



BUDDY POPPY / VFW NATIONAL HOME

September, 2025

BUDDY POPPY

The Buddy Poppy is one of the most recognizable symbols of our organization. This little red flower reminds all Americans of the sacrifices made by our Veterans while protecting the freedoms that we all enjoy today. The poem “In Flander’s Fields” by John McCrae was inspired by this little red flower. Your Auxiliary now has two options for Buddy Poppys: the traditional artificial flower and the metal tab. Special Poppys are available for VFW Post marking their 25th, 50th, 75th, and 100th anniversaries.

Now is the time to start planning your Buddy Poppy Drives, here are a few tips and important things to remember:

1. Make sure you have plenty of Poppys. Remember, Poppys must be ordered through your Post.
2. **“WHEN”** Choose your distribution date. Veterans Day, Memorial Day, any day is a good day for a Poppy Drive.
3. **“WHERE”** Decide where you are planning to hold your event. Choose high traffic areas (grocery stores, coffee shops, gas stations, high traffic street corners, post office, etc.) Be sure that you get permission from the business owner or manager and be sure to abide by any city ordinances.
4. **“HOW”** Add them to your Membership recruiting table, set them out during an Auxiliary Bingo session, incorporate them into an Auxiliary fundraiser.
5. Wear something that tells people who you are. A shirt, hat, name tag. Smile and have fun.
6. Most importantly: REMEMBER we do not SELL Buddy Poppys, but we are simply distributing them with hopes of receiving a donation.

VFW NATIONAL HOME

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 there, 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.

There are several ways which your Auxiliary or members can help support the National Home:

1. Remember to pay your Health and Happiness Contribution.
 - a. Maintenance of buildings, emergency repairs, Christmas or Graduation Gifts
2. Become a Home Front Hero
 - a. Monthly donor
3. Purchase a Tribute Brick
 - a. 4" x 8" brick with 3 lines of verbiage is \$100.00
4. Become a Life Member
 - a. Membership is \$50.00

I reached out to Sue Alverson at the National Home to see where and how we could help support them. She told me about the VFRC Veteran and Family Resource Center. It is located in the basement of the H&E building and serves as a central hub of support, guidance, and empowerment for military and veteran families. The VFRC proudly supports specialized programs that provide unique avenues for skill building and community engagement. She suggested the following three programs, which I will highlight this year:

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

- a. Teaches sustainable farming techniques and self sufficiency while providing therapeutic benefits while working with the land

GUITARS FOR VETS

- a. A music therapy program that help veterans cope with PTSD. They provide free instruments and lessons to those who want to learn how to play

HEROS TO HIVES

- a. A beekeeping education program offering training in sustainable beekeeping practices as a means of therapy, skill development, and economic opportunity.

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 a 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

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