

Department of Missouri VFW Auxiliary
Buddy® Poppy/ National Home
March/ April 2025-2026

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As we march through the final months of the program year, it's time to celebrate the incredible work we've done—and to gather our courage to finish even stronger! Like Dorothy and her companions traveling the Yellow Brick Road, we've encountered challenges, but we've faced them with unwavering strength and heart. Just like the **Cowardly Lion**, who discovered the courage he always had within him, we too have shown our strength in ways big and small. And now, as we make one final push, **it's time to reflect on the power we hold to make a difference.**



The Buddy® Poppy Program: A Symbol of Sacrifice and Service

The **Buddy® Poppy** is more than just a flower—it's a symbol of sacrifice, remembrance, and the enduring cost of freedom. As Auxiliaries, we are entrusted with ensuring that our communities understand what this tiny red flower truly represents. Every poppy we distribute tells a story of sacrifice, of the men and women who gave their all for our country, and the families that continue to bear the weight of that sacrifice. It is our mission to ensure the meaning behind this simple flower is shared, remembered, and honored.

This year, the **“Poppy Valor” Award** will be presented to the Auxiliary in each membership group **that demonstrates the most outstanding activity and/or event conducted with their VFW Post to educate their community about the Buddy® Poppy.** This award isn't just about the distribution numbers—it's about the creativity, the impact, and the partnership. It's about the Auxiliaries who use the Buddy® Poppy to make a difference, who embody the spirit of remembrance and service.

As we move into the final stretch of the year, let's **keep our energy high and our hearts full of courage**—just like the Cowardly Lion! Here are some ideas for March and April to continue spreading the message of the Buddy® Poppy:

- **Partner with a Local Business & Your VFW Post:** Set up a table with the history of the Buddy® Poppy, explaining who assembles them and how donations help Veterans and their families. Invite your community to stop by, learn, and donate. This is a great way to educate and engage local businesses and the public while raising awareness.
- **Sponsor an Easter Egg Hunt:** Team up with a local business and your VFW Post to sponsor an **Easter Egg Hunt** for the community! This fun, family-friendly event can be a great way to bring people together while educating them about the Buddy® Poppy and the VFW National Home. Include educational materials about the VFW National Home and how it helps military families. You can even hide small poppies in the eggs as a fun and meaningful touch. This event will not only help raise awareness but also show the community how the VFW and Auxiliary are dedicated to making a difference.
- **Create a Large Poppy Display:** Work with your VFW to create a large, eye-catching Buddy® Poppy display at your Post or local library. Add educational signs explaining the meaning behind the Buddy® Poppy and how it supports our Veterans. You can also provide **poppy flowers** where people can write the name of their Veteran and add it to the display. This will give everyone a chance to honor their own

heroes and contribute to a powerful visual reminder of the sacrifices made by our Veterans. A display like this can spark conversations and deepen the community's connection to the cause.

- **Social Media Campaign:** Use your Auxiliary's social media platforms to share stories, facts, and images about the Buddy® Poppy and the VFW National Home. Highlight the critical services offered, and encourage people to donate or volunteer. Use hashtags, images, and call-to-action posts to inspire support and raise awareness.

The VFW National Home: A Lifeline for Families

The **VFW National Home** represents hope and healing—a place where military and Veteran families find support, stability, and a future full of possibility. It's not just a building; it's a lifeline for those who need it most. We must continue to spread the word about the National Home, ensuring that more families know where to turn when they need help.

This year, the **“There's No Place Like National Home” Award** will be presented to the Auxiliary in each membership group that demonstrates the most outstanding activity and/or event to raise awareness and educate their community about the National Home. The award celebrates those who help their community understand that the VFW National Home is **not just a place—it's a sanctuary and a lifeline for families who need it most.**

Just like Dorothy and her friends, each of you brings something vital to the table, and together, we can continue to make a lasting impact. Let's finish this program year with courage, heart, and a dedication to making a difference. There's no place like the VFW Auxiliary, and no place like the VFW National Home. Here are some ideas for March and April to continue spreading the message of the VFW National Home:

- **Host an Informational Event or Open House:** Partner with your VFW Post to host an event where your community can learn about the VFW National Home's services. Share information about how the Home supports families and how the community can help. This is a great opportunity to educate and engage people on a deeper level.
- **Social Media Campaign for VFW National Home:** Share the story of the VFW National Home on social media. Post facts, success stories, and information about the **Stock the Store** initiative. Use hashtags and images to spread the word and encourage donations.
- **Fundraising for the VFW National Home: Remember to support our National Commander-in-Chief and National President's Joint Project—Stock the Store.** Organize a fundraiser to support the VFW National Home and help fill its store with essential items for the families who call it home. These items may include clothing, toiletries, and other necessities that help the families thrive. Whether it's a silent auction, dinner, or donation drive, every contribution counts. Let's channel our courage and generosity, just like the Cowardly Lion, and show our community how we can give back.

Important Reminders:

- **Remember to Report Everything in Detail!** As we head into the home stretch, it's crucial to report every event, donation, and activity with the details that showcase the impact of your efforts. Include photos to make your reports stand out! This helps ensure your hard work is recognized and celebrated.
- **Fill Out the National Auxiliary Award Entries:** Don't forget to complete and submit the **National Auxiliary Award entries.** These awards are an important way to recognize the outstanding work of your Auxiliary and the dedication you've shown throughout the year.

“Be the Reason a Veteran Smiles Today” as we stand together “From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans – Who Keep Us Free.”