALTA Member Resources. VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry forms to their Department VFW "Buddy"[®] Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman by March 31, 2025, for judging. The Department VFW "Buddy"[®] Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry forms to the National VFW "Buddy"[®] Poppy & VFW National Home Ambassador by April 30, 2025, for judging.
 - Citations will be mailed directly to the winning VFW Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the winning VFW Auxiliary account after the 2025 VFW Auxiliary National Convention.
3. Plaque to the Auxiliary in each membership division that purchases the **Most National Home Life Memberships**. Citations to 2nd and 3rdplace

VFW “BUDDY”® POPPY / VFW NATIONAL HOME MID/YEAR-END REPORT

Mid-Year Report - Must be sent to your District President by December 10, 2024
Year-End Report – Must be sent to your District President by April 10, 2025
District President forwards to Department Chairman by December 20 and April 20, 2025

Auxiliary Name: _____ Post #: _____ District: _____

“Buddy” Poppy:

1. Did your Auxiliary have “Buddy” Poppy Drives? Yes _____ No _____ How many _____
2. How many “Buddy” Poppies were distributed? _____
3. Did your Auxiliary participate in the Statewide Project? Yes _____ No _____
4. Did you participate in the Official National VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Contest? Yes _____ No _____

VFW National Home:

1. Did your Auxiliary use the National Home Info available thru Malta? Yes _____ No _____
2. Did your Auxiliary promote the National Home and the Helpline? Yes _____ No _____
3. Did your Auxiliary purchase at least one Life Membership? Yes _____ No _____
4. Did you donate to VFW Commanders’ & Auxiliary Presidents’ “Team Texas” Department Level Joint Project? Yes _____ No _____
5. Did you participate in Educating your Community with a “Buddy” Poppy Event?
Yes _____ No _____
6. Our Auxiliary supported the National Home by: _____

Auxiliary Chairman: _____ Aux#: _____ District: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____