

# Christmas made merry thanks to volunteers

The kindness of more than 300 volunteers and three generous businesses made Christmas Day merrier for Georgetown residents facing loneliness and hunger.

Pilot's Choice Aviation, owned and operated by Beth Jenkins, partnered with The Monument Cafe, H-E-B and the Sun City organization Women Helping Others to distribute food and care packages to Meals on Wheels and certain Carling Place clients.

Roughly 30 volunteers gathered Christmas Eve in the hangar at Georgetown Municipal Airport to prepare the packages filled with breads, fresh fruit, cookies, treats, toiletry items and special gifts.

On Christmas Day, volunteers made 112 stops to deliver 417 Christmas dinners provided by The Monument Cafe as well as the goody bags.

H-E-B donated the bread while volunteers provided fresh fruit and other items. The ladies of WHO, led by Nina Stancil, baked cookies, knitted caps and lap warmers and purchased gifts for Meals on Wheels clients. They have collected soaps, shampoos and conditioners

throughout the year.

"We try to give some special gifts to everybody. The children for sure got gifts," Ms. Jenkins said.

"If they requested something special, we tried very hard to get it in their package."

About half of the recipients are seniors who rely on the Meals on Wheels program for a hot meal five days a week. The program does not deliver on Christmas Day.

"They would not have had any hot meals delivered to them so that was good for those who couldn't get out," said Ms. Jenkins, who oversees the distribution.

Ms. Jenkins first got involved with the project in 2000, a year after she had spent Christmas along the border, helping her aunt and uncle distribute food and presents to 2,500 Mexican children in Progreso, Mexico. The experience was an "eye-opener" for her and the next year she decided to volunteer closer to home, she said.

Pilot's Choice Aviation operates at 209 Corsair Drive near the Georgetown Municipal Airport.

- Joyce May