



HANDS for Cambodia board members posed with the ambassador: (l-r) Albert Cheng, Mary Hodge, Carolyn Wyatt, Sichan Siv, John Ingle.



Traditional Cambodian dancers performed the "Blessing Dance."



An audience of over 100 people attended the golden event jointly planned by *HANDS*, CCPC Multicultural Presbyterian Fellowship, and the Cambodian-American Association of Dallas.

An Evening with Ambassador Sichan Siv

"The moment had arrived...*Am I really doing this? Am I really about to put my life on the line for a dream of freedom?...*I jumped...I could feel my legs already beginning their mad scramble into the jungle cover that I hoped would shield me from the deadly snout of the AK-47." ~ Sichan Siv, excerpt from *Golden Bones*

Sichan Siv was 27 years old when he made his daring escape from the clutches of the Khmer Rouge in the Killing Fields of Cambodia in 1976. His incredible story is told in the bestselling book, *Golden Bones: An Extraordinary Journey from Hell in Cambodia to a New Life in America*. Over 100 people—most of them originally from Cambodia themselves—heard him tell his amazing story at Canyon Creek Presbyterian Church (CCPC) on Saturday evening, January 16, 2010. Sichan, and his wife, Martha, came at the invitation of the CCPC Multicultural Presbyterian Fellowship and *HANDS for Cambodia*.

In Cambodia it is said that a person who is lucky is a person of "golden bones." Sichan Siv's luck, however, seemed to have run out on April 12, 1975 when he missed the helicopter evacuation from the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh that would have whisked him away from the encroaching army of the Khmer Rouge. He was working for the international relief and development organization CARE and had gone to Kampong Speu to arrange supplies for several thousand refugees, returning to Phnom Penh 30 minutes late for the evacuation. Five days later, the city of Phnom Penh fell and the four-year reign of terror that has come to be known as the Killing Fields began. *Golden Bones* is the story of Siv's capture, daring escape, and eventual freedom in the United States, rising to a position of global influence as a United States ambassador. It is an inspirational story. Siv credits his mother with instilling in him an unwavering hope with her words, "No matter what happens, never give up hope."

Siv was resettled as a refugee in Wallingford, Connecticut, in 1976 and later obtained a master of international affairs degree from Columbia University. He was nominated by President George W. Bush in 2001 and unanimously confirmed by the Senate as a United States ambassador to the United Nations, serving until 2006. He and his wife, the former Martha Pattillo of Pampa, Texas, currently spend their time in San Antonio, New York, and beyond. For more information regarding the ambassador, please visit his website www.sichansiv.com. For more information on *HANDS for Cambodia*, see www.handsforcambodia.com or contact Mary Hodge at mary@handsforcambodia.com.
