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## Rebuilding Dreams: A School Library in Haiti after the Earthquake

*This issue of International Leads focuses on the experiences of a school librarian in an American high school (New Trier High School, near Chicago, IL) with close ties to a town in Haiti (Petit-Goave). Two of the school's staff are from this town in Haiti. Last summer, staff from New Trier visited Petit-Goave and created a fundraising project to improve an elementary school there. Following the earthquake, the fundraising project shifted gears from improvement to rebuilding, as the school was completely destroyed.*

*For this issue, Deborah Lazar, a librarian at New Trier High School, and Jean Cayemitte, one of the New Trier staff from Petit-Goave, share their perspectives on rebuilding the school in Petit-Goave. Also, two students who participate in the New Trier Haiti Relief Project contribute briefs about their experiences.*

*The photos are taken from the presentation created for talks by New Trier students about the project.*

### **By Deborah Lazar, MLIS**

On January 12, 2010, an earthquake struck Haiti, inflicting the worst natural disaster in two centuries on the Western Hemisphere's poorest inhabitants. When this happened, the Haitians were already tired from government instability, foreign occupations, health crises, deadly hurricanes and



*The town library in Petit-Goave, Haiti, following the earthquake on January 12, 2010.*

floods. What little infrastructure the country claimed would be leveled by this immeasurable and incomprehensible tragedy. The world gasped at the scenes of collapsed buildings, of neighbors pulling neighbors from underneath piles of rubble, and of medical personnel scrambling to save lives.

And along with the world, in a small suburb north of Chicago, New Trier High School watched and waited too. Several of New Trier's staff members are from Haiti and we were holding out for good news of their loved ones. Additionally, we hoped that Petit-Goave's Ecole Saint Joseph, a

small primary school built in 1952 and already in need of repair, was still standing and that its 162 students were safe. Our community had come to know St. Joseph's School through Jean Cayemitte and Maurice Bonhomme, the latter whose father founded the school. Both Maurice and Jean were born in Petit-Goave, 40 miles south of Port-au-Prince and had been best friends for 50 years. Their lives have many common denominators, including their jobs, both as security guards on New Trier's campus as well as their evening shift as chefs in one of Chicago's finest restaurants.

*Continued on page 5*

## Message from the Editor

It's hard to believe that the earthquake in Haiti was almost 6 months ago. The media coverage has lapsed significantly, of course, as other important events occur in our world. Yet the people affected by the earthquake continue to work on recovery. This issue of *International Leads* includes several short articles about a partnership between a high school near Chicago, Illinois, and an elementary school in Petit-Goave, Haiti. I hope you find the stories shared by the staff and students of the high school inspiring. Remember that ALA still has a donation mechanism in place on its website for assisting Haitian libraries.

Not long after the earthquake in Haiti, another was felt in Chile. Libraries there were devastated as well. If you have any stories to share about how the libraries there are coping, please send them to me at [intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com](mailto:intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com).

Are you ready for Annual? It seems like Midwinter was just last month! As usual, the schedule has many programs about international libraries. To make your planning easier, a list of programs sponsored by IRRT or by IRC is included in this issue. Don't forget the All Subcommittees

meeting to be held on Saturday, June 26. If you're attending Annual and are interested in becoming active in IRRT, you'll want to attend this meeting.

At Annual we will say farewell to our current President, Sha Li Zhang, and welcome to the incoming President, Pat Oyler. Thank you, Sha Li, for your great leadership of IRRT! I know I am not alone in hoping that you will continue to contribute your energy and passion for international librarianship. Pat, you have big shoes to fill, but I am sure that you will do so competently - you have been a long active member of IRRT and are just as passionate about international librarianship. I look forward to your leadership.

Also at Annual, the new website for the IRRT "Free Links Program" will be unveiled. You can see a preview of it by going to the website mentioned in the announcement on the last page of this issue. The "Free Links Program" has been developed over the last two years by a group of Emerging Leaders. Application for the next cohort of Emerging Leaders are being accepted now - details are on the last page.

I hope to see many of you at Annual!

~ Rebecca L. Miller

## Call for Submission

Do you have news about...

International library activities?

People in international librarianship?

Upcoming international conferences?

International partnerships between libraries?

Then why not submit it to *International Leads*?  
Send your news to [intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com](mailto:intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com)  
for consideration.

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## Message from the IRRT Chair

By Sha Li Zhang

With the ALA 2010 Annual Conference fast approaching, my term as the IRRT Chair will conclude at the end of the Conference. It has been a wonderful year for being able to work with many active IRRT members and friends on the Roundtable's activities and tasks. With effort and time from IRRT committees and working groups, again, IRRT will offer excellent activities to conference attendees from the U.S. and abroad.

The preparations for the IRRT programs and events at the Annual are on track, as I mentioned in the previous Chair's message in International Leads (March 2010). Additionally, the Pre-Conference Committee was able to recruit a high caliber of speakers this year on the theme of mobile technology, a very hot topic. There are still some seats available for this pre-conference. More information on the event is at <http://tinyurl.com/33xhn55>. The Visitor Center Committee started early this year in recruiting volunteers to help staff the Center. The Committee has almost filled out all open slots. Congratulations to these committees for their jobs well done.

For the third year IRRT has been closely working with the ALA President to facilitate the nomination process for outstanding library projects to receive the ALA Presidential Citation for Innovation in International Librarianship, initiated by Dr. Lorie Roy in 2008 when she was ALA President. This year, a special working group, chaired by Jeannette Pierce, with Lorie Roy,

Vivi Hoang, Joan Weeks, and Susan Schnuer as members, is busy working with Dr. Camila Alire, ALA President, to finalize logistics for the award presentations at the ALA's International Librarians Reception to be held during the Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. The award presentation will be an excellent platform to showcase the unique library projects and to learn from each other beyond geographic borders.

The Emerging Leader's Project also progresses well. The Emerging Leaders Project Team, led by Lucas (Wing Kau) Mak, an IRRT member, with Suzan Alteri, Stephanie Carr, Jasmina Jusic, and Valeria Molteni, issued a press release in late April 2010 on the beta launch of a new Free Links Program Website. The Project aims to provide access to free professional development tools for ALA members worldwide. This year, the featured resources focus on library advocacy, in partnership with the International Partnership for Advocacy and Library Services (iPALS). To sustain this excellent IRRT project, the Team has developed marketing plans to promote the Project. Congratulations to Lucas for leading the Project. A special thank you goes to Jeannette Pierce for being a mentor and an adviser to this Project.

IRRT continues playing an important role in offering needed services to ALA members who are interested in international librarianship. The events and programs organized by IRRT bring together librarians from the U.S. and abroad to address common issues that they are all facing. This year, there

are more than 100 IRRT members serving on various IRRT committees and ad hoc committees. Their energy and dedication helped make these programs and events possible.

Several IRRT members won elected posts in ALA this year: Molly Raphael (ALA President-Elect), Jim Neal (ALA Treasurer), and Ismail Abdullahi, Loida Garcia-Febo, and Cristina Ramirez being elected to ALA Councilor-at-Large positions. In IRRT itself, Eve Alison Nyren was elected IRRT Chair-Elect and Joan Weeks was elected IRRT Member at Large. With their passion and understanding of issues in international librarianship, we look forward to their leadership in helping shape ALA's international agenda.

It has been rewarding experience to work with many IRRT members. I have also had valuable support and guidance from past IRRT chairs: Susan Schnuer, Jeannette Pierce, Joan Weeks, and Judith Lin Hunt. Jordan Scepancki and Lea Wells, also past IRRT chairs, are continuing to lead the IRRT endowment fundraising campaign to support the international projects and initiatives. I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for their diligent work and for their support during my year as the roundtable chair. Dr. Pat Oyler, the recipient of the 2009 John Ames Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award, will lead the roundtable to a new height. Pat, I look forward to working with you next year.

*Can't travel to ALA Annual? Don't worry!  
The IRRT Free Links Project offers a collection of free web-based tutorials and professional development information focusing on technology and advocacy.*

*The Free Links Project is put together by Emerging Leaders of ALA - go to  
<http://tinyurl.com/newfst>*



# Schedule for IRC/IRRT Sessions at Annual

## Friday, June 25, 2010

- 9:00 am - 1:00 pm Preconference: Web 2.0 and Mobile Technology – Building Global Connections  
Renaissance Hotel, Congressional Hall A  
*Remember! Advance registration is required.*  
Tickets: Advance: \$75, Onsite \$75  
Event Code: IRR1
- 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm International Relations Committee I  
Washington Convention Center 302
- 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm International Librarians Orientation  
Renaissance Hotel, Grand Ball Room North

## Saturday, June 26, 2010

- 8:00 am - 10:00 am IRRT/IRC All Subcommittees Meeting  
Renaissance Hotel, Renaissance East
- 10:30 am - 12:00 pm IFLA Update  
Renaissance Hotel, Renaissance East
- 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm International Paper Session: “Libraries as Gateways to Local History around the World”  
Renaissance Hotel, Renaissance East
- 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Libraries in a Time of War  
Washington Convention Center 209A/B

## Sunday, June 27, 2010

- 8:00 am - 10:00 am International Leadership: The U.S. - China Librarian Collaboration Project  
Washington Convention Center 208A/B
- 8:00 am - 12:00 pm IRRT Executive Board Meeting  
Grand Hotel, Farragut Square/Lafayette
- 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm Challenges and Successes: Library Education in the Near East and South Asia  
Washington Convention Center 103B
- 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm African Libraries: Meeting the Needs of Diverse Communities  
Washington Convention Center 204B/C

## Monday, June 28, 2010

- 8:00 am - 10:00 am Public Libraries in Argentina, Chile and Mexico – Changes and Challenges  
Washington Convention Center 102A
- 10:30 am - 12:00 pm Books in Many Languages: Reaching Out to Youth in a Multilingual World  
Washington Convention Center 103B
- 10:30 am - 12:00 pm Building Bridges to Establish International Partnerships: The Nuts and Bolts  
Washington Convention Center 203A/B
- 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm IRRT Chair’s Program: “International Grassroots Advocacy”  
Washington Convention Center 147B
- 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm International Relations Committee II  
Washington Convention Center 302
- 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm International Librarians Reception  
Library of Congress, Great Hall  
*Remember! Advance registration is required.*  
**No tickets will be sold that evening at the Library of Congress.**  
Tickets: Advance: \$35, Onsite: \$35  
Event Code: IRR2



ALA ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE  
& EXHIBITION

## Haiti

Continued from Page 1

During the summer of 2009, at the invitation of Maurice and Jean, a small group of New Trier High School staff had the privilege to visit Petit-Goave and St. Joseph School. I was fortunate to be a member of the team. While we witnessed great need in this community, we also experienced its great heart. In spite of insufficient salaries, St. Joseph schoolteachers remained unwaveringly dedicated to their students. The children's learning commitment was equally strong, despite empty stomachs and crumbling school facilities. And they had dreams – dreams to become doctors, nurses, presidents, indeed to “be somebody.”

Maurice and Jean had encouraged and sustained the students' dreams by keeping the doors of St. Joseph open. Through personal finances and donations made by family and friends, they paid the \$300 monthly salaries of St. Joseph's teachers and the \$250 tuition for children of the 162 families unable to afford this yearly expense. No child was turned away for financial reasons from this “private” school.

We returned from our Haiti travels, inspired by the resilience, hospitality, and hopes of the people we met. With great enthusiasm, the New Trier School community began to fundraise for the repair of St. Joseph's, teacher's salaries and student tuitions, which culminated in the forming of our alliance, The Haiti Project.

In the days following the earthquake most news was being reported from Port-au-Prince and it seemed like forever before we learned the fate of St. Joseph's School. The damage done to the town had been extensive and St. Joseph was only one of many buildings that collapsed. It was clear that the already impoverished area had been further ravaged by this tragic disaster. Our fundraising immediately shifted from the repair to the rebuilding of St. Joseph's. At this writing,

four months after the earthquake, we are close to reaching our goal of \$100,000 and Chicago's Architecture for Humanity has begun designing the plans and drawing the blueprints for the new school.

The designs reflect the hopes of Maurice and Jean for a bigger and better school. The new plans accommodate almost twice as many students and include a kitchen and cafeteria to provide at least one hot daily meal, a nurse's office and a library. In the near future, St. Josephs will stand proudly again.

But sadly, St. Joseph's is only one of 59 schools destroyed in Petit-Goave; what of the many children and families who also have dreams and hopes but no school to house them? How will they put their images of devastation behind them and transition back to a normal life? This is where a library in the area could fill the dire educational need left in the space of the collapsed schools. As a librarian, I was heartened to learn of the American Library Association's relief efforts to rebuild libraries in Haiti and as a friend of Petit-Goave, I began to have hope with them.

Along with 60% of Petit-Goave's buildings, the town's municipal library was reduced to rubble. During Maurice and Jean's visit to Petit-Goave

three months after the quake, the need to rebuild the library as soon as possible was apparent, as they witnessed the score of desperate families, mind-boggling children in makeshift tent camps, gazing out at the ruin of their city and lives.

A new library would be the place, a rare oasis of normalcy amid the devastation, where mothers, fathers, aunts, grandparents, babies, children and young adults of all Petit-Goave could begin to imagine and live their lives again. The library would not only provide work and traditional library services for Petit-Goave's citizens but it would serve as a visible symbol of expansion and confidence in the future, even when surrounded by anguish and limitation. Libraries are at the heart of creating and sustaining any healthy and successful community. As President Barack Obama said in a speech to the American Library Association:

*If you open up Scripture, the Gospel according to John, it starts: “In the beginning was the Word.” Although this has a very particular meaning in Scripture, more broadly what it speaks to is the critical importance of language, of writing, of reading, of communication, of books as a means of transmitting culture and binding us together as a people.*



*Scenes from Petit-Goave, Haiti, following the earthquake.*

## Haiti

[Continued from Page 5](#)

*More than a building that houses books and data, the library represents a window to a larger world, the place where we've always come to discover big ideas and profound concepts...*

When I went back to school at age 50, chasing my dream to become a librarian, I remember the many hours I spent in the University of Iowa's library – reading, writing, learning – moving my personal human story forward. I am so grateful for that time in my life, grateful that I achieved my dream. That dream fulfilled led me in directions I never imagined, including toward Petit-Goave. My hope and wish is that the citizens of Haiti will be able to have the space they need to recover their dreams and to that end, particularly in the absence of schools, I can think of no better harbor of hopes than a library.

*Has your library been doing exciting things with an international twist? If so, please share your experiences with us! Send a report to [intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com](mailto:intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com).*

*Photos are always welcome!*



*Maurice Bonhomme, left, and Jean Cayemitte, right, visit with a student at the Ecole St. Joseph in Petit-Goave, Haiti.*

**By Jean Cayemitte**

Growing up in Petit-Goave in the early sixties, life was enjoyable. Back then, the city was spotless and I recall waking early every morning to the noise of the sanitation workers cleaning the streets. School was a challenge. Teachers were well trained and students were always competing with each other to be the smartest. The cost of living was affordable, parents had peace of mind and most kids were basically happy. The Canadians came and restored the library, which students of all ages frequented to read and do research.

I visited Haiti three months after the earthquake and everything had changed. The main street of Petit-

Goave, where the now ruined library once stood, is almost completely destroyed. Additionally, businesses, churches and government offices are reduced to rubble. Now, for most residents of Petit-Goave, life is rough and survival remains a daily challenge.

A lot of help is particularly needed in one aspect of the society: We have to focus more on the young generation in order to support them. We need to lift them from the misery and the trauma marking their youths in post-quake Haiti. Therefore, reconstruction efforts should focus more on education, healthcare and agriculture. These are essential for real development.

I have two homes. I am accustomed to life here in Chicago, but my hometown is Petit-Goave, which I love dearly. It is my dream to see that one day the people in Petit-Goave will have a normal life. I will do anything to make that happen.

*More about Mr. Cayemitte's return visit to Petit-Goave can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/2gx2by8>*



*Maurice Bonhomme, far right, and Jean Cayemitte, second from left, pose with a group of students at the Ecole St. Joseph in Petit-Goave, Haiti.*

# New Trier High School Students Share Their Experiences with The Haiti Relief Project

**By Jessica Tetzlaff**

I am part of the Haiti Relief Project at New Trier High School. To have a club like this and be able to join as a freshman is amazing. I was able to do so much and I also ended up learning from many different people. I joined the club after the quake in Haiti and have been going to meetings before school on Wednesdays every week possible.

There were many things that I was involved in and each specific thing I did touched my heart in different ways. I went with club members to many schools in the area to share the story of New Trier High School's Haiti Project. I also helped out selling T-shirts in my fifth period lunch. Everything done, as I said before, has had an effect on how I see my community and the world.

Going to the different schools and organizations, such as Skokie Elementary School, Chicago Public Lab School, and Manor Care in Wilmette has offered me the most enlightening experiences out of everything listed above. Not only did it allow me to step outside of my comfort zone, but it also helped me to see that the younger kids really are the people of tomorrow. Going out of my comfort zone was a good thing, because it gave me confidence to speak in front of many people and it also gave me an opportunity to actu-

ally use my public speaking skills that I have learned in school over the past few years. After seeing the support from the kids in younger grades, I began to see how important they were to the world and that everything did not revolve around us teenagers. One example of that was the Chicago Public Lab School fourth graders. They raised over \$12,000 by doing a read-a-thon. I thought that was impressive and that everyone, no matter what age, could help out anyone if they put their hearts and minds to it.

Overall, my involvement in the Haiti Relief Club has benefitted me in many substantial ways. It gave me the ability to look past myself and to the community of other people around me. Before starting the club, I never would have thought that I would come out a changed person, but I did. I have experienced change first hand and have loved it every step of the way.

## Want to donate?

### **New Trier High School**

If you would like to help New Trier High School and their Haiti Relief Project fundraising goal, go to <http://tinyurl.com/ykeoorx>

### **American Library Association**

ALA has created a fund to support specifically the reconstruction of affected libraries and the rebuilding of collections. Go to <http://www.ala.org/haiti> to learn how you can contribute. All donations are tax-deductible.

**By Alexandra Ranieri**

When I first heard about the Haiti project, it was in Global Activism Club, a club designed to learn about and support global-related causes. I was saddened by the devastation of the earthquake, and was happy to hear that we would be doing something to help. Little did I know that it would become such a huge part of my life. I felt – I still feel, that we are all connected. Not only humans, but all things are connected. I think it is through this belief, this duty, that I have been so motivated to help Haiti. If I have helped support that connection through what I have done, then I am glad.

There is nothing that makes me different than a teenager in Haiti – our places could easily have been reversed. I could be living in a tent in Petit-Goave right now, while a teenager from Haiti would be writing this. Life is too fragile not to help others – what I sow, so shall I reap. However, this is not really why I participate in the New Trier Haiti project. I participate because I hope that because of the small things I have done, at least one person in Haiti will benefit and live free from the bonds of the earthquake. Everything will have been worthwhile and more even if just one person's life is made a little easier. That is why I participate in the New Trier Haiti Project.

## Earthquake Hits Chile

On February 27, 2010, a magnitude 8.8 earthquake shook the coast of Chile. While the earthquake was 240 miles southwest of the capitol of Santiago, it and the more than 150 aftershocks caused damage in the capitol and triggered a tsunami. Over 700 people died and well over 2 million people were affected by this natural disaster.

Although not as poverty stricken as Haiti, Chile has its share of poor regions and small towns. While world attention has focused on Haiti, Chile should not be forgotten.

Initial reports from 200 libraries indicated that over 50% were damaged, with six libraries destroyed complete-

ly. In response, ALA has set up a relief fund to assist library rebuilding. More information can be found at <http://www.ala.org/chile>, including reports about the libraries. If you would like to share your experiences with libraries in Chile as an article for *International Leads*, please follow the instructions on page 2.

## Free Links Program Website Launched

The International Relations Round Table (IRRT) and The International Partnership for Advocacy and Library Services (iPALS) invite you to the beta launch of the new Free Links Program Website.

The IRRT Free Links Program is a project providing access to free professional development tools for ALA members worldwide. This year's featured resources are on library advocacy. You can find a list of free annotated resources on the new Free Links Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/irrtfreelinks/home>

For more information, visit the IRRT website at: <http://www.ala.org/irrt>

The Free Links Program can be contacted at [irrtfreelinks@gmail.com](mailto:irrtfreelinks@gmail.com)

## Applications for 2011 Emerging Leaders Cohort Now Being Accepted

Emerging Leaders is a program established by former ALA President Loriane Roy as a mechanism to bring fresh voices to ALA leadership. The program is designed to enable a group of library workers to get on the fast track to ALA and professional leadership. Participants are given the opportunity to work on a variety of projects, network with peers and get an inside look into the ALA structure and activities.

To apply, you must meet the following criteria:

- Be under 35 years of age or be a library worker of any age with fewer than five years experience working in a library, and
- Be able to attend both ALA conferences and work virtually in between each,
- Be prepared to commit to serve on either an ALA, division, chapter or round table committee, taskforce or workgroup, or in your state or local professional library organization upon completion of program and
- Be an ALA member or join upon selection if not already a member.

IRRT has sponsored participants for the past two years, resulting in the successful "Free Links Program." The program focused on training resources during the first year and on advocacy resources the second. A website compiling the links was recently announced and will be launched during the Annual Conference. We are sure next year's Emerging Leaders will add another quality program to the portfolio of Emerging Leaders projects sponsored by IRRT.

To apply, go to <http://www.ala.org/cfapps/emergingleaders/index.cfm>

The deadline is July 30, so don't wait!




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### International Relations Office

American Library Association  
50 East Huron Street  
Chicago, IL 60611 USA

Postage