

# The HIRRS Circulator

March 2014, Issue Ten

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*Circulator staffers  
hard at work*



Greetings Circulator Readers,

It's the start of a new year and a new season. This year has brought us lots of snow, which means lots of days off. In this issue, we will share our predictions for the Super Bowl with some graphs. Even if the Super Bowl is long over, you'll see our prediction skills. We will also be showcasing our multicultural staff members by interviewing them about their backgrounds. We will be checking in with staff members who are coming and going about their successes.

We hope that the spring time brings us warmer days and joyous times. We appreciate your continued support and hope you enjoy this issue! Thanks.

Signing off,  
The HIRRS Circulator Staff

**Happy Birthday to all the January, February,  
and March babies!**

Eric M – Jan 3  
Janet M – Jan 3  
Robert C – Jan 12  
Horace B – Jan 13  
Ben G – Jan 16  
Alliyah K – Jan 28  
Andre B – Jan 28

Payman J – Jan 29  
Adwoa D – Feb 20  
Denise R – Feb 25  
Jimmy E – March 13  
Sam M – March 18  
Tom K – March 26

# What's new at HIRRS

## Listening Group Review

By Ben G

Listening Group is a new group at HIRRS. We do different activities in Listening Group each week. This week in Listening Group we learned about haikus. Haikus are different from other poems because it's in a metrical and also contains seventeen syllables. We wrote haikus about movies. I wrote about *Frozen*. I wrote about the singing in *Frozen* and about the snow man. We learned about Claire's favorite things. Her favorite things were bees because she likes honey. She also likes cars. Liz shared about *The Christmas Story*. She also liked *Big Daddy*. I like Listening Group because it's fun and I enjoy it a lot.



*Listening Group practicing focused listening*

## My trip to Italy

By Desmond O

For my mom's birthday my family and I went to Italy. It was her 60<sup>th</sup> and we all had a good time. My family planned for everything. They rented a wheelchair so I would not do a lot of walking. I think it was very kind of them to do that. Anyway to go on about my trip, my mother and I got to have front row seats ahead of the crowd when we got to meet the pope. The pope gave me a cross and he blessed it. Also, we ate out as a family for the whole trip so every day I ate something different. I loved my trip to Italy and I would like to go back. I even had some money from my trip to buy some gifts for some friends. I was happy to know my gifts made them happy and that was my trip.

## A.A. Meetings Now Held at HIRRS

By Duncan M

Hello. This is Duncan and I'm going to tell you good people a little about A.A. This is a good program if you have a problem with drinking. There are some of us who have a lot of problems and there are a lot of us who can't get past our problems and in A.A. we call that "hitting rock bottom", which is about the worst you can expect from the bottle. So the old saying is "you can put the bottle to your head and pull the trigger", which is hitting rock bottom. So if you're interested in finding out a lot more about what really goes on in A.A., come and find out! We have a meeting here at HIRRS every Thursday at 11 A.M. until 12 P.M. And I am sure you will find it interesting. Each meeting is run by a great leader. I can't tell you his name because it's anonymous, but I help him out as much as I can. We usually have donuts and coffee so you will not starve, haha. We hold the meetings in the large conference room. Be there or be square.

## The Choir at Mother Seton Catholic Church

By Dave H

I go to Mother Seton Catholic Church on Father Hurley Blvd. every Sunday. I used to sing at my old church where I used to live. When I joined the choir, it made my mother so proud that she made her screen saver on her cell phone a picture of me in my choir outfit. It doesn't really take much to be in the choir, just an overwhelming desire and all you gotta do is get up and sing. There's choir practice every Wednesday and nobody knows I'm in the choir unless I tell them, or I live with them, or they go to my church. But, now it's in the newsletter, so everyone will know! --- Here are a few more things to add....

1. I like singing in the choir because you get to put on a costume almost, it's called a robe, and you almost feel elite because everyone is looking at you.
2. I'm not really sure how long I've been singing in the choir at Mother Seton Parish, but it feels like a while cuz everything feels like it goes by so fast when you're having fun.
3. My favorite song to sing is Amazing Grace because it's so easy to just belt out and it feels so good to sing it. It's like it makes the upper half of your body feel so alive, it's almost like nothing else.

# Who's Who at HIRRS

## Interviewing Elissa

By Tim C

I interviewed Elissa who used to work at the day program. She left HIRRS to go back to school and get her masters. I wanted to check in with her and see how she is doing.

**How do you like graduate school?** *It's pretty cool. It's very busy, but I'm learning a lot. My days are not nearly as interesting as they were at HIRRS though – more studying, less Uno.*

**What are you going to master?** *I am mastering social work.*

**What kind of grades are you getting?** *I am getting perfectly respectable grades. A +++ in every class.*

**Do you miss working at HIRRS?** *I miss working at HIRRS very much – I especially miss all the people I got to spend time with there.*

**When are you going to visit us again?** *Probably sometime this summer!*

**I'm still playing my keyboard!** *I'm so glad! I expect to hear some keyboarding when I visit.*

## Interview with Kelli

By Liz K

Do you know Kelli the speech intern? If not, let me introduce you to her. She was born in Seneca Park, MD. She is a student at University of Maryland, College Park. Her favorite food is lasagna. If she had a million dollars she would buy a new car and travel the world. She likes working at HIRRS and feeling a part of clients' lives. She is graduating in May and wants to work with kids. Her favorite book is "The Perks of Being a Wallflower". Kelli likes to spend her free time running and planning her wedding. Kelli says she wants to be a speech therapist "because being able to see real-world progress with clients is very rewarding". I hope you learned as much about Kelli as I did.

## Interview with Steven

By Trish D

I interviewed Steven, the residential manager at Brooke Meadows, about his job at HIRRS and my improvement. I'm glad I got to learn his perspective about me because improvement is my goal.

**How did you hear of HIRRS?** *I heard about HIRRS through a friend who worked here some years ago.*

**Is there significant improvement in most clients?**

*Of course, yes. There are significant improvements in some of the clients. Some have been able to maintain a stable job and the elopement rate (clients running away) has also dropped.*

**Was working at HIRRS an option? If so, what was the other choice?** *Yes, there were other choices. I had a choice to work with SEEC, the Arc of Montgomery County, and CSS among others. But I chose HIRRS because I believe in the principle and values of HIRRS.*

**What three improvements have you witnessed about me personally since you started working with me?** *The first improvement is your memory. When I started working with you nine years ago, you couldn't remember anything if you do not have it written down. The second improvement is your willingness to do things for yourself. And the third improvement is your self-actualization is remarkable compared to nine years ago.*



Above: Liz K & Kelli  
Below: Ashley & Eric



## Interview with Ashley

By Eric M

I interviewed the speech intern, Ashley. I learned about where she goes to school and much more.

**What do you do here at HIRRS?**

*I am a speech intern. I'm learning to do what Robert and Tom do.*

**Where do you go to school?**

*University of Virginia*

**What sport do you like to watch on TV?**

*I like to watch basketball and football.*

**Where are you from?**

*I'm from Gainesville, VA.*

**What do you like about being a speech intern?**

*Everything! I like working with all of the clients.*

# Creative Expression

## Hamster Family Life

By Nick M

There was a hamster cage in a pet store in some town in Maryland, in Montgomery County, in the city of Silver Spring and in a suburb neighborhood named Stonegate. There was a family of hamsters living in a big pet cage. There is a father hamster named Cliff, a mother hamster named Debbie and their three babies named John, Jeff and Jane. Mostly because John and Jeff were the males they would take most of the food and leave baby sister Jane with just a little food.

John and Jeff said to Jane, "We're the older boys, so we need the majority of the meals."

Little Jane responds, "But the future kids always come out of a female, so go figure that, you dumb rats."

## CHEMISTRY FABLE

By I.C.

On one of the tables, in a high school chemistry lab sat a petri dish and a graduated cylinder. Both filled with liquid. The graduated cylinder said mean things. He said things at the fat petri dish. "Your liquid is wide, fatso. You have more liquid than me."

But the fat petri dish was wise. It saw the liquid, tall and narrow in the graduated cylinder containing the same amount. It replied, "We are equal. You will learn in time. And just for kicks, look closely. You've got salt water. Mine is Kool-Aid."

## *Fables*

*For this Creative Expression Group, participants studied fables as a genre. They learned that fables are short fictional stories in which animals, plants and other objects talk and interact with each other or humans. The fable usually starts with setting the context and ends with some clearly stated moral. As an example of a fable, clients read and discussed "The Bald Man and the Fly" by Aesop. Aesop is one of the most famous story-tellers in human history. He was a slave who lived in ancient Greece between 620 and 560 BC.*

*The group assignment was to write a fable without humans as characters. Participants were reminded that they can employ animals, plants, forces of nature or some objects instead. Enjoy results of their creativity!*

## The Troubles of Bob the Bull

By Mark S, typed by Trish D

There once was a bull named Bob. He never understood why he was always having to perform for very strange species that always rooted against him. Until one day a friend of his named Molly the Moose said "Be careful of the day that you *really* are not appreciated, for when they are not happy with you, they will put you to pasture."

## Play Time

By Duncan M

Once upon a time, there was a mother lion with her cubs sitting on the river bank. The cubs were playing like cubs do, but the mother lion told the cubs to stay away from the water.

Well, you know that baby cubs sometimes get curious, and this one cub was very curious about the river, so he went too close to the river bank, and he fell in. The mother lion got hysterical and freaked out. She went in after her cub, but she could not get him out because he had climbed on to a tree branch that was floating down the river.

So she thought she had lost her baby cub, but she had not. About a couple of minutes had gone by and suddenly, here comes the cub running after the other cubs that were still playing on the river bank.



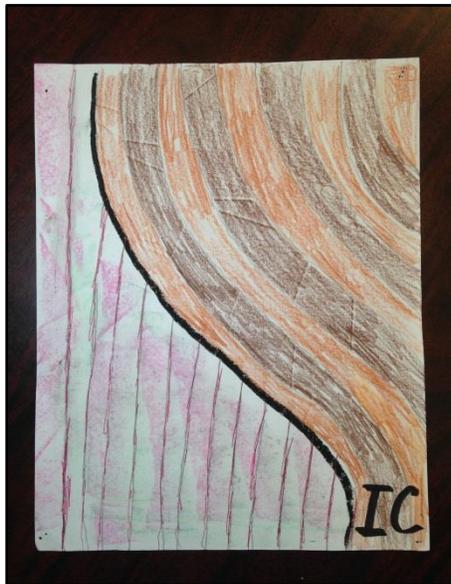
By Mark S



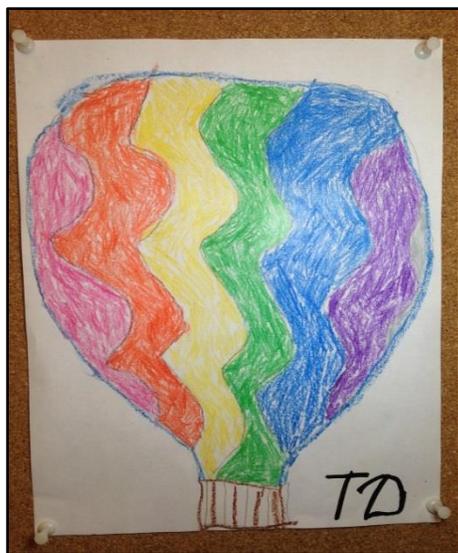
By Jermaine L



By Desmond O



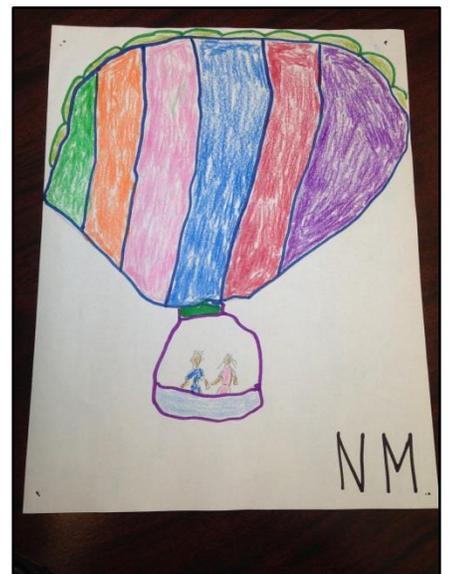
By I.C.



By Trish D



By Duncan M



By Nick M

**Hot Air Balloon**  
To get the creative juices flowing, the participants of Creative Expression Group looked at many images of hot air balloons noticing different shapes, patterns and colors. Then they read a short article about the history and the parts of construction of hot air balloons. As usual, our artists didn't need any additional encouragement to be original; their bursting creativity and endless imagination are always there!

# Super Bowl XLVIII

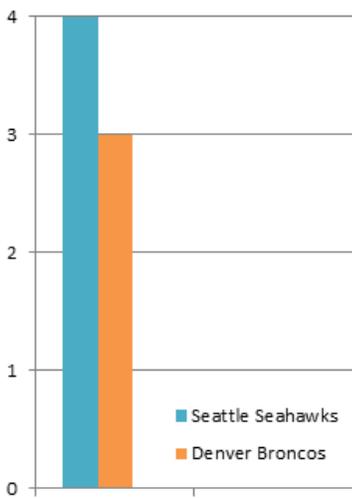


Before the Super Bowl, clients at HIRRS made predictions about the game. We created polls about the coin toss, score, timeouts, and other things. These graphs show the results.

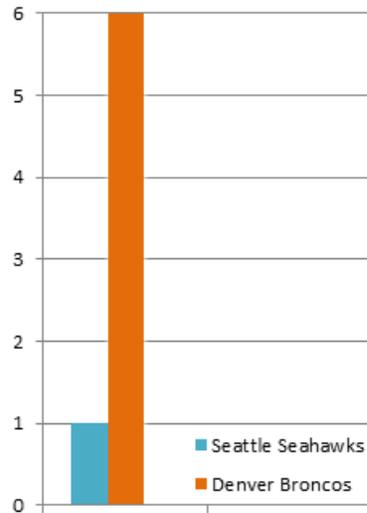
*By Eric M.*



**Who will win the Super Bowl?**



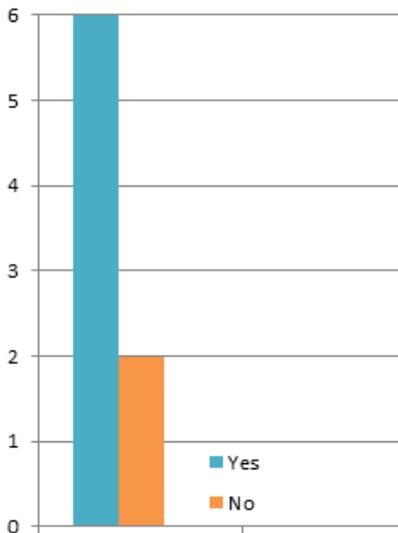
**Who will win the coin toss?**



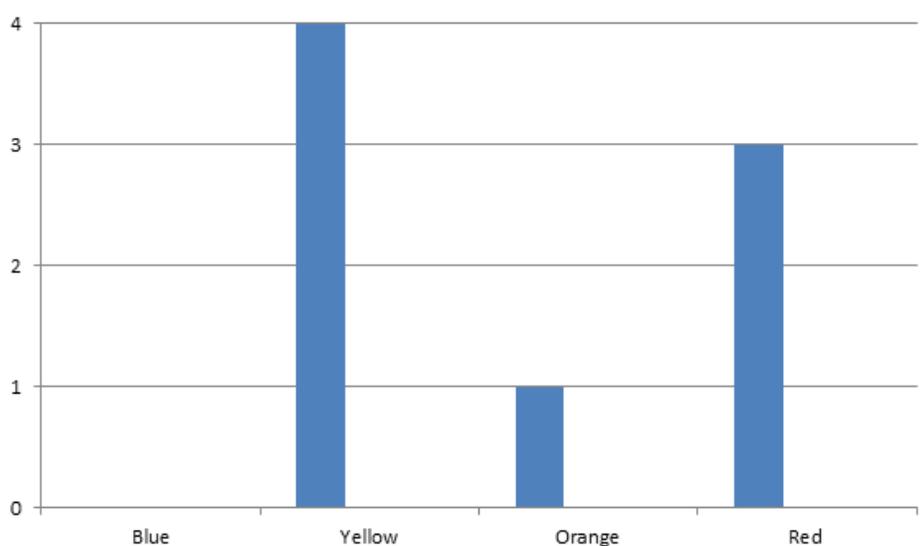
**Who will score first?**



**Will it snow?**



**What color Gatorade will be dumped on the winning coach?**



# Outings Recap

## Mormon Temple Visitor's Center

By Mark S

On February 7, 2014, HIRRS clients and staff went to the Mormon Visitor's Center. Two lady missionaries took us around the visitor's center, teaching clients and staff about the Mormons and what they believe. Everybody seemed to enjoy the peacefulness and the joyfulness of being aware that God exists in all of us. All we have to do is ask by praying, and asking "What is the truth?" I'm sure you will get an answer one way or another. You might ask yourself what the difference is between what Mormons believe in and other churches. Besides not having crosses on the top of our churches, we basically believe in four things: the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance (or asking for forgiveness for our sins), baptism (to make yourself clean from the generations of the past, laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. If you haven't guessed already, I'm a Mormon and this is my testament of the truth. Amen!



### Mormon Temple

Andre B, Daniel M, Tim C, Mark S, Ben G, Sean S, Patrick K



### NPR Headquarters

Daniel M, Sean S, Kerem K, Duncan M, Mike M, Tim C

Recent Outings	
January 10	Movies – Catching Fire
January 15	Movies – Lone Survivor
January 30	Wheaton Used Bookstore
February 7	Mormon Temple
February 20	Shops at Union Station
February 25	Movies – The Monuments Men
March 7	Joe's Record Paradise
March 12	NPR Headquarters Tour
March 26	Ben's Chili Bowl

### NPR

By Daniel M

As an outing, we went to the NPR (National Public Radio) Headquarters in DC. We saw the different rooms that had to do with the NPR shows. Basically we got to see behind the scenes of everything. My favorite part was the stage room, which is the room where they have radio shows with studio audiences. The stage room was my favorite part because it was relaxing. The lighting was the relaxing part. I would recommend seeing the NPR building again.

## Joe's Record Paradise

By Patrick K

Joe's Record Paradise is a place where you buy records. They have music with different styles and sounds. The older records are worth more. I went on the outing with staff and clients. I enjoyed the different music. Since I am a musician, I fell in love with it. I would go again.

# International Interviews

Welcome to our showcase of HIRRS cultural diversity. In this issue, we have interviewed HIRRS staff members who come from different countries. We wanted to learn more about them and their cultures. Lucky for us, our staff is so diverse that we couldn't fit all the interviews into 1 newsletter, so stay tuned for the rest of their interviews in our next edition. We hope you are as excited as we are to learn about where our wonderful staff comes from.

## Interview with Janet

By Denise R

I interviewed Janet who is from Sierra Leone in West Africa. She is my one-on-one counselor. It was a great experience to know about her and her country.

**What country are you from?**

Sierra Leone

**What is the most popular religion where you are from?**

Christianity

**What type of food is most popular in Sierra Leone?**

Rice and beef stew

**What sport is the most popular over there?**

Football

**What was the reason you came to the US?**

My dad was sick.

**What music is popular in your country?**

Cultural music



Denise & Janet

## Interview with Adwoa

By Trish D

I interviewed Adwoa, my one-on-one, who is from Ghana in West Africa. Learning about other countries interests me. The contrast between the two countries is very evident, but only if you have lived in both.

**What holidays do you celebrate?**

The major holidays are Easter and Christmas. There are other holidays they celebrate such as traditional ones based on the tribe, farmers day, and Independence Day, presidents day, boxing day and many more are celebrated.

**What is the biggest difference between here and Ghana?**

1. Gross mismanagement in Ghana 2. Technology is more advanced in U.S. and 3. Lack of health care improvements.

**How is the food different?**

Ghanaian's food is typically prepared with more of tropical ingredients and is very spicy.

**How does the weather differ?**

In Ghana, we experience two rainy seasons during the year and one dry season- it is not moist but dry that really affects your skin. We also experience some coldness during December. Ghana experiences a hot, tropical climate year round.

**Do you prefer the weather here or there?**

I prefer the weather there because I hate snow and being chilly cold is not my favorite.

**How has your view of women's role evolved?**

Ghanaian women play a major role within family, communities and societies at large.

**Are you sorry or relieved you left?**

It's good to travel for a change although I am here with a couple of my family members. I still miss *home sweet home* and dear loved ones.

**Will you ever go back?**

Yes, I will. My greatest desire is to impart the knowledge I have received here to help people with special needs. I will miss H.I.R.R.S..

## My interview with Alliyah

By Nick M

I interviewed Alliyah who works at HIRRS as a one-on-one helper. This is about her background in Sierra Leone.

**What country are you from?** Sierra Leone

**What is your country's official language?** Krio

**How many languages can you speak?** Six

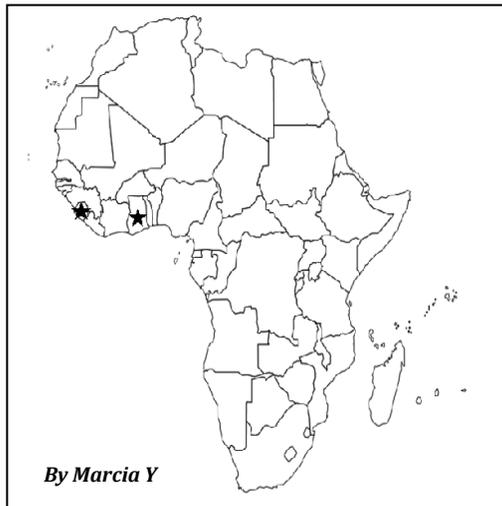
**Can you name one law that differs from laws in the United States?** *The drinking age in the US is 21, but there's no legal drinking age in Sierra Leone.*

**What is the title of the leader in your country?**

*President Ernes Bai Koroma*

**How many years have you been in America?** 12 years

**Have you ever lived in another state besides Maryland?** *California and Georgia*



By Marcia Y

Trish & Adwoa



## My Interview with Abe

By Andre B

This is my interview with Abe. It's about where his family comes from. I learned a lot about him and so will you.

### Where are you from?

*I was born in Takoma Park, MD.*

### Where is your family from?

*My mom is from Peru and my dad is from Cuba. My grandparents are from Spain*

### When did your family move here?

*In the 1980's.*

### Do speak any other languages?

*I speak Spanish.*

### What music is popular in your culture?

*Salsa, mambo, o'batchata, cumbia, cha cha cha, merengue, and rumba*

### What is your favorite food from your culture?

*Rice and black beans (arroz con gris), Pollo Alabarsa (Peruvian chicken), Lechon (traditional Cuban meal), and sugarcane juice, pina colada*

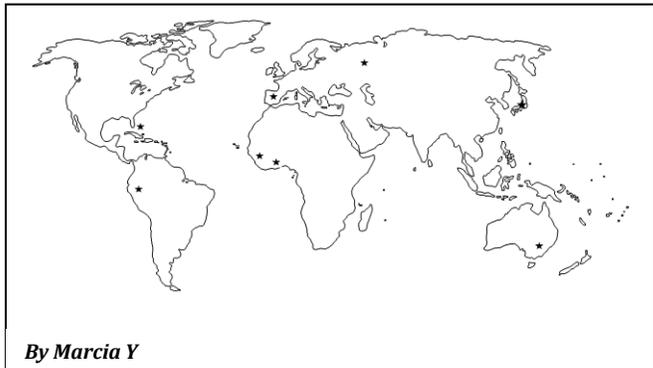
## Kyoko Interview

By Jason L

I had a very interesting interview with this young lady named Kyoko who happens to be from Japan but is also a bookkeeper here at HIRRS.

I learned many things about Kyoko's culture such as, in Japan they drive on the wrong side of the road (a.k.a. the left side). I found out that she is from Sapporo which is in northern Japan where the climate is cold. She said there is snow there from November until April. That's a long time. She also told me that sushi is a traditional Japanese food-dish. I inquired about her move to America and she said that she came here for more freedom and choices. Last, but not least, she said that it takes at least 3 days to get over jetlag if you're traveling between the US and Japan. So remember that.

I enjoyed learning about Japan. Thank you Kyoko for participating in this interview, but now I must go play chess.



By Marcia Y

## Svetlana Interview

By Desmond O

My interview with Svetlana is about her being from Russia. Svetlana works in the day program. That's how I know she is from Russia but I didn't know everything. I hope you like it.

**Where did you grow up?** *I grew up in Vladimir, Russia, which is over 1000 years old and was the capital of early-medieval Russia. Vladimir is also a traditional male name and my father's name.*

**How is the culture different from the US?** *People don't smile at strangers on the street. Not because Russian's are unfriendly, but because it is not a custom to smile at people we don't personally know.*

**Are there any unique holidays celebrated in Russia?** *May 9 is Victory Day where Russians commemorate fallen WWII soldiers with military and veteran parades.*

**What is the capital?** *Moscow. In Russian it is pronounced "Moskva"*

**When did you move to the US?** *I met my husband in 1996 in England and moved to the US two years later to marry him!*

**What do people in Russia do for fun?** *Russians are very social: we have get-togethers, picnics, and play/watch sports especially hockey and soccer.*

**What are people like in Russia?** *It is a very diverse population with over 100 unique nationalities.*

**Is there a national religion?** *The main ones are Russian Orthodox Christianity, Buddhism, and Judaism.*

## Fatouma Interview

By Daniel M

Fatouma did a good job answering the questions. Her answers are very interesting. I think it's awesome how she's the medical coordinator because she is making sure everyone is healthy and that is a good thing.

**What do you do here at HIRRS?** *I am the medical coordinator. I help clients get through their medical needs.*

**What country are you from?** *I'm from Niger, a country located in West Africa. It gets its name from the Niger River, the principle river of Western Africa and one of the biggest in Africa. Most of Niger is occupied by the Sahara Desert.*

**What kind of food is popular in Niger?** *Most meals consist of a cereal (millet, corn, rice, soy) paired with a sauce or stew. Stews are usually made with vegetables.*

**What sports are popular in Niger?** *Wrestling has been practiced for centuries but soccer is the most popular sport. Our national soccer team is called The Menas.*

**What are the colors of Niger's flag?** *Orange, white, green*  
**What kind of wildlife is common where you lived?** *We have the last giraffes of West Africa. We also have lions, hippos, gazelles, cheetahs, jackals, and elephants.*

**When did you move to the US and start working at HIRRS?** *I moved to the United States in January of 2005 as a continuing student. I transferred from Suffolk University, Dakar Campus (Senegal) to the University of New Orleans. After graduating from UNO in December 2007, I decided to move to Maryland. I started working for HIRRS in August of 2011.*

# Extra! Extra! Read All About It!

**Danielle, Part II** (continued from Issue 7)

*By I.C.*

I woke up on Monday October 6, 2006 to find my Aunt Cecelia sitting on the living room couch. When she saw me she grabbed a pillow and placed it over her bobbing knee. She started whistling while she continued to chew a cracker.

Mom hadn't told me her sister was visiting. Aunt Cecelia lived about a four hour drive away, so I felt a little spooked seeing her in our house, sitting on the living room couch with all the lights on at five in the morning. Her eyes were glossed and she stared into the grandfather clock clear across the living room. Practically every time she came to visit she would cook different breakfasts with my mother, but now she told me that there were cheerios on top of the fridge that she bought on the way here. This whole thing seemed weird to me but my thoughts didn't get specific even when Cecelia insisted that she'd take me to school herself. When she bypassed the Croaley and Strather intersection I didn't bother to ask why. And I didn't say anything when she looked at the car ceiling and said that "Some things have to be done. Some things I have to do." We pulled into the school roundabout and I hopped out but Aunt Cecelia caught me before I shut the car door. "Here's your lunch." she said, and handed me the brown bag.

My mom had always made my lunch, usually peanut butter and jelly or cold cuts and cheese. Only rarely did she send me to school with hardboiled eggs. But that is what Aunt Cecelia gave me. I passed through the middle of the cafeteria my lunch bag in my hands. I didn't fall, the floor wasn't even wet. My mind was fixed on something in another life, or rather why my aunt seemed like she was in another life. The lunch bag turned over, flipped right out of my hands and two raw eggs rolled out cracking and splattering in the middle of the cafeteria floor.

The whole cafeteria, all grades, stared and laughed until the noise became how a football stadium sounds, where you can hear something, you can hear it loud, but it doesn't sound like much of anything important or anything to understand.

I kept turning around slowly, 360 degrees, shaking, my skin covered with bumps and turning different colors. I don't know how long all this lasted. It didn't seem either long or short to me. But looking at the ground after a while, looking at the cafeteria floor I saw a shadow moving by.

"You OK?" I looked up and I saw him passing by... Trey Booker...and the eggs disappeared. My next two classes went blank. "You OK?" he had said, and to me? I couldn't believe it. When the bell rang I skipped home. But I only got halfway there till I was greeted at Croaley and Strather St. by a police officer I had never met before.

## **Cooking Group: Colorful Waffles**

*By Jason P*

When we were in cooking group we made waffles. Now the reason why these waffles were so special is because we made our own personal waffles. Other than myself, Jason Pauley, there was another individual in cooking group. Her name is Marcia. She made her waffles red and I made mine green. We used eggs, flour, food coloring, and sugar. I don't really recall what she put on her waffles. However, I didn't put any topping on my waffles. I've always been like that. We mixed our ingredients in a mixing bowl. Now I've cooked a few different things in my life, but this was the best thing I've made in my life. Thank you for reading this article.



*You may not be able to tell by the picture, but those are multicolored waffles Jason P is whipping up!*

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