

VETS ...

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Thus began "Cook for a Cause." Add the kids putting together a food drive and D'Andrea thought, "We can put this whole thing together and have this great thing. It's grown from there."

Renee Knight of the Partnership in Patriotism pitched in by raising awareness of the campaign by sending letters and making

contacts.

"She's fantastic. She's amazing," D'Andrea said of Knight. "She's one of those go-getters that says, 'I get these ideas,' and puts it into motion."

The list of sponsors is growing. The event coordinators include the Navy Marine Club, the American Legion Post 410, the VFW Post 2535, the Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Kids Breaking Free and the Elks Lodge 41.

"We've got some pretty great people who are on

our board," D'Andrea said. "We have great sponsors."

The Elks, who have a long history of helping veterans, will provide the facilities for the first fundraiser event, on July 6. The Support Disabled & Homeless Veterans of Niagara County festivities will take place at the Elks Lodge, 6791 N. Canal Road.

It's an alcohol-free family event and there is room for tents, bands and bounce houses. Ray Pierce of the VFW will be roasting two pigs.

Bill Timkey of Timkey Limousine will pick up vets who want to attend the party. A 5K run is included.

On Tuesday, the children from St. Mary's reading class and the cooks from Orleans/Niagara BOCES will welcome prospective sponsors at a dinner at the Christ United Church. The long-term goal is to acquire a transitional home in Lockport that will provide vets the necessary training and basic support services.