



# NEWS FROM HOINA HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

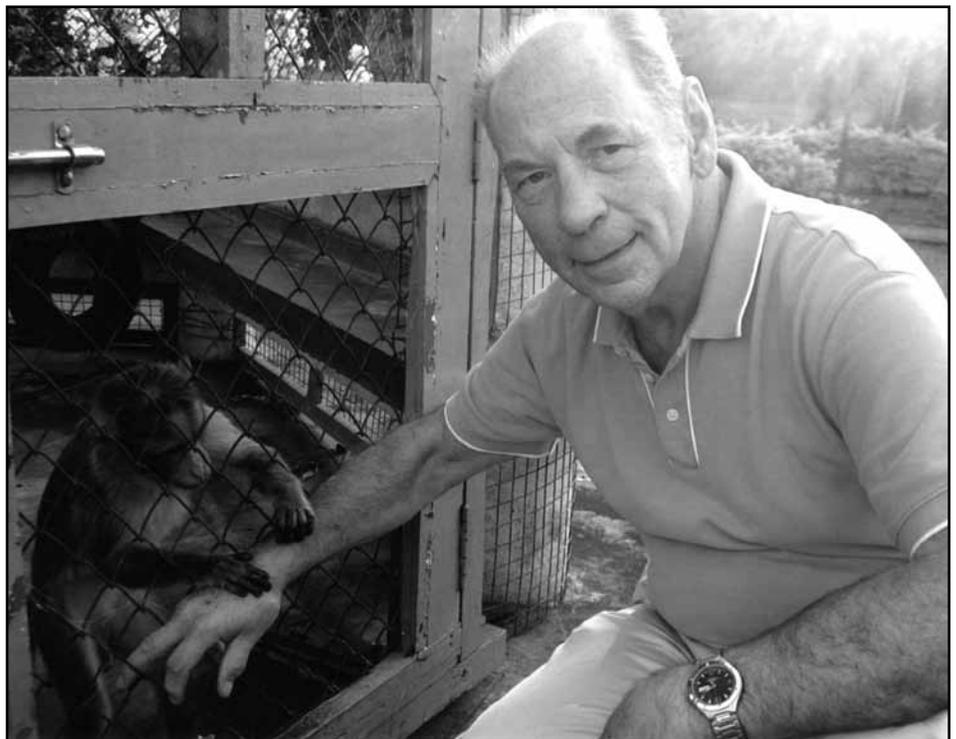
PO Box 87, St. Charles, Missouri 63302 • [www.hoina.org](http://www.hoina.org) • May 2012

## “Is Anyone Happy? Let Him Sing Songs of Praise.”

James 5:13

By Richard Curry  
HOINA Sponsor

When my plane arrived in Vizag after two days of traveling, Darlene (known by all as “Mom”) met me at the airport, and we made our way to the HOINA campus where I would spend the next three months teaching English (pronunciation mostly) to the HOINA students and staff. I was also to work with the teaching staff at a local private school (The Jindal School) that many of our students attended. I had no idea at that point how this venture would turn out. I knew very little about India and knew nothing about orphanages. All of my teaching had been in private preparatory schools, public schools, and colleges. Teaching at an orphanage would certainly be a new experience, and with any new experiences there was a certain amount of anxiety—will I enjoy it? will I like the people with whom I work? will I enjoy the children? And what about the food—will I tolerate the heavily spiced food? Etc. etc. I need not have worried; the welcome I got from students and staff was so warm and enthusiastic, I felt as though I were returning home rather than arriving at a completely foreign destination.



Every day the monkey would check my arms for lice. He was always disappointed.

We finally turned off a two-lane road and drove through a small village. There were signs of destruction and construction everywhere in the village. Tucked between cement houses that obviously were constructed recently were many poorillu huts. (These are one-room homes that are roofed with palm leaves—the doorways are so low, one has to crawl in—a room 14’ by 20’ might house four to six people). It was

a rather depressing little village, quaint, yes, but untidy and congested because of all the construction.

And then the road straightened, and off to our right lay the HOINA campus. The wall adjoining the road had metal grates interspersed between cement pillars. The grates were multicolored and each one spelled out the name of the person/s who donated for the wall’s construction. The difference between

# Sing Songs of Praise

continued from page 1



Staff English lessons everyday at 11:30.

what I had seen of India and this campus astounded me. It was clean and bedecked with flowering shrubs and plants. Directly in front of us was a three-story building, brilliantly white in the sunshine, that Mom said was the staff house. As we turned into the drive, the gateman opened the gate for us. The shock to my senses deepened as we drove down the lane to the girls' home.

There before us was a pristine structure made of cement and painted white. It was much larger than I had envisioned, and the whole campus was a haven of cleanliness. The girls' home sparkled, glowed even. I wondered how such a place could be maintained in the India that I had experienced getting here. I was to learn later that the 15,000 square foot building contained 20 large rooms and four open courtyards; a large dining room; and work areas for cooking, laundry, library, infirmary and offices. As I had not anticipated such grandeur, I was amazed.

The place, however, was not the last of my preconceived disillusionment. Shortly after my arrival a 15-seat van came down the drive with children poking out of every window. It might have been built as a 15-seater, but squeezed into it now were some 40 children. (I learned later that HOINA is in desperate need of a bus for transporting their children.) When it stopped, the noise grew as children erupted from

this well-worn vehicle. We were surrounded by girls of various sizes all wanting to know who I was and why had I come and was I going to stay and what is my name. Their exuberance was overwhelming. These are not orphans thought I to myself. These children are neat and tidy; they are too happy to be orphans. They all wanted to hold my hand and introduce themselves. I didn't realize it at the time, but they expected me to know their names later. They would come to me and say: "What is my name?" Of course I would not know, and they would say, "but I told you my name yesterday."

I was able to fall back on my age as an excuse: "I am old," I would say, "and I can't remember very well anymore." These children did not walk—they ran. They did not talk—they shouted. They enlivened the space around them with an energy that was nearly palpable. When I planned this trip to India, I imagined that I was going to

bring some joy to the lives of subdued orphans, despondent children. These children were not those in my imagination.

At this point, I had met only one van-load of girls from the girls' campus. More girls would arrive at intervals as the school day ended at each particular school. And I was seeing only the girls' contingency. There was another building—a duplicate to the one I was in—for the boys. There were 102 boys living in the second building several blocks down the road. Eventually, I met the hundreds of children and staff who lived on this 23-acre estate who did not seem to belong in India. I came to realize that it is the India that could be; an India that will be if people like Mom continue to encourage order, cleanliness, education, and concern for humanity one child at a time. Unfortunately, there are not many Moms in the world.

For the first several weeks, I took my meals at the boys' dining room. In one of my emails to friends, I remarked on a small incident that I observed in that dining room. When the children finish their meal, they are required to wash their hands and their plate and then stack the plates for the next meal. One of the three-year-old boys went to the sink after eating and pushed himself between a number of older boys who were themselves jostling for the sink, and he simply

see **Sing Songs of Praise** page 3

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number (on your mailing label): \_\_\_\_\_

Mail coupon to: **HOINA**  
**PO Box 636**  
**Brownstown, PA 17508-0636**

May 2012



I want to Sponsor a HOINA boy / girl (*circle one*).

Here is my first monthly gift of \$30.

Use this gift to finance HOINA's ongoing projects through the General Fund.

Use this gift toward a vehicle purchase or wherever it's needed most.



All donations are tax deductible.

## Sing Songs of Praise

continued from page 2

stood there. One of the boys picked him up and helped him wash his hands and his plate and then set him back down. The child didn't ask to be lifted; he simply wedged himself in and waited. He knew that someone would assist him, and of course someone did. I did not speak to the boy who lifted that toddler, but if I had asked him why he helped the child, he would not have said that he had to do it or get into some trouble; he would not have said that he gets special privileges for helping the little ones. I think he would have looked at me quizzically and said something like: "He couldn't reach the water, he's too little." Just that.

You may think that my story is not really profound, but it was profound to me because this little incident that took no more than a minute to play out taught me a great deal of what HOINA is all about. The child did not have to yell or force himself on the older boy because he knew with full confidence that he would be helped. And I realized that every child on this campus has that same confidence, that same assurance that a stronger person will lift him up when he needs lifting. Such security is rare even in some families. But it is the accepted norm at HOINA. How Mom and the HOINA staff have imbued these students with such love and respect for one another is something I can't define for you. I wish I could; I would write a book and bring peace to the world.

Give praise to the LORD,  
proclaim his name; make  
known among the nations what  
he has done. Sing to him,  
sing praise to him; tell of all his  
wonderful acts. Glory in his holy  
name; let the hearts of those  
who seek the LORD rejoice."

I Chron. 16:8-10 (NIV)

As I leave HOINA I know that its sounds will reverberate in my mind for a long time. The sounds of children glorying in their freedom from school as they disembark from the school bus, their laughter at the Saturday evening talent programs,

their joyful singing when the singing teacher comes, the hooting and hollering during the endless cricket matches, the giggling of the girls as they hide during hide and seek, and most especially their greetings to me wherever I wander on the campus: "Uncle, come, Uncle." These are children who have been removed from conditions too bleak and Dickensian to describe, and they have learned to trust, to laugh, to study, to help others, to make joyful

noises unto the Lord. Their music is surely heard in heaven.

HOINA is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization with international headquarters located at:  
HOINA  
PO Box 87  
Saint Charles, MO 63302-0087 U.S.A.

This newsletter is published to inform our readers of the work HOINA does among the handicapped and abandoned in India. Edited by Letti L. Becker  
Layout by Eberly Designers, Mount Joy, PA.  
Printing by Freedom-Graphics, E-town, PA.

Send address changes to:  
HOINA PO Box 636,  
Brownstown, PA 17508-0636 U.S.A.  
717.355.9494  
Toll-free: 877.99.HOINA (4.6462)  
Email address: hoina@frontiernet.net  
Website: www.hoina.org

The official registration and financial information of Homes of the Indian Nation (HOINA) may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling, toll-free in PA, 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



HOINA  
PO Box 636  
Brownstown, PA 17508-0636

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit #910  
Lancaster, PA

## Monthly Sponsor Spotlight

Dhana Lakshmi's parents were married in 1998. Her father worked as an auto rickshaw driver, and her mother sold fish at the Vizak market. Dhana Lakshmi was born in 2004. She has an older sister, Sai Meghana who was born in 2000. Their father died of AIDS in October 2008. Their mother was also infected with HIV and left her children with her sister-in law. The sister-in-law could not care for her own children and her two nieces, so she approached HOINA and asked us to care for them.

Dhana Lakshmi's favorite animal is a cat. Her favorite color is pink. She is studying 1st standard and would like to be a Doctor when she is grown. Her birthday is November 19.

If you would like to sponsor her, we'd be glad to assign her to you. Please complete the coupon on Page 3 and send it with your first monthly donation of \$30. While costs keep rising around the globe, we have been able to stretch your dollars because of God's blessing. We have not had to raise our support fees for our children for many years. That \$30 you give covers your child's food, clothing, schooling fees, and medical care as needed for your child.

Thank you for giving a child hope.

