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SIP dinner raises funds, hope for the future



A large crowd filled the auditorium at EastRidge Missionary Church at the SIP fundraising dinner in October.



SIP secretary Trish Robinson and friend Valerie Franc ham it up for the camera at the Oct. 19 fundraising dinner at EastRidge Missionary Church.

By Kate Gilderdale
Stouffville Free Press

Once again, the Stouffville Igoma Partnership (SIP) dinner on Oct. 19 was a night to remember. The annual event raised approximately \$39,000, and organizers hope that total will increase substantially with the help of donation envelopes distributed in each program.

In welcoming guests, SIP chair Peter Neufeld appealed for financial help for education. The following day he noted, "I have just received confirmation that we now have donors for not only the five secondary school tuition aid sponsors we were seeking, but two more, for a total of seven." Those donations will bring in an additional \$3,150.

More sponsors are needed for eight vocational

school spaces at \$400 per student, as well as for mosquito nets at just \$4.50 each. "We also still need to raise extra funds for the furnishings and equipment for the new mother child infant care facility scheduled to be ready for early 2008," said Peter.

The evening's entertainment got under way with the evocative sounds of the Summitview Hand Drum Band, whose energy and exuberance were a big hit with the capacity crowd. Nichole Strawbridge's interpretations of *Time To Say Goodbye* and *My Prayer*, a beautiful duet with the talented Sam Moffat, were simply outstanding.

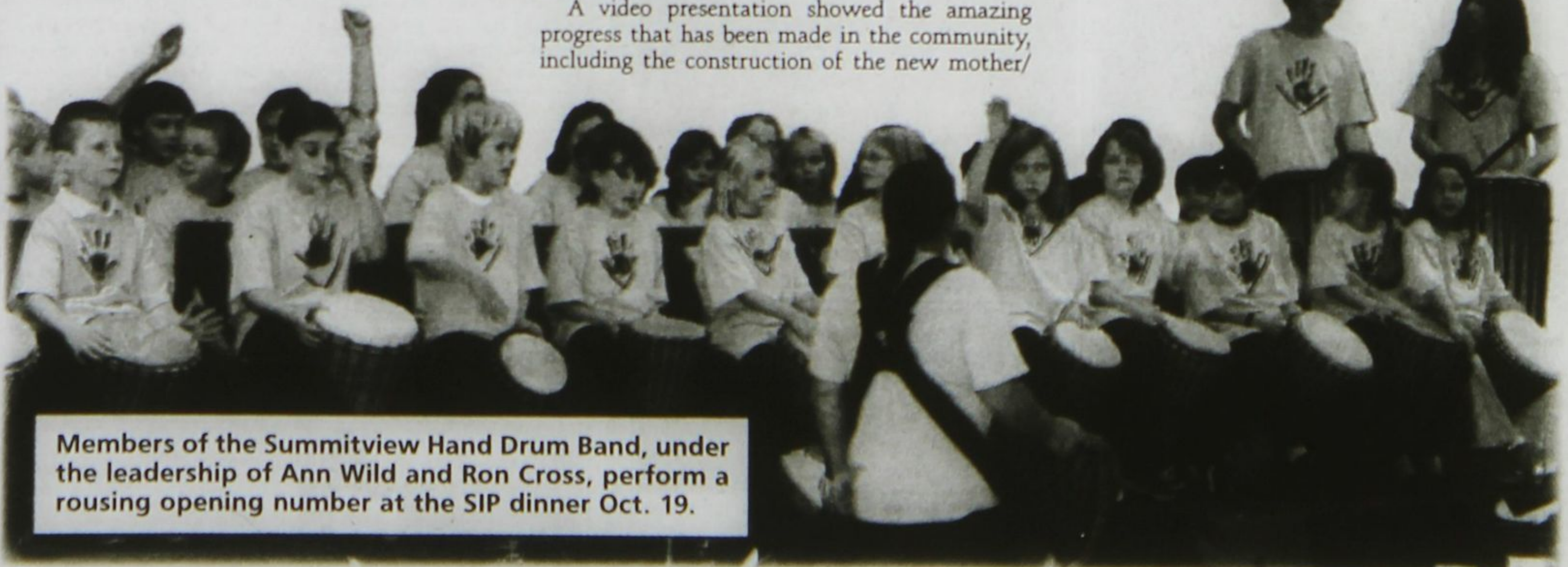
Master of Ceremonies Sandy Schell Kennedy interviewed three volunteers who worked in Igoma this year and who all said they would love to return. Like all volunteers with SIP, each raised her own funds to pay for travel and accommodation.

A video presentation showed the amazing progress that has been made in the community, including the construction of the new mother/

child care facility which is close to completion. In conjunction with the Stouffville Lion's Club, SIP has conducted two weekend eye clinics, provided more than 900 pairs of glasses and performed more than 70 cataract operations.

However, there is still much to be done and funds are constantly needed to continue the work that has provided Igoma with genuine hope for the future. As Peter Neufeld noted, Stouffville has become a well-known and loved word for the residents of our twin town in Tanzania.

Congratulations to Brenda Lobraico and her incredible team on making us all proud to call Stouffville home. For more information on SIP and to find out how you can help, visit www.sipartnership.org or call 905-640-3911 ext. 42.



Members of the Summitview Hand Drum Band, under the leadership of Ann Wild and Ron Cross, perform a rousing opening number at the SIP dinner Oct. 19.

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