



**“Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Program  
Department of Maryland  
January/February 2025**



**Poppies are Red  
Violets are Blue  
National Home is 100  
Because of YOU!**

It's a new year to create new ideas that promote, educate and share the “Buddy”® Poppy and the VFW National Home Program with our members and the community. I have enjoyed reading the reports I have received. Unfortunately, I have not heard from every Auxiliary. I will contact the Auxiliary Presidents whose Chairman has not yet sent in a report this program year.

In this new year, it's time to prepare for the Department's “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest. Also, remember the National Program Awards for “Buddy”® Poppy and VFW National Home. Forms can be found on the National Website VFW Auxiliary Program & Publicity Resources .

As the VFW's official Memorial flower, the Poppy represents the blood shed by American service members. It reiterates that we will not forget their sacrifice. However, the red of this flower means more than blood. It also represents the lifeline of our organization. Every day it brings a sense of comfort to veterans and their families; they, too, know that they have not been forgotten. There are so many ways to use the “Buddy”® Poppy during the month of February. It is a time for love; love of country, a love for veterans and their families. It is a time to show that “No one does more for Veterans”® than the Veterans of Foreign Wars with the Auxiliary by its side.

Share the **“Red”** in our Programs:

- Americanism – Design a patriotic Valentine's Day Card with Poppies.
- Hospital – Distribute the above Valentine's Day cards to hospitalized veterans during “National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans” week, February 9th-15th.
- Historian/Media Relations – Take pictures of the above cards being distributed. Send photos and news release to local press.
- Legislative – Invite local government representatives to participate in your “National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans” “Buddy”® Poppy Card distribution event.
- Membership – If you are hosting a Community Valentine's Dance/Party at your Post, have membership applications readily available. Decorate your recruiting table with a “Buddy”® Poppy Valentine Centerpiece.
- Veterans & Family Support – Distribute Valentine cards decorated with “Buddy”® Poppies to your Post veterans thanking them for their service.
- Youth Activities – Include youth in creating and distributing “Buddy”® Poppy Valentine's Day cards.

There are so many resources that you can use on MALTA for this program

\*\*“Buddy”® Poppy Chairman's Guide

\*VFW National Convention “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest Rules

\*\*“Buddy”® Poppy Story Cards (print using Avery 5371 or equivalent)

\*The Veterans Behind the “Buddy”® Poppy Video (8 minutes)

\*The Veterans Behind the “Buddy”® Poppy Article (from the September 2015 issue of VFW Auxiliary Magazine)

\*VFW National Home website Supporting Families - [Supporting Families - VFW National Home](#)

\*Military & Veteran Family Helpline - [Get Help - VFW National Home](#)

**Program Goals**

- \*\*“Buddy”® Poppy Education/Outreach
- \*National “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest
- \*VFW National Home Education and Community Outreach

## VFW National Home – *Happy 100th Birthday!*

Happy 100th year of providing a safe, nurturing environment for our nation's military and veteran families! The origins of today's VFW National Home can be traced to a 23-year old woman named Amy Ross. In 1922, Ross made it her mission to help find jobs for the thousands of unemployed veterans in Detroit. News of Ross' efforts reached millionaire cattleman Corey Spencer, who gifted 472 acres of land near Eaton Rapids, Michigan, to build on Ross' vision of supporting veterans.



On Jan. 7, 1925, the VFW National Home was founded, helping to fulfill the VFW pledge to “honor the dead by helping the living.” In March of 1925, the Home welcomed its first family in an old frame farmhouse, Mrs. Pollett and her six children. Pollett had become suddenly widowed and lost her husband's military pension. Since its founding, the VFW National Home has grown from an old frame farm house to a sprawling campus with playgrounds, park areas, and multiple buildings, including the single-family homes, a community center and gymnasium, child care facility, guest lodge, chapel and administrative offices.

Over the years, the National Home has evolved to meet the changing needs of America's military and veterans' families. Through it all, one thing has remained constant: The National Home's commitment to honor our nation's veterans and active-duty military by providing help and hope for their children and families. Click here to see videos of who we have helped. [Stories - VFW National Home for Children](#)

Supporting the VFW National Home within our Programs during our month of love:

- Americanism – Send patriotic books to the National Home along with Valentine cards.
- Historian/Media Relations – Write a feature or editorial piece about the 100th birthday of the National Home.
- Veterans & Family Support – Purchase a National Home Life Membership as a gift for a Post or Auxiliary member.
- Youth Activities – Include youth groups to create Valentine's Day cards then send to the National Home for distribution to their young residents.

Including the VFW National Home in our Programs will bring awareness to this safe haven for active-duty service members, veterans and their families. With your support and donations the VFW National Home will exist for another 100 years.

*Let's start 2025 with a strong commitment to our National Home and continue to bring awareness of our "Buddy"® Poppy! We are "Setting Sail for Our Veterans" as we continue "From our Roots to Our Branches Extend Service to our Veterans"*

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