

‘We Stepped Up’

A VFW Post in Indiana partnered with its local school district to deliver food to families in need amidst the COVID-19 crisis

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VFW Post 717 in northern Indiana joined the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in April by serving food to local families in need once a week.

The Post in St. John, Ind., about 38 miles south of Chicago, partnered with the local school district, Lake Central School Corp., on the first of April to hand out free meals to families impacted by the coronavirus crisis each Wednesday.

“Our community needed help, and we stepped up to respond,” said Mike Rodgers, VFW Post 717 quartermaster. “And we plan on continuing to do so until the state’s stay-at-home policy is lifted, or circumstances dictate otherwise.”

The partnership with the local school district allowed Post members to distribute more than 1,100 meals within the first two weeks of April. Part of the rapid success, however, came from an unwavering support by the Post’s Auxiliary.

“We could not have accomplished this without our Auxiliary,” Rodgers said. “Led by President Sandy Morgan, Janet Schweitzer and Beth Teibel, our Auxiliary has exemplified the spirit of community involvement.”

Post 717 and its Auxiliary plan on expanding their efforts beyond the St. John area and into the collection of northwest Indiana towns nearby, which altogether encompasses a school district of more than 10,000 students.

“This won’t be an ordinary feat, but we’re ready for the task,” Rodgers added. “We at Post 717 are proud of what we’ve done and continue to do. Our ‘will do’ spirit has carried us before this crisis, during this crisis, and it will continue after this crisis.”

By Ismael Rodriguez Jr./VFW magazine

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