

The Times Record

HOW TO REACH US

Main Office:

3 Business Parkway, Brunswick, ME
04011-1302

Phone: Main number: (207) 729-3311
In-state (800) 734-6397
Auto Attendant/Co. Directory
504-8201
Fax (207) 729-5728

Bath Office: 84 Front Street,
Bath, ME 04530

Phone: Main number (207) 443-5547
Fax (207) 443-8102

On-line: www.timesrecord.com

E-mail: Staff members can be contacted via e-mail using the individual's first initial and last name, followed by "@timesrecord.com." Example: Robert Long, the Managing Editor, can be reached at rlong@timesrecord.com

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Return of the Doughboys?

Bath shop organizes effort to ship baked goods to U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Iraq

BY SETH KOENIG
Times Record Staff

BATH

Marnee Robinson's gourmet cookies have been in celebrity chef Rachel Ray's magazine, as well as in Forbes magazine. The Bath "cookiepreneur" has her sights set on less glamorous places to send her signature sweets this Memorial Day weekend.

Robinson is recruiting area bakers and volunteers to wrap cookie gift packages for Maine military personnel serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Thursday marked the first day of preliminary packing for what Robinson affectionately calls "Operation: Cookie Drop." Volunteers are welcome to donate home-baked cookies or help package the treats every day from now until the gifts are ready to be shipped, likely next Thursday or Friday.

"We had over 300 cookies dropped off this morning," Robinson said Thursday afternoon at her 23 Elm St. Marnee's Cookie Bistro. "People came up all the way from Saco."

Robinson said she plans to send 400 gift packages to U.S. military men and women serving in the Middle East. She, her sister and a company designer dreamed up the idea when thinking of ways to celebrate Memorial Day. Robinson said they had always wanted to do something for the troops around Christmas, but the December holiday is the busiest stretch for the cookie company, and there isn't much time to organize a big donation rally then.

"This time of year — Memo-



TROY R. BENNETT / THE TIMES RECORD

DEB QUIMETTE of Marnee's Cookies holds a package of Operation Cookie Drop sweet treats bound for American military men and women fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq.

rial Day — this is just a great idea," Robinson said. "One man who came in said, 'On Christmas, they're all getting packages. This is different.'"

Since she announced "Operation: Cookie Drop" by submitting notices to area newspapers and posting fliers, the response has been overwhelming, Robinson said. Area high school and Boy Scout groups volunteered to help package and decorate "Thank You" cards to the soldiers, and local bakers promised to deliver another wave of donated cookies after the holiday weekend — during which they'll sneak in some baking.

"I think it has reached people on a lot of different levels," Robinson said. "It's just a lot of fun."

The gift packages will be shipped overseas to points of



TROY R. BENNETT / THE TIMES RECORD

CHILDREN AND ADULTS can write cards to soldiers at Marnee's Cookies in Bath as part of "Operation: Cookie Drop."

contact supplied by the Maine National Guard, she said. The cookies then be handed out to individual soldiers.

"We hope each of them will get half a pound of cookies," she said. "Each little bag will have a few of our (Marnee's

Cookies brand) cookies on the bottom, then a couple donated cookies on top."

EDITOR'S NOTE: "Doughboy" was the term popularly used to identify American soldiers sent to fight in France during World War I.