



BUDDY POPPY / VFW NATIONAL HOME

AUGUST 2025

Is your Auxiliary ready to set sail into a new year for the Buddy Poppy / National Home program? Have you ordered your poppies? Have you thought about a Buddy Poppy drive? Did you know that the Buddy Poppy is one of the most recognizable symbols of our organization? This little flower reminds all Americans of the sacrifices made by our Veterans while protecting the freedoms that we all enjoy. The poem, “In Flander’s Fields” by John McCrae was inspired by this little red flower. Buddy Poppys are now available in 2 options: the traditional artificial flower and the metal tab. Special Buddy Poppys are available for VFW Posts marking their 25th, 50th, 75th, and 100th Anniversaries. Buddy Poppys must now be purchased through your Post. When Poppys are purchased for distribution the following contribution is made:

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

Buddy Poppy’s are a great companion with all VFW Auxiliary programs:

- Americanism: wrap a poppy around the base of small flags when you hand them out
- Auxiliary Outreach: attach a poppy to your name tag or hat that you wear when volunteering with another organization
- Hospital: include a poppy on a tray favor
- Legislative: when printing your voting stickers, insert a small poppy on the corner of the tag
- Scholarship: attach a poppy to an award certificate or pen that is given to the winners
- Veterans & Family Support: attach a poppy to a care package and add a few extra that can be shared with others
- Youth: tie treat bags at Halloween or Christmas with a poppy

The VFW National Home was founded in 1925 in Eaton Rapids, Michigan. Over the years, it has met the changing needs of America’s military and veteran families. Families may live at the National Home for up to 4 years rent free. While living at the National Home, they have access to professional case management services, on-site licensed child care, tutoring and other educational services, community and recreational services, and life skills training.

Please do not forget to pay your Health and Happiness Contribution. This contribution supports maintenance of Auxiliary sponsored buildings, emergency repairs and renovations, and Christmas and Graduation gifts.

Located in the basement of the H&E building, is the **Veteran and Family Resource Center (VFRC)**. The VFRC serves as a central hub of support, guidance, and empowerment for military and veteran families. Dedicated to improving the lives of those who have served, the VFRC connects families with vital

resources, programs, and partnerships that foster stability, growth and personal development. In addition to these essential services, the VFRC proudly supports specialized programs that provide unique avenues for skill building and community engagement. These include the REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM (which I touched on in last month's Sunflower), HEROS TO HIVES, AND GUITARS 4 VETS.

Guitars 4 Vets program provides a free instrument and lessons to those interested in learning to play. Promoting emotional well being through the power of music. The music therapy program helps Veterans cope with PTSD and other challenges. Please see the attached flyer.

NATIONAL AWARDS CAN BE FOUND ON THE DEPARTMENT WEBSITE: vfwauxks.org under Buddy Poppy / National Home

DEPARTMENT AWARDS:

1. Monetary award to the Auxiliary for the BEST Buddy Poppy Drive. One photo and short description must be submitted to the Department Chair NO later than March 31, 2026
2. Citation to each Auxiliary that participates in the Buddy Poppy Display contest. One photo and a short description must be submitted to the Department Chair NO later than March 31, 2026
3. Citation to each Auxiliary that participates in each of the VFRC programs.
4. Citation to each Auxiliary that purchases any Life Memberships or Tribute Bricks for the VFW National Home

I am looking forward to a very exciting year for the Buddy Poppy/National Home program.

Kathy McCandless

422 Winn Rd

Salina, KS

785-822-4266

kathymccandlessvfw@yahoo.com

PS Don't forget your seed packets when you come to School of Instruction on August 23 in Arkansas City!