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UPDATE

Ladies Auxiliary First Timers Take to Adopt-A-Unit with Ease

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B Co 1/178th Infantry Regiment of the Illinois Army National Guard received the royal treatment when VFW Post 1307 and its Ladies Auxiliary of Crystal Lake, Ill., joined National Military Service's (NMS) Adopt-A-Unit program last year just before B Co's deployment to Afghanistan.

The ladies were there every step of the way. They were there from the first pre-deployment briefing where according to District 5 Chaplain, Mickeyann Miller, they provided "more baked goods than they could have imagined," to the homecoming celebration when B Company rode in on buses escorted by the police and fire departments followed by Freedom Riders while the community greeted the troops with roaring cheers.



A VFW Military Assistance Program grant made the family briefing picnic at the Elgin Armory possible, where the ladies served a catered lunch for the military families.

The ladies attended family readiness group meetings where they helped the families organize care packages and prepared sides galore while the Post's commander grilled hamburgers and hotdogs.

"This was an emotional event as the families received a wonderful surprise. Each unit within B Co had prepared a DVD that was shown to the families," said Miller.

Miller explained that at one point after sending care packages from one of their events, B Co had received so many items from various organizations, including the VFW, that they donated some of the items to their fellow service members of D Co out of Woodstock, Ill.



This was the first time Post 1307's Auxiliary was involved with an active unit and Miller wanted to share a few helpful suggestions. "Have someone with the sole responsibility of capturing the events on camera, if possible, have enough volunteers to prepare for the events as well as ones to chat with the families, and be flexible!"

"We may never know what a difference we make to the families of B Co 1/178th but our soldiers' duty calls, and we respond," Miller said of the experience with the Adopt-A-Unit program.

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National Military Services is a department of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW). If you have questions about this Update, please contact Michael Penney, National Military Services Director, at mpenney@vfw.org or 816-756-3390.