

Dinner helps African clinic

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

Whitchurch-Stouffville residents have a heart for the people of Igoma, an ocean away.

Their support of the Stouffville Igoma Partnership means about 40,000 residents in the African village have a medical clinic open 12 hours a day.

Before this, there was no clinic, nurse or doctor in the village.

When people fell ill, they would have to travel about 10 kilometres to Mwanza, the nearest big city, or be treated by a witch doctor.

The Stouffville Igoma Partnership is hoping to raise enough at its gala fundraising dinner Oct. 20 to extend the clinic hours to 24 hours a day and provide a source of clean water in the village.

Stouffville resident Peter Neufeld, who chairs SIP, noted although almost all tickets have been sold for the fundraising dinner at EastRidge Evangelical Missionary Church on 10th Line, donations are still needed. The dinner is sponsored by council and the Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce.

Last year's fundraiser made about \$35,000.

This year, Mr. Neufeld said, he's hoping for at least \$30,000 to enable the clinic to continue operating.

Along with water-borne illnesses, malaria takes a heavy toll on the population. Most of those who die from malaria are children under five who haven't yet developed an immunity to the disease, which is carried by mosquitos.

Thirty thousand Africans die every day and half are due to malaria," Mr.

Neufeld said.

On a previous trip, members of SIP distributed mosquito nets to residents, which greatly cut down the risk of being infected with malaria.

Donations of funds or items for the silent auction are still welcome.

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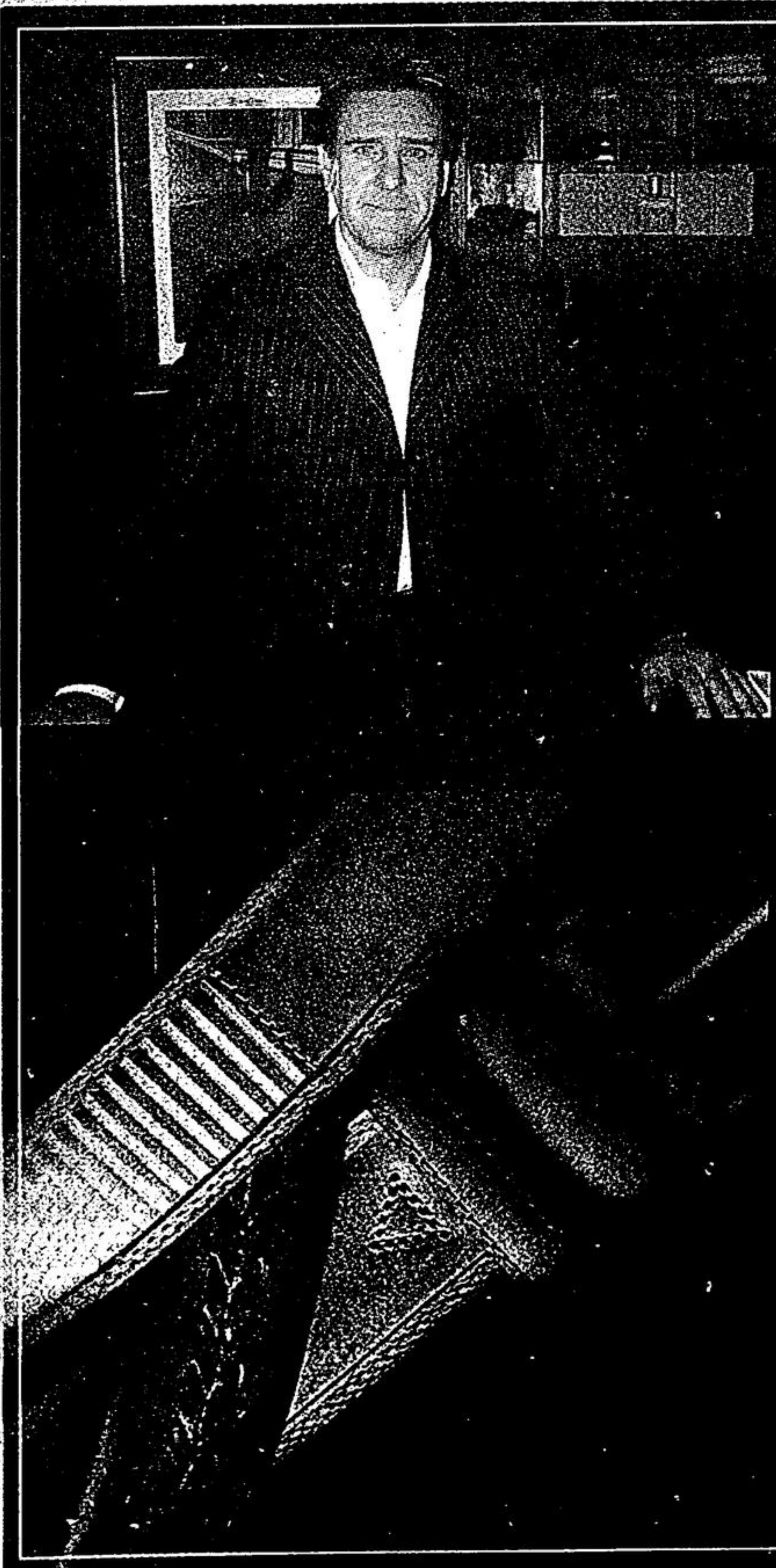
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