

# Boxes for our troops

By SIERRA BRAND

The Blaine County Republican Women's Group is participating in a program to help send items to soldiers deployed out of Mountain Home Air Force Base that are serving our country in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Suzan Stommel of the Blaine County Republican Women's Group had this to say about the project, "We have dedicated men and women defending our freedoms day in and day out. This is one small thing that we can do to let them know how much we appreciate them and that we have not forgotten them. This is not a partisan project. And BCRW welcomes cards, letters and, or supplies from anyone wishing to show their support." She also said they've done this every holiday in year's past, and this year decided to start doing this regularly, once per month.

The group originally adopted five servicemen based in Idaho. Through much help from businesses and individuals in the Valley, the group is currently sending items to 20 servicemen and five servicewomen based in Iraq. The boxes that are sent each month by the group keeps them in communication with the people that serve for America. "Sharing with these brave men and women not only lifts their spirits, but our spirits are boosted as well," commented Maureen Schwendener, who donates from her store in Ketchum.

Businesses and individuals of the Valley are encouraged to help make donations. Snacks, hygiene items, socks (male and female), slippers, iTunes, movies, paperback books, magazines, and shelf-stable

food are all good choices. One businesswoman donated a box of new stuffed animals for the troops to distribute to Afghani and Iraqi children. Please drop off your donations at the office of Ascente Financial, upstairs in The Courtyard in Ketchum (360 East Ave. N., Suite 700,) or call 726-3331 for further information. The next scheduled mailings are March 2 and March 23. The Blaine County Republican Women's Group continues to be an active voice dedicated to serving our troops and our community.

*SSGT Mathew Lawrence, United States Air Force civil engineer, sent the following letter to the Blaine County Republican Women's Group:*

*"I would like to say thank you for taking the time to get us some snacks, Snickers and magazines which we will use throughout our deployment. Your packages were distributed to the United States Air Force engineers here in Iraq and they were greatly welcomed. You put a smile on their faces, which will last for such a long time. I apologize for taking so long to respond back, but we have been very busy, as I'm sure you can imagine. We found the moose crunch to be quite tasty and enjoyable. As for the movies, we have a few members who love Monty Python, so I'm sure that one will be passed around a lot. That's one of the cool things about being in the military. Everyone is so diverse. We really did enjoy this care package, and I just wanted to send you a return letter to tell you guys... THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!! Take care and know that we are fighting for the land of the free."*