

## Buddy Poppy/National Home Program 2023-2024

### DECEMBER



Hope the Warmth  
that is Christmas  
Will Join You  
During this Holiday  
Season And All  
Throughout the New  
Year!!



#### **“Buddy” Poppy:**

I have news about the metal “Buddy”<sup>®</sup> Poppy! According to Lynn Rolf, the VFW Programs Director, it is available through your Department or VFW Post as of October 1. It can be ordered through their order management system. I want to clarify some miscommunications regarding the new Poppy. The reason for the new metal poppy is about costs and quality. National VFW took a hard look at the program. They reached out to find a company to make the new metal poppy. Unfortunately, they did not get any bids from an American company. They found a company in Canada that makes cattle tags. This company is the one that is making our metal poppies. If you have not heard anything about the new Poppy, please contact your Department VFW.

I know it is difficult for change to happen, but I ask you to encourage your membership to be open-minded. Lynn Rolf distributed the new metal Poppy this year at the National Mall. He states that he has seen fewer Poppies lying on the ground and raised twice as many donations as the original Poppy. The public will be willing to pay more for a quality program.

#### **VFW National Home:**

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Here are a few of the newest programs that are happening. The National Home recently graduated their first class of journeyman beekeepers. This is the Heroes to Hives program. The program began this year with two hives purchased and assembled by National Home staff. The first class is hoping to be producing honey next year. They have plans on selling the honey and calling it "Cootie Nectar." The hope is to receive more hives next year from Michigan State University.

Another program that just finished was "Guitars 4 Vets." This program brings a group of veterans together that learn how to play the guitar. In 10 short weeks, veterans learn the components of a guitar, tuning, notes, string recognition and chord memorization. They then have a small private recital where each member learns a song of their choice to play. At the end of the program the veterans receive their very own guitar.

Once a month on a Saturday, the Veteran Resource Center opens for veterans from the National Home and local veterans can meet for a "Cup of Joe." The Cup of Joe event allows veterans to sit back and have a cup of coffee and get together to talk about their choice of topic.

The Program staff have built relationships with many organizations that assist veterans. One of the resources that has been a huge help to the veterans on campus is having a Veteran Service Officer. Veterans can arrange a time to meet with the Veteran service officer to assist each veteran with their benefits. Krieger is also working on getting with a group to help each veteran on getting any tax issues completed. For any service that is needed for our Veterans, Krieger and Allen work hard to find the service and bring the service to the VFW National Home.

Not all programs are designed for the veteran. Many events are happening for the children living at the VFW National Home. For children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age, there is an Early Education Center. This center is available for families living at the VFW National Home and is available free of charge for these children. There are also after-school activities for older children from piano lessons with Miss Rhonda to painting and Gaga Ball. Gaga Ball is dodgeball, but the ball can only hit no higher than your knee and is played in an enclosed pit. They also arrange paint nights and other events for the spouses of the veterans to attend.

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We also cannot forget about 4-H Group. Children raise pigs and rabbits from a young age and will show them at the Eaton County Fair. Recently, a student named her pigs Porky and Hammy. The rabbits that are raised are for their distinguished species like the rabbits with large floppy ears or their cashmere fur. The animals are then sold at the fair and once the cost for feed and purchase are paid for, the child gets to keep the remainder of the money.

The National Home also has a greenhouse. Each year seeds are donated to the home. The seeds are started in the greenhouse. Several homes share a garden bed to grow their vegetable gardens.

With all the wonderful resources that are available, and the above is just a small example of them, Madam National President Carla has just one question for our members. The VFW National Home only has about 100,000 Life Members, while between the VFW and Auxiliary, we have almost 1.5 million members. Why are you not signing up to be a Life Member of the VFW National Home? This is one of the most reasonable Life Membership fees you will ever pay. Consider signing up today!

As always if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me. You can email me at [buddypoppyvfwhomeamb@gmail.com](mailto:buddypoppyvfwhomeamb@gmail.com) or call me at 978-400-1658.

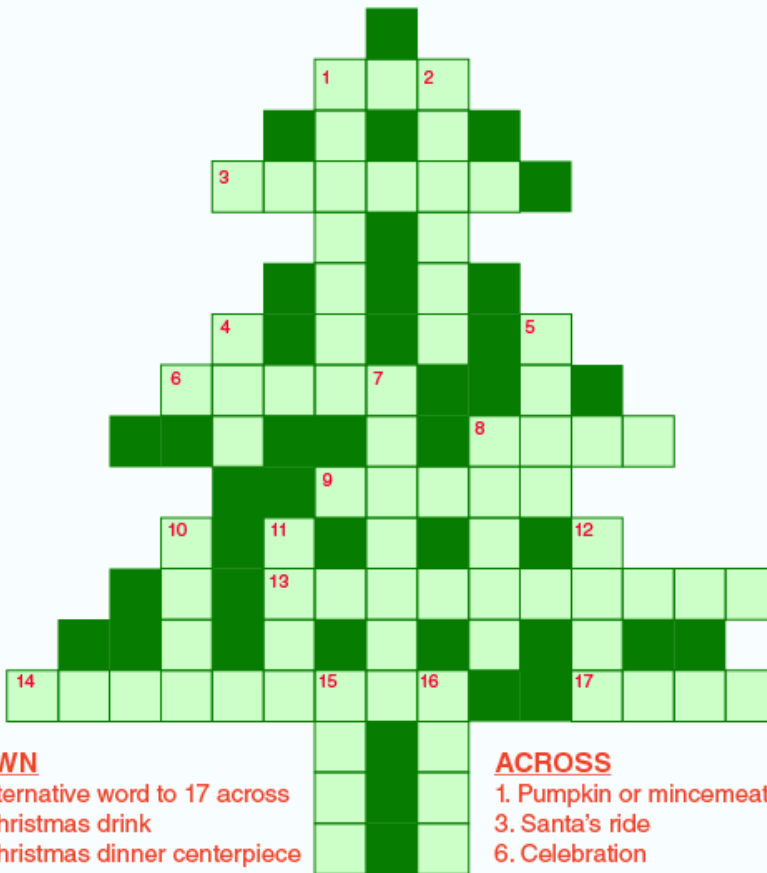
Happy holidays to you and yours!

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**CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD PUZZLES**



**DOWN**

- 1. Alternative word to 17 across
- 2. Christmas drink
- 4. Christmas dinner centerpiece
- 5. Dec. holiday
- 7. Christmas warmer
- 8. "Jingle \_\_\_\_\_"
- 10. Christmas tree
- 11. O. Henry's "The gift of the \_\_\_\_\_"
- 12. What carplers do
- 15. French Christmas
- 16. Snow glider

**ACROSS**

- 1. Pumpkin or mincemeat
- 3. Santa's ride
- 6. Celebration
- 8. Newborn
- 9. Northpole crew
- 13. Word of praise
- 14. Words on a Christmas card
- 17. It's opened on Christmas

