

Poppy Program  
Department of California  
Chairmen Name \_\_\_\_\_

and contact information \_\_\_\_\_

### **American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program WHAT IS THE PROGRAM AND WHY DO WE HAVE IT?**

The [Poppy Program](#) has been a cornerstone of the American Legion Auxiliary for close to a century and has continually evolved since its inception. With the recent expansion of The American Legion's rules governing the Poppy program, Auxiliary members have the opportunity to further expand the Poppy Program like never before. You can download the Poppy Guide as it is intended to assist every American Legion Auxiliary member in their efforts to promote awareness about the poppy's significance as a patriotic symbol that honors our veterans and their families. This Guide offers answers to questions members often ask about the program and its intricacies.

#### **Symbolism of the Poppy** (*one version*)

- The red petals stand for the vast outpouring of blood; the yellow and black center, the mud and desolation of all battlefields.
- The green of the stem is symbolic of the forests, meadows and fields where generations of Americans have perished to make this land free.
- The stem represents the courage and determination of our fallen warriors.
- The assembled product, a flower, is a symbol of resurrection, which is sure to follow.

#### **Financial Benefit**

The financial benefit realized by our nation's veterans as a result of poppy distribution is huge; millions of American Legion Auxiliary poppies are distributed by Units each year, raising millions of dollars. Children and entire families are involved in spreading the poppy message, too.

The program assists in meeting the continuing needs of our veterans by raising much-needed funds. The Auxiliary promotes the poppy as a symbol of the sacrifices our military have made, a symbol to open people's hearts and inspire them to donate.

#### **Ordering Poppies**

All Units should order poppies as early as August and before the October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Units will be assessed \$30.00 and allocated 100 poppies, if [Poppy Order](#) is not received by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### **War Poem**

"In [Flanders Fields](#)" is a war poem in the form of a ronde au, written during the First World War by Canadian physician and Lt. Col. John McCrae. He was inspired to write it on May 3, 1915, after presiding over the funeral of friend and fellow soldier Alexis Helmer, who died during the Second Battle of Ypres.

#### **Annual Poppy Poster Contest**

Poppy Poster Contests are held in local schools for students in grades 2 to 12. Units shall sponsor contests in local schools. When schools do not conduct activities, other youth groups, including Junior members, may participate under direct supervision of the Unit. Class Grade Level Categories: I-Grades 2 and 3, Class II-Grades 4 and 5, Class III-Grades 6 and 7, Class IV-Grades 8 and 9, Class V-Grades 10 and 11, Class VI- Grade 12, Class VII: Students with special needs. See ALA Department of California website for [Contest Rules and Winners](#).

#### **Miss Poppy Contest**

The [Miss Poppy Contest](#) is a fun event for Junior Auxiliary members who develop local programs to promote the Auxiliary memorial poppy.

#### **Poppy Program Resources**

[History](#)

[National Poppy Day](#)

[The Poppy Lady Story](#)

[Poppy Branding](#)

[Poppy Video](#)

#### **Poppy Program Annual Reporting**

**Year-End reports – for Units, District due date is typically in mid-April/Department due date is early May.** Annual reports reflect the program work of units in the department. It is requested that these reports be accompanied by photos of select Unit projects. Each Unit Chairman is encouraged to submit a narrative report by mid-April to the District Chairman who will submit a report to the Department Poppy Chairman.