



# NEWS FROM HOINA HOMES OF THE INDIAN NATION

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## HOINA Boys and Girls Make the Transition

By Roz Vinci  
HOINA Sponsor

**F**or weeks, Darlene and everyone in India had been packing and unpacking mountains of boxes. She worked so hard to get everything ready for the girls; so that, when they came it would feel like home. My first task was to set up the library. I began unpacking the books. Eagerly, the boys came to help me. First, we needed to categorize the books. We created four general piles: language, science, math, and storybooks. One boy would take the book out of the box and hand it to me. I would scan the book and state its pile destination, "story book." The next boy would repeat it and pass it along. We developed a nice rhythm, not unlike rounds of *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*. Next, we did the same in more detail for the shelves.

We worked for six hours, and they glowed with how nice it looked. How generous they are to give their home to the girls so willingly. Their new home is still under construction, but the HOINA boys are true troop-



The boys stand in front of the newly stacked shelves of the library.

ers and always are smiling and singing. The two dogs, Heidi and Honey, also were relocated from the old boys' home to the new one. However, they didn't make the transition as smoothly! They immediately went back to their old home, where they feel comfortable. I was wondering if the boys feel the same way.

After so many preparations, the girls arrived. They came in at midnight after a 14-hour train trip followed by an hour-long bus ride. The girls poured out with wiggly legs and droopy eyelids. While they were happy to see me, they were more eager to see their beds. Darlene, with sleep lines on her face, woke up to greet them and to assign each girl a bed. Patiently, they waited their turn and then collapsed into a deep sleep. As the beds filled, we realized we were short one bed! As we frantically began looking for another bed, Darlene stopped for a moment at the nursery to say hello to two new toddlers and to pick out a special stuffed

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animal for each one. Back to the bed situation. It turned out, what we thought was occupied was really empty. Without knowing the final count of how many children and staff members would come, we had exactly the right number of beds!

The girls were anxious about their new home, over 500 miles away to another state, another language, different environs and different food. They also left behind some family members and their friends. Their first week was difficult.

Darlene decided to send them on a field trip into the mountains to see how beautiful it is here and have them visit an incredible, huge cave site. To describe the road up the mountain as “winding” would be an understatement. Those curves were tighter than a letter S getting sat on by an elephant! Slowly, the girls’ little brown faces started to turn green. Instead of the girls looking up at the lovely mountains, they were looking down at the road. Thank goodness we had large and many windows! Half of them got sick. Those who avoided motion sickness *oooooh* and *ahhhhh* at how beautiful everything was. They pointed at how lush and green the landscape was and how clean the air smelled. Their happiness was good to see.

One afternoon I put together a painting class. Originally, I thought it would be just for the younger girls, but everyone joined in. The assignment was to look at one another and study the differences in facial features—nose, eyes, brows, etc.—and to paint a person. The girls were a bit hesitant to start. One bravely asked, “Auntie, do we have to paint people?”

“What would you like to paint?”

“I want to paint the mountains!!” The other girls chimed in loudly with *yes, I, too!* I took this as a good sign that they were adapting to their new home. We now have some lovely mountain paintings to display.

After a week’s time, Darlene wanted to give the girls a treat. An ice cream party! In Chennai because of the cost of living in a metropolitan area, each girl would normally get a serving that we would say was only a half “Dixie-cup” full. In Visak, our money goes so much further. Darlene bought tubs like ours here in the States. She filled mugs full with two scoops for each



Telugu language lessons at the HOINA girls’ home

girl! Their eyes were as wide as their mouths. Better yet, they didn’t get just vanilla but a brand new flavor to them—strawberry! What excitement! When the two young HOINA men went to purchase the ice cream, the shopkeeper asked why they were buying so much ice cream. They explained that it was for HOINA’s girls’ and boys’ homes. The shopkeeper decided right then to sponsor one boy and one girl—another kind of double-scoop surprise!

One evening, Darlene asked me to lead the girls’ nightly prayer group. I had no particular ideas. She suggested I look at a Bible story book from the library. I opened to a page about contentment. *How appropriate*, I thought. The lesson taught how to adjust to changes and to not necessarily fit old things and ways into new situations but to be open to new experiences. The story was about a grandfather explaining to his grandson that when he moved to the city, he couldn’t have a flower garden like he had in the country because the flowers wouldn’t grow. Then he learned that he just needed to find flowers that would grow in the new environment. I read from I Timothy 6:6-8 “Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world and we cannot take anything out of the world. But, if we have food and clothing, with these things we will be content.” The girls said they enjoyed the readings.

Another day, we walked down a ways, tethered to a rope, to visit the cows Darlene purchased last year. As

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06/09



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she often does, she looks for ways to stretch a dollar. This time, she bought pregnant cows. We went to see and pet the calves. Both the calves and girls were hesitant at first, but in no time they adjusted and enjoyed each other.

That's what adjustment needs—time. In the few weeks I was overseas, I was able to witness the girls' growing contentment. I'm happy to report they are enjoying their new home and liking the new food. Darlene and I set up a playroom for these little children, and she made sure it was complete with dolls properly clothed to reflect village dress.

As busy as she is, Darlene keeps her eye on important details. I'm continuously amazed how much detail she remembers about the children. As she introduced me to each one, she told me a bit of their story, how old they are and when they came to HOINA. Later, in private, she'd recount the story of why they came. Some stories are heartbreaking. The children here lead healthy, happy, and productive lives. They not only are well educated, but also get a lovely art education from Darlene who is a retired art teacher. The proof of their works is seen throughout the homes on many murals. It's really quite impressive.

I have trouble finding ways to describe how much work Darlene does here. She wears so many hats in areas of CEO, architect, spiritual leader, teacher, art edu-

cator, public relations director, social worker, international correspondent, health care provider, and on and on (in any order on any given day). One day while at the construction site, Darlene was discussing with a foreman where kitchen doors and plumbing would be located. In the middle of the discussion, the four-year-old son of one of the workers smiled at her. Without losing a beat, she reached into her bag like Mary Poppins and pulled out a Matchbox car for him.

It was obvious to me on my trip that Darlene is doing God's work. He continues to inspire her with new ways to support the less fortunate in India. For example, when she bought the cows, she bought them not only to provide milk for the children, but also knew to sell

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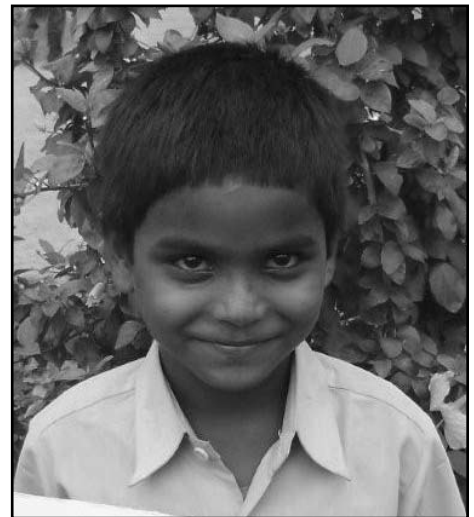
# Young boy needs your sponsorship

*[Editor's Note: You may have noticed we've featured many boys lately. That's because we're waiting until we accept more girls in our new location.]*

Bonugu Pavan Kalyan was born in June of 2002 and came to HOINA in February of 2008.

Pavan's parents married in 1996. His father worked for a daily wage, since he had no property. After they were married a year, their first child, Satyaviathi, was born. Although the little girl was fine, the mother was frequently ill after her birth. Pavan was born about 6 years later, and was also a healthy baby. However, his father found it difficult to support his sick wife and also care for two small children. He talked with his village president about the family difficulties and was given a letter of recommendation to present to HOINA.

Pavan is presently in second grade at a local government primary school. His favorite game is Cricket, and he wants to be a police officer when he is grown. Pavan loves the color blue. ♿



Bonugu Pavan Kalyan



Working on a new mosaic.

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the extra milk to villagers to help both them and to raise funds for HOINA. Plus, they also utilize the cow dung to generate biofuel. Darlene works hard to find means to help HOINA expand to become more efficient and further extend its help to the greater community. On this trip, I have often said, "She's always thinking!"

As busy as Darlene is, with her 12-hour days traveling to and from the city in traffic and pollution to take care of business, or dealing with many daily ordeals, she always stops everything to counsel a child when needed. She truly is "Mom" as all the children call her. She writes *MOM* on many items that are duplicates so she will be sure hers are returned to her. The other day, I saw it upside down—WOW—she certainly is! ♿