



**Department of Virginia
2021-2022 Poppy Program**



Caring for the Caregivers

Poppy education and motivation of our Auxiliary Family is critical to the success of the Poppy Program. To keep the Poppy program exciting and interesting requires us all to be innovative in our approach.

Think of some of the poppy distribution methods that have been deployed during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, drive thru poppy distribution worked well with ongoing advertisement at some posts. Placing donation containers in local businesses urging patrons to take a poppy and/or Flanders Field bookmark at checkout. Of course, not all methods work in all situations, but some can continue into post-pandemic times as well. Take advantage of the fact that we can meet in-person now, but always prepare for changes in pandemic restrictions. For those of you not well-versed in social media, on-line meetings, and other electronic means, please reach out to me or others you know that can be helpful. We are a family of volunteers, and we need to pull together.

We encourage you to involve your Junior members in your Poppy Program initiatives this year more than ever. They have great ideas for using poppies in projects and serve as great ambassadors for the Poppy Program. We need to show our Juniors that we value them as members and appreciate their dedication.

This year, we are considering options to replace the creative contests typically held during major Department meetings. National no longer has the traditional Poppy competitions beyond the poster and coloring projects geared towards youth. If you would like to nominate a creative or competitive idea, please contact me by email at poppy@vaauxiliary.org. One idea that has been proposed is a session on how to actually make the crepe paper poppies so we can appreciate the skills and expertise of our veteran poppy makers in Virginia.

You will be seeing monthly educational information that can be deployed in a variety of ways. For instance, August will be a suggestion to include poppies, bookmarks, coloring pages, etc. in school backpacks. This will expose school age children, teachers and family members to the meaning of this important symbol.

Units need to ensure they are in good standing through our ROAR assessments. 15% of the Poppy receipts from the previous year must be paid to the Department Secretary/Treasurer by December 1, 2021. This must be done before you can place your Poppy order for 2021-2022. The Poppy orders must be placed early to help manage our supply and maximize pickups at the Spring Conference. Shipping to the individual units is expensive and pickup is more cost effective. Please use the order form on the Department website under the Members Portal. (www.vaauxiliary.org).

End year reports are due by April 15, 2022. Please mail reports to me at 3216 Davis Mill Rd, Goochland, VA 23063 or email them to poppy@vaauxiliary.org.

Let's make the Poppy Program fun and meaningful through all we do. Let's see to it that everyone understands the meaning of the Poppy and the sacrifice associated with it.

Have a great year and consider inviting me to visit your Unit or District to share more details.

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

SERVICE NOT SELF

Dale Mitchell – 2021-2022 Poppy Chairman – Department of Virginia – (804)-357-6731