

Miramichi Leader: by Edna Williston May 19, 2009

A group of students involved with the multicultural club at Miramichi Valley High School raising money to help send to school children orphaned by an HIV epidemic in Lesotho.



Many people in the small landlocked country in the middle of South Africa, including children, are having a difficult time coping because of the epidemic.

MVHS teachers Melanie Maltby- Ingersoll and Terry Whalen Jr.

are working with the club members to raise the money for an Ottawa- based charitable organization called Help Lesotho.

This year the students will be collecting pocket change from people by selling cutouts in the shape of Lesotho.

As well, they plan to participate in this year's 12 Homeless Hours event planned for Friday, May 30, at MVHS.

"On May 30, the multicultural club students, Terry [Whalen] and myself will be homeless from 7 p.m.-7 a.m. here at MVHS in support of the orphaned children in Lesotho," said Maltby-Ingersoll.

She said for safety reasons, they will be homeless indoors in the main lobby of the school's theatre.

"We will set up a mock shantytown type of situation with cardboard boxes, sleeping bags and whatnot," she explained.

Food will be permitted and bathroom facilities will be available, but no MP3 players, laptops, portable game systems, televisions or other technological devices will be allowed.

"For the most part, we are going back to basics, trying to mimic somewhat how the children in Lesotho live, even though there is really no comparison to the tragedies these poor children in Lesotho are living through," said Maltby-Ingersoll.

The Terry Whalen Band is planning a benefit concert at the school during the first two hours of the event, with all proceeds raised from ticket sales going into the fund.

She said the students are doing the fundraising through their family, friends, neighbors and their community and they are currently seeking other sponsors for the event.

"It costs \$465 annually to send a child to school in Lesotho," she said, adding last year the club raised over \$2,700 from a yard sale.

The Terry Whalen Band Benefit Concert is taking place at the MVHS Theatre on Friday, May 30, from 7-9 p.m.

Tickets for the benefit concert are \$5 and are being sold at Books Inn in Newcastle and at CD Plus in the Northumberland Square Mall in Douglastown, as well as by contacting Whalen, Maltby-Ingersoll or the Multicultural Club.

As well, if the tickets do not sell out before the event, they will be available at the door on Friday evening.

The students will be running a video during the concert showing the ways in which Canadians can help the children and the people of Lesotho.

“In addition we will be selling tickets on a spa basket donated by Eloise Seigel, of Eloise’s Body Rescue Massage Therapy,” said Maltby- Ingersoll.

She added the basket is worth over \$150 and includes a massage paraffin wax treatment, various beauty products.

Tickets for the spa basket are one for \$2 or three tickets for \$5 and can be purchased through the school by contacting one of the people mentioned above.

All proceeds will go to Help Lesotho, with tax receipts issued for contributions over \$15.