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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."



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

- [Credit Roll](#): 35 volunteers get and give that holiday feeling
- [Goody bags](#): What's in them?

(Dec. 10, 2008) A number of Metro staff donated their lunch hour on Dec. 2, cheerfully stuffing 150 gift bags for Operation Holiday Stocking, a holiday gift program for elderly clients served by the St. Vincent "Meals on Wheels" program.



Gift bag coordinator Tess Fitzpatrick and Sister Alice Marie Quinn, St. Vincent Senior Citizen Nutrition Center program director, take stock of 100 gift bags collected by volunteers for delivery to homebound seniors on Christmas Day.

"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 Gabriel Valley service sector offices.



Sister Alice Marie Quinn, St. Vincent Senior Citizen Nutrition Center program director: "One hundred and fifty seniors will be receiving these bags on Christmas day and this may be the only Christmas present that they will receive!"

"We've put together 150 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.

New this year are cashmere scarves and gloves, said Fitzpatrick. Plus, the number of volunteers increased along with the interest in the program. "We were able to make 150 bags this year. We've always done 100 bags in previous years. We're up 50 percent!"

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, and co-workers Debbie Bishop and Regina Lim are among the volunteer runners for the St. Vincent "Meals on Wheels" program. Runners deliver hot meals to homebound seniors on selected, scheduled

weekends.

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."

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.

CREDIT ROLL

Volunteers: Anne Adelman * Avis Brame * Barbara Olson-Bonk * Beverly Davenport-Waldon * Carlos Valdez * Carol Silver * Carol Holben * Dana Williams * Debbie Bishop * Diana Estrada * Edina Pagadora * Evelina del Castillo * Fe Alcid-Little * Gloria Shen * Helen Cosner * Julianne Fowler * Julie Ellis * Juliet Glindro * Liz Campos * Lorna Vargas * Lynn Ong * Mary Nugent * Maria Mariano * Mila Asuncion * Nancy Untalan * Nela De Castro * Ralph Carapia * Regina Lim * Renita Anderson * Richard Christie * Susan Carias-Ginsberg * Tommy Williams * Robert Vasquez * Monique Pe * Nancy Wong

What's in the goody bags: * Mugs * Pens * Pencils * Christmas ornaments * Lotions * Soaps * Razors * Q-tips * Raisins * Post sticks * Socks * Hard candy * Candy canes * Band aids * Shampoo/conditioner * Gloves * Scarves * Toothbrushes

