



News and information from Loveland, Colorado

Saturday, June 14, 2008

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Story help

Food budget

The rising cost of food, gas and just about everything else has many area residents looking for ways to stretch their money.

Do you have a special way of making your food dollar go farther? Share your tips with the Reporter-Herald. We'll gather the best ideas of Loveland area residents and share them in a future edition.

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Church members send an 'early Christmas' to troops

By Marcy Ortega
The Reporter-Herald

A team of people from the First Congregational Church in Loveland have come up with a way to bring comfort and joy this summer to soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Christmas in July" is a project in which members collect, pack and ship donated items that servicemen and women crave — things they cannot get overseas but that people stateside take for granted every day.

Loveland resident Bob Trout, who attends First Congregational, is spearheading the effort.

He and his wife, Marinda, said they were involved in a donation drive for service personnel at Christmastime last year and thought it would be nice to bring the troops a little cheer midyear.

"It's nice to do it more than once a year," Marinda said.

"We'd like to do more and let them know we care about them all year long."

The team involved in the donation drive has put together a list of needed items from the Web site www.AnySoldier.com and is enlisting the community's help in the effort.

Service members interested in receiving donations and communication from people back home may submit their names to the Web site. A representative from each branch of the military is then contacted and will disburse the items.

The list of requested supplies includes simple and inexpensive items such as snacks, powdered drink mixes, toiletries, DVDs and magazines.

Some things are prohibited, however, such as Bibles, pork and magazines containing nudity.



Sara Trout, left, Ginny Carnes, center, and Sarah Zwetzig package up donations to be shipped to U.S. service members in Iraq and Afghanistan. **Special to the Reporter-Herald**

Goodies for the troops

What: "Christmas in July" donation drive for troops overseas.

Where: Drop off donations at First Congregational Church, 800 N. Lincoln Ave., Loveland.

When: 9 a.m. to noon beginning this Sunday through June 29.

More information: and a list of supplies available from Bob Trout, 667-8996, or First Congregational Church office, 667-4884.

From The Associated Press

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"We are in their country, and we want to be respectful of them," Marinda said.

Servicemen and women enjoy getting letters as well. "We're asking everyone who's willing to write a letter to tell them what's going on back home," Bob said.

Loveland resident and church member Ginny Carnes says she has been canvassing her neighborhood to get people interested. "We'll be putting boxes together and taking cash donations to defray the cost of postage," she said.



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According to Bob, the cost to ship one small box is more than \$10, so donations of money are very helpful.

Anyone interested in participating in the Christmas in July program can drop off donations Sunday through Friday until June 29 at First Congregational Church, 800 N. Lincoln Ave., between 9 a.m. and noon.

For details or a full list of needed supplies, call the church office at 667-4884 or Bob at 667-8996.

"This effort is especially important now that the economy and high fuel prices have taken our country's attention away from the war and the sacrifices being made by the servicemen and women," Bob said.

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