

# Sun-Tribune people

Katalin Brown, who is collecting toys for an African trip, poses next to the heart wall display at Whitchurch Highlands Public School. Students have donated toys from the Jump Rope For Heart for orphans overseas. Mrs. Brown got involved with the charity after her son was seriously injured.



STAFF PHOTOS/BILL ROBERTS

## African orphans feel love of hygienist, students

BY ALYSHIA HIGGINS

Katalin Brown has a lot to be thankful for. And even more to be proud of.

Brown's son Drew suffered a near-fatal brain injury while golfing, and doctors weren't optimistic about his recovery. Since the accident, he has made a full recovery and plans to pursue post-secondary education.

"It's a miracle he survived and I just wanted to give back for all we have," Mrs. Brown said. "Even though I give financially, I needed to give deeper."

### FACES & PLACES

The Vandorf resident decided to make the trek to Africa during the summer of 2004. Initially, she thought she was going to teach young girls how to sew, but when she arrived she realized the children were in desperate need of dental care.

"Some kids walk 35 to 40 km to get rid of their toothaches," she said. "It's pretty sad, they've been in pain for a long time."

A dental hygienist, Mrs. Brown cleans the teeth of all 600 children in the orphanage, along with local villagers who come for assistance, during her visits. She also performs tooth extractions for those with abscessed teeth.

She visits the Charles Mulley Family orphanage in Kenya each summer. She pays her own way and uses her vacation time to make the trek. She is the first person to volun-

teer at the orphanage who is able to help with the dental needs.

The orphanage was started 17 years ago and has helped many children and village locals learn life skills, offer employment and prevent starvation.

"I totally feel honoured I can help these people," she said. "It warms my heart. They are so grateful."

She isn't the only one donating to a good cause.

Students at Whitchurch Highlands Public School, including her son Wesley, donated all of their prizes from the annual Jump Rope/Hoops for Heart event to the children in the orphanage.

Rob Harper, a gym teacher for seven years at the Bloomington Road school, organized the event, which involved the entire student body.

"The kids were really pumped about it (donating their prizes)," he said.

The donation includes about \$10,000 worth of soccer balls, basketballs and jump ropes. He hopes donating the prizes will become an annual event.

Mrs. Brown will take the prizes to Kenya when she goes this summer.

"The school was nice enough to open their doors," she said Brown. "It was a very nice gesture for the kids to have made."

"The kids are learning donating is one part of what we can all do to help."



Here Jared Burks, 9, gets some serious air with help from Alex Gardner, 12. (left) Kendra Kirkness, 13, and Almyra Papat, 11, during Whitchurch Highlands Public School's Jump Rope For Heart event.

### Whitchurch-Stouffville News Digest

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#### New Stouffville GO station topic of public meeting

A second GO train station for Stouffville will receive a first look from residents Thursday.

An information meeting on the North Stouffville Station, at Tenth Line and Bethesda Road, goes from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the municipal offices. GO Transit representatives will speak at 7.

GO plans to start building the station this fall. Parking for 183 vehicles, driveways, kiss and ride zones and bus pick-up and drop-off areas are in the first phase.

For more information, call 905-640-1910 ext. 270.

#### Food, wine festival benefits aphasia centre

The Ballantrae Food and Wine Festival gives you a chance to sample the finest that Whitchurch-Stouffville wineries and restaurants have to offer.

In addition, the York Durham Aphasia Centre benefits from the proceeds of the event.

The second annual festival is on Monday at the Ballantrae Golf and Country Club from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

The event is organized by Councillor Phil Bannon. June has been declared Aphasia Month.

Last year, around \$8,000 was raised at the festival for the Bloomington Cove long-term care facility.

#### Q107 back in town

John Derringer lives in Whitchurch-Stouffville. And he's working here more and more.

Q107's morning radio host brought his Tour of the Neighbourhood to Stouffville's Knaz family last month.

On Thursday, the tour's weekly challenge was held at Timber Creek Golf Family Centre.

Derringer raved about the Ninth Line facility, following his on-air search for a top-end mini golf centre in the GTA.

—Jim Mason

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