

## New Duplex Construction Begins



May 13th marked the groundbreaking ceremony for the National Home's newest duplex, which will be ready for occupancy by the end of this year.

Construction of the new residence is being funded by an anonymous donor whose wish is that the two homes be named the Air Force House and the Air National Guard House.

The National Home is still seeking sponsors for the homes that would help to fulfill the donor's wishes. Any potential sponsor or anyone who can help us connect with a non-governmental Air Force or Air National Guard organization, please contact Tim Smith at 866-483-9642 or email [tsmith@vfnationalhome.org](mailto:tsmith@vfnationalhome.org).

## Congratulations, Graduates!



The VFW National Home for Children congratulates Class of 2011

members Shena and Andrew on their high school graduation!

Shena was active in cheerleading, soccer and volleyball in high school, and plans to study psychology at Spring Arbor University in the fall.

Andrew plans to study accounting at Lansing Community College and Northwood University. He was a member of the Accounting Club in high school, where he also played varsity tennis and ran cross country track.

If you would like to make a special donation to help these great kids in the next phase of their lives, please earmark your gift for "graduates." We at the VFW National Home for Children



are proud of our graduates for all that they have accomplished during their time here.

Congratulations, Shena and Andrew!

## Calendar of Events

Jul 30 • Ohio Day • NH Campus

Jul 31 • Michigan Day • NH Campus

Sep 25 • Indiana Day • NH Campus

Oct 1 • Illinois Day • NH Campus

Oct 22 • Annual meeting of Life Members • NH Campus

Oct 22 • Missouri/Wisconsin Fall Festival • NH Campus

Dec 10 • Cootie Christmas • NH Campus

## Battle Cry: A Poem of Thanks

William J. Tuck III wrote this poem to thank his father, a Korean War veteran, for his service to our country. His mother, Betty Jean Tuck, submitted the poem for the benefit of all veterans, courtesy of the Korean War Veterans Association.

### Battle Cry

I am heading to my destiny  
With the weight of the world on my back.  
I am heading off to war from which  
I may not come back.  
Please do not cry, mama,  
If I come home draped in a flag.  
To my darling wife, I love you,  
But please do not be sad.  
For I am protecting your future,  
Your freedom and a home that is true.  
Keep me in your dreams  
And I will come home to you.  
Believe that you will see me again  
And it will be so.  
I love you and I will miss you  
But now I have to go.  
I will keep your love in my heart  
As our time apart passes by.  
And please honor my fallen brothers  
For this is our Battle Cry.



# THE Home Front

A Special Report for Friends of the VFW National Home for Children • Summer 2011



## Families Find New Beginnings at the National Home

A National Home case manager shares the story of a family that recently completed our Single Parent Family Program:

*It was a dark, cold fall day when I drove to a domestic violence shelter to interview a potential National Home resident. She was*

*The day they arrived here, Mom's initial reaction was a common one – she cried when she saw the house she was going to live in. She was so grateful. The boys didn't cry, though! They were too excited and happy – and busy exploring the house.*

*As they transitioned into the program, the National Home team was able to find needed counseling both for Mom and her boys. Mom got a job and attended financial classes – and with her confidence growing, made her first-ever family budget and started saving. Her boys benefited from the wonderful care at the National Home's child care center.*

*By the time she completed the program, Mom had built an emotionally healthy and stable family – a miracle considering the violence and uncertainty they had endured.*

*Just as important, they were completely ready to start fresh and live independently. Mom now had a good job as manager of a small business, she was just four credit hours short of completing her bachelor's degree...and because she saved while in the program, she was even able to purchase a small house for her and her boys.*



*living there with her two active little boys, whose grandfather served in Vietnam, but her time at the shelter was up. And with no job, no family support, and no degree, she had no idea where to turn. Alone and scared, she was beaten down both physically and emotionally.*

*I hope this story has solidified and reinforced for you the transforming power of this program and I thank you very much for your dedication and support that makes it possible.*

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## Did you know...

Through our Veteran Family Program, returning soldiers can keep their families together and happy at the National Home while participating in VA Vocational Rehabilitation?

## THE HOME FRONT

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*Please visit our new web store!*

## National Home Apparel and Souvenirs Now Available Online



You can now purchase National Home hats, shirts, totes and other items direct from our website. Our new Web Store opened in April. Visit [www.vfwnhcstore.com](http://www.vfwnhcstore.com) today to shop, and to enjoy the photographs of our National Home kids modeling the merchandise.

## A Word from... Patrice Green, Executive Director

Like the single-parent family featured in our cover story, most residents arrive at the National Home with emotional damage – sometimes, very serious damage.

The circumstances that bring children and families here are varied. Children may have suffered a tragic loss, may have been shuffled from foster home to foster home for years, may have lost their entire support system when a parent was deployed overseas. There may be experiences with homelessness, violence and abuse. There may be difficulties adjusting to life with a spouse or parent who returned from war wounded or traumatized.

Given the unique stresses endured by the military and veterans' communities, it should be no surprise that mental health counseling is a major part of all our



programs. And it's also why we work so hard to provide our residents with stability, to accept them with love, and to surround them with caring assistance.

We like to think that the National Home is not a Home in the institutional sense, but in the family sense – a place of warm, loving refuge. A place where a hero's child can have a normal American childhood, where an embattled family can heal their wounds,

where kids and families can build the foundation for happy and successful futures.

That's what you help us to accomplish, and why I am so grateful for your steadfast support.

*Patrice Green*

## How to Fly the American Flag

Here are ten guidelines, according to the federal flag code and other federal legislation:

1. The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.
2. The flag is never allowed to touch the ground or the floor.
3. When hung over a sidewalk on a rope extending from a building to a pole, the union stars are always away from the building.
4. When vertically hung over the center of the street, the flag always has the union stars to the north in an east/west street, and to the east in a north/south street.
5. The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a
6. The flag should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds but always allowed to fall free.
7. The flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon on Memorial Day then raised to the top of the staff.
8. Never fly a flag upside down except as a signal of distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.
9. The flag is never flown in inclement weather except when using an all-weather flag



10. The flag can be flown every day from sunrise to sunset, and at night if illuminated properly.



## Debi Rankin

Thanks to husband Bob's stories, Debi Rankin knows exactly how bad a childhood without parents can be. And that's why she has been such a committed supporter for the past 20 years.

Bob was raised in "welfare" homes in upstate New York – at a time when orphaned and abandoned children were frequently abused. He himself was used as slave labor on numerous farms before joining the U.S. Navy during the Korean War.

When Debi visited the VFW National Home for Children, she was amazed at the contrast between Bob's experience and that of our kids. "Listening to his stories, and then seeing what a caring place the Home is, just warms my heart," Debi says, continuing, "The Home is such a loving, stable environment for the families. Mental health services are provided to the families that are in need. The moms or dads are given the opportunity to regain

their footing and stability. They can attend school to better care for their families."

Best of all, she says, is "that no matter where you are in our country – you can get to the home and find solace and a time to heal."

Debi is a natural leader who devotes all her free time and resources to veteran's causes. A native of Apache Junction, AZ, she is very active in VFW Auxiliary #9399. In fact, Debi is a past Grand President of the MOCA (spell out), and a past Department President in Arizona. This year, she is running for the National 15th Council representing AZ and New Mexico.

Fortunately for us, Debi is just as committed to the National Home, which she calls "the best kept secret of the VFW!" A donor for 20 years, she has been a monthly recurring donor since 2006, and is a member of our 5 Points Family. And she hopes to become even more



active, by running for National Home Board Membership, "if I can ever retire."

Good luck with that quest, Debi! And thanks for choosing to support the VFW National Home for Children!

### Where should we shine the Spotlight next?

If you would like to nominate another member of our community – or volunteer yourself -- for a future Donor Spotlight, please contact Veronica LaDuke at (800) 424-8360, or by e-mail to: [vladuke@vfwnationalhome.org](mailto:vladuke@vfwnationalhome.org)



## You can be a Home Front Hero for a child who's missing one

Every child needs a hero. But the children in residence here at the VFW National Home for Children need something extra. Some of these kids have suffered tragic losses ... others are anxiously waiting for the return of parents currently deployed in war zones. And they need Home Front



Heroes, loving patriots right here at home whose monthly contributions guarantee the high level of care these children deserve.

You can fill that vital need. Becoming a Home Front Hero is as simple as completing the reverse side of the enclosed form, or go to [www.HelpHopeHonor.us/hero](http://www.HelpHopeHonor.us/hero). Please do it today!