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Buddy Poppy/National Home

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As I spoke about our Buddy Poppy program at the C of A. it saddened me that we are so restricted and limited to our fundraising. We need to think “outside the drive” and come up with new and creative ways to raise money for our relief funds.

Think to your specific community and the places that are allowed to be open under the current conditions, donation boxes with locks are very affordable and might be a good idea to place at a partnered store or restaurant within your community. Get those community businesses that are open to do a contest with these boxes; whoever has the most donations out of the few businesses you choose gets a plaque or other incentive from your Auxiliary as the winner.

Get your Auxiliary Members that are social distancing at home and needing something to do some supplies and make “poppy” themed items; like mason jar vases, necklaces (like Billie’s Lei), door wreaths, or anything else you can “sell” for a donation. Place a Buddy Poppy in a snack size zip lock bag with the Buddy Poppy Story cards (Template found on the website) and include where they can donate to your relief fund (i.e., your auxiliary address and who checks can be made out to), attach Buddy Poppy stickers you can purchase from the VFW store \$5.00/per 100, and place in carry out bags if you are doing carry out meals or give to Auxiliary member to hand out to people. These are a few options for you. Check out the VFW Store for a lot of great resources, I know money might be tight, but even if you cannot buy from the store something might “spark” an idea that you can do on you own without spending money. They have koozies, bookmarks, coloring books, shirts, tote bag, scarf, pins, earrings, and so much more. If money isn’t super tight and your auxiliary can afford this, take \$60.00 and buy these different things through the store and as your posts open again or as you are doing carryout food, have a raffle and all proceeds or all monies go into your relief fund.

Due to restrictions Illinois Day has been cancelled for in person visits; however look out for a Virtual Day option for this event! Ways to help during this is an additional donation outside of your Department donation to the National Home’s General Fund as this is where the greatest need is right now with the uncertainty of money needing to be spent. Buy a Life Membership; Already a Life Member? Gift someone in your Auxiliary a Life Membership. Life Memberships help the home with funding and help gain additional monies out there for Non-Profits; also gives you the ability to vote on bylaw changes and vote for new Trustees for the National Home. Use AMAZON Smile, a program that donates as you shop, set the VFW National Home as your beneficiary for your purchases! You can also find a few fundraising ideas here:

<https://www.vfwnationalhome.org/ideas>

As you do these new and exciting things to help with outreach and fundraising for these programs, please make sure to send these ideas to me while reporting. Happy Brainstorming and I cannot wait to hear new ideas!!