

### Thirty-Hour Famine Raises Funds, Awareness

By Kimjal Dagli Shah

It was work as usual on a Wednesday afternoon in April, except for a few growling stomachs. A bunch of high school students in Stouffville participated in the 30-hour famine, an event started by World Vision to raise awareness about hungry children.

"I wanted to experience hunger just to see what it was like. Most of my peers weren't willing to sign up because they thought it would be too hard," said Natasha Hayward, who grew up in Stouffville. "And it was," added the 15-year-old. Students who took part ate breakfast and started fasting at noon, continuing until the following evening.

A 14-year-old student at Glad Park Public School, Alison (not her real name) also volunteered to go hungry. "Just one day without food was so difficult that I couldn't imagine having to do it every day, or several days in a week. I was distracted and couldn't

focus on anything because I was hungry," she said.

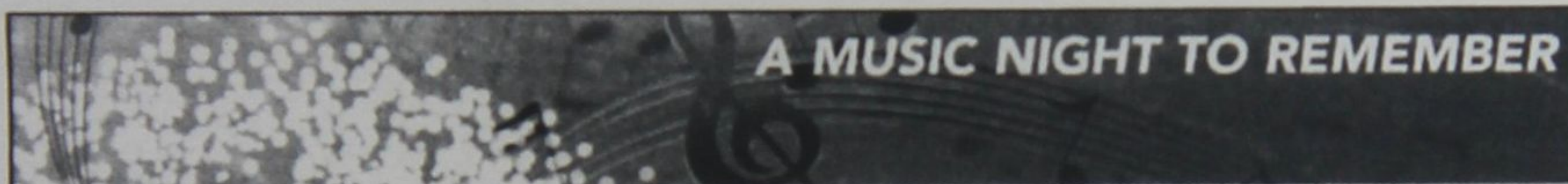
Natasha, too, tried not to think about food, but realized it was harder than she thought. "It's all around us. Everyone's always talking about it. You realize it only when you aren't allowed to eat. Our worlds are so different from theirs," she said of the children that have to face famine every day.

Alison also said the experience sensitized her to the needs of starving children. "I had trouble falling asleep that night. I wanted to eat but I kept thinking that those children don't have a choice so I too must keep going. I realized how surrounded we are by luxuries in a world where just getting food each day is a luxury to some. We should consider ourselves lucky," she pointed out, adding that her changed perspective has brought about a determination to do more for the cause. "You can't neglect another part of the world just because you aren't in it."

Natasha wondered what it was like for a child to face such extreme poverty. "I know that if you keep going hungry, your body stops asking for food at some point. It's almost like your stomach shrinks. For children who go without food every day, it must be difficult to eat even when they do get access to a meal," she said.

"You cannot solve the problem alone. Starving children in countries like Africa is a problem everyone knows about but how many step up to do something about it?" she asked, adding that she would take up a fight for the cause more readily after going through the fast.

For now though, she has collected \$222 to help eradicate hunger. It may not sound like a big sum but every \$30 helps feed and care for a child for a month. That means Natasha put more than a bite inside a few children's stomachs.



### A MUSIC NIGHT TO REMEMBER

The Uxbridge trio of Brian and Ron Evans and Ralph Sider, along with piano virtuoso Jim Wagg, will highlight the 42nd annual Sacred Music Night, Sunday, May 6 at 7 p.m. in St. James Presbyterian Church, Stouffville.

The Reflexions, as the group is known, have sung at various Stouffville venues, but it's their first time at St. James. Other participants

will include renowned vocal soloists Susan (Brown) Ryman, now of Aurora, A.J. de Boer of Lemonville and 14-year-old Rosa Alaimo of Ballantrae, a member of St. Mark Catholic Church and a grade 9 drama major attending Unionville's School of the Arts.

Of special interest will be the presence of accordionist Frank Frano, well-known Stouffville barber. The

Believers children's choir of St. James will also attend. Bruce vanderBent of Heise Hill Brethren in Christ Church will serve as congregational hymn-leader.

Refreshments will follow the concert. Offering is free-will. Net proceeds from the offering will go to the Student Music Scholarship Fund, a project sponsored by St. James.

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### Evergreen Hospice To Host Annual Fundraiser Fashion for Compassion takes place May 15

On May 15 at 5:30 p.m., Evergreen Hospice will host its largest annual fundraiser, Fashion for Compassion - A World of Style, at Le Parc Conference and Banquet Centre in Markham.

The event will showcase exciting 2012 fashion collections from both local boutiques and designers, with items ranging from chic daywear to the perfect little black dress. "This event is really our best opportunity to create awareness of our services in the community," explained Jan Pearce, Evergreen's executive director. "It's important that people know that we're here, so that if and when they need us, they will remember what we do and that we can help."

"The fundraiser is vital to the ongoing support that Evergreen Hospice offers to children, teens and adults living in Markham and Whitchurch-Stouffville," said event chair Colleen Cugini. "Proceeds from this annual event help fund free-of-charge palliative care and bereavement support and could not be accomplished without the dedication of all the event committee volunteers and the financial support from our sponsors."

Fashion for Compassion includes a signature cocktail, dinner, live and silent

auctions and a fashion show. Tickets are \$95 each are available at [www.evergreenhospice.org](http://www.evergreenhospice.org) or by calling 905-472-5014.

Since 1989, Evergreen Hospice has helped people of all ages who are touched by a life threatening illness or the death of a loved one. The hospice provides compassionate palliative care and bereavement support to meet the emotional needs of children, teens and adults as they adjust to loss and learn new living skills.



### The Gift Of Life

On May 17 at 7 a.m., the Community of Whitchurch-Stouffville will hold its annual Prayer Breakfast at Station Creek Golf Club on Woodbine Avenue north of Stouffville Road.

This year's topic is 'Giving Life' and guests will include an organ donor recipient, a donor, the parent of a donor and Newmarket/Aurora MPP Frank Klees. Mr. Klees is committed to increasing awareness of the importance of organ

donations in saving lives and in making it easier for Canadians to sign up for the program.

Liana and Orest Hrynewich will provide musical entertainment and tickets for the breakfast are \$20 per person. They can be purchased at Candlelight and Memories on Main Street, or by calling Ann Pride at 905-640-3361 or Dennis Seeley at 905-642-3632.



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