

## Angel Concert Oct. 18 to benefit Syrian refugees, KAMI

By Constance Scrafield

The Orangeville Angel Concert Oct. 18 will raise funds for a family from war-torn Syria to come to Orangeville and the KAMI Foundation, which helps to support local industry in northern Haiti.

Organizer Ann Lay, during a telephone interview, gave details about the plans for the concert and about the charities to benefit.

In keeping with its theme, everyone is invited to contribute an artistic impression of his or her ideas of angels. Several of this community's artists are doing so and have agreed that the proceeds from their efforts will go into the funds being raised.

In addition, children are encouraged to enter their ideas of what angels look like and, for them, this is a competition, the prize for which is dinner at Angels Diner, which the restaurant has contributed as a gift certificate.

As background information, we referred to a feature about the KAMI Foundation, published in the July 15, 2010 Orangeville Citizen. There were two main elements to founder Michel Jobin's, work and the basis of his foundation in aid, but concentrating specifically and not generally on the Haitian people.

At the beginning, Jobin worked with their Rabouré Cooperative to improve its marketing and distribution of locally grown produce. Then, as the first of his two real initiatives, he instituted a new respect for the humble Jatropha tree. This little gem grows naturally in Haiti, but had not been appreciated for its many virtues, chief among is the oil it produces. Quickly and in good abundance, the Jatropha oil is a very efficient and clean source of biodiesel fuel.

In a country where trees had been largely eradicated by the need for fuel to cook, the Jatropha tree was the perfect solution to the ever-present problem of reforestation versus coal as the only remaining fuel.

In addition, whereas the island's free ranging animals, both wild and domestic, were a constant invasion into the vegetable gardens, the Jatropha were planted around the gardens, defending them from animals who found the trees inedible.

Secondly, Jobin had begun to introduce small but very strong one-burner cooking stoves, made of steel frames, in Haiti (thus, creating another small industry) and using the burners and fittings made in the Philippines as of the best quality for the needs. The stoves are built to accept gravity-fed kerosene, much cheaper, more efficient and cleaner than coal.

According to Lay, the Jatropha trees are producing a good quantity of oil and the little stoves are being brought into the country in small numbers as much as possible.

A resident of Melville in Caledon, Lay has been with KAMI as a fundraiser since its inception. She was sorry to say that Jobin died a couple of years ago in his beloved Haiti, but that his wife and co-founder, Kathleen, has been carrying on in his stead.

Better known as a situation of the moment is the other aspect of the Angel Concert, that of bringing a Syrian refugee family to Orangeville through the auspices of the Headwaters Syrian Refugee Group, chaired by Brian Logel.

Logel said the group was formed in January. Many of its members had been part of the sponsorship of families from Iraq and the core of them decided to see what interest there was in likewise sponsoring one or more families from Syria.

'We've been paired with a family of four, currently in Jordan,' he said. 'We are in weekly communication with them; our application was accepted by Immigration in Winnipeg.'

'Our group is responsible to find accommodation, food, clothing, whatever they need for their first year,' he remarked. 'If they come in the middle of a month and the apartment we find for them is not ready until the beginning of the following month, then they will stay in the home of one of the group.'

Apart from government sponsorship, there are currently three ways into Canada for refugees. They can be sponsored by family members of theirs here in Canada already; by a church group; or by a group of at least five Canadians who can prove that they collectively are able to support a family of four, say, for the year, to the tune of \$30,000 annually. This is the dollar number set by the theory of the amount of welfare such a family would otherwise receive here.

Although St. Mark's Anglican Church will be the site of the concert, Westminster United Church is the fund manager for this initiative. Donations can be made independently by writing a cheque to the church with a note on the memo line directing the funds to the Headwaters Syrian Refugee Group.

This has all happened through the assistance of AURA (Anglican United Refugee Alliance), a Canadian charitable organization assisting in the sponsorship and resettlement of refugees. It is a joint project of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto and the Toronto Conference of the United Church of Canada, which deals with the search to unite families with potential sponsors and the paperwork that can make it happen.

There is plenty to entice all to attend this benefit concert: Great entertainment with some of the top musicians in the land (12 at last count); beautiful art to admire and even purchase and three authors: Elizabeth Armstrong, with her new book about how Boomers

can still make a difference to the condition of the earth; Jill Michelle, an angel communicator with her book *Angelic Awakenings* and Cliff Standingready (Standing Buffalo Warrior) with his *Children of the Creator*.

Of the music, it will be an excellent, exciting mix of classical to folk to native drumming.

Basically, there are three elements to the occasion, as Lay explained.

On the wall next to the art, there will be the list of the names of all the missing native women; 1,600, she said. We want to include all these people: the Syrians, the Haitians and the Native women.

We have so much and it is so easy for us to give, she added.

The Orangeville Angel Concert, Art, Music and Authors, takes place Oct. 18, at 4 p.m. at St. Mark's Church, 5 First St. in Orangeville. Tickets are available at St. Mark's or BookLore, or by calling Lay at 519-940-3659.