

[Click Here to Print This Article](#)

April 30, 2009

Rescue Mission benefits from growing unease over gun rights

BY ANNA WEBB - awebb@idahostatesman.com

When Nampa gun store owner Roberta Regnier offered a chance to win an AR-15 rifle for anyone who brought in two cans of food, she got 7,000 entries and collected 10 tons of food for the Boise Rescue Mission.

The winning ticket was drawn on April 15.

The raffle piqued so much interest that Regnier's Alpha Omega Services is doing another one - the shop's third - this time for a new, 1927-style Tommy gun.

Other businesses are catching on.

Sheepdog Ammo in New Plymouth donated 1,000 rounds of ammunition to Regnier's raffle.

Archery Outfitters of Nampa is holding its own "Food for Bow and Arrows" drive with a bow hunting package as the prize.

Howard's Tackle Shoppe, also in Nampa, is offering a food donation raffle for a G-Loomis rod and Shimano reel.

"We're trying to see if the fishermen can outdo the hunters," said owner Howard Davis.

Both he and Regnier will draw their winning tickets on Independence Day.

Roscoe said people recognize that the need for food assistance is growing.

On Tuesday, 613 people ate at the Rescue Mission's River of Life shelter in Boise, setting a record for the number of meals served in a single day.

But Idahoans are also uneasy about the state of the country and the economy - and what effect the Obama administration might have on the Second Amendment, the Mission's Rev. Bill Roscoe said.

He understands that anxiety. The president's voting record showed he was willing to restrict some uses of weapons, Roscoe said.

Regnier said she has heard from customers who are afraid of what's ahead for semi-automatic weapons. She had to hire extra help before the presidential election because of all the people stocking up on weapons and ammunition.

But she's also heard from people who don't feel too removed from tough times themselves.

"A customer came in and donated food for the raffle. He said, 'I may be needing food from them one of these days,'" Regnier said.

"Even if people didn't fear for their rights, they would still go for the guns," she added.

The value of the items she's raffling is close to \$2,000.

Interest in guns and generosity happen to be converging, Roscoe said, "but it doesn't matter if you're selling guns, or computers. People are concerned about their neighbors."

Alpha Omega staffers found envelopes of cash among the donations from people who wanted to donate but didn't bother taking a raffle ticket.

Anna Webb: 377-6431