

September 26, 2026

Poppy Sales/Production Committee

The Poppy Sales/Production Committee was called to order at 10:01 am with a salute to the colors and the Pledge of Allegiance recited by all members. Present: 1st Division: Frank Thompson, 2nd Division: Todd Latham (acting Chair Pro Tem), 4th Division: Linda Glenn. HQ Staff-David Scott.

The committee reviewed the budget for Poppy Sales/Production and Poppy Scholarship, signed and returned to Finance.

Poppy Sales/ Production \$1,000 (Printing and Meetings)

Poppy Scholarships \$3,700 (Printing and Scholarships)

Reviewed the following brochures/documents:

Poppy Poster Contest Rules and Guidelines (Sept 2026)-No Change

Poppy Poster Contest Cover Sheet (Dept winners to National) changes accepted.

Poppy Order Form-

Cost increase anticipated for assembled poppy per thousand; shipping \$14.

Poppy order per unassembled to increase with shipping options.

Auxiliary Coloring Book was distributed.

Reviewed Poppy Sales/Distribution May 1, 2025, to April 30, 2026.

Sales of All Districts: 188,131

Posters: 439

Club Cards: 738

Can Labels: 243

Citation of Recognition: 11

Bookmarks: 6,645

Division Totals:

1st Division 32,220

2nd Division 53,106

3rd Division 21,450

4th Division 52,650

5th Division 28,725

Other 18,260

Emblem Sales 230,000

The Finance Committee distributed Poppy Notes.

The committee reviewed the Committee Purpose issued by Commander C. Latham.

The committee was surprised that it had to submit a semi-annual report to the Finance Committee and sought clarification on “work closely with the Chicago office.”

Poppy Sales/Distribution/Poster Contest/Scholarships

Veterans’ Homes participating in poppy assembly included: LaSalle, Manteno, Quincy, Anna, Danville.

Commander Celeste Latham, Adjutant Josh Thielen, and Sr. Vice Commander Wayne Erickson visited the Committee.

Poppies are now pre-cut from two vendors with two options: assembled and unassembled. Due to the cost of supplies the cost per poppy will increase and estimated \$30 per 1,000 poppies. Department will encourage smaller orders to assemble their own poppies, at discount. Due to post office rates changing posts/units ordering poppies may not be charged shipping if orders are picked up and distributed at a Poppy Seminar. If not, the cost for shipping will likely increase and passed on with each order.

The committee set the following goals for the Department Poppy Program.

1. Distribute at least 180,000 poppies
2. Get the Legion Family full participation in the poppy program
3. All 5 Divisions and their Districts hold at least one Poppy Seminar
4. Support and promote Poppy Distribution, Poster Contest, Coloring Contest
5. Encourage more posts to use the Poppy Citation to recognize people, chairs, and businesses that support the poppy program.
6. Promote National Poppy Day, the Friday before Memorial Day
7. Select a Jr. Miss Poppy (Auxiliary) and Jr. Mister Poppy (SAL)

The Committee would like more posts/units in schools to promote the Poppy Program through Distribution.

The committee wants to emphasize how the Poppy Program is tied to each of the Four Pillars.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation-Pillar 1

Direct support: Donations collected from distributed poppies fund medical and financial assistance for disabled, needy, and hospitalized veterans.

Rehabilitation Work: The hand-made poppies, often assembled by disabled veterans, provide therapeutic work and a small income.

National Security-Pillar 2

Supporting families: Funds raised provide aid and essential resources to active-duty military personnel and their families facing financial or deployment hardships.

Americanism-Pillar 3

Honoring Sacrifice: Wearing a red poppy promotes public patriotism, memorializes fallen service members, and reminds the community of the cost of freedom.

Education: Local programs often include patriotic poppy poster contests in schools to teach youth about national sacrifice.

Children & Youth: Pillar 4

Family Assistance: Money raised through the American Legion poppy fund helps support family care initiatives, children's welfare organizations, and programs that assist military children in need.

The Committee can accomplish this by actively working with local schools to increase access, participation, and awareness of the Poppy Program. Program improvements would include increased distribution, increased Poppy Poster participation, and connecting the program with the four pillars to better support posts and members.

Lastly, we would like to report a goal that at the 2027 Department Convention: 200,000 were sold; all Divisions held at least one seminar; the number of post/units participating increased; and the National Poppy Day was used for greater awareness.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Latham, Vice Chair

