

## R.I.P.P.L.E.S. AT COMMUNITY LIGHTING FESTIVAL

Among the local customs leading up to Christmas each year is the lighting up of the different villages in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The communities come alive with excitement as lights are strung up at designated areas in the villages and a brilliant competition is held for the Best Lit Village.

2006 was no exception, and Paget Farm, one of the five villages on Bequia, flipped the switch to dazzle the large crowd with its intricately mounted figures of reindeer and Christmas scenes.

Also included in the night's activities were songs and amusement by local community groups. R.I.P.P.L.E.S. with their djembe drums and youthful voices added to the island's cultural expression, sharing the unity between people of varying colours, ideologies, religious denominations, ages and social status.

UNESCO certainly deserves commendation for its support of such programs that empower young people to become involved in the cultural activities of their countries. Peace begins in small measures like these and Christmas is a reminder of the Prince of Peace.

**By Leah Belmar - RIPPLES**