

Fourth Issue

April 2011



IHS Word

2010-11

IHS Word is the Ithaca High School Newsletter, jointly funded by the PTSA and IHS. It serves all IHS parents, caregivers and staff.

Submit news to:
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School WILL be in session on April 15 and May 27, due to the snow days!

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Get important IHS and PTSA news by email: sign up for the IHSPTSA listserv (usually one email per week)!
Send an email to: IHSPTSA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To join the discussion listserv, send an email to:
IHSPTSA-discuss-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Visit IHS and PTSA on the web:
Ithaca High School: <http://www.icsd.k12.ny.us/highschool>

PTSA:
http://ihsptsa.clarityconnect.com/IHS_PTSA/Welcome.html

From the Principal

Spring is here! Although it seems someone forgot to tell the weatherman, yesterday's dusting of snow will hopefully be our last. Spring, being a time of renewal, is a great time for students to reinforce/renew their focus for a successful year.

I.H.S. recently presented the Path of Success seminar to our students in ninth grade as well as our AVID and ACE students. One of the quotes that Mr. Watts shared relates to the power of a positive attitude as one aspect of a person's life that cannot be overlooked. Mr. Watts told our students to remember that: **Whether you think you can, or think you can't, you're absolutely right. The only time you fail is the last time you try.** The last quarter of the year is important and students will certainly need to be readying themselves for finals. One thing that I often remind students of is the importance of beginning to review early for their exams. Waiting until a week before the final is often too late. I also want to remind students and parent that the teachers, counselors and administrators are here to help students be successful especially as we approach the end of year and final grades. If your student is having difficulty please remind them to ask for help, attend an afterschool help session and talk with their teachers. We of course are looking for students who may not be asking and offering this assistance anyway.

Our Spring Sports teams are off to a great start as well and I encourage everyone to come out and support our teams. I have enjoyed the games out on the turf and at the playing fields that I have been to so far this season. Our student athletes are the best in the area. Please come out and show your support for all of our team's. Let's go Lil' Red!

Master scheduling is in full swing currently. Our goal is to have schedules out to families by the start of the summer vacation. If your student experiences a

scheduling conflict during the scheduling process we will be contacting you prior to leaving for the end of the school year to help make an informed decision about their schedule.

The work on the new fitness facility has continued through the snowy weather and work is progressing on target for a mid-year opening next year.

One goal that the school has focused on this year has been around attendance and I would like to give some updated information on the success of our collective efforts. Last year at this time we had close to 46,000 class skips and currently we have had about 7,300, which is a significant gain. Of course this number is still too high and we are continuing our efforts to reduce this number.

The end of the school year has several upcoming events to announce. The event listings for I.H.S. can be found on our website within the activities calendar. Some notable dates to remember include Regents Exam Week from June 15 to 23, Senior Week from May 31 to June 3, Jazz Concert May 7, Spring Orchestra Concert on May 18, Spring Band Concert on May 25, Spring Choir Concert on June 1, the Junior Prom on May 21, Underclassman Awards on June 7, Senior Awards on June 9, African Latino Club Senior Recognition Dinner on June 10, Lil Red Field Days on June 10, the Senior Prom on June 18 and Graduation on June 23.

As always please feel free to stop in or contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Respectfully,

Donald Mills
Principal
274-2143

From Student Services

- May 2, 2011 – May 13, 2011 – **AP Exams**, York Lecture Hall
 - April 28, 2011 – **Juniors Getting Into College Night**, 7:00 pm, York Lecture Hall
 - May 7, 2011 – **Standardized Achievement Test (SAT)** 8:00 am at Ithaca High School
(late registration deadline: **April 22!** See <http://sat.collegeboard.com/register>)
-

PTSA News

From the PTSA President

Spring has just officially arrived, which at Ithaca High means a few more snow days, spring sports, the musical, spring concerts and budget season. Here at the IHS PTSA, we are happy to announce the IHS Teacher Mini-Grant Awardees:

- Christene White (Special Education) in support of an international cooking/nutrition course for Secondary Transition I Students.
- Astrid Brueckner (Student Services) in support of a student-welcoming group for orienting new students.
- Nan Bell (Library) to purchase an electronic book reader and e-books for vision impaired students.
- Shawn Goodman (Student Services) for writers' notebooks for English 10 Regents Class

We've been fairly active despite the cold. In February, we hosted a program for parents and guardians with Student Services. Thanks to Sharon Gublo (Department Leader) and Leann Donnelly (College & Career Counselor) for giving us a great overview of all they do and for answering our questions.

In March, Don Mills and Board members Brad Grainger and Rob Ainslie explained how the different budget scenarios will affect IHS. Jarett Powers, Samantha Little, and Claudette James from the High School then reported on progress on IHS as a SINI (School In Need of Improvement) in English Language Arts for Students With Disabilities (SWD). It was refreshing to hear of their school-wide approach to help all students, not just SWD and not just in English Language Arts.

We continue to host **Monthly Munches** for all teachers and staff on the first Thursday of each month. Donations are always welcome (email Penny at promantic@cityofithaca.org). Thanks to the coordinator, Penny Romantic and to Claire Nicholson and Roberta Moudry for helping Penny with set-up and clean-up. Thanks to Gimme! Coffee, Dunkin' Donuts and Starbucks for donating coffee!! Our **Staff Appreciation Lunch** is scheduled for May 18. Coordinator Laura Andolina will be letting you know how you can help!

We would like to offer our appreciation to Superintendent Brown and the Board for working hard to make information available regarding the budget process. At this point, meetings are taped and streamlined on the web for viewing at any time, and handouts are made available through the web site usually before meetings occur. Please do check out the ICSD website for up to date information: <http://www.icsd.k12.ny.us/>

On May 2 there will be a **district-wide presentation by Dr. Brown on the budget**, as well as a PTA vote. On May 17, we all go to the polls and **vote for the budget** and for three Board members. There will be candidate forums held in May to meet the candidates. Please do what you can to inform yourself. This is a great example of thinking globally but acting locally—every vote counts, and the budget and Board set the tone for how we educate “our” (meaning everyone’s) children. *What better, more important, investment of your time and money could there possibly be?*

We are already thinking of next year—the PTSA is fully dependent on parents and guardians volunteering time and energy to keep it going. Think of all we do—list serves and meetings and open house and this newsletter, not to mention direct support for staff and students... ***How little would you know about your child's high school without the PTSA?*** And while we fully appreciate the generous financial support this community gives to us, WE NEED YOUR TIME AND ENERGY. Please contact me, Sue Merkel (email: ihsptsa.pres@gmail.com), if you would like more information about heading a project or being an IHS PTSA Board member.

Sue Merkel
smerkel@twcny.rr.com

IHS PTSA - Parent Teacher Student Association.
Visit the Web site at:
http://ihsptsa.clarityconnect.com/IHS_PTSA/Welcome.html, or contact President Sue Merkel, at:
smerkel@twcny.rr.com.

IHS Student and Class Activities - Activities

Director, Karl Mellander. Email:
kmelland@icsd.k12.ny.us

FABG - The Ithaca Community Fine Arts Booster Group Visit their website: www.fabgithaca.org or email: president@fabgithaca.org

IPEI - The Ithaca Public Education Initiative. Visit the Web site at: www.ipei.org or call 256-IPEI.

SportsBoosters - The Ithaca Sports Booster Club Visit the web site at: <http://sports.dir.groups.yahoo.com/group/IthacaSportsBoosters> or email: SportsBoosterPrez@yahoo.com.

Ithaca SEPTA - Special Education PTA For more information, email Samantha Preston, Secretary, at: Slp59@cornell.edu

From the Office of Student Activities

Upcoming major events:

Junior Prom: May 21, 8 pm, Biotech Conference Room, Cornell University

Senior Prom: June 18, 8 pm, Appel Commons, Cornell University

Graduation Rehearsal: June 23, 1 pm, Bartels Hall, Cornell University (buses provided from/to IHS)

Graduation: June 23, 7 pm, Bartels Hall, Cornell University

If you have not ordered a cap and gown for graduation, contact Jostens by visiting their website at www.nygrad.com. OR call (315)-458-3871.

Karl Mellander
IHS Student Activities

From Ithaca High School Family Liaisons

NEED TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION?

For information on local transportation call Information & Referral at 2-1-1 or if online, visit www.way2goinfo.org. The above website gives you information on carshare and rideshare, volunteer ride services, City Van, Car repair assistance, etc.

Any questions concerning your child or IHS, please give Barbara, Mary or Oscar a call at 274-6843 and leave us a message.

What is a PLC? (Professional Learning Community)

The PLC concept is relatively new, having grown out of the work in the mid-1990s to re-culture schools by examining the effects of school organization on teachers' work and their commitment to school improvement. Studies have shown that how teachers learn from one another in school settings influences both job satisfaction and their sense of responsibility for student learning. Professional learning communities emerged as a concept to both improve teacher well-being and make a difference in student achievement.

Concurrently, educators were embracing the notion of schools as learning organizations for adults and students; the focus was on learning rather than teaching. School leaders began to accept learning rather than teaching as the fundamental purpose of schools. Because professional communities offered teachers opportunities to develop and share their expertise, their focus was readily expanded to include an emphasis on professional learning.

Characteristics of a PLC

A PLC is not a model, per se; rather, it is an approach or process. A brief description of some of the most commonly cited characteristics of a PLC follows:

Shared values and vision. Teachers and administrators share a vision focused on student learning and a commitment to improvement. The vision is used as a context for decision-making about instructional practices and collaborative learning efforts. The vision statement should result in a collective responsibility for, and an unwavering focus on, student learning.

Collaborative culture. PLCs are based on the premise that through collaboration, professionals achieve more than they could alone. Teachers benefit from the resources that each brings to the PLC. Collaboration provides a mechanism for sharing responsibility for student learning and a means to work together toward a common purpose. Collaboration (e.g., opportunities for teachers to engage in ongoing collegial opportunities where they talk about teaching, receive frequent feedback on teaching, design classes together, teach each other, etc.) has been found in successful schools and is missing in unsuccessful schools.

Centering on examining outcomes to improve student learning, PLCs promote results-oriented thinking that is focused on continuous improvement and student learning. The focus goes beyond a team getting together to look at data. In PLCs, teachers *respond to* data that require mutual accountability and changing classroom practices. Data help motivate teachers to see what is happening and what they need to do collectively.

Supportive and shared leadership. PLCs often are viewed as a foundation for developing teacher leaders. Administrators are committed to sharing decision making with teachers and providing opportunities for them to serve as leaders. Leadership is shared and distributed among formal and informal leaders. The purposes and goals of a PLC grow from among the participants, based on their values, beliefs, and individual and shared experiences. Teacher leadership capacity sustains PLCs. Sharing power and authority with teachers through decision-making and shared leadership increases leadership capacity and builds a belief in the school's collective ability to affect student teaching.

Shared personal practice. A major focus of PLCs is on professional learning in which teachers work and learn together as they continually evaluate the effectiveness of their practices and the needs, interests, and skills of their students. Teachers share experiences, observe each other, and discuss teaching. Shared practice and collective inquiry help sustain improvement by strengthening connections among teachers, stimulating discussion about professional practice, and helping teachers build on one another's expertise. Through continuous inquiry and reflective dialogue teachers discover solutions and address student needs.

*From: The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement,
<http://www.centerforsri.org/plc/elements.html>*

Music

Congratulations to the following IHS Choir members who performed in the annual All-County Chorus Festival at Trumansburg High School on January 21 and 22:

Vanessa Anderson, Matt Avery, Emily Behrmann-Fowler, Savannah Charif, Austin Cody, Sandrine Duboscq, Julie Erickson, Haley Evanoski, St. John Faulkner, Harmony Gaves, Josh Greenberg, Zoe Kiriazis, Lena Kornreich, Jenna Ledet, Jon Liebherr, Allison Mollenkamp, Naomi Powers, Hannah Rawlings, Naomi Raymond, Julia Ridley, Tony Ruta, Emily Scarpulla, Ben Sherman, Sarah Skrovan, Courtney Smalt, Casey Smith, Mike Stern and Elena Studier.

Congratulations also go to the following Choir members who participated in the annual NYSSMA Sr. High Area All-State Music Festival at Ithaca College on February 4 and 5:

Matt Avery, Emily Behrmann - Fowler, Jacob Clay, Haley Evanoski, St. John Faulkner, Harmony Graves, Josh Greenberg, Zoe Kiriazis, Lena Kornreich, Jon Liebherr, Tony Ruta and Caroline Sendek.

Way to go, Choir members!

Special recognition goes to three Choir members who distinguished themselves by being accepted into the most prestigious honors groups in the nation.

Michael Stern, a freshman, was chosen to participate in the American Choral Directors Association Jr. High National Honors Choir. This group consists of the

finest singers in the country from middle school through 9th grade. Needless to say, this is a great honor.

Junior Emily Behrmann-Fowler was likewise selected to perform with the Sr. High ACDA National Honors Choir consisting of the finest high school singers in the nation from grades 10 - 12.

Finally, Haley Evanoski was selected to perform in the Music Educators National Conference All Eastern Choir consisting of the best singers in the eastern United States. These students do honor to themselves, our Music Department and the City of Ithaca. Congratulations to one and all!

Ithaca High School Junior, Haley Evanoski, was selected to perform in the All-Eastern Honors Chorus Ensemble as a Soprano 1. Ms. Evanoski's application competed against top All-State Junior and Senior High School music students throughout New York State for this prestigious vocalist position. With assistance from her music teacher, Mr. Arthur Loomis, and her vocal coach, Ms. Brenda Dawe, this exceptional student has prepared remarkably



challenging music. Ms. Evanoski will perform under the leadership of the prominent conductor Constantina Tsolainou from Columbia State University in Columbia, Georgia.

German News

Ithaca High School ninth grade German student Chandler Pfaff was recently awarded an all-expense-paid summer study trip to the Federal Republic of Germany. Chandler was one of approximately 23,000 students who competed for the study trip by participating in a nationwide German testing program. The German test is administered by the American Association of the Teachers of German and coordinated through Ithaca High School World Language Department. This study trip award has been made possible annually for over fifty years by a grant from the Federal Republic of Germany through its Embassy in Washington, D.C. Kudos to Chandler!!!

Submitted by Janet Abowd

Math

The American Math Competition (AMC) results were calculated, and the following students made it through to take the American Invitational Math Exam (AIME) on March 17th: Forest Tong, Anying Li, Jason Setter, Mia Smith, Jeff Setter, David Stauffer, Rex Lei, Irit Huq-Kuruville, Ofer Grossman, Jensen Lo, and Daniel Halpern. All of these are IHS students, except Daniel, who goes to Boynton. The IHS Math Department would like to give a big "congratulations" to these students!

The Fractals and Chaos class now have their spring art show on display. Look for intriguing and impressive fractal art in the hallway outside H202. This artwork will be on view for a couple of months.

April is Math Awareness Month. IHS celebrated Math Awareness Week in conjunction with Cornell University during the week of April 11-15th. This year's theme is "Unraveling Complex Systems". In the weeks leading up to Math Awareness Month, students were asked to participate in a t-shirt design contest that incorporated the theme. Stay tuned for the contest winner in the next IHS Word.

The Math Department has chosen Rachel Ferris for the 1st marking period Student of the Quarter, and most recently, Vatsana Sisombath was awarded Student of the Quarter for the 2nd marking period.



Left to right:
Rex Lei, Ofer Grossman, Irit Huq-Kuruville,
Forest Tong, Jeff Setter, Mia Smith, Jason
Setter, Anying Li, Jensen Lo. Not pictured
David Stauffer and Daniel Halpern. (Daniel
was sick and didn't compete).

Science Department News

The Science Department took its first international trip during the February break. It was a wonderful success! Thirty-six students and six adults traveled to Costa Rica for nine days. The trip was organized by Carlan Gray, a Biology teacher and the current Science Department leader. All of the traveling students had either taken or had an interest in Biology. They attended several meetings during the 2009-2010 school year, filled out thoughtful applications, and fundraised for almost a year! During the trip students visited the Arenal Volcano, kayaked on Lake Arenal, zip-lined in the rainforest, visited the Santa Elena Cloud forest and Manual

Antonio National Park, visited a local school, got sunburned and built lasting memories with each other. Carlan Gray hopes to run the trip again during the 2012-2013 school year. If you would like your son or daughter to be involved please email Carlan Gray at cgray@icsd.k12.ny.us or call 274-2190.

Special thanks to all of the traveling adults: Ross Creagan (English), Karl Mellander (Math and Student Activities), Andrew Lesser (Science-Chemistry) and Linda Knewstub (former Science teacher) and Fred Knewstub (former Special Education teacher).

Physics News

Seven students at the high school sat for the Physics Olympiad. Of those, Forest Tong and David Stauffer both were semi-finalists, among only 350 students nationally. We are anxiously awaiting the results of the semi-final exam. The top 24 students selected from this group to be on the United States physics team attend a summer program in physics, with 5 students from this final group competing internationally. Congratulations to all!

The physics classes will be taking their annual trip to Darien Lake in May for Physics Day. The amusement park is open only to physics students that day, with students from across the state packing the park with calculators, accelerometers and other equipment. Students apply what they have learned during the year to real-life situations at the park. It is both an extremely productive time and a lot of fun for all.

Code Red Robotics

Code Red Robotics successfully finished their eleventh Build Season and their first competition! The team, composed of 51 students, 15 professional mentors, and parent volunteers, worked for six weeks from early January to late February in order to build their robot. During this six-week period, the 'Build Season,' students worked weekdays from 5-9 pm and eight more hours each Saturday. The end result? A 120- pound, competition-ready robot and a LOT of learning along the way.

The weekend of March 5th, Code Red was in Rochester for their first regional of the year, the Finger Lakes Regional. FLR is hosted by the Rochester Institute of Technology and is always a competitive and fun event. Code Red was ranked 21st out of 44 teams after the qualifying matches and was selected to be on the seventh seeded alliance. For the finals, 24 teams compose the top 8 alliances and played a single elimination tournament for all the glory. Sadly, Code Red's alliance lost in the quarterfinals against the second seeded alliance. But as always, Code Red gained valuable experience at FLR and is looking forward to competing again April 7th through 9th. The April regional is hosted by Boston University, and Code Red is looking for a berth to Nationals!

The FIRST competition, for which the team prepared, is a challenging global contest. FIRST is an organization designed to spread technology awareness, and the acronym is short for "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology." One thousand five hundred teams from ten countries compete at the high school level in regional and national events. The program creates an exciting and highly educational environment where the students work collaboratively with professional engineering mentors in the spirit of "Gracious Professionalism." Every year, the students design and build a complex, computer-controlled machine to complete a new challenge. Major funding comes from the generous donations of local and regional companies and individuals such as Kionix, Borg Warner, BAE Systems, and Goodrich. Code Red also benefits from a partnership with IPEI, the Ithaca Public Education Initiative.

Submitted by Alejandro Younger,
Student Public Relations Officer
publicrelations@team639.org

The Wiz Remembers and Honors Lee Strebel

The recent musical production of *The Wiz* was supported by an award established in loving memory of Lee Strebel, an Ithaca High student who died suddenly during his freshman year in February of 2006. In his short time at the high school, Lee became a standout in the drama department. The award honors Lee Strebel's love and enthusiasm for the performing arts. Lee's parents Leslie and Paul Strebel, the Strebel Planning Group, Ithaca High School Drama Teacher Lorraine Tino, and the Fine Arts Booster Group, an affiliate of IPEI, collaborate on planning. Thank you to The Strebel Fund for Community Enrichment of the Community Foundation of Tompkins County for supporting *The Wiz*!

Ithaca City School District Transition Program

The ICSD Transition would like to make families aware of two credit-bearing opportunities for the 2011 -2012 School Year.

2011 Summer Internships

The Summer Internship is developed through the Transition Office to students with an IEP or 504 Plan. An Internship is an experience that is designed to support a student's potential career interest, but is not paid. Students can earn elective credit in an internship and this can help to keep them on track for graduation.

A job may be used as an internship, providing the student is learning on the job and the employer is willing to participate.

2011 -2012 College Success Seminar

The College Success Seminar is a dual credit offering with TC3 and is available to any 11th or 12th grader. (A student does not need to have an IEP or 504 Plan).

This course is designed to help a student to prepare for the college experience. It is a one semester class and students can earn a half high school credit and up to 3 college credits if they attend TC3. The course covers such topics as college study skills, time management, how to seek assistance in college, and other topics relevant to the college experience.

For more information on these opportunities, please contact Jim Scarpulla at jscarpul@icsd.k12.ny.us or 274-2106.

Library Lines

With the rest of the High School, the Library is gearing up for a bustling spring.

- We will be awarding the 3rd quarter **Student of the Quarter**, for service to the library. Since the BOE eliminated Library Club last year, it has been harder to find Library volunteers, but they still come! Our previous awardee this year was Quanisha Goines, who faithfully tended the front desk after school (and still does!). It is an example of how our excellent students keep finding ways to help out and serve, tough budget times or not.
- The **Poetry Slam** will occur April 28, in the quad, weather permitting—Black Box if it's stormy. Judy Cogan and the Poetry Club have it all under control, with the Library providing support, pens, and maybe even a poet or two.
- We have added **more books** by a new favorite author, Ni Ni Simone—come check them out! We have also added bestsellers (*The Tiger's Wife*), thrillers (Dennis Lehane's *Darkness*, *Take My Hand*) and history (*The Warmth of Other Suns: the Epic Story of America's Great Migration*). There really is something for everyone, and if your student doesn't see their "something"—ask!
- Several of us have started listing the books we've read on www.shelfari.com. It is easy to sign up for and I will friend you if you want. Dr. Brown, the Superintendent, uses Shelfari, too.
- Maybe you have or maybe you haven't heard about a new routine this year: **Games Fridays**. When students have finished their schoolwork, they may check out board games or card games all day Friday. The favorites? Chess, Bananagrams, and UNO. We feel you're still using your brain, playing games, and it's a very civilized way to interact socially. Libraries are all about civilization, after all.
- **Library Advisory Board**: I would like to start this in the 4th quarter, with a meeting in May. We will be a Library support group, having input on policy, regulations, and activities in the Library. Please call or e-mail me if you would like to join us; meetings will be minimal, and it's a great opportunity to support a school institution!

"Poetry is a friend to whom you can say too much."

--Gwendolyn Brooks, *Report from Part One*, 1972

Yours in the Library,

Nan Bell

274-2186 nbell@icsd.k12.ny.us

Spanish News

The Spancom 2 students enjoyed a trip to the Johnson Art Museum for a guided tour in Spanish of the exhibit "Life in the Americas before Columbus" with Ronit Spiwak Aminoff, a Cornell graduate student docent from Columbia. The Johnson is not always able to provide tours in Spanish, so we were very excited to take advantage of this unique opportunity. In preparation for our visit, our docent provided a vocabulary list and students read and discussed background information in Spanish ahead

of time. This allowed students to understand the docent and ask questions with almost no need to resort to English, which was a very satisfying experience for students and teacher alike. Thank you to Carol Hockett and Ronit for facilitating this memorable educational experience!

Submitted by Claudia Miettunen

French News

During the February break four chaperones, Ms. Nussbaum, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Powers, and Mrs. Bowman set out on an incredible journey with 33 students taking French. Our destination was the city of lights, Paris. During our nine-day tour, students began to master the use of the Metro and they discovered most of the important museums in Paris such as the Louvre, the Musée d'Orsay, the Picasso Museum, the Rodin Museum, and the Carnavalet Museum. We trekked to important historical sites such as Invalides, the tomb of Napoleon and Père Lachaise, the largest cemetery in Paris where many famous artists, composers and writers were buried.

We visited and compared the churches of Notre Dame and Sacré Coeur and even in the driving rain made it to the second and third level of the Tour Eiffel. In the evening, we explored the Quartier Latin, the Champs-Élysées and of course we saw the Eiffel Tower and took pictures of it as it twinkled for

the first five minutes of the hour. We visited the Petit Trianon and the hamlet of Marie-Antoinette. Later in the week, we visited the vast grounds of the Chambord Castle, with its mere 400 rooms for a hunting lodge and we enjoyed the roaring fire and finely assembled furnished rooms at the Castle of Chenonceau located on the Cher River.

We even had time to participate in an interactive museum devoted to impressionism in Auvers-sur-Oise where we were able to see the original church that inspired Van Gogh's painting. In this small town we visited the simple yet lovely gravesite where Vincent and his brother Theo Van Gogh are buried. All too quickly, we had eaten all of the crepes that we could and it was time to return to the United States. We returned tired yet extremely grateful to have had the chance to experience Paris and its wonders.

Submitted by Janet Bowman

(YES) Youth Employment Service

YES is a program of the Ithaca Youth Bureau that assists Teens with finding jobs. We will begin accepting applications for Summer Jobs on April 1. 14 and 15 year olds who live in the city of Ithaca and are looking for work for the first time are especially encouraged to apply.

A few of the places our Teens have worked in past summers are the Ithaca Journal, GIAC, Cass Park, City Hall and Cornell University.

Spring is also the time for yard work and we can help connect you with people looking for help gardening, trimming bushes, mowing, etc.... Other odd jobs YES members do include babysitting, housecleaning, dog walking and moving.

You can pick up an application at the YES table during lunch on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at IHS or weekdays before 5 pm at the Ithaca Youth Bureau. You can also reach us by calling 273-8364 and asking for YES!

10th Grade Combined Class

We have had a very exciting couple of weeks in Combined.

In early March the Combined classes, along with several English 10R students, taught by myself went to Cornell University for a round robin trip. We visited Kroch Library and the Acting Director of the French Studies Program, Laurent Ferri, to see one of the premier collections of the French Revolution in the country, including documents signed by Louis XVI himself. We also traveled to the Johnson Museum to work with Carol Hockett where our focus was on the pre revolution art period, the Ancien Regime. Lauren Cowdery provided a hands-on experience allowing students to try on dress from the period. William Cowdery gave a wonderful lecture about Baroque music and how it reflected both pre and post revolutionary times preceding his performance.

The Combined class has also had the pleasure of working with NYS Baroque. Students have had the please of two recent guest lecturers: Amanda Winkler, from Syracuse University, spoke about music in the courts of Elizabeth I of England. Andrew Walkling, who is currently a visiting professor at Princeton, lectured on Baroque gesture. Later in March we traveled back to Cornell for an extension trip to learn about Baroque dance and opera. Students learned to minuet and were able to attend a dress rehearsal of NYS Baroque's presentation of Handel's opera Terpsicore. The ultimate goal of this program is to bring students to an awareness of interactions between music, history, and society, both in the past and today. 3 more special sessions are planned through April.

With two months left we have lots to do! Future plans include a Victorian Tea at the A.D. White House, a trip to The Cloisters and Met in NYC, and a 1940s soiree.

Lauren McKown
English teacher of Combined Class

English

April is Poetry Month! While the English Department organizes the participants to read a poem during morning announcements, the readers come from any department and any age group. Some examples this year include: Jay Barnes and Rae Williams (reading her own poetry) from Special Education, Matt Holl from World Languages reading in French, and Art Loomis from Fine Arts singing his poem.

Encourage your student to sign the list taped to the table in G-109, the English office. It happens every April, so if the list is filled when your student arrives, remember to sign up early next year.

WISE students of Ms. Gergely and Ms. Lord are well into the second semester of their projects, which means they are researching and journaling their work. The final presentations will be made the last weeks of school, including Regents week. Volunteer community members are always needed to help evaluate these projects and are given rubrics to guide their evaluations. (Call the English office to leave your name, phone number, and email—274-2187.)

This year WISE projects cross many disciplines. Some of them include: **music** (playing the violin, making a vocal album, learning the saxophone, learning an African instrument, composing jazz ensembles, becoming a DJ); **cooking** (basics, baking, vegetarian, Asian, Italian, parties); **science** (Faraday rotation, nature journal, landscaping including creating hardscape and greenscape, living sustainably, biological survey of property, investigating intersects between science and Christianity); **fitness** (bodybuilding, Triathlon training, martial arts, shadowing an athletic trainer); **the arts** (clothing design, creating a mural, jewelry making, designing a dream home, building a kiln to create Raku pottery, equine photography, movie making, multi-track recording/Youtube production, dance party to benefit children's charity, becoming a slam poet, clowning, creating a point and click computer game, making a fishing reel, building a tree house); **writing** (creating a graphic novel, a Star Wars Galaxy workbook, writing and illustrating a children's book); and **community service** (mentoring an autistic child, involvement in local politics).

See the complete picture at the WISE Blog <http://www.icsd.k12.ny.us/legacy/highschool/wise/wiseprojects.html>. With Ms. Lord's successful application, the WISE students received a \$500 Red and Gold Grant to help with supplies.

Mr. Armstrong's eleventh grade, second period class has been taking advantage of one offering from Cornell's GRASHPR Outreach Program. Graduate student Kim Todt is coming once a week for six weeks, during their small town unit, to discuss the differences between the film version of texts and the actual work, exploring the reasons for the differences. Recent films viewed have include: *King's Row* and *A Shadow of a Doubt*. Texts students have read include: *Our Town*, *Ethan Frome*, and *The Spoon River Anthology*.

Ms. McKown and Ms. Cole's 10th grade English Regents class has been discussing the role that storytelling plays in their lives. They considered what makes good storytelling, and why, despite technological advances, people continue to enjoy this simple style. YA author Shawn Goodman joined the class to help guide students through the writing process. Storyteller and librarian Nan Bell shared her skills in delivery. Carol Hockett from the Johnson Museum gave a presentation on storytelling in photography.

Each student worked to tell his or her own true story using NPR syndicated Moth Radio as a model. Each student was asked to write, record (using the new English mobile lab!), post to a wiki, and then listen and blog responses to other students' stories. Students were encouraged to submit their stories to the Moth Radio site for a possible invitation to read

live in NYC. It was a powerful and moving experience for all. As a result of this project students were also invited to read their stories at Barnes and Nobles on April 9th.

All of the tenth graders in Mrs. Murphy's classes have used Comic Life software to produce scenes in graphic novel style of the works they have read. Previously the Regents students created scenes from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Presently, Honors students are portraying scenes from Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

Ninth grade teachers Ms. Metzler and Ms. Swartz were awarded a \$500 grant from IPEI to create a sports literature library for their Regents classes. Students are creating an independent reading project with the texts. Barnes and Nobles donated a book cart to house the library. It can be seen in G-107.

Ms. Amodeo also has obtained five different titles for a total of 30 books from the organization Donors Choose for her eleventh grade unit about outsiders. The English Department greatly appreciates all of the support reflected in the gifts and the speakers who have come our way from our resource-rich community.

In addition, three student teachers have joined the department this quarter from Ithaca College: Robert Tate with Ms. McKown, Harry Nichols with Ms. Scholl, and Lizzy Honas with Ms. Swartz.

Shirley Kennedy
English Dept. Chair

Fine Arts Booster Group

Fine Arts Boosters Survey Results

The Fine Arts Booster Group conducted a survey to evaluate goals and activities and the community responded enthusiastically. Respondents confirmed the importance of advocating for and supporting district arts program and staff. A summary of the survey highlights are available at www.fabgithaca.org. For more information about the survey or the boosters, contact president@fabgithaca.org

Equity and Inclusion Leadership Council

The Equity and Inclusion Leadership Council (EILC) was formed to engage the community in supporting the District and the Board of Education "equity plan," along with the goal of closing the educational achievement gap. EILC members include parents, city and county administrators, teachers, directors of community programs, and representatives from the business and faith communities, and from urban and rural communities

As I write, the budget process is in full swing. This is a busy time for all as we advocate for programs that reduce the achievement gap. At the January meeting, the EILC reviewed the budget survey results, in which the public was asked to rate priorities from 1-8. Over 1200 people responded, and 600 people commented. While recognizing that the results were not statistically significant, the survey gave useful information, comparable to a huge town meeting. Here's what folks who answered thought:

Survey Results: Average score (a low score means ranked more highly)

- 3.13— early and sustained intervention for children at high risk of academic failure
- 3.44—recruit and retain the highest performing educators
- 3.48— improve college and workforce readiness for all students
- 4.38 -- support school-based efforts to eliminate race, class, gender, and disability as predictors of academic performance
- 4.40 -- provide additional staffing resources for classroom support
- 5.28 --invest in administrative and instructional technologies to enhance multi-dimensional learning opportunities within and alongside the classroom
- 5.39-- improve professional development opportunities for staff
- 5.56-- meet capital needs for maintenance, infrastructure and capital equipment

There are currently **3 budgets** put forth, at 3 different levels:

Tier 1: \$103,685,818 (~ 2.9% tax levy increase)

Tier 2: \$103,004,574 (~1.9% tax levy increase)

Tier 3: \$101,710,210 (~ 0% tax levy increase)

Superintendent Brown is asking the Board to adopt the Tier 1 budget. We applaud the Board of Education and Dr. Brown for their efforts to make the meetings more accessible and for posting documents on the ICSD website (<http://www.icsd.k12.ny.us/>). Look there for documents that describe the proposed budget adjustments. Particular areas of concern regarding reducing the achievement gap include the Pre-K program and summer school.

The District Equity Report Card came out on March 8, and will be presented to the Board of Education. The EILC will be meeting to discuss how to engage the community as we all look at the Equity Report Card.

At the March meeting, Connie Evelyn, Lauren Faessler, Roger Sevilla, and Lynn Van DeWeert gave a Staff Development Presentation. One main point that Connie Evelyn (Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction) made was that the focus of staff development will be to create a structure that allows district measures to be based on student achievement and teacher behavior. The new vision for staff development is to move away from training events and a train-the-trainer model to Professional Learning Communities (PLC). This was the topic of the most recent PLC Day (formerly called Superintendent's Conference Day) in March.

The EILC Communications Committee wrote letters to each building Principal asking these questions:

- What strategies did you use to obtain input from families on budget decisions you made particularly families who previously may have been less involved in the budget process?
- What process did you use to determine potential cuts?
- Was a specific amount to be cut identified? If so, what was the amount? How were potential cuts communicated to families?
- Are there additional ways members of EILC can be of assistance to you?

We are waiting for, and will report on, their replies.

The Equity Inclusion Leadership Council meets on the first Wednesday of every month. For more information, see: http://www.icsd.k12.ny.us/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=172&Itemid=613

Submitted by Sue Merkel

Fine Arts Booster Group "Good Works" Quilt Supports the Arts!

Join our community and support arts. Participate in our quilt drawing!

Marcie Wyant, retired teacher and owner of CottonPatchQuilts, has donated a beautiful quilt to benefit access to the arts in the Ithaca City School District. The Fine Arts Booster Group is offering tickets for a quilt drawing, to be held on June 18, 2011 at a 40th reunion of music lovers. You need not be present to win.

All proceeds from the quilt drawing will benefit kids in the arts in the Ithaca City School District . Suggested donations for tickets are one ticket for \$1 or six tickets for \$5. Go to www.fabgithaca.org and make your donation online. Your name will be entered into the drawing automatically. Or, fill out the form below and return it to Fine Arts Booster Group, 101 East State Street #182, Ithaca, NY 14850. The Fine Arts Booster Group, an affiliate of IPEI, supports and celebrates the arts in the Ithaca City School District.

Blowin' In The Wind Quilt Drawing

Name:

Address:

Phone/email:

Number of tickets:

Suggested donation is 1 ticket for \$1/5 tickets for \$6).

Amount enclosed:

Checks should be made out to IPEI/FABG and quilt drawing in the memo line.

The Fine Arts Boosters support district programs and staff, and advocate for increased student access, participation and equity in the arts programs. Formed in 2001 as an affiliate of the Ithaca Public Education Initiative (IPEI), the boosters believe the arts – music, visual art, drama and dance – are a central part of every student's public school education. IPEI is a community-based, not-for-profit organization that works to develop supportive community and private sector relationships with the Ithaca City School District. Check www.ipei.org.

Ithaca Public Education Initiative (IPEI)

The Ithaca Public Education Initiative (IPEI) has awarded \$61,000 in grants as of Feb. 1 for 2010-11 school year activities. Each of the 77 grants represents a project that expands classroom learning by drawing on community resources and the creativity of Ithaca City School District (ICSD) teachers and others who applied for funding from IPEI, according to President Terry Byrnes.

Lists of recently awarded grants are found at www.ipei.org under several categories: Teacher Grants, Red and Gold Grants, Community Collaboration Grants, Phyllis B. Brodhead Library Media Technology Grants, and Fine Arts Booster Group Grants. Another grant honors the memory of the late John Caren who taught at Ithaca High School before coming an ICSD administrator.

IPEI Teacher Grants to IHS teachers and staff:

Global Expeditions

Kristina DeCicco/Ithaca High

Jhakeem Halton et al, Global Expeditions

Identity: Text and Image

Carol Spence, Ithaca High

Ink Shop

Humanities at I.H.S.

Maryterese Pasquale Bowen, Lauren McKown, Emily Schwan, Ithaca High

Carol Hockett, Johnson Museum of Art, and others at Cornell

This grant is funded in memory of John Caren

Doodling Diseased Dissections

Victoria Benson/Ithaca High

Dr. Paul Maza, College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell

Selected to be funded by the Charles E. Treman Jr. Teacher Grant Endowment of the Tompkins Charitable Gift Fund in memory of former president of Tompkins Trust Company.

In addition, a number of Red & Gold Grants have been given to IHS teachers and staff; please see the IPEI web site for more information. IPEI is a community-based, not-for-profit organization that works to develop supportive community and private sector relationships with the Ithaca City School District. Check www.ipei.org.



Visit us on the web:

Ithaca High School: <http://www.icsd.k12.ny.us/highschool>

PTSA: http://ihsptsa.clarityconnect.com/IHS_PTSA/Welcome.html

Get important IHS and PTSA news by email: sign up for the listserv!

Send an email to: IHSPTSA-subscribe@yahoo.com

To join the discussion listserv, email IHSPTSA-discuss-subscribe@yahoo.com

Next issue of IHS Word: deadline for submissions May 31, for publication in June.

Submit items to: ihs_news@yahoo.com

Remember: School IS in session on Friday, May 27, due to the snow day.
