

Published June 6th, 2012

Orinda Rotary Shepherds Little Flock

Submitted by Frank and Rhonda Darling



Children near Chennai, India have future as bright as their smiles thanks to the collaboration between Little Flock orphanage and Lamorinda's Rotary and Interact clubs. Photo Frank and Rhonda Darling

globally to make life better for others no matter where they live need not be just a dream.

For more information about Little Flock, visit: littleflockhomes.org.

Rhonda Darling always wanted to do a project somewhere in the world that needed her skills. So in January 2011, after retiring from a 38-year nursing career, she teamed up with other medical professionals to care for the children of Little Flock, an orphanage in Southern India, 90 miles south of Chennai.

Little Flock was founded to care for 100 children ages 4 to 17, many of whom had been abandoned because of their status as members of the "Dalit" or "untouchable" caste. At Little Flock, they now have food, shelter, clothing, education, and limited medical and dental care.

For two weeks, the three dentists set up their own clinic while the five nurses examined the kids. Once they had completed treating the orphans, they opened the clinics up to neighboring villagers.

After Rhonda returned, she talked with her husband, Frank, about the hardships in the Indian jungle. She told him that rented vehicles were being used to get volunteers to and fro in difficult conditions, and that a more reliable means of transportation was needed for the volunteers - and to allow the kids to connect to their heritage on field trips similar to those taken by many U.S. kids.

Frank, named president of the Rotary Club of Orinda in July 2011, suggested raising funds to purchase a bus for Little Flock as part of the club's call for international projects. The Board liked the idea and "Wheels for Little Flock" was born with help from the Moraga, Lafayette, Lamorinda, Sunrise, and Rossmoor clubs, as well as the area's Interact Clubs (Rotary sponsored service clubs in high schools). "Little Flock" also reached out to their major donors with the goal of providing half of the total amount needed - \$50,000.

That goal was met, and planners are now working out the details for the bus purchase and delivery, proving that simple ideas can become reality. Acting locally and thinking

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA