



# I.A.R. Newsletter



June 2010  
(860) 677-2683

20 Wolf Pit Road  
Farmington, CT 06032

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE Kelly M. Lyman, Principal

The middle school curriculum includes instruction in health and wellness in both grade 7 and grade 8. These courses focus on several topics including decision making, communication, nutrition, human sexuality, and drugs and alcohol. We are fortunate that we are able to add an additional component to our drugs and alcohol unit in the eighth grade. Each June, FOCUS provides the funding for educators from the Newton, MA based non-profit organization Freedom from Chemical Dependency (FCD). This organization is committed to providing education and support to young people and their families to promote substance free living. Their educators are all highly trained former substance abusers who now work to help others make better decisions than they made at one time in their lives. Educators from FCD now support our students yearly in grades 5, 8 and 10.

At IAR we have designed a two day program to be presented in the final week of school – just as our students are preparing to leave this structured environment for the freedom (and mostly unstructured days) of summer. We know that the summer between grade 8 and 9 is often the time when students first experiment with substance use. The program provided by FCD is intended to be a final reminder to students to make good decisions and to consider the consequences of their actions before they act. We have had positive reactions from students each year regarding their time with the FCD educators.

In addition, FCD has developed a very comprehensive survey that helps communities measure their students' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors about the use of legal and illegal substances (tobacco, drugs, and alcohol) as well as measure student perceptions of the school and community climate. We first gave this survey three years ago. The results followed national norms in nearly all areas. Of great interest to us was students' perception about suspected use among high school students versus reported actual use. It is common for

students to perceive much higher use than is actual. Farmington students fit this pattern and we have been using these data in our health classes in an attempt to dispel myths about use. This is important because students who perceive use then think it is not only ok, but it is expected, that they too will become users of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol.

The FCD survey will again be given to all students in grades 8-12 in the coming week. Results will be tabulated and analyzed and a full report returned to the schools during the summer. The results will be shared with faculty, parents, and students throughout the coming year.

We are grateful to FOCUS and to the REACH Foundation for a very special matching grant that is funding the FCD visit to IAR. These are valuable programs for our students. Please be sure to ask your child about the visits from FCD in the final week of school.

*Kelly M Lyman*

**Last Day of School  
Friday, June 25, 2010  
12:31pm Dismissal  
LUNCH WILL BE SERVED**

**Last Day for Late Bus—June 17  
Last Day for CREC Late Bus-  
June 11**





# Wellness Day 2010



Wellness Day is organized by the Health, Physical Education, and Wellness Department. Throughout the day students participate in explorative sessions focusing on social, emotional and physical development. This full day experience provides students with opportunities to explore ways to improve his or her person wellness. The theme of this year's Wellness Day is encouraging students to take responsibility for their own wellness. Students took the first step of this responsibility by selecting which activities they feel would be most beneficial to their own wellness.

Beginning at 8:25 the day will kick off with a fifty minute keynote address by Ed Gerety, a leadership trainer who inspires students to take risks, to feel empowered and to take responsibility and action toward their goals. Mr. Gerety has spoken at previous Wellness Days and his message is both powerful and memorable.

Following the keynote address, students will participate in breakout sessions. Students will participate in one session from each group:

## Social Wellness

Unified Sports  
Social Dance  
Pre School  
Group Body Pump!  
Leadership

## Emotional Wellness

Robotics  
Athletic Training  
Police Dept. Careers  
Fire Dept. Careers  
High School Life

## Physical Wellness

Climbing  
Dance and Drill  
Golf  
Yoga  
Iron Man Triathlon

The Health, PE, and Wellness Department would like to thank Farmington FOCUS and the Farmington Junior Women's Club for supporting the seventh annual Wellness Day by providing the funding to bring back a climbing wall for another year. The wall is available to all students to try throughout the day.

In the afternoon, all students will engage in various physical activities. Students will also have the opportunity to create an art piece of what wellness means to them- either through tile or chalk design.

The IAR Wellness Department encourages you to ask your child what activities he or she signed up for and why and to continue to cheer your child on as he or she explores new ways to improve his or her own wellness.

## Four Perfect Pebbles A HOLOCAUST STORY

By Lila Perl and  
Marion Blumenthal Lazan



Marion Blumenthal Lazan, author of the Holocaust memoir Four Perfect Pebbles, visited I.A.R. Tuesday, May 25th. This wonderful author visit and presentation was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Alexander Franklin Foundation, the Farmington Community Chest, and the IAR Library.

Mrs. Lazan spoke from the heart to 7<sup>th</sup> graders as she recounted her experiences as a young Jewish girl living in Nazi Germany. A survivor of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, Mrs. Lazan told 7<sup>th</sup> graders her moving story --- one of courage, determination, and hope in the midst of tragedy. Mrs. Lazan loves to interact with students and also spent time answering their questions and being photographed with them. Sharing her poignant and inspiring message is Mrs. Lazan's life's work. She and her husband Nathaniel spend their time traveling around the United States speaking to various schools and groups. They have also travelled to Germany and Israel.

A luncheon for the Lazans, attended by many students and teachers, followed the presentation. Mr. and Mrs. Lazan expressed their appreciation for the warm reception they had received from the students and teachers. Many students who had ordered copies of Four Perfect Pebbles received their personally autographed books in the afternoon.

Readers can find out more about Marion Blumenthal Lazan by visiting her wonderful website at [www.FourPerfectPebbles.com](http://www.FourPerfectPebbles.com).

## Library Volunteer Opportunities for 2010-2011



The IAR Library welcomes volunteers to help with our day-to-day tasks. Our volunteers help with shelving

books, processing and shelving magazines, maintaining the periodical room (magazine back issues), covering books, working on the Book Fair, "adopting a shelf" to keep in order, and doing various other jobs. No previous experience is necessary! We'd be glad to train you. Most volunteers come in for an hour or so every week, though work on a special project or the Book Fair might occur at just one time during the year. Working in the library is a great service to the whole school community.

If you're interested, please email or call the library. [nicklisd@fpsct.org](mailto:nicklisd@fpsct.org) or [ransomb@fpsct.org](mailto:ransomb@fpsct.org) or 674 9612.

Thanks,  
Barbara Ransom, librarian  
Donna Nicklis, Assistant

## Equality Day

On May 28<sup>th</sup> our grade 8 students participated in the Fourth Annual Equality Day. This program connects to curriculum in both social studies and language arts and is designed to support our Respect Initiative. Trainers from the Anti-Defamation League originally helped us design this experience and continue to come each year to help deliver the program. The day is designed to increase students' awareness of diversity and bullying issues and to give a voice to the targets, build empathy in the perpetrators, and inspire bystanders to become allies. Activities are designed to help students develop the skills and motivation necessary to move from being a bystander to an ally. The day also included a presentation by the Farmington Police Department regarding cyber-bullying and its consequences.

The day ended with a collaborative activity completed in period 9 classes. Students reflected on their experiences and created banners that celebrate diversity and respect for others. These banners were presented at an all school assembly on June 4<sup>th</sup>.



Many thanks to social studies teacher Wendy Huntington for creating the idea for this day and planning it each year.

## Good-Bye to Staff Leaving IAR

We say good-bye this year to the following staff members:

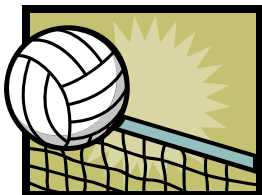
Mr. Jeremy Pilver has been a social studies teacher in Farmington for seven years. He taught initially at IAR and was then transferred to Farmington High School. This past year we were happy to see Mr. Pilver back at IAR as a grade 7 social studies teacher. He brought great content knowledge, a thirst for learning himself, and the ability to build wonderful rapport with his students. Due to budget reductions, Mr. Pilver's contract can not be renewed. We will miss him and the many contributions he made to both the social studies department and Team B.



Mrs. Pamela Hewitt has been a speech and language clinician for 6 years at IAR. She supports students with a variety of articulation and language development needs and supports their academic progress. Mrs. Hewitt is transferring to East Farms School.

## WHEN ARE SPORTS PHYSICAL FORMS REQUIRED?

The Irving Robbins Athletics Department offers a variety of Intramural and Extramural activities after school. Incoming seventh and eighth graders may join the Cross Country (boys and girls), Volleyball (girls) and Field Hockey (girls) teams in the fall and are required to have a current sports physical form on file with the school nurse to compete against other schools. Sports physical forms are good for one year. Sports physical forms may be picked up in the school nurse office. Participation in Intramural activities do not require a sport physical form.



## IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM THE LIBRARY

**ALL books and magazines are due in the library by Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup>.**

If a student has lost a book or magazine, he/she may pay for it by bringing either cash or a check to the library. Do not go by the price on the overdue notice; that does not reflect replacement costs. Checks should be made out to IAR Library. If a student has any question about a lost book, he/she should see Mrs. Nicklis. Prices are as follows:

PB (paperback fiction)	\$10.00
F (hardback fiction)	\$20.00
Non-fiction	<u>See Mrs. Nicklis</u> <u>for a price as</u> <u>these vary</u> <u>greatly.</u>
Magazines	\$ 5.00

As of June 7<sup>th</sup>, books and other materials will not be able to be checked out of the library due to inventory. **The library will be open during Silent Reading for returns only from June 7<sup>th</sup> on.**

**Grade 8** students who wish to buy Picnic/Class Night tickets when they go on sale must not owe the library any books or magazines. The Student Council advisors will have a list of students with overdues from the library, and those students will not be permitted to buy tickets. The overdue list will be updated daily. After a student has returned or paid for a lost book, he/she will be able to buy tickets the following morning after Mrs. Nicklis has updated the list and given it to the Student Council advisors.

All students who still have overdues at the end of the school year will not receive their report cards, but their parents will get a notice instead concerning the overdue/debt. Parents are kindly requested to come to the school office to return the missing item or settle the debt before receiving the student's report card.

Thank you in advance for your assistance and cooperation.

Ms. Barbara Ransom,  
I.A.R. Librarian  
Mrs. Donna Nicklis,  
Library Assistant



# Counselors' Connection

*Mrs. Brooke Stanziale Ms. Sara Runkle Mrs. Laura Ramirez / Mrs. Mary Wendell  
Mrs. Denise Sanady, School Social Worker Miss Connie Mayette, Counseling Secretary  
IAR Counseling Office (860) 677-4363*

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## Transitions

IAR students had the opportunity to visit FHS during the last week of May and West Woods students are visiting IAR during the first week of June. If you have any concerns about your child's upcoming transitions, please do not hesitate to contact a counselor.

## Positive Parenting Tips for Summer

As a parent you are the most influential person in your children's lives and how you work through family issues can have a positive influence on behavior at home as well as at school. Here are some parenting tips for the summer months.

**Read:** If your children see you enjoying reading, they will be more likely to pick up a book of their own.

**Sibling conflicts:** Stay on the sideline of sibling arguments (unless there is danger) and help your children to learn to appropriately express their negative feelings.

**Discipline:** Children develop security, increased self-esteem and have fewer behavioral problems when in an environment that provides consistency, rules, consequences, praise and positive acclamations.

**Parent/Child conflicts:** Two wonderful words can be used when your child wants to engage in an unending argument with you or chooses to defy your authority. They are "nevertheless" and "regardless." For example:

Parent: Child please clean up your room.

Child: Sister never has to do any chores.

Parent: Nevertheless, I want you to pick up your room.

## Technology and teens

Please be aware of your child's use of technology as they will likely have more time to access it over the summer. Many electronics are both a tool and a "weapon."

## Getting Ready for FHS

### FHS Orientation

Watch the mail this summer for information about the freshman orientation at FHS in August.

**Fall Sports begin in August.** Students may not practice unless their physical forms are completed by their doctors along with their medical cards and code of conduct forms. Watch for details on pre-season practice for fall sports.

Have a wonderful summer!