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ReligionSPIRITUALITY

Orphanage opening fulfills dream of Mosier couple

■ By ELROY KING
of the Chronicle

The opening of Osanidde Village, an orphanage for children whose parents have died of AIDS, has fulfilled the long held dreams of a Mosier couple.

The orphanage is on Bussi Island in the middle of Lake Victoria in Uganda. Currently it houses 74 children ages four to 14, and Jon and Ann Dunagan have hopes that it will grow

to handle up to 300 children.

Osanidde is a special African word in the Luganda language which is pronounced "Oh Sunny Day." Osanidde is a word of honor used only in reference to God (or a sovereign king). It's a phrase from a well known Luganda worship song the children love to sing, and the word means "you are worthy."

The orphanage is located on a 35 acre, lakeside plot, on property owned by Harvest Min-

istries, a ministry started by the Dunagan's 20 years ago. They minister in Third World countries and he has preached on all seven continents, including Antarctica where his listeners were a team of Russian scientists.

Ann Dunagan said Bussi Island is known for pineapples, sunshine and peace, and even during the civil wars in Uganda, Bussi Island remained peaceful. But that island is now devastated by AIDS.

Jon had worked with Ugandan minister Drake Kanaabo for 15 years and two of his grown sons, Michael and Ronnie, are now among those who are involved in the actual supervision of Osanidde. They are among a total of four "uncles" and seven "mamas" who oversee the children, who live in seven houses now on site (another is under construction).

Each house has eight to 10 children, and there are 35 boys and 39 girls.

The first children moved into the houses, made of bricks and stucco, in February of this year. Each house has its own garden and the kitchens are located outside the house. The residents in each house eat together as a family.

The houses are about 22-by-24 feet in size and have two rooms for the children and rooms for the "uncles" or "mamas."

Many of the children come from deplorable conditions and before coming to Osanidde Village they lived in grass shacks or slept under trees on plastic bags. Many of them had never slept in a bed before.

They come from Bussi Island or from Kachanga Island, which Ann says is one of the poorest places in Uganda.



SEEN WITH SOME of the residents of Osanidde Village is Christi Dunagan, the daughter of Jon and Ann Dunagan of Mosier. She came with her parents along with Peggy Clear, the widow of Pasto Norman Clear of The Dalles, to Uganda when the orphanage opened in February. (Contributor photo)

It costs \$1 a day or \$30 a month to sponsor a child and most of the children have sponsors. Covenant Christian Church in Hood River, where Ann and Jon are both elders, sponsors a house (called Covenant House), as does a dentist in the Seattle area. Other sponsorships come from churches, youth groups, businesses and others. Information on the orphanage or sponsorship is available at www.harvestreport.net/osanidde.htm or www.harvestreport.net. One pamphlet states that sponsors can name their own orphanage house.

Despite their backgrounds,

Ann says the children at Osanidde are the happiest children she has ever seen. She said they get up at 4 to 4:30 a.m. for prayers, which they do on their own. They all attend a Christian school and have classes where they speak English, Luganda and Swahili. She said the children are learning they can make an impact in the world.

Most of the schools in Uganda are government run and cost money to attend. It is usually hard to get permission to start a school. Ann said the Ugandan vice president was on a neighboring island at the time of the dedica-

tion of the orphanage and while visiting gave Harvest Ministries permission to open the school on the spot.

The need there is great, she said, and they plan to expand their work "as God provides."

The Dunagans, who have seven children of their own have lived in the Mid-Columbia area for about eight years the last seven in Mosier. Before that they lived in the Bend area.

They helped start another orphanage in Mbarara ten years ago. It now has around 400 children and is managed by a Swedish organization.



Osanidde
YESU!

JESUS,
You are Worthy!