



# VFW National Home



The 2023-2024 National Home Special Project chosen this year is two-fold shared jointly by Supreme President Billie Cassidy and Supreme Commander Mark Larkin. So read all about one of their projects. It is quite unique. We want to have some great ideas to raise funds to support both projects. Curious?? I'm sure. Okay here goes.



## “Heroes to Hives Program”



Was developed as a Service Member Training and Support Program. Heroes to Hives is a 9-month beginning beekeeping education course designed to train Service Members through a free online training program that is coupled with on-ground training opportunities to develop a community of support with other veterans. Since 2015, Heroes to Hives has trained over 8,200 Service Members and their dependents from all over the world.

Since 2015, the Heroes to Hives program has been leading the nation in training military veterans, National Guard members, Active-Duty personnel, Reservists and their dependents in the art and science of beekeeping. Founded by Bee Wise Farms LLC and Michigan Food and Farming Systems' Veterans in Agriculture Network, the program began as a way to engage Service Members in beekeeping as an opportunity for them to continue serving their nation by protecting our nation's food security and work with other Service Members to recreate the support network of the military.

The 2023 Heroes to Hives program includes: Over 100 hours of online training in beekeeping through lectures, instructional videos, and handouts. Small business training by the Small Business Administration's Veterans Business Outreach Center Educational module and job seeking tool for preparing veterans for jobs in the commercial Beekeeping industry. Online marketing training and training on therapeutic practices in the bee yard.

Service Members successfully completing the Heroes to Hives program are eligible to receive a Certificate of Completion, recognized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). They also have the opportunity to transfer Heroes to Hives credits to the Great Plains Master Beekeeping Program at the University of Nebraska where Service Members can complete their Master Beekeeping Certificate. This will give our Veterans at the National Home a much bet opportunity for an exciting new career.



## Music Program

Let's start with a new twist to the music program. Last year the focus was on Guitars for Vets. The 2023-24 MOC Supreme Commander and MOCA Supreme President's Special Project will be raising funds to cover the expense of 23 full-sized keyboards. Previously Pianos were in the homes and long usage made them not replaceable. Now children and adults will be able to learn to play and practice at home. The National Home even acquired an additional musical instrument group, which included a drum kit. The children began practicing on a ragtag set of mismatched drum pieces discovered in the music room. Todd Marriott the Facilities Director has been recruited to provide the drum lessons. Music has a therapeutic nature of being soothing and uplifting; music teaches children so much while providing confidence and self-esteem. They are also upgrading the audio equipment.

## Scholarship



There are two types of Scholarship Funds. Do not confuse the Supreme Obligation Scholarship fund with the National Home internal Scholarship Program.

**National Home Scholarship Program** allows students to further their education. Each year one or more Scholarships may be awarded to graduates of the National Home regardless of his or her intended major. This Scholarship aids in their continuous education. Make sure any donation you make is earmarked for the project your Auxiliary intends the funds to be used for, while at the National Home, sent or presented direct to National Home. National Home may award one or more Scholarships to a Graduate of the National Home to aid in their continuous education if needed.

**Supreme National Home Fund** The donations received are donated to the VFW National Home for Children to be used for the MOC/MOCA House and other things that the children need. They have special outings and Holiday events that funds are used for. Just ensure you earmark on the FOR line what your donation is intended for!

Donations to the Supreme National Home Fund and The National Home Supreme Presidents Special Project are to be mailed directly to the Supreme Treasurer.

**Cootie Christmas** The annual Cootie Christmas Party will be held this year 1-3 December 2023. Cootie Christmas is hosted by the Grand of Michigan and funded through your generous donations; ensure you earmark your check Cootie Christmas. There are numerous opportunities to support Cootie Christmas. If your Grand or its Auxiliaries bring gifts, make a special monetary donation, or support any of the other programs, make sure you report it on the National Home Form, listing hours spent making or purchasing gifts. Your Grands may also support with gifts from their Grand to give out at the Christmas Party.

- National Home Gift shop is open for you to buy or order logoed items. There is also a place on their website to order direct.
- Youth Craft room has a limited number of handmade Cootie crafts for sale; and the Santa Shop needs donations of items for house families or donations to purchase shortfalls. (Youth earn points to buy gifts for their families.)

**Other National Home Programs** Life Membership Programs, Pins and Souvenirs, Bequests, Memorials, Subscriptions to the Patriot, Graduations, Birthdays, etc. are sent directly to the VFW National Home at 3573 S. Waverly Road, Eaton Rapids, MI 48827. The telephone number to the Home is (517) 663-1521. Send National Home Seal money to VFW National Home, PO Box 1521, Eaton Rapids, MI 48827. Several Grands have Special Programs to benefit the National Home.

There are **Four Grands who host Events:**

Ohio Day - 5 August 2023

Michigan Day - 6 August 2023

Illinois Day - 23 September 2023

Indiana Day - 24 September 2023

This is not to say that your Grand cannot sponsor a National Home Day.

Remember a report must be received by the Grand Chairman for them to attach to your year-end reports for Awards and Certificates. Auxiliaries not in a Grand ensure you send your reports directly to me.

### **2023-2024 Awards Programs**

- Citations will be awarded to each Auxiliary and Grand reporting at least \$25 to The National Home Supreme Presidents Special Project Fund. A copy of the Year-End Report from the Auxiliary must be received along with the Grand's Year-End.
- Citations will be awarded to each Auxiliary and Grand reporting at least \$25 to the Supreme National Home Fund. A copy of the Reports from the Auxiliary and Grand must be received.
- Citation and a gift to the Division Auxiliary and Grand with the Best Program.
- Citation and Plaque to top Grand for best-supported Project for the year.

Reports may be sent by regular mail or e-mailed to me. I will respond they are received!

### **Instructions**

- Send all National Home reports monthly on the Supreme Form provided to your Grand National Home Chairman of your donations. Monthly and Year-End Report Forms can be found in the Supreme Program Book or at [www.lotcs.org](http://www.lotcs.org) under Auxiliary emblem and National Home Tab.
- Due to many new National Home Chairmen a new section is being added for better clarification of how to file Year-end reports. GRAND PRESIDENTS ensure your chairmen have a copy of the MOCA Program they have accepted for your Grand and ensure reports are filed especially the Year-End.
- When submitting ensure as Grand National Home Chairman you have included the year-end submissions for all Auxiliary's reporting; otherwise, they do not receive recognition from Supreme.
- Ensure this is not a copy of their donation/contribution form; these are not the proper forms to submit reports on the National Home. Year-End Report form must be used.

### **Supreme National Home Chairman**

Penny Sue Cacoulidis

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