

## Auxiliary\_Department of VA



"Buddy"® Poppy

### Buddy"® Poppy Education/Outreach National Display Contest

The "Buddy"® Poppy is the official memorial flower of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). It represents the blood shed by American service members. It is a symbol of both remembrance and hope for a peaceful future as well as a reiteration that the VFW will not forget the sacrifices of our country's service members. It has been an integral part of the VFW community since 1922.

The Poppy movement was inspired by the poem, "In Flanders Fields," written by Canadian Army Col. John McCrae. Poppies were originally distributed by the Franco-American Children's League to benefit children in the devastated areas of France and Belgium following WWI.

In 1922, VFW conducted a campaign and got Poppies from France. Members soon discovered it took too long to get the flowers in from France and they produced a better idea. Disabled, hospitalized and aging veterans could make the paper flowers and ship them out to the members for distribution. And so, it was known, for veterans in VA hospitals and domiciliaries and in state veterans' homes, every day would be VFW "Buddy"® Poppy Day.



**Chairman**  
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These veterans assemble the Poppies, tie them in bunches of ten and pack them in boxes of 500, 1,000 or 2,000 for shipment to the Posts and Auxiliaries. VFW pays the disabled veteran for the work. In most cases, this extra money provides additional income for the worker to pay for the little luxuries which make life more tolerable. Furthermore, Poppy assembly is often used as a therapy program to provide exercise for fingers and hands crippled by wounds, disease, and the effects of old age.

Another reason Poppies are so important is because all proceeds from distribution are used for veteran's welfare or for the wellbeing of their needy dependents and the orphans of veterans. More than 2,300 children of veterans have been or are being cared for in the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, thanks to a portion of Poppy funds. Reiterate to your fellow members the two-fold importance of Poppies. It is truly all about veterans helping veterans and living up to VFW's motto of "No One Does More for Veterans."



Contact your VFW Post to order Poppies. Brochures, "Buddy"® Poppy distribution supplies and promotional items can be purchased from the VFW Store at [vfwstore.org](http://vfwstore.org) or by calling 1-833-VFW-VETS.

### Tips

# "Buddy"®

# Poppy Distribution

## Tips:

- Meet with your VFW Post and discuss holding a joint drive and splitting the proceeds.
- Contact the clerk's office in your city/town to see if a permit is required to hold a distribution event.
- Get permission from store managers/owners in the desired distribution location(s) prior to promoting your event.
- Share the information about your distribution event with your community by utilizing PSAs on local television channels, radio stations, local paper, and on social media. Post flyers in high traffic areas around the community.
- Ask for assistance from youth groups in the area such as VFW and/or Auxiliary youth, JROTC, after-school, Scouts, Young Marines, and faith-based clubs.
- Ask your 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 your volunteers that they are not selling **"Buddy"® Poppies**. They are 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 in MALTA Member Resources.

AT both 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)

"Buddy"® Poppy drives can be hosted at any time during the year – not just Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Make a goal of holding one once a quarter. If you have enough people to volunteer, host a monthly "Buddy"® Poppy drive.



## V F W N A T I O N A L H O M E

As June ended, people gathered to honor a remarkable milestone in our history: the centennial anniversary of the VFW National Home located in Eaton Rapids, Michigan. Born from the belief that America needs to care for the children and families of people who sacrificed for our country, the VFW National Home is a place of support, growth, and community for veteran and military families. It has helped military and veteran families needing a fresh start. Families can live there up to four years in no cost single-family homes with access to licensed childcare, professional case management, tutoring, life skills, classes, secondary financial assistance, recreational and community service opportunities all on-site.

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



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



Military & Veteran Family Helpline

**Be Heard. Be Helped.**

**800-313-4200**

**Call for any reason.**

### Chairman

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It was founded in 1925 as a place where the families left behind by war could remain together, keeping the family circle intact even when their service member did not come home. Today's families face different challenges — reintegration, post-traumatic stress, and high unemployment — and the VFW National Home continues to evolve to meet these needs. Over the decades, it has adapted programs and services to provide the essential support that these families need to grow and thrive. The VFW National Home remains dedicated to ensuring that military and veteran families have the support, resources, and community they deserve.

One way the Auxiliary supports the National Home is through gifts of ten 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:

DONATE



Making a gift is easy on MALTA. Gifts can be made by an Entity (Auxiliary, District, Department) or by individuals.

- The Treasurer can log into MALTA.
- Go to the Duties tab for the entity you are making the gift on behalf of.
- Select Make a Gift shortcut icon.
- Click on 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. 34<sup>th</sup> Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Kansas City, MO 64111