

By [Jane Koropsak](#) | April 16, 2012

Counting Down the Days Until a Soldier Comes Home

BNL's Teich family appreciates packages sent by Adopt-A-Platoon

Diana and Frank Teich, a husband and wife both employed at the Lab, bid a temporary farewell to their son Vinny this past November. Vinny, a United States Marine, had been deployed to Bahrain, a small desert island in the Persian Gulf.



Seated and holding a photo of Vinny is the Teich family, from left, Frank Sr., Diana, Ashley, and Frank Jr. Standing from left, AAP Volunteers Bob Duffin, Michael Paquette, Sue Duffin, Joyce Fortunato, Lisa Metz, John McCaffrey, Joanne Rula-Delles, Tina Walsh, and Kelly Backofen.

"It was really tough to see him leave," said Diana who works in the Lab's Information Technology Division. "Frank and I, together with our son Frank, Jr., [who also works at the Lab] and our eighth grade daughter Ashley, are counting down the days until Vinny returns to his home base in Norfolk, Virginia — where we know he will be safe." Vinny is scheduled to return this July.

The Teich family thinks about their son and brother every day and is grateful for the goody packages that BNL's Adopt-A-Platoon (AAP) has sent him during his deployment. "We are in touch with Vinny via email and occasional telephone calls, and he tells us how much he and his fellow Marines eagerly await the arrival of these packages," said Frank Sr., who works in the Magnet Division.

The packages are filled with useful, everyday items such as cotton socks, suntan lotion, cool wipes, and helmet liners. But the AAP volunteers make sure the packages include some fun things that aren't readily available in locations like Bahrain. For example, games, candy, gum, and powdered drinks like iced tea and lemonade are all-American favorites.

"It's the very least we can do for those serving and protecting our country," said John McCaffrey, the AAP Team Leader who works in Photon Sciences. "These small gestures make a huge difference when you are deployed overseas," added Michael Paquette of Facility Operations, also an AAP member.

But Vinny is just one of many who receive packages from BNL. Volunteers for AAP organize fundraisers and use the monies to purchase and mail suitable items to military personnel of BNL families and to a specific platoon assigned to BNL by the national Adopt-A-Platoon program.

When the AAP volunteers gathered with the Teich family for this photo, Diana took the opportunity to extend them a face-to-face thank you. "I can't tell you how much these packages mean to Vinny and to us," she said. "It's a little piece of home that helps to get him and his comrades through their days." McCaffrey responded with an emphatic, "We should be thanking Y-O-U!"

For more information on the Lab's AAP program go to:

<http://www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/va/Adopt-A-Platoon/> or contact John McCaffrey, Ext. 8162, mccaffrey@bnl.gov .

-Jane Koropsak