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Volunteers donate their lunch hour to help assemble gift bags for "Operation Holiday Stocking," a program of the St. Vincent Senior Citizen Nutrition Program, popularly known as "Meals on Wheels." On the assembly line are, clockwise, from left, Lynn Ong, Tess Fitzpatrick, Renita Anderson, Barbara Olsen-Bonk, Debbie Bishop, Fe Alcid-Little, Tommye Williams and Helen Cosner. Click [here](#) for complete list of volunteers.



## Heart-warmers: Volunteers Assemble Holiday Gift Bags for Homebound Seniors

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Dec. 18, 2007) A number of Metro staff donated their lunch hour on Dec. 11, cheerfully stuffing 100 gift bags for Operation Holiday Stocking, a holiday gift program for elderly clients served by the St. Vincent "Meals on Wheels" program.

"The holiday season is the loneliest time of the year for the city's poorest seniors, many of whom are homebound without the means or capability to get around," said Tess Fitzpatrick, a senior administrative analyst at Metro San Fernando Valley service sector offices.

"We've put together 100 gift bags for the seniors, and those who are otherwise confined to their living quarters. The items included new socks, toothbrushes, tree ornaments, soap, combs, Q-tips, candies, shampoo, lotion, Christmas mugs and several other useful items," said Fitzpatrick.

Fitzpatrick knows first-hand the joys a hot meal and warm greetings can bring to the forgotten elders. She and her sister, Fe Alcid-Little, are volunteer runners for the St. Vincent "Meals on Wheels" program. She and other Metro volunteers have been collecting useful items for the goodie bags that will be delivered to seniors along with their holiday meal on

Christmas Day.

"Without the volunteers, it would not be possible," said Fitzpatrick. "They were all coordinating it, buying things that we needed for the bags and sorting the donations. They sacrificed their lunch hours and after-work hours to put it together."

Photos: Gayle Anderson



Sister Alice Marie Quinn, St. Vincent Senior Citizen Nutrition Center program director, takes stock of 100 gift bags collected by volunteers for delivery to homebound seniors on Christmas Day. From left, volunteers Cristina Coronado, Jerry Catuira and Debbie Bishop,

This is the fourth year that Lynn Ong, a senior secretary in ITS, has volunteered to assemble the gift bags. "I love the thought of making people happy, especially this time of the year," she said, noting she also enjoys getting to know co-workers during the festive assembly. "It's the time of year when people need to feel warm in their hearts," she said.

Ong coordinated the delivery to the St. Vincent's Senior Citizen Nutrition Center on Friday, helping to load the items into volunteers' cars. The items were delivered by volunteers Debbie Bishop, Jerry Catuira and Cristina Coronado.

St. Vincent Meals on Wheels is privately funded, serving an average of 2,500 meals a day, including some 1,500 meals delivered directly to each home.

* Volunteers 2007
*Evelina del Castillo, *Renita Anderson, *Mila Asuncion, *Barbara Olsen-Bonk, *Ralph Carapia, *Alan Tang, *Richard Christie, *Diana Estrada, *Barbara Burns, *Liz Campos, *Lynn Ong, *Maggie Chen, *Nancy Untalan, *Susan Cariasa-Ginsberg, *Avis Brame, *Nela De Castro, *Juliet Glindro, *Edina Pagadora, *Tommye Williams , *Debbie Bishop, *Fe Alcid-Little, *Tess Fitzpatrick, *Helen Cosner, *Carol Silver, *Anne Adelman, *Fred Polscheit, *Frank Shapiro, *Elizabeth Bennett, *Cory Uy, *Beverly Davenport-Waldon, *Jerry Catuira, *Cristina Coronado, *Juli Fowler, *Mary Nugent, *Regina Lim