



BUDDY POPPY/VFW NATIONAL HOME

Happy New Year! 2026 is off and running and it's time to start thinking seriously about your Buddy Poppy Display for the Department and National VFW Contest. Displays must be submitted first at the VFW Department of AZ Convention. There are 3 categories and you may have an entry for each category. The rules are as follows:

Category 1: Public Promotion of Poppy Campaign (window, booth, parade or poster displays, sales promotion, etc.)

- Displays must be designated for public exposure and must bear a message soliciting a donation for and wearing of the VFW "Buddy" Poppy.
- At least 1 of the Poppies used in the display must be in its original form and color, with label attached.
- The display must have been on display in a public place for a minimum of 3 days and the public place must fill in the official entry form for verification.

Category 2: Memorial or Inspirational Displays (wreaths, memorial tablets or plaques, patriotic or devotional themes)

- Displays must be designated to honor the dead, to inspire devotion to God and Country, or to dramatize the activities supported by "Buddy" Poppy.
- At least 1 of the Poppies used in the display must be in its original form and color, with label attached.

Category 3: Artistic or Decorative Use of Poppies (Post Home display, table centerpieces, corsages, pictures, plaques, models, scenes, hats, novelty pieces, etc.)

- Any display not meeting the qualifications for Categories 1 or 2 shall automatically be entered in Category 3.
- At least 1 of the Poppies used in the display must be in its original form and color, with label attached.

Judging of displays will be on the basis of effectiveness, purpose, clarity of theme, suitability, originality, beauty, and number of Poppies used (minimum of 100 Poppies). If identical items are entered, full credit will be given for the total number of Poppies used. The scoring of the displays will be on Originality-25 points; Composition-25 points; Neatness-25 points; Poppy story-25 points for a total of 100 points. First, Second, and Third Place winners in each Category at the National level will receive a plaque. Get your thinking caps on and order your Buddy Poppies soon!

Buddy Poppy is strong in Arizona. Now let's focus on the VFW National Home. Did you know that the Military Order of the Cootie presented the idea for a home to care for the children and families of veterans

at the 1923 VFW National Convention? This is when Corey Spencer, a Michigan cattleman and VFW member, stepped up and offered 472 acres of land as a gift to the VFW in order to build the home. Unfortunately, Amy Ross, the young woman who started the movement to help unemployed WWI veterans, passed away in 1924, just 4 months before the National Home opened. During her life she was able to help 9000 veterans find jobs and help put the idea of the Home in motion.

This year the VFW Commander-In-Chief, Carol Whitmore, and the VFW Auxiliary National President, Lois Callahan, have joined together for their Special Project to “Stock the Store” at the National Home. Last year we helped with donations to Build the Welcome Center, and this year we are challenged to help fill the store for the residents. Monies raised should be donated to the National Home, www.vfwnationalhome.org, with the designation “Stock the Store.”

Stay busy educating people about eligibility to the National Home. Show your support by purchasing a Life Membership and Tribute Brick. Be sure to send me an email, sunlover1102@gmail.com, if your Auxiliary has purchased these and/or donated to “Stock the Store.” This is how I am able to keep our National Ambassador, Sandra Jeffries, informed of AZ support.

Keep in mind the National Citation Awards for both Buddy Poppy and the National Home. You must send your entry form to me by March 31, 2026 of your outstanding activity with pictures for judging. The winning entries will be sent to the National Ambassador for final judging. Winners will receive \$25.00 and a Citation for their Auxiliary.

Continue to wear your Buddy Poppies everywhere! People notice.

Sincerely,
Peggy Welch