In October, Bethesda resident Robyn Nietert, president of a Bethesda microfinance group, had an idea: collect unused instruments in the Bethesda area and mail them to Uganda. At first things were slow going, but soon 50 instruments had been collected. And as of January, the instruments were in the hands of a band in eastern Uganda.

"The students are so grateful," Nietert said. "When I told them they were going to get saxophones, they were amazed."

Nietert traveled to Uganda in late December as part of the Women's Microfinance Initiative, a Bethesda group that helps fund entrepreneurial projects in the country. While the instruments wouldn't reach the students for another week, Nietert said watching the band made her think all the work was worthwhile.

"It was remarkable, watching all of these 10- or 11-year-old children playing by ear," she said. "It was totally amazing."

In October, Nietert began collecting instruments at Walt Whitman High School, and sent out e-mails to parents at Walter Johnson and Bethesda-Chevy Chase high schools as well, seeking support. The initiative eventually sent more than 50 instruments, including guitars, saxophones and trombones.
In October, Bethesda resident Robyn Nietert, president of a Bethesda microfinance group, had an idea: collect unused instruments in the Bethesda area, and mail them to Uganda. At first things were slow going, but soon 50 instruments had been collected. And as of January, the instruments were in the hands of a band in eastern Uganda.

"The students are so grateful," Nietert said. "When I told them they were going to get saxophones, they were amazed."

Nietert traveled to Uganda in late December as part of the Women's Microfinance Initiative, a Bethesda group that helps fund entrepreneurial projects in the country. While the instruments wouldn't reach the students for another week, Nietert said watching the band made her think all the work was worthwhile.

"It was remarkable, watching all of these 10- or 11-year-old children playing by ear," she said. "It was totally amazing."

In October, Nietert began collecting instruments at Walt Whitman High School, and sent out e-mails to parents at Walter Johnson and Bethesda-Chevy Chase high schools as well, seeking support. The initiative eventually sent more than 50 instruments, including guitars, saxophones and trombones.