

**VFW Auxiliary**  
**Department of Wisconsin**  
**July 2024**  
**VFW Buddy Poppy/National Home Program**

The VFW Auxiliary works to honor and make a difference in the lives of veterans, service members and their families. Two ways we do this are through the VFW Buddy Poppy Program and the VFW National Home.

Before Memorial Day in 1922, we conducted the first poppy distribution. The poppy was soon adopted as the official memorial flower of the VFW, as remains so today.

The Buddy Poppy program provides compensation to those who assemble the poppies, financial assistance in maintaining state and national veterans' rehabilitation and service programs and partially supports the VFW National Home.

The VFW National Home can be traced to Amy Ross, who in 1922, at only 23 years of age, made it her mission to help find jobs for the thousands of unemployed veterans in Detroit. News of her efforts reached millionaire cattleman Corey Spencer, who gifted 472 acres of land near Eaton Rapids, Michigan, to build on Ross' mission. The on January 7, 1925 the VFW National Home was founded, helping to fulfill the VFW pledge to "honor the dead by helping the living." The National Home's commitment is to honor our nation's veterans and active-duty military by providing help and hope for their children and families.

Sue Carlson

VFW Buddy Poppy/National Home Program Chairperson