

# many hands

QUARTERLY

Transforming together, to be love in action, in a broken world.

## SEPTEMBER 2019 - THIS ISSUE

- 2 CORN, CROPS, AND COMMUNITY
- 3 SPIRITUALITY AND TECHNOLOGY, UPDATES
- 4 TEAMS IN HAITI



P.O. Box 204 Pella, IA, 50219  
www.mh4h.org | 641.629.6633



## READY, SET, GROW!

Darryl De Ruiter, Organizational Development Manager



A view of the Sylvain campus with the Sylvain Christian School of Light pictured to the right



A student smiling at her new uniform



Dean and Paula Van Roekel



The recently graduated PS3 class will become the First Grade class.

The new school building is nearly completed and will be READY by the time the new school year begins on September 9. The instructional staff is SET with four well-trained teachers and four classroom helpers. Both of these facts are evidence that our students and school continue to GROW and for this, we are super thankful.

As most are aware, we have constructed a new school building that contains three classrooms. For this coming academic year it will house our first First Grade of the new Sylvain Christian Fundamental School. All that is left to do is to install a couple of wall fans and a chalkboard. Dean and Paula Van Roekel (Sioux City, IA) recently came to build and paint/varnish all of the students' furniture which included tables, chairs, shelves, and a teacher cabinet for the classroom. Dean and Paula are amazing volunteers who have made every piece of school furniture we have for the Yellow Iron School of Light Preschool and now for this new classroom. Dean has also served as our lead architect for the campus layout and for every building Many Hands has constructed in Haiti. Kalot, our Campus and Security Manager, has been overseeing the construction of a new Wout Elav (Student Path) that the students and staff will use every day to get to the new building. Our vision is to continue to add a class, teacher, and helper each year for the next eight years as our students continue to grow and learn. Our new building will support the next two years of growth and in a couple more years, we'll be looking to construct another three-classroom building. We are also in need of some new playground equipment for the new school. All of this of course is, as Many Haitians say; "Si Bondye vle" (If God wants).

Our instructional staff for the 2019-20 school year has been hired and includes four teachers and four helpers. Mdms. Elimene and Wilnise will be in PS1. Mdms. Mirguelita and Nerlande in PS2. Mdms. Juna and Patricia for PS3. And Mdms. Nicole and Wilnide will serve in First Grade. All four of our teachers and three of our helpers have certified teaching degrees and are outstanding educators who love their kids and the Lord. We could not be more excited for our students to learn from these eight quality educators. The four teachers attended a four-day educator workshop in mid-August that was excellent and provided tools and strategies for teaching. And, at the request of the parents, we also plan to introduce some basic English instruction to our First Grade curriculum this year. Good stuff!!!

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

One other new and significant change happening this coming year is the transition in which the parents of our first graders will begin paying the tuition for their own child's education. Up until this year, their child has had a sponsor(s) that has been paying for almost all of the education costs. But we know the importance and dignity that this new approach brings to these parents. We also know the financial impact this would have on these parents so we have been preparing for this and devising a plan for the past few years to prepare them for this moment. We have provided each preschool student's family with two pregnant goats and have a buy-back program in which they sell their kids back to Many Hands. At the time of the sale, we pay them half the fair market price, keep AND match the other half and put this money into an Education Savings Account to help pay for their child's fundamental school education. We also have a service program at our school that can reduce their tuition cost if they choose to participate in the weekly service schedule. This involves cleaning and serving at the school approximately one hour per week per family. We are anxious to see how this goes in the upcoming year but believe that this will be a successful change and one that encourages parental engagement and falls in line with the mission of transformation and development of the Many Hands organization.

It is absolutely critical to our educational program that we commit to get individual child/student sponsors for children starting when they are in the second year of our First 1,000 Days Program (around age one to 18 months) until they complete preschool (age 5-6). And as we grow, we need sponsors whose sponsorship for a student ends after preschool to "loop back" and pick up another child (even if for one year). Sponsors can keep supporting their child after preschool through prayers, notes, small gifts, etc. but there will always be more and new children who need a provider of financial support in those first five critical years. If you would like to learn more about how you can sponsor a child for the first time or if your current sponsored child just graduated from preschool and you are ready to loop back and select a new child to support, go to [www.mh4h.org/loveinaction](http://www.mh4h.org/loveinaction) and view the profiles of the still-available children. Thank you to so many of you who are already serving as Love in Action sponsors. We truly are pi bon ansanm (better together).

## CORN, CROPS, AND COMMUNITY

Micah Aurand, Administrative Coordinator



Women working to harvest corn grown from our test crops



Aerial view shows our corn plots (top and middle) and community gardens (bottom)

A well-tended garden is a beautiful sight. It's a sign of growth, new life, and hope. Gardens are as diverse as the people who tend them. Some are filled with vibrant flowers and elaborate designs while others produce vegetables and fruit, enticing the palette and providing fuel for the body.

In Haiti, nourishment takes priority and gardens are an investment for the future. Staple foods such as corn and beans are grown and stockpiled with the excess being sold for cash to meet other household needs. In the last 18 months, Haiti has suffered a drought resulting in a notable decline in agricultural production and, subsequently, family incomes. (OCHA, 2019)

With this in mind, our spirit is strengthened to see the third class of students enter the Community Garden program. The program started in 2017 with nine students attending an agriculture class led by Claudin Augustin with the purpose of teaching families to grow sufficient produce to fill their table and sell at market. There they learned how to raise healthier crops using methods such as fertilizers to enrich the soil and raised garden beds to decrease water waste. Others quickly saw how the students' gardens flourished and 20 more families were added to their number for the second season. For Fall 2019, 19 new students have enrolled for the Community Gardens program which now supports a total of 48 of our Love In Action families. Many Hands staff has been encouraged to see some of the families transferring this knowledge to use in their own home gardens!

Many Hands has recently partnered with an Iowa seed company, testing 13 varieties of hybrid corn, in-country, to determine which seed is best able to thrive in the Haitian environment. In general, Haitian farmers plant their field from the seed corn of the previous year's crop. Generation after generation, the same corn is used while the seeds' genetics grow weaker; each growing season produces a smaller yield from an inferior plant than the season before. When drought strikes the land, the crop isn't durable to withstand the hardship resulting in a lost investment. The hope of this project is to find a drought-resistant hybrid corn that produces a greater yield for the Haitian farmer. Such a seed corn could provide agricultural and economic development for our Haitian communities. Early tests have shown a 115% to 155% improvement in yield.

Many Hands has determined two ways we can assist in this drought are through training and development. We believe if we continue to empower Haitians to grow their own gardens, and identify a drought-resistant corn seed, we can aid the economic stability in the area. By supporting the community in these ways, Haitians will be better prepared during future droughts, and can look forward to bigger crop yields, two strategic 'seeds' that have the potential to bear fruit for families now and in the future.



# SPIRITUALITY AND TECHNOLOGY

**Tom Johnston, Spiritual Development Manager and Missiologist**



Tom Johnston (left) overseeing morning devotions



Tom showing the capabilities of the Lightstream Pocket device

*Thomas Johnson has been the Many Hands Spiritual Development Director since October 2018. One of his prime responsibilities is equipping the Spiritual Shepherds with the resources they need to be more effective in the field.*

Since starting with Many Hands, one of my major tasks has been to deliver training to our Spiritual Shepherds in Pignon. This has been through visits to Haiti, as well as by distance learning through teleconferences and downloads. Haiti's internet, though, isn't yet reliable enough for successful video-conferences, but hopefully that day will soon come, which will make remote, face-to-face instruction between the U.S. and Haiti possible.

The Spiritual Shepherds are very interested in Christian leadership topics on making disciples and equipping believers. They've appreciated the curriculum I used when I taught Christian leadership at a French-language seminary in Niamey, Niger. This teaching applies biblical principles—such as servant leadership—to common leadership themes.

In August, I went to Haiti and trained the Shepherds on using the Lightstream Pocket wi-fi hard-drive to share digital content such as audio Scriptures, the Jesus film, children's songs, and worship music to Haitians with smart phones or other wi-fi devices. In the future, the Shepherds could make their own recordings, such as sermons or teachings and pass them along to other Haitians through the Lightstream Pocket. Since four out of five people in Pignon do not read, digital media may be the best means to reach these Haitians.

The other topic that we introduced to the Shepherds was John Edmiston's study on "The Spiritual Continuum". Edmiston explains that "The Spiritual Continuum" is a unique approach to basic discipleship that is not based on rules, on behavior, or on academic knowledge, but instead is based on a step-by-step approach that cooperates with the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. Maturing believers are encouraged to understand that the "Helper" Jesus promised to send is working to bring us into relationship to the Godhead and to guide us into sanctification.

Feedback from the Shepherds on this training was enthusiastic, as they had never before had a teaching on the Holy Spirit which explained His daily involvement in our lives outside of specific spiritual giftings and manifestations. We are excited to see how God uses this training to equip our staff and Spiritual Shepherds to continue to be Love in Action in the communities they serve.

## LATEST UPDATES ACROSS MANY HANDS

### Volunteer Milestone

Volunteers at our Many Hands Thrift Market stores in Grimes, IA and Spencer, IA have reached a new milestone. This summer, volunteers at both stores passed a total of 60,000 volunteer hours donated since 2013, when Spencer opened its doors! They are excited to keep adding to this total as the year progresses.



### Motorcycles for Missions

On July 28th, "Ride for the Cause", a charitable motorcycle event held at Federated Fellowship Church in Pella, IA, raised more than \$5,000 to purchase new motorcycles for our staff in Haiti. These new life-transforming motos will help them continue being Love in Action in Pignon, extending their reach out into the community.



# many hands

QUARTERLY

SEPTEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER



P.O. Box 204 Pella, IA, 50219  
[www.mh4h.org](http://www.mh4h.org) | 641.629.6633

## MANY HANDS BUSINESS BREAKFAST

OCT 4 | DES MOINES

FEATURING

**Jon Gordon**



[mh4h.org/bb2019](http://mh4h.org/bb2019)



**Send audio Bibles  
to Haiti through  
your Summer VBS!**

**Find out how:**

**[www.mh4h.org/vbs](http://www.mh4h.org/vbs)**

## TEAMS IN HAITI - JUNE TO AUGUST



**Fresno Bible Church, Fresno, OH**  
May 30 - June 6 | People: 16



**Market Rewards, Spencer, IA**  
June 6 - 13 | People: 15



**First Baptist, Aberdeen, SD**  
June 13 - 20 | People: 9



**MFI Team, Fort Pierce, FL**  
June 13 - 20 | People: 12



**Brand Family, Pella, IA**  
July 11 - 18 | People: 4



**Johnson Family, Lincoln, NE**  
July 11 - 18 | People: 2



**Des Moines Team, IA**  
July 18 - 25 | People: 14



**Mobility Worldwide, IA and TX**  
July 25 - August 1 | People: 7



**Sarah Ripperger, Internship**  
June to August