

Family trades Illumination Night for smiles

By Janet Hefler

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While Island visitors and residents enjoy Illumination Night, fireworks, and the fair, dentist Kendrick (Ken) Brede, his wife Debra, and children Joshua and Ashley of Wellesley are far from their summer home in Tisbury.



The dental team in the back row, from left, includes office assistant Pam Allie, Ashley Brede, Dr. Brede, and student Robert Ang. Photo by Debra Brede

This week they are working as volunteers in a dental clinic at the Agape International Orphanage in Hyderabad, India.

As previously reported, Dr. Brede and his family, joined by his office assistant Pam Allie, friend Bob Lindley, and students Suzy Kia and Robert Ang, are spending marathon days attending to the dental needs of 235 children ("Hundreds of smiles reward thousands of miles of travel," MV Times, July 23).

Many of the children have tested positive for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or have

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Since the Bredes worked at the dental clinic last summer, the Agape International Orphanage has added 40 new children and now cares for 126 boys and 109 girls.

Executive director Lynne Voggu runs the orphanage. She formerly worked as Ms. Brede's assistant at her investment management company in Needham, where Dr. Brede's dental practice also is located.

On Tuesday, Dr. Brede and the local and visiting staff treated 50-plus children. In an email to The Times yesterday, Ms. Brede described the work.

"Pam Allie, Ken's dental assistant, is from his Needham Laser Dentistry practice. She is Ken's right arm and helps him see so many more children each day. Weather here is so very humid yet the smiles on the kids' faces make it so worthwhile. My son Josh and I were able to bring 126 new pairs of cargo pant shorts with adjustable waists and belts. What a blessing for the slim boys whose pants were being held up with old string!"

Ms. Brede went on to say that her husband, who was already at work in the clinic, greatly appreciated the news coverage. "You cannot imagine how thankful he is to get some information out about this orphanage that has rescued kids left to die on the streets," she wrote. "Not only are they fed, but they are being educated to get them out of the slums."

When asked what the orphanage needs, Dr. Brede wrote, "We'd very much love to have a second dental chair and unit (approximately \$2,500 U.S. dollars) to be able to treat more children. We're training local orphans in all safety and OSHA protocol and hope to see some of these children pursue a dental career."

Agape hopes to send all of the children to college, Dr. Brede said. Tuition costs an average of \$1,500 per student annually.

"College scholarships are greatly welcomed and life changing to these children who've come from nothing," he said. Although the orphanage library needs books, Dr. Brede recommends monetary donations to purchase them in India, because shipping is too costly.

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"We can commit to come once a year and hope other dental professionals can join us for a week to help treat the children," Dr. Brede added.

Agape International is a 501 (c) 3 organization. Tax-deductible donations can be made payable to Agape International and sent to P.O. Box 918, Sudbury, MA 01776. For more information, visit the website www.agapeintl.org.

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