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# Stevens Point Journal

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2010

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PHOTOS BY DOUG WOJCIK/STEVENS POINT JOURNAL  
Ben Franklin Junior High School Spanish language students look over some of the books they purchased Wednesday to donate to a new library the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partnership of the Americas is establishing.

## Students' donations to fill new library in Nicaragua

Nonprofit group organizes efforts to promote literacy in country

By NICOLE STRITTMATER  
JOURNAL STAFF

The Ben Franklin Junior High School Spanish Department is working with the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partnership of the Americas to promote literacy.

A Stevens Point-based partnership, WNP is a nonprofit organization that works to enhance the quality of life in both countries by promoting cultural awareness through people-to-people relationships.

The organization is starting its 13th library in Nicaragua, resources that were previously unavailable to Nicaraguan children and adults. Students in the Spanish department bought books to fill the new library in Managua.

"We saw a video on how their life was (in Nicaragua) and how they didn't have any decorations or anything, so it made me feel good so that they could have stuff to do," said Sara Tainter, 14, who bought 11 books to donate.

The students will include a photo and information about themselves so the children and adults in Nicaragua can read about them.

"They are able to make connections with people



Funds from the Sherin Rose Bowen & Henry Gillis Memorial project are paying for the renovation of a library in Managua, Nicaragua.

across the world," Spanish teacher Beth Karr said.

This is the second time the department teamed up with the organization. This year, about 50 students donated books.

"It was just really good for them to see the world beyond Steven Point," Spanish teacher Lori Ferguson-Borton said.

Brittany Boyer, 15, said she realized not all children have it as good as her.

"One little thing will help a whole lot more than not doing anything at all," she said of donating books.

Amy Wiza, the WNP program director, said the students' involvement is critical to starting these libraries.

"To keep building this collection, it's very important to have these students

involved. Literacy is something they can relate to, because they use so many books in their education," she said.

There are 100 learning centers in Nicaragua through the WNP, which house training areas for people to learn personal and family independence and other skills. Not all of the training areas have libraries.

The Managua office has a training area, but the library is new and will house books in Spanish and English. The remodeling project, which began in September, is being paid for by the Sherin Rose Bowen & Henry Gillis Memorial project.

Gillis was remodeling the Managua office when he fell to his death.

### Learn more

To learn more about the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partnership, attend its meeting at 11 a.m. Saturday at Community Industries Corp., 41 Park Ridge Drive, Stevens Point. An update about the library will begin at 1 p.m. E-mail [wnp@uwsp.edu](mailto:wnp@uwsp.edu) for more details.

To learn more about WNP, visit <http://wnp.uwsp.edu/>.

Bowen was a leader in the Stevens Point organization and a visionary of development in central Wisconsin and internationally. She died in March 2009, at age 71 from a head injury in Managua. She was there to decide how the office could be remodeled. By combining the two memorial funds, WNP had enough money to remodel.

"This is something that we've been thinking about for years, but we've never had the money to do it, so it's her memorial fund that made it possible," said Wiza, Bowen's daughter. "It's bittersweet, because it's great that all these changes have happened in the office down there. I just wish she could be here to be a part of it."

## Health care talks 'bridge the gaps'

Obama, Dems still haven't reached reform compromise

By ERICA WERNER  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Searching for unity, President Barack Obama and senior Democratic lawmakers emerged from marathon health care talks late Wednesday with a declaration that they had made tough gains — but no deal just yet.

"We made significant progress in bridging the gaps," Obama said in a joint, written statement with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. It was a reference to the significant differences in the versions of the House and Senate bills, legislation designed to expand coverage to millions and rein in long-term health care costs.

Pushed by Obama, senior Democratic lawmakers plunged into talks at the White House in a hurry-up bid for an overdue agreement. The unusually long meeting — it began at midmorn-

ing and was still going at sunset — underscored the urgency they and Obama felt about completing legislation on which they have staked so much.

The White House said the leaders covered all aspects of the legislation, but it released no details about where the progress had been achieved or when the laborious process would end.

"Prospects of reaching agreement between the Senate and the House are better than they were 24 hours ago. We're getting close," House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md., said after the daylong talks finally ended.

Congressional negotiators will return to the White House this afternoon for more meetings.

The House and Senate have passed different versions of the measure, which Obama wants to expand health coverage to millions who lack it, end insurance company practices such as denying coverage on the basis of pre-existing medical conditions and slow the rate of growth of medical costs overall.

Hoyer and others said the day's talks ranged widely over numerous areas of

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THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., center, walks Wednesday into the West Wing of the White House in Washington, D.C., to meet with President Barack Obama to discuss health care reform legislation.

## Thousands feared dead, trapped in Haiti quake

By JONATHAN M. KATZ  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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 ASSOCIATED PRESS  
People search for survivors under the rubble of a collapsed building Wednesday, the day after an earthquake hit Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

## Troops, families adjust after deployment ends

By ADAM WISE  
FOR THE JOURNAL

For months, local Wisconsin National Guard families received information about life after their soldier returns from active duty.

Now, it's time to put that knowledge to use. There will be adjustment periods for the families, and especially for the soldiers, experts say.

Several Guard units with local members are expected to return to Wisconsin in the next week from their year-long deployment.

Soldiers who soon will end their deployments include the 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, which has headquarters in Wisconsin Rapids and bat-

teries in Marshfield and Stevens point. Members of the 132nd Brigade Support Battalion based out of Wisconsin Rapids also are expected to return soon.

The servicemen and women have been on active duty since they left for Texas in February for training to prepare them for their deployment to Iraq.

Those men and women are expected to return to their homes full time later next week, a transition that can be difficult for many.

Bob Evans, director of psychological health for the Wisconsin National Guard, said reintegration can be tricky.

"One of the most

A Gannett newspaper



### Obituaries/2A

Ray Fawley  
Lorraine Nowak  
Elizabeth Pederson

### Weather/4B

Drizzle, freezing on surfaces early.  
High: 38 Low: 21



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