

African hospital to benefit from Stouffville humanitarian effort

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

A \$100,000 CAT scan is on its way to an east African hospital, thanks to a Whitchurch-Stouffville committee.

Members of the Stouffville-Igoma Partnership committee

have been told a CAT scan, donated by Mississauga's Trillium Health Centre, is being shipped to Hindu Union Hospital in Tanzania's Mwanza City.

The hospital serves the Tanzanian village of Igoma and its 42,000 residents.

Whitchurch-Stouffville

struck a humanitarian partnership with Igoma last year. Aid has been sent and a health care clinic opened since the deal was made.

Committee member Rev. Lou Geense said the CAT scan is a critical piece of diagnostic equipment.

"The machine is fully

operational," he said. "It was apparent that it was too technical for the clinic in Igoma. But the nearby Hindu Union Hospital can use it."

Since receiving word the CAT scan is on its way, the hospital set up the electrical requirements needed and

hired a radiologist with CAT scan experience.

Toshiba International, based in Markham, supplied the committee with a technician for a day at no cost.

"The technician helped take the machine apart, Mr. Geense said. "It will be packed in a shipping container, travel to Tanzania and then on to Mwanza."

residents of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Markham in Igoma last summer, spending a month helping build the clinic.

"To our group, it was an eye opener as we had never seen such poverty," Mr. Neufeld said.

Committee member Peter Neufeld pointed out the economy in Igoma operates mostly on the barter system, with people scrounging for food.

Hindu Union Hospital is anxiously waiting delivery.

"The hospital is thrilled with the developments and have agreed the patients from the Urafiki Health Clinic in Igoma will receive highest priority and financial deductions for those needing the use of the machine," Mr. Geense said.

Patients from Igoma will have a 35-kilometre trek to the hospital.

Mr. Geense and Mr. Neufeld know first-hand how the people of Igoma live. They joined 16 other

residents of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Markham in Igoma last summer, spending a month helping build the clinic.

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The committee has raised about \$25,000 in its first year of fundraising.

Arrangements have been made to supply the clinic with several pieces of basic equipment.

Donations to the Stouffville-Igoma Partnership can be sent to Stouffville Missionary Church, 6500 Main St., Stouffville, L4A 5T4. Make cheques payable to Stouffville-Igoma Partnership. For more information on the partnership, call 905-640-3911 or log on to www.sipartnership.org

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