



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
Department of Ohio

2009-2010
POPPY
PLAN OF ACTION

Department of Ohio Poppy Committee

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REPORT DUE : June 1, 2010

SEND REPORT TO : Mary Lee Mercier
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Communication Is Key
Martha Lee Thatcher
2009-2010 Department President

POPPY

2009-2010

Our National Poppy Committee's Plan of Action states the purpose of this Committee is to elevate community awareness and respect for our veterans by educating our membership and the public about the Poppy's significance and the financial benefits realized by our Nation's veterans as a result of its distribution.

The Department's Objectives for the Poppy Program are listed below. These objectives and associated action steps detail how and what Units can do to have a successful Poppy Program and in turn help the Department reach its objectives.

As the citizens of this country wear a Poppy each year, we are remembering and honoring those who served and those who are still serving. Our goal is to promote the Poppy distribution along with sharing the Flanders Field story. **Communication is Key.** There are so many ways to incorporate this meaningful Poppy 365 days of the year. Use it in your decorations for celebrations of holidays and parties. Be creative. If you feel you are not creative, there is someone in your Unit who is and loves to be creative - get her involved; **Communication is Key. Be sure to increase the number of Poppies you order so you will have them available – be a member of the new “25% distribution increase club.”** The great State of Ohio always shines through –we can do this. We can reach our increased distribution goal and share the story.

OBJECTIVES

1. **OBJECTIVE** – Increase Poppy distribution – goal will be 25% increase.

Action Steps:

- a. Supporting Veterans and hospitalized soldiers returning home and/or awaiting discharge.
 - 1) Support our veterans by utilizing proceeds from distribution of the Poppy.
 - 2) Volunteer at VA facilities with Poppy Workshops.
 - 3) Encourage Unit members to distribute Poppy items such as poppy cards.
 - 4) Organize or host a “Girls Day Out” with other members and visit local VA facilities or veterans at the local nursing home.
 - 5) Solicit junior members to help with parties, activities and the making and distribution of Poppy Cards and favors.
- b. Include the American Legion Family.
 - 1) Extend an invitation to Legionnaires and SAL members to participate with Auxiliary members in the distribution of Poppies in local communities and visits to VA facilities and nursing home visits.
- c. Poppy production workers.
 - 1) Recruit and retain Veterans to become Poppy Production Workers.
 - 2) Send “*Thank You's*” to current poppy workers
 - 3) Treat them to lunch or treats when you visit the workshops.

d. Poppy Distribution and Proceeds

- 1) Distribute the poppy throughout your communities and generate donations through such activities.
- 2) Place poppy cans in your community. When asking to place Poppy cans in businesses, make sure to provide history of the Poppy and provide publicity.
- 3) Plan and execute your Poppy day festivities and include The American Legion family to help distribute poppies and provide publicity.
- 4) Take advantage of the downloadable information sheet on Poppies.
National Auxiliary website: The “Thank You For Caring” leaflet can be downloaded from this site. www.legion-aux.org (See related Poppy Resources) or purchased thru Emblem Sales.

2. **OBJECTIVE** – Connect with the Poppy’s significance by sharing The Flanders Field story whenever possible

Action Steps:

- a. Public Relations (Poppy Promotion) Make the community aware of the history of the poppy’s significance and the purpose of the distribution.
 - 1) Create and maintain a relationship with the news media (newspaper, television and radio) to publicize poppy distribution.
 - 2) Visit schools, churches, civic organizations senior centers, etc., to tell the Poppy Story.
 - 3) Promote Miss Poppy contests and Poppy posters contests.
 - 4) Promote Poppy awareness in your community.

IMPORTANT POPPY PROGRAM DATES

December 31, 2009	Poppy order deadline date
January 15, 2010	Poppy Corsage Contest
January 15, 2010	Junior Poppy Corsage/Centerpiece Contest
January 15, 2010	Poppy Centerpiece Contest
April 11, 2010	Poppy Open House
May 1, 2010	Unit Poppy Award due to Mary Lee Mercier
May 1, 2010	Poppy Poster Contest due to Mary Lee Mercier
May 31, 2010	Poppy Scrapbook “Shelly Riggs Plaque” due to Mary Lee Mercier
May 31, 2010	National Miss Poppy Scrapbook due to Mary Lee Mercier
May 31, 2010	GREEN REPORT due to Mary Lee Mercier!

All orders must be post marked by December 31, 2009 to qualify for the Department Citation of Merit and must be ordered through the Department of Ohio. This encourages the “Ohio Hand Made Poppy” thus retaining veteran workers in Ohio. Orders will be filled “first in – first out”. Be sure to order early so we can keep the workers busy. The cost of Poppies is indicated on the Poppy Order Form. Make sure to order enough to create your Poppy corsages and centerpiece.

KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL POPPY PROGRAM

Order poppies EARLY – Deadline is December 31, 2009, for the Citation of Merit. (ONLY ORDERS THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF OHIO QUALIFY FOR THE CITATION OF MERIT).

Contact local Elementary Schools – Ask teachers to have a Poppy Poster Contest and give certificates to the students for their efforts.

Choose Miss Poppy Contestants – Give a Junior Member the opportunity to participate in this wonderful program.

Make Poppy Corsages AND Centerpieces – Bring to Department of Ohio Mid-winter for members to select Ohio's best to be taken to the Awareness Assembly in Washington DC.

Attend Poppy Shop Open House – April 11, 2010 Ohio Veterans home in Sandusky. Bring your Little Miss Poppies and/or Master Poppies to celebrate a rewarding year.

Select your Poppy Distribution Sites – Send letters to all Legion Family Members asking them to help in Poppy distribution day. Be sure to use as many Juniors, SAL and Legionnaires as possible.

Contact the Media – Get a Proclamation signed by your City Officials and put them into your local newspaper with any article and /or pictures to advertise your Poppy Day and be sure to include in your article where the funds are used.

Display Poppies – ALL year, using donated monies to care for the needs of our disabled and hospitalized Veterans.

UNDERSTANDING RESTRICTED FUNDS

The funds collected from Poppy distribution are **restricted** and may only be used for the rehabilitation of discharged veterans and the welfare of their families as well as for servicemen and women returning home and awaiting discharge from service hospitals. (Remember, Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation assessments may also be taken from this fund).

AWARDS

DEPARTMENT

POPPY CORSAGE CONTEST – The Poppy Corsage Contest will be part of the Awareness Assembly again this year. Each corsage should have the name of the creator, their Unit and District. They should be approximately 3 ½ x 3 ½ and fit in a standard 4" x 4" corsage box. Any larger will be disqualified. Attendees pay \$1.00 per vote and the proceeds will go to the Creative Arts Festival. The winning corsages will be used at 2009-2010 Girls Nation Session.

As Department Poppy Chairman, I am challenging every Unit to submit one corsage using the Poppies. Bring the corsages to Midwinter Conference in January where all the attendees will be asked to vote for their favorite corsage at \$1 per vote. The top winners will then be sent to the National Awareness Assembly and entered in the National Poppy Corsage Contest. Note: Ohio won this contest in 2004, 2006, 2007 and 2008 and received second place in 2005. Let's keep up the good work!

This year we are asking our Juniors, (**remember, Communication is Key,**) to create their very **own Poppy Corsage and/or centerpieces**. Please tell them about the Contest. Help them with this project. This would be a wonderful opportunity to make sure they fully understand what the

Poppy represents. We will be able to vote for the Junior favorite just as we do for the Seniors. See Junior Plan of Action for more details.

In addition to the above judging, each attendee will receive one ballot to vote (free of charge) for their favorite corsage. This will be called the “peoples choice” award. These corsages will be given out at Buckeye Girls State. Those submitting an entry at Department of Ohio Midwinter, January 15, 2010 will receive a Certificate of Participation and the top 3 winners will receive a gift.

CENTERPIECE CONTEST – I am asking all Units to bring a centerpiece created with Poppies to Midwinter Conference. This will be an opportunity for you to share with other Units your creative ideas on how they can use their poppies. Remember that these are centerpieces that will be used at the Past President’s Parley luncheon. All attendees will have the opportunity to vote for the winning entry. Remember to remove all white “In Memoriam” tags.

- a. Poppy Poster Contest Participants (*see rules under National Awards*)
- b. Miss Poppy Contest (*see rules under National Awards*)
- c. Unit Poppy Award (*see rules under Department Awards*)
- d. Chairman’s Choice Award (*see National Chairman’s Choice Award under National Awards*)

UNIT POPPY AWARD – The Unit Poppy Chairman in each class reporting their Best Unit Poppy Program will receive an award at the Pre-Convention meeting on June 25, 2010.

1. Each entry should cover all phases of the Poppy Program as described in the Plan of Action – **Most Outstanding Overall Poppy Program.**
2. Entries must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words with cover page to include Unit name and number, address, District number, Department name, name of Poppy Chairman, date and word count.
3. Must be postmarked by **May 1, 2010** to: Mary Lee Mercier, Department Poppy Chairman, 3674 Colonial Drive, Hilliard, Ohio 43026
4. Winning entry will be forwarded on for National judging.

THE SHELLY RIGGS PLAQUE – “BEST ALL-AROUND POPPY PROGRAM” – This plaque will be awarded to the Unit who submits a SCRAPBOOK based on the “Best All-Around Poppy Program” with emphasis on the Plan of Action criteria. The plaque will be presented on the Department of Ohio convention floor June 26, 2010.

1. This SCRAPBOOK must be 8 1/2” x 11” with cover page to include Unit name and number, address, District number, Creator’s name and date. It should contain photos, articles, newspaper clippings and a 250 word essay on how your Unit promoted “our” Poppy.
2. ALL SCRAPBOOKS will be returned at Department Convention or given to the District President for its safe return.

3. Due by **May 31, 2010** to: Mary Lee Mercier, Department Poppy Chairman, 3674 Colonial Drive, Hilliard, Ohio 43026.

NATIONAL

NATIONAL POPPY POSTER CONTEST – 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. The Unit chooses their winning entry and must be sent by **May 1, 2010** to: Mary Lee Mercier, Department Poppy Chairman, 3674 Colonial Drive, Hilliard, Ohio 43026.

Contest Classes are:

Class I	Grades 2 & 3	Class II	Grades 4 & 5
Class III	Grades 6 & 7	Class IV	Grades 8 & 9
Class V	Grades 10 & 11	Class VI	Grade 12
Class VII	Students with Special Needs as defined:		

- a. Those students in special education classes.
- b. A student recommended for special education classes, but who had not been admitted due to waiting list or various other casual factors.
- c. A child identified as having a disability, but not in a special education class due to lack of facilities, identification contingent upon discretion of school officials.

Poppy Poster Requirements:

1. Each poster shall have a fitting slogan not to exceed ten (10) words. Articles “a, and, an, the” are not to be counted as words. The words “buddy” and “buy” cannot be used.
2. The words “American Legion Auxiliary” must be used in the design of the poster and will not be counted in the ten (10) word count.
3. Each poster must carry a picture of the Flanders Poppy in the correct color (four red petals with a center of green and black).
4. The poppy shall have four petals and no leaves.
5. The Department shall determine the closing date of the Unit contest.
6. The poster shall be 11x14 poster board (effective 2008-2009 Administrative year). **(Drawing paper will not be accepted).**
7. The United States Flag may be used as long as there are no infractions of the flag code.
8. Posters will be judged using the following criteria:
 - a. 50% - Poster appeal (layout, message, originality)
 - b. 40% - Artistic ability (design and color)
 - c. 10% - Neatness
9. Media used shall be watercolors, crayons, powder or oil paint, handmade paper cutouts, ink or textures, acrylics, pencils and markers.
10. Written in ink on the back of the poster (not attached) shall be the class in which the entry is submitted, the name, address, age and grade of the contestant and the name of the Department.
11. The poster shall be the work of only one individual.
12. No humorous drawings or slogans shall be used.
13. The label “In Memoriam” from the veteran-made poppy may not be used.
14. When the Holy Cross is used, the Star of David shall also be used.

Judging and Awards

1. Each Unit shall establish its own judging procedure.
2. All entries are due to the Department Chairman by **May 1, 2010**.
3. An Award to be determined by the Department Chairman will be given for the best poster in each of the five classes at the Department Convention in June, 2010. (*\$25.00 shall be given for the most outstanding poster in each classification within the five Divisions by National*)
4. Certificates will be given to all participants at the Department Pre-Convention meeting.
5. An award will be given to the first Place winners in each classification at the Department Pre-Convention meeting.

UNIT POPPY PROGRAM AWARD – Refer to the Department Unit Poppy Program Award. A plaque will be presented to a Unit Chairman in each division reporting the Most Outstanding overall program.

1. Be sure you adhere to the postmark date of **May 1, 2010** – this is a must as the overall winning entry will be forwarded on to the Divisional Chairman.

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S CHOICE AWARD – There will be a **Poppy Corsage** chosen at the Awareness Assembly in Washington D.C. that will be worn by National President, Rita Navarrete

NATIONAL MISS POPPY CONTEST – Two Categories: Little Miss Poppy – Ages 6-12, Miss Poppy – Ages 13-18

1. Entrant must be between 3-12 of age or 13-18 years of age and a **Junior Member** of the American Legion Auxiliary.
2. Promotional activity of the Poppy Shop must be through the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary and the community.
3. Selection of Miss Poppy is at the discretion of the Unit.
4. Narrative report, not to exceed (100) words on the “Memorial Poppy” must be submitted.
5. Entrant must submit a Miss Poppy Scrapbook (8 ½ x 11) containing photographs and clippings illustrating how she promoted the American Legion Auxiliary poppy.
6. Due date is **May 31, 2010** and must be sent to: Mary Lee Mercier, Department Poppy Chairman, 3674 Colonial Drive, Hilliard, Ohio 43026

Each category will be judged on the following criteria:

1. Costumes 33.3%
2. Promotion of the Poppy Program 33.3 %
3. Publicity of poppy activities 33.3%

Miss Poppy (6-12) and Miss Poppy (13-18) winners will be invited to appear at the National Convention following her selection and if she so chooses, will travel at her own expense. Winners of the National Miss Poppy contests will be awarded \$250.00. There is no specific dress code or particular color for Miss Poppy.

NOTE: Dues dates are a **MUST!**

RESOURCES

Unit Handbook pages 81 - 82 tells you how you can seek funds for, Poppy facts, supplies for Poppy Day, suggested activities and publicity for Poppy Day. Handbook is available through Emblem Sales. (1-800-452-4466 or www.emblem.legion.org).

Poppy Preview-this pamphlet has information in how to promote Poppy days. It provides sample news releases, public service announcements and proclamations (Available through Department Headquarters).

Poppy Volunteer Guide-an eighteen page booklet that gives a history of the Poppy program, answers most frequently asked questions and offers tips on organizing, planning and conducting a successful Poppy campaign. #355.203 \$2.95

Poppy Certificates- can be given in recognition to business or volunteers #333.120 \$1.00 each or \$75.00 for a pack of 100

Thank You for Caring Leaflet - can be distributed to the public. It tells the poppy story and lists the eligibility requirements for membership. (Soon to be available on line.)

Flanders Field Poem: www.legion-aux.org/files/poppy_story_flanders_filed_doc

ALA Public Relations Guide: www.legion-aux.org/publicrelations/

Annual Report Form - Refer to the attached copy – original will be mailed in the January-February, 2010 bulk mailing.