



NEWS FROM HOINA HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

PO Box 87, St. Charles, Missouri 63302 • www.hoina.org • December 2014

Cyclone Cleanup Continues

By Richard Curry, HOINA Board Member

Two hours before I was to leave Germany for India, I learned that the Visakhapatnam Airport and much of the surrounding city had been destroyed by a hurricane. David, my former student who now works in Germany and has contacts in India, took charge. After several phone calls, he arranged for me to fly to Hyderabad and then to be transported by car to the HOINA campus. During the 12-hour ride to Kothavalasa, I witnessed widespread damage from the storm. Evidence lined the highway. Fallen and broken trees were everywhere, along with downed electrical lines and utility poles. Everything was dark, bleak.

I did, however, make an interesting observation: the buildings were not severely damaged except where a large tree had fallen on a house or into a larger building. Indian houses are made of cement blocks, which are then plastered with a further coating of cement. Their roofs are cement slabs. Of course, outbuildings with corrugated roofs lost them, and many buildings had broken windows; but the buildings themselves were standing solidly. Even so, when I saw the amount of extended damage, I began to seriously worry about the children and staff at the orphanage. I had heard nothing from them since telephone, electricity, and internet were all disabled. I gratefully arrived at the HOINA campus at four in the morning—43 hours after leaving Germany.



Before and after cleanup: HOINA's big boys put the chainsaw to use, cutting up the largest teak tree which fell on our property. Toolshed—minus roof—in the background above, completed work below.



After sleeping for eleven hours I was finally able to face the devastation at HOINA. We lost 291 trees. Many of them were food bearing while others were raised as a

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cash crop, particularly the teak trees. Since school had been cancelled until some normality returned, all of the children were on the campus. For the next five days, we cut fallen trees into manageable sections; and the children hauled them off to either a burn sight or to where wood could be dried and saved for future use or sale. Some magnificent trees were felled by that storm (as in the photo on page 1). As I looked down the drive to the girls' home, my heart was heavy. A bit of HOINA's beauty had been lost.

I was so focused on clearing the debris from the trees that I had not observed the other storm-wrought damage. Roofs that were not cement slabs had been ripped away: the generator building, the building where soy milk is made, the water plant above the girls' home, both garages, part of the guest house roof, and the roof to the corridor of the girls' toilet wing, both tiki huts—all of these lost their roofs and suffered other damage because of that.

Twenty windows at the boys' home were shattered along with other windows at the staff house and the guest house. The water tank on the cow shed was ripped open and blown away. The chapel door was shattered, which is amazing since it was made of teak, a very strong wood. Since the chapel is on a slight rise and the front of the chapel faces in the direction from which the storm came, it must have born the full force of a wind reaching 200 kilometers per hour. Of course all of the electricity was taken out; even some of the utility poles were either broken or pulled out.



In lieu of a forklift, we used an eight-boy-power engine to move logs from the downed trees.

The satellite internet dish along with the TV dishes were blown into the night. Since they were on the roofs of the homes, they were particularly vulnerable.

Yet through all of this destruction, not one was injured. The children were frightened at the height of the storm, and I'm sure that some of the adults were also, but with 200 children huddled in two buildings, it is still amazing that no one was injured. Though everyone was in awe of a power that could cause such destruction, they set about immediately to clean the campus. I have always been quite proud of our children here, and I'm sure I have burdened many people with tales of their greatness, but I was never more proud of them than now as I observed their determination to set this campus to rights. Although hauling and stacking the wood of

several hundred trees and collecting the other detritus of the storm were huge tasks, our boys and girls bent their wills to accomplish that task without complaint. Please remember that we are just out of the monsoon season so both temperature and humidity are very high.

On a much brighter note, another highly energized storm descended on the HOINA campus shortly after my last trip here in January. His name is Sagar but he is known to all as "Tiger." He is a beautiful boy whose mother died and whose father is mentally disabled. He was brought to the orphanage after his mother's death. This 14-month-old now has ten mothers and fathers and 200 brothers and sisters whom he commands rather successfully. Someone is always carrying him or hugging him or playing with him. One does not walk by the little Tiger

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without hugging him or patting him or pinching his plump cheeks (something I do not approve of). Despite all the carnage here, our little Tiger brings joy to everyone. In his presence people smile.

If perchance you have some extra funds lying about for which you have no use (ha!), you might consider sending a small donation

to help with the cost of repairs to HOINA's buildings and grounds. We have much to repair, and costs for materials are soaring because of demand. Know that we have succeeded in getting electricity, several roofs have been constructed and the broken trees have been cleared from the main campus.

HOINA's physical plant has changed. With 291 trees removed

from our small campus, it is only natural that the space would have a different look. But that is only the outward HOINA—the HOINA that people see as they pass by. The inward HOINA is still as strong and verdant as it ever was—a secure fortress where girls are as valuable as boys (and can haul as much wood), and where little tigers amble about being loved by all.



Many hands make light work: To clear their cricket field of stray debris, the HOINA students pass sticks down the line, bucket brigade style.



Sagar, HOINA's little tiger, held by our nursery caretaker, Ruda.

Last Minute Gift Ideas

Having trouble thinking of the perfect gift for that family member who has everything? How about one of these:

- A Christmas donation that will be used to purchase a gift for a HOINA child.
- A one-time donation in honor or memory of someone. If you provide a name and address with your gift, we will send your recipient a thank-you letter acknowledging their gift. In our February newsletter, we will publish our semi-annual recognition list as well.
- A child sponsorship.
- A donation to our education fund, which provides scholarships for secondary and technical schooling for our children.

Your gifts are valuable to us. So that we can serve you better, please send your tax deductible donations to the HOINA office by Dec. 31 in order for them to be counted for this tax year.

HOINA is a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization with international headquarters located at:
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HOINA Sponsor and Contribution Coupon

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



Dec 2014

All donations are tax deductible.

- I want to Sponsor a HOINA boy / girl (circle one). Here is my first monthly gift of \$35.
- Please use this gift of \$ _____ toward the Christmas Fund.
- Please use this gift of \$ _____ toward the HOINA General Fund.
- This gift of \$ _____ is in honor/memory of _____ (circle one)
(please give name and address of person): _____
(please print clearly)



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Save a Life: Support an Orphan

P. Kali Prasad was born on May 12, 2005. He joined our HOINA family in June of this year. His father was a truck driver until he was in an accident, which took his life in the hospital two days later. Kali Prasad's mother worked as a daily laborer to support the children until her death in March 2014 from heart problems. The grandfather approached HOINA about admitting Kali Prasad.

This nine-year-old hopes to go to college to be an engineer. Would you like to help him? If so, please send your first monthly gift of \$35 with the coupon above to our office.



If you would like to **send a Christmas greeting to our staff or children**, please send it to:

The HOINA Campus
Kothasunkarapalem
Balighattam B.O.
Kothavalasa Mandal
Vizianagaram- 535183
A.P.
India

Please do not include any cash or checks in the cards. Gifts, as always, must be sent to our Brownstown, Pennsylvania headquarters.