



# THE CHARM



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## LETTER FROM COLIN GERSHON (DG)

Dear Club Presidents,

Since 2001, at times of disaster, our district foundation has served as a vehicle to transmit funds to help in relief efforts. Rotary is usually not a first responder, but rather helps with follow-up and re-construction efforts.

We have raised and disbursed funds for the families of 9/11; the 2004 Tsunami, and Hurricane Katrina.

I have spoken with Lynda Hammond, our District International Service Chair, and with President Norma Peterson of the Fairfield Rotary Club who has particular interest in disaster relief efforts. Lynda will be meeting with our Board of Directors of the District Foundation (composed mostly of Assistant Governors) at next Wednesday's (Jan 20th) AG meeting in New Haven. By then, Lynda will provide the Board with an up-to-date report on relief options.

In this case I can assure you we will be in touch with our Rotary friends at the Haitian Health Foundation and Shelter Box and Rotarians in the affected areas.

If your club wishes to donate through our district foundation, I ask you send any donations to me. Checks should be made out to "Rotary District 7980 Foundation, Inc.". My address at work is:

Colin M. Gershon, Esq.  
One Century Tower  
Suite 500  
265 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510.

Yours in Rotary Service.

Colin~

## HAMDEN CLUB ON HAITI

Early this morning, the Hamden Club's Executive Board voted to release \$500 in emergency funds to the District 7980 Disaster Relief Committee. These funds were acquired from last year's gas card raffle.

PDG Rick Benson sent a request to all 42 district Interact Clubs to conduct a fundraiser to help the people in Haiti.

Members of our club have also been in contact with our Rotaract Club (whose members begin their semester next week), to solicit help.

In addition to requesting that our Rotaract Club conduct a fundraiser, I asked that club consider that the American Red Cross will need blood donations; particularly Type O which can be nearly universally administered.

To set up an appointment to donate blood, please call

1-800-Give-Life

There are blood drives happening five days a week, and there are several in the Hamden area in the next several days.

To view a list of local blood drives, please visit:

<http://www.redcrossblood.org/>

Then click "Search by Zip Code".

Several members of the club have already agreed to make personal financial donations to this disaster relief effort. I suggest that in addition to Happy Bucks next week that we take a special Happy Bucks collection specifically for Hatian Disaster Relief.

I've little doubt that this club will step up and do whatever they can to help the people of Haiti.

## HAITI: THOUSANDS FEARED DEAD, MANY TRAPPED

By JONATHAN M. KATZ, Associated Press Writer  
[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100114/ap\\_on\\_re\\_la\\_am\\_ca/cb\\_haiti\\_earthquake](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100114/ap_on_re_la_am_ca/cb_haiti_earthquake)

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti – Dazed survivors wandered past dead bodies in rubble-strewn streets Wednesday, crying for loved ones, and rescuers desperately searched collapsed buildings as fear rose that the death toll from Haiti's devastating earthquake could reach into the tens of thousands.

The first cargo planes with food, water, medical supplies, shelter and sniffer dogs headed to the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation a day after the magnitude-7 quake flattened much of the capital of 2 million people.

Tuesday's earthquake brought down buildings great and small — from shacks in shantytowns to President Rene Preval's gleaming white National Palace, where a dome tilted ominously above the manicured grounds.

Hospitals, schools and the main prison collapsed. The capital's Roman Catholic archbishop was killed when his office and the main cathedral fell. The head of the U.N. peacekeeping mission was missing in the ruins of the organization's multistory headquarters.



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Police officers turned their pickup trucks into ambulances to carry the injured. Wisnel Occilus, a 24-year-old student, was wedged between two other survivors in a truck bed headed to a police station. He was in an English class when the earth shook at 4:53 p.m. and the building collapsed.

"The professor is dead. Some of the students are dead, too," said Occilus, who suspected he had several broken bones. "Everything hurts."

Other survivors carried injured to hospitals in wheelbarrows and on stretchers fashioned from doors.

In Petionville, next to the capital, people used sledgehammers and their bare hands to dig through a collapsed shopping center, tossing aside mattresses and office supplies. More than a dozen cars were entombed, including a U.N. truck.

Nearby, about 200 survivors, including many children, huddled in a theater parking lot using sheets to rig makeshift tents and shield themselves from the sun in 90-degree heat.

At a triage center improvised in a hotel parking lot, people with cuts, broken bones and crushed ribs moaned under tent-like covers fashioned from bloody sheets.

"I can't take it anymore. My back hurts too much," said Alex Georges, 28, who was still waiting for treatment a day after his school collapsed and killed 11 classmates. A body lay a few feet away.

"This is much worse than a hurricane," said doctors' assistant Jimitre Coquillon. "There's no water. There's nothing. Thirsty people are going to die."

If there were any organized efforts to distribute food or water, they were not visible.

The aid group Doctors Without Borders treated wounded at two hospitals that withstood the quake and set up tent clinics elsewhere to replace its damaged facilities. Cuba, which already had hundreds of doctors in Haiti, treated injured in field hospitals.

Bodies were everywhere in Port-au-Prince: those of tiny children adjacent to schools; women in the rubble-strewn streets with stunned expressions frozen on their faces; men hidden beneath plastic tarps and cotton sheets.

Haiti's leaders struggled to comprehend the extent of the catastrophe — the worst earthquake to hit the country in 200 years — even as aftershocks reverberated.

"It's incredible," Preval told CNN. "A lot of houses destroyed, hospitals, schools, personal homes. A lot of people in the street dead. ... I'm still looking to understand the magnitude of the event and how to manage."

Preval said thousands of people were probably killed. Leading Sen. Youri Latortue told The Associated Press that 500,000 could be dead, but conceded that nobody really knows.

"Let's say that it's too early to give a number," Preval said.

As dusk fell, thousands of people gathered on blankets outside the crumpled presidential palace, including hundreds of women who waved their hands and sang hymns in a joyful, even defiant tone.

Ricardo Dervil, 29, said he decided to join the crowd because he was worried about aftershocks and was tired of seeing dead bodies.

"I was listening to the radio and they were saying to stay away from buildings," he said. "All I was doing was walking the street and seeing dead people."

Balancing suitcases and belongings on their heads, people streamed on foot into the Haitian countryside, where wooden and cinderblock shacks showed little sign of damage. Ambulances and U.N. trucks raced in the opposite direction, toward Port-au-Prince.

About 3,000 police and international peacekeepers cleared debris, directed traffic and maintained security in the capital. But law enforcement was stretched thin even before the quake and would be ill-equipped to deal with major unrest. The U.N.'s 9,000-member peacekeeping force sent patrols across the capital's streets while securing the airport, port and main buildings.

Looting began immediately after the quake, with people seen carrying food from collapsed buildings. Many lugged what they could salvage and stacked it around them as they slept in streets and parks.

President Barack Obama promised an all-out rescue and humanitarian effort including the military and civilian emergency teams from across the U.S. Late Wednesday, the Navy said the amphibious assault ship USS Batann had been ordered to sail as soon as possible with a 2,000-member Marine unit to join other warships headed to the Caribbean nation.

"We have to be there for them in their hour of need," Obama said.

The first C-130 plane carrying part of a U.S. military assessment team arrived in Haiti, the U.S. Southern Command said. The aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson was expected to arrive off the coast Thursday and more U.S. Navy ships were under way.



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A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter evacuated four critically injured U.S. Embassy staff to the hospital at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where the military has been detaining suspected terrorists.

A small contingent of U.S. ground troops could be on their way soon, although it was unclear whether they would be used for security operations or humanitarian efforts.

Port-au-Prince's ruined buildings fell on both the poor and the prominent: The body of Archbishop Joseph Serge Miot, 63, was found in the ruins of his office, according to the Rev. Pierre Le Beller at Miot's order, the Saint Jacques Missionary Center in Landivisiau, France.

The United Nations said 16 U.N. personnel were confirmed dead and between 100 and 150 U.N. workers were still missing, including U.N. mission head Hedi Annabi of Tunisia and his chief deputy, Luis Carlos da Costa.

Senate President Kelly Bastien was rescued from the collapsed Parliament building and taken to a hospital in the neighboring Dominican Republic. The president of Haiti's Citibank was also among the survivors being treated there, said Rafael Sanchez Espanol, director of the Homs Hospital in Santiago.

An American aid worker was trapped for about 10 hours under the rubble of her mission house before she was rescued by her husband, who told CBS's "Early Show" that he drove 100 miles (160 kilometers) to Port-au-Prince to find her. Frank Thorp said he dug for more than an hour to free his wife, Jillian, and a co-worker, from under about a foot of concrete.

Even the main prison in the capital fell down, "and there are reports of escaped inmates," U.N. humanitarian spokeswoman Elisabeth Byrs said in Geneva.

Haiti seems especially prone to catastrophe — from natural disasters like hurricanes, storms, floods and mudslides to crushing poverty, unstable governments, poor building standards and low literacy rates.

The survivors likely will face an increased risk of dengue fever, malaria and measles — problems that plagued the impoverished country before, said Kimberley Shoaf, associate director of the UCLA Center for Public Health and Disasters.

Some of the biggest immediate health threats include respiratory disease from inhaling dust from collapsed buildings and diarrhea from drinking contaminated water.

The international Red Cross said a third of the country's 9 million people may need emergency aid, a burden that would test any nation and a crushing catastrophe for impoverished Haiti.

The U.S. Embassy had no confirmed reports of deaths among the estimated 40,000 to 45,000 Americans who live in Haiti, but many were struggling to find a way out of the country.

The quake damaged the airport, stranding dozens there. Kency Germain of Eatontown, N.J., kept his family — five adults and three children — at the airport until nearly 3 a.m. They made their way to the U.S. Embassy, where they were allowed to sleep briefly near the entrance.

"It was safer in there (the airport) than it was out there in Port-au-Prince," Germain said.

## ROTARIANS RESPOND TO EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI

By Ryan Hyland Rotary International News -- 13 January 2010

Rotarians are gearing up to deliver aid to areas of Haiti rocked by a powerful earthquake 12 January as a major international relief effort takes shape.

Thousands of people are feared dead after the quake, the impoverished nation's strongest in 200 years, crumbled government buildings, hospitals, schools, and shantytowns. Most of the capital, Port-au-Prince, is in ruins.

"Rotarians are working hard and fast to get help to those in Haiti," says Past RI Director Barry Rassin, of Nassau, Bahamas, who has previously coordinated relief efforts in the country. "We're at the same time working on long-term efforts."

More than US\$75,000 has been donated to District 7020 in the Caribbean, according to Past District Governor Dick McCombe. The district will be coordinating much of the Rotarian relief effort through its Haiti Task Force, set up two years ago to administer all financial aid to the nation.

A six-member team of Rotarians from District 5890 (Texas, USA) have reported in safe after landing in Haiti for a humanitarian mission 45 minutes before the quake struck. They were scheduled to be there a week but will likely return early.

ShelterBox has dispatched about 500 containers of supplies to the affected area. A ShelterBox response team is being mobilized, with two members from the United States and one from the United Kingdom. Also, more than 100 Aquaboxes are being delivered to Haiti to provide safe water.

"We were in Haiti 18 months ago, delivering aid after a series of hurricanes left thousands homeless," said Lasse Petersen, general manager for ShelterBox. "We'll now be working closely with our contacts on the ground in the country to make sure we get aid to the people who need it most during the current crisis."

The Rotary Foundation will be establishing a donor advised fund for U.S. Rotarians who want to donate to help with long-term recovery.

RI President John Kenny and Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair Glenn E. Estess Sr. have sent a joint letter conveying Rotary's condolences to victims of the quake and asking for more information on how Rotarians can help.



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## EU RESPONSE TO HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN HAITI

January 13, 2010

The European Commission provides a 3 million Euro initial aid package and launches an EU-coordinated response to the humanitarian crisis in Haiti.

Following yesterday's devastating earthquake in Haiti, European Commission President [José Manuel Barroso](#) offered his deepest condolences to the victims and to the people of Haiti and pledged Europe's full support in the international relief effort.



"We are troubled by the reports on the devastating earthquake in Haiti," said [European Commission Vice President and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs](#) Catherine Ashton. "We are still gathering information to understand the impact on the population. My colleagues in the Commission and I offer our full assistance to Haiti and will mobilize all available instruments to support the population of Haiti in this difficult time. Our thoughts are with the victims and their families."

This morning, VP/HR Ashton convened an EU emergency coordination meeting with Commissioners [Karel De Gucht](#) (Development and Humanitarian Aid) and [Stavros Dimas](#) (Environment, Civil Protection Mechanism) and the relevant services in the Commission and the [EU Council](#).

The [European Commission's Humanitarian Aid organization \(ECHO\)](#) and the Commission's [Monitoring and Information Center \(MIC\)](#) are already assessing the situation to ensure the best possible EU coordinated response to provide relief funding and assistance.

Following its initial assessments of the situation on the ground, ECHO will use its fast-track relief funding to provide a 3 million euros initial package of humanitarian assistance. The funding will be used to meet basic needs of the stricken population, including shelter and medical assistance. Funding is channeled through experienced international relief organizations.

An ECHO relief expert based in the Dominican Republic is expected to arrive in Port-au-Prince later today to carry out a first needs assessment.

The MIC is preparing the civil protection response and assistance in the form of search and rescue teams, water purification, advanced medical posts. Field hospitals are also being coordinated. An assessment and coordination team is being assembled that will travel on site as soon as possible, as well.

## MEETING SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Event
Mon	Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	Update: Club Assembly
Mon	Feb 8 <sup>th</sup>	Student of the Month
Mon	Feb 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Rotary's 105 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
Sat	Feb 27 <sup>th</sup>	District Leadership Seminar
Sat	Mar 13 <sup>th</sup>	World Rotaract Day
Mon	Mar 15 <sup>th</sup>	Student of the Month
Mon	Apr 12 <sup>th</sup>	Student of the Month
Sat	Apr 17 <sup>th</sup>	District Assembly – Meriden
Fri-Sun	Apr 30 <sup>th</sup> -May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	District Conference – Burlington VT
Mon	May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Student of the Month
Sun-Wed	Jun 20 <sup>th</sup> – 23 <sup>rd</sup>	International Convention Montreal

Meetings are held each Monday unless otherwise posted.

Of the things we think, say, or do...

Is it the TRUTH?  
 Is it FAIR to all concerned?  
 Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?  
 Will it build GOOD WILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?