

California VFW District Dedicated to Adopted Unit

Members find creative ways to support Unit.

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In 2010 VFW District 22 in the Department of California and its Ladies Auxiliary adopted the Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3 (VMU-3) through **VFW Military Assistance Program's** Adopt-a-Unit.

"Our district explored the many programs that support our veterans. We also looked at programs that support active-duty military," said District 22 member Ron Rich. The committee decided their District could make the largest impact through Adopt-a-Unit.

After VMU-3's "adoption," District members contacted the Unit's commanding officer, family readiness officer (FRO) and other supportive staff. This allowed District 22 to ensure their support was on target with the actual needs of the Unit and their families.

"So far we are doing one to two projects a month. We are finding out daily that their needs are many, and we have many more activities that we can do," said Rich.

Thus far, activities include a family picnic, sending care packages and providing the latest **VFW Operation Uplink** Free Call Day information. District members frequently have a presence during send-off and welcome home events.

These VFW members find creative ways to support VCU-3. They enlisted a professional photographer to hold a photo session free-of-charge for members of the Unit with their families, so every troop had a family photo to take when deployed.

Eager to find other ways to help, District 22 has two projects in the works specifically for new mothers while their husbands are deployed. One is the "Baby Basket," which will include various items needed for mothers and their newborns. The other project is "Meals for Mom," which will provide a new mother several frozen home-made meals. This allows her to feed her family a nutritious meal without having to worry about cooking.

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This District's participation in the Adopt-a-Unit program is a great example for others to follow. "AAU provides the District with a continual loop between the VMU-3 Unit and the VFW and their Ladies Auxiliary. Being able to work one-on-one with the FRO gives us the opportunity to find out what the Unit's needs are...while establishing a direct dialog with the families about VFW youth and community programs," explains Rich.

To learn more about Adopt-a-Unit and other National Military Services programs, click [here](#).