

# Moscow rallies for Special Olympians following theft of equipment

Donations pour in following the theft of equipment from Moscow Special Olympics team's storage unit

**Elizabeth Rudd/Lewiston Tribune**

MOSCOW - Elizabeth King has been humbled in the days following the theft of equipment from the Moscow Special Olympics by an outpouring of community support.

Equipment and monetary donations have poured in over the past few days to compensate for \$4,000 in equipment that was reported stolen from the team's Moscow storage unit near the intersection of South Main Street and Palouse River Drive.

The help has ensured the team will get to compete in the coming State Winter Games.

King, who is the coach of the Moscow Rebel Tigers, said she discovered the theft about 8:30 a.m. Saturday just before the team's weekly practice. King reported the break-in to the Moscow Police Department when she realized a storage container holding snowshoes and cross-country ski boots was missing.

"The whole tub was gone," she said.

The missing equipment is estimated at \$4,200 and includes 12 winter jackets, nine sets of snowshoes, four cross-country ski boots and a set of cross-country skis and poles.

The Moscow Rebel Tigers recently returned from the regional competition in Coeur d'Alene and were preparing for the State Winter Games Feb. 28 to March 2 in Sun Valley. King said the team members were concerned they wouldn't be able to go to state when they learned about the theft.

"They were sad," she said.

But King said contributions over the past few days have made it possible for team members to keep practicing.

The volunteer coach said she learned Monday afternoon that retailer REI intends to donate equipment to replace what was taken in order for the Rebel Tigers to compete at state. King said a Spokane man worked with the store to make the donation happen.

"It's a very humbling experience," she said.

The Rebel Tigers have also received support from local business owners, as well as residents of Moscow, who wanted to make monetary donations to get the team to state.

"I have no doubt that Moscow is the place to live," King said.

Other Special Olympics teams have also extended help to the Rebel Tigers, King said. The Clarkston Special Olympics team has offered to let the Rebel Tigers borrow its equipment for practice this weekend, and the Coeur d'Alene Special Olympics team donated \$1,000 to the Rebel Tigers so Moscow can go to state.

Most of the donations and contributions to the Rebel Tigers were made Sunday and Monday, King said. She planned to call all the team members about the donations Monday night and post about the support on the team's Facebook page.

"I want to stress the fact that I really appreciate all of the volunteers for Special Olympics," King said. "I also really want to stress how much I appreciate all the generosity from the community."

As for the theft, King said police will be monitoring social media sites for sales of the stolen items and checking local pawn shops to see if any of the equipment turns up. Anyone with information about the theft is asked to contact the Moscow Police Department at (208) 882-COPS.

Anyone interested in making a donation or contribution to the Moscow Rebel Tigers can contact North Idaho Area Director Pam Lisenbe at (800) 915-6510, via email at [pam@idso.org](mailto:pam@idso.org) or via email to King at [eliking81@gmail.com](mailto:eliking81@gmail.com).

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