



VFW National Home
Eligibility Helpline
1-800-313-4200



WOW! Just WOW! I want to thank all who attended the Member Involvement Training (MIT), August 22-24, for all the love and dedication you showed for the Buddy Poppy/National Home Program! I am truly excited for this year. I learned some creative ways you are getting the word out about Buddy Poppy and the National Home to the public. One Auxiliary made keychains with the National Home Eligibility QR code on them. A great idea for easy access to the information. Members are making Buddy Poppy keychains, bracelets, and leis. Crocheting poppies into blankets. Many are using them for fundraisers and education purposes. They are great eye catchers for Poppy Drive tables, as well. I found out many are purchasing Life/Centennial Memberships and Tribute bricks to the National Home. Some of you have visited Eaton Rapids to see the campus. These activities are so important to our Auxiliaries. They keep us motivated to honor and help our veterans. It keeps it fun, too! Keep the creativity and innovation coming. You make a difference!

A shout out to Kerry Shrand, who crocheted Poppies for us to wear at the MIT. They are beautiful. At the training, we played Bingo, questions and answers for door prizes, and had county fair style stations for groups to rotate through all programs to make sure all attendees learned. Group participation was key for Buddy Poppy/National Home. Many won a door prize when asked “which country provided the poppies for the VFW distribution in 1922?” Do you know? A mailbox was provided at the training for questions. Two questions were “Can anyone purchase a National Home Life/Centennial Membership?” and “Can anyone purchase a Tribute Brick?” YES to both questions! Spread the word. On the last day we played Buddy Poppy/National Home Jeopardy. Our contestants, Angela Cummins Hubbard, Paula Avery, and Marcy Scott, really did an excellent job showing what they learned.

I want to congratulate Bambi Johnson and Auxiliary 9399, Apache Junction, for winning third place at the National Convention with the “Ready To Go Buddy Poppy Distribution” display. Woo Hoo, Arizona! Let’s start thinking about our display entries for 2026. It is not too early. Discuss ideas. Look at previous year’s entries and winners. Ask “What can we do?” Plan ahead with your purchase of Poppies with your Comrades. I would love to have every Auxiliary in Arizona enter the contest. The real win is participation of your members in the project. Rules are in MALTA, under Resources, then Buddy Poppy/National Home.

It continues to be important to distribute and educate about the Buddy Poppy. Our National Ambassador has a passion for Poppies and loves to see participation in the program. She encourages us to engage people in conversation. Find out if they are military, veterans, families of veterans, etc. Everyone has a story. We have been distributing poppies since 1922. Let’s keep the tradition going and flood Arizona with Buddy Poppies.

The VFW National Home is turning 100 this year. Starting with a modest farmhouse in 1925, on 472 acres, it has now grown to 43 single family homes. The newest home was dedicated this year on March 7th and is named the Missouri II/Pollett House in honor of the first family of the National Home. It is the first new home built in the last 14 years and symbolizes the unwavering commitment to providing quality housing for our veterans.

The purchase of Life/Centennial Memberships and Tribute Bricks makes programs and projects at the National Home possible. Some ideas are fundraisers for the memberships and bricks. Possibly go in with the Auxiliaries in your District for a District Tribute Brick. This would meet the goal for each Auxiliary in the District.

Continue to educate your communities on the VFW National Home Eligibility. Above is an example of a simple way to make the information portable. Include at least the Helpline number and QR code. I encourage you to visit the site yourselves to learn more about the National Home. Click on the blogs to learn about what has happened recently. Also, some heartwarming videos are available from families who share their stories about living there. Get your tissues ready. vfwnationalhome.org, 1-800-313-4200.

Post your activities on Facebook with hashtags: #az2526buddypoppy, #az2526nationalhome, #az2526media, #vfwauxiliaryaz, #vfwauxiliary. If you do not Facebook, send me an email with a description of your activity with pictures. Sunlover1102@gmail.com. The human touch is so important.