

LOCAL NEWS

Dec. 2 concert key to raising funds, awareness for AIDS

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ST. CATHARINES — When the community attends the annual World AIDS Day Observance and Benefit, it's a sign of support that extends well beyond the boundaries of Niagara.

Now in its eighth year, the event has raised thousands of dollars for the Stephen Lewis Foundation, and in turn, supported the grassroots work the organization has been conducting in its aim to eradicate the pandemic of HIV/AIDS in Africa.

"It seems to be growing every year, the community is very supportive," said Caroline Misener, a member of WomEnchant Chorus and a member of the organizing committee.

This year organizers hope the event, set for Monday, Dec. 2 at St. Andrew's United Church, 92 Main St. in Port Dalhousie, will continue the trend. It's key to raising funds and funds awareness about the cause.

Over the last 10 years the Stephen Lewis Foundation has been working with more than 300 grassroots organizations across sub-Saharan Africa that have worked ceaselessly to bring the

voices of grandmothers and women to the forefront of the response to the AIDS pandemic. While significant progress has been made, there is still much work being done.

WomEnchant started its partnership with St. Andrew's church about five years ago, and Misener said it was exactly the type of event the chorus and its drummers aims to support.

"We really focus on peace and social justice," she said. "The concert fits very well with the mandate of our chorus."

This year, said Misener the drummers will be not only performing some African rhythms,

called kpanlogo, but they are also hoping to welcome a woman from Ghana to accompany them with vocals. They've been working with Dr. Gavin Webb, a professor in Ethnomusicology, in anticipation of the event.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., with a penny auction, book sale and auction, followed by the concert at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will also be served.

Tickets for the event are available for \$20 for adults and \$15 for seniors and students. They can be purchased in advance by calling Cindy at 905-935-7231, or you can purchase them at the door. All proceeds support Stephen Lewis Foundation.