

## First Steps: Gifts of Kindness



Soybeans are shipped from Canada to North Korea to make soymilk. One cup of soymilk costs just 2.7 cents including shipping.

Donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards soybeans.



For \$50 the micronutrient Sprinkles program provides 18 months of sachets for a baby (6 to 24 months) and 1 year of sachets for a pregnant and nursing mother. A lack of nutrients in the diet impacts growth and brain development. Sprinkles prevents rickets and lowers rates of diarrhea and pneumonia, the leading causes of death in children under 2 years of age.

Donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards micro-nutrient Sprinkles.



20-litre stainless-steel milk cans are vital for storing and transporting soymilk from production centres to the children we serve. They cost \$100 each.

Donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards milk cans.



The VitaGoat is powered by combustible fuel (wood, coal, etc.). It processes soybeans directly into soymilk and provides about 1,500 cups of soymilk per day to hungry children. The main difference from the VitaCow is that the VitaGoat runs without electricity. The cost of the VitaGoat is \$4000.

Donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards a VitaGoat.



VitaCows process soybeans directly into soymilk providing children with a warm and protein-rich drink. The VitaCow is powered by electricity and can produce 2000 cups of soymilk per day to feed hungry children. The cost of the VitaCow is \$7000.

Donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards a VitaCow.

name \_\_\_\_\_  
 address \_\_\_\_\_  
 city \_\_\_\_\_ prov. \_\_\_\_\_ postal code \_\_\_\_\_  
 phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to First Steps and forward to: 3260 West 5th Ave. Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1V4 Canada  
 BIN: 878227511 RR0001. Gifts are acknowledged with an official receipt for income tax purposes.  
 For further information contact us at: 604.732.0195 or [www.firststepscanada.org](http://www.firststepscanada.org)



Spring 2015

Ever thankful and encouraged by your support and prayers, a First Steps team (Alex Harden, Mary Amendt, Susan Ritchie and Andrew Parker) visited North Korea from April 28 – May 5. It was our first visit in almost eight months due to quarantine measures imposed in October 2014 that were aimed at preventing Ebola from entering the country.

After our lengthy absence, the words “change” and “a sense of mutual gratitude” seem to best sum up the experience of being back on the ground. This was most noticeable in the many new appointments in personnel and the greater willingness on the part of ordinary people, particularly young people, to engage with waves, smiles and talk.

Most apparent was change for almost two thousand orphans in Wonsan, for whom a new housing complex has been built, at the instruction of Leader Kim Jong Un. Next time we visit, we expect to see the 1,941 children from the Baby Home (orphanage), Kindergarten Orphanage, and Primary and Secondary Boarding Schools (orphanages) as well as their newly appointed directors, at this new facility.

We would like to see change in the percentage of women and babies affected by anemia, which remains a matter of serious concern. In fact, nowhere in North Korea is the rate of childhood anemia higher than in Kangwon province, where 40% of children are anemic. To date, First Steps has only been providing pregnant women and babies in Wonsan with micronutrient Sprinkles. Over the next year, we hope to expand the program to cover all women and babies in the seven accessible counties and two cities (Wonsan and Munsan) in Kangwon province (see separate story).

Seeming to sense how the various changes might be impacting a visitor, one of our partners reminded us that First Steps has had its longest history with this soymilk production facility (more than a decade) and shared sincere hopes that the long-standing relationship will continue.

Indeed, it will continue... “to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20); the call of Christ today is the same as it was at the end of the 19th century, when James Gale, Robert Grierson, Robert Hardie and many

other Canadians responded and lived and served in Wonsan.

What motivated them then is the same thing that motivates us now—our personal relationship with Christ.



**“We know what real love is because Jesus gave his life for us...”** (1 John 3:16).

As we continue to work in North Korea we look to the Lord for guidance, knowing that true change comes from reconciliation, as is perhaps best captured in the words of 2 Cor. 5: 17-21. May you be encouraged by these words and blessed as we continue to serve together.



## Bringing Sprinkles to Kangwon Province

During our visit, the First Steps team met with Dr. Oh Suk Chol, who is the head of the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN), to continue talks that began in August 2014 about expanding our Sprinkles program. Together, we decided it is best for First Steps to focus on increasing Sprinkles distribution in Kangwon province (we've been working in the provincial capital, Wonsan, for nearly 10 years).

This decision was influenced by the 2013 DPRK Nutrition Survey, which showed the prevalence of iron deficiency anemia (IDA) amongst women and children hasn't been improving. IDA is a matter of serious concern in North Korea, especially in Kangwon province, where the rates of both are among the highest. IDA

increases a woman's chances of pregnancy complications, which can be deadly. Childhood anemia may delay or impair a child's mental and physical development, weakening their immune system and reducing their productivity in adult life.

However, it doesn't have to be this way. We can work towards preventing anemia and its far-reaching consequences in women and children with an inexpensive and effective solution: Sprinkles! Costing three cents each, a sachet of Sprinkles contains a blend of 15 essential minerals and vitamins, including much needed iron.

This year, First Steps' goal is to provide Sprinkles to all the



Happy pregnant mother with her sprinkles package.

expectant moms and their babies—roughly 40,000 individuals in total—living in the accessible counties (7) and cities (2) throughout Kangwon province. We're committing to this initiative because preventing micronutrient malnutrition pays the best curative dividend. It's ambitious but we believe that with strategic and thoughtful planning, seeing a decrease in anemia is possible and attainable, and are thrilled to be working together with you toward this goal!

## Meet A First Steps Child:

What do you want to be when you grow up?



Chang So Hyong



Age: 10

Home: Wonsan Primary Boarding School

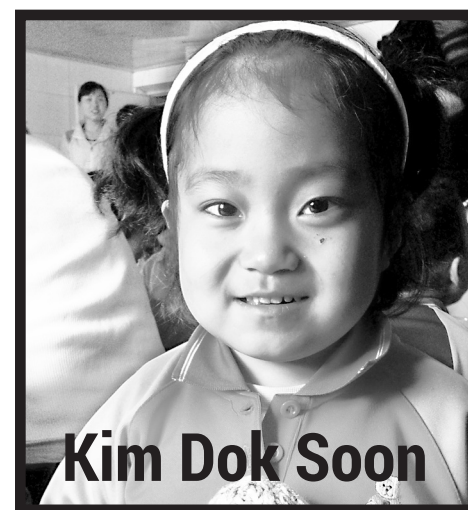
Favourite Food: Meat

Favourite Activity: Physical Education class

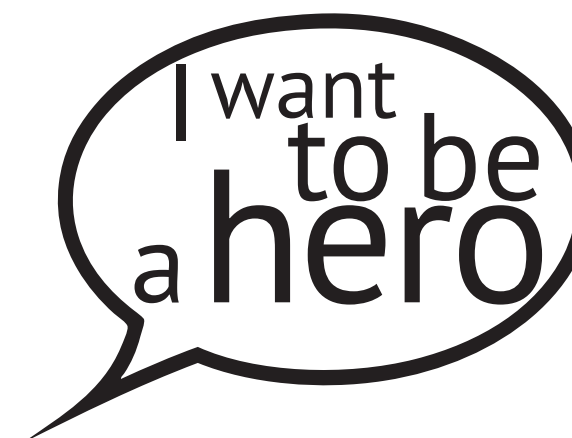
Favourite Subject: Math

## Meet A First Steps Child:

What do you want to be when you grow up?



Kim Dok Soon



Age: 5

Home: Nampo Kindergarten Orphanage

Favourite Food: Soymilk

Favourite Animal: Pigs and tigers

## Changes in Leadership

One noticeable change from our visit was the many new appointments in personnel at our partner orphanages and soymilk production centres. In our previous newsletter we introduced you to Mrs. Park Soon Shil, who became the Director of the Primary Boarding School in Wonsan in June 2014. This visit, we met four more newly-appointed orphanage directors. The reasons for the changes in leadership are unclear but we're excited to begin working together. In the coming months, please pray that good

working relationships are formed. Please also pray for the incredible partners we said goodbye to:

Mrs. Ri Jong Hui (Wonsan Secondary Boarding School): Mrs. Ri became the principal after having taught literature for a number of years. She and her husband were both orphans. Because she



Mrs. Jung Jung Suk will be missed.

knew what it was like to grow up in an orphanage, she treated all 700 children as if they were "her" own.



Soymilk is soy delicious.

Mrs. Jung Jung Suk (Wonsan Kindergarten Orphanage): Mrs. Jung was one of the directors we always looked forward to meeting with because she was just like your favourite grandma. She was always thinking of creative ways to serve the children's food so they'd be excited about proper eating and grow up strong.

Also, Mrs. Kang Jung Hee (Wonsan Baby Home) and Mrs. Huangbo Chun Ae (Nampo Kindergarten Orphanage).