

Pride Month salute
Vet honored for defending
country and LGBTQ+ rights
p 3

Know your rights
Business owners receive
tips on handling incidents
p 10

Concerns about screens
Irvington school leaders
respond to parents
p 12

Vol 2. Issue 40.

June 12, 2026

RIVERTOWNS Dispatch

Local News,
Locally Sourced

\$2⁵⁰

WWW.RIVERTOWNSDISPATCH.COM ARDSLEY — DOBBS FERRY — HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON — IRVINGTON



Seeing blue

Students from Amanda Kupillas Dance in Hastings perform the second of their two shows at Irvington Theater on Saturday, June 6. For more photos and information about the program, turn to page 17.

Hastings enlists hunter to thin deer population

BY AMY BOCHNER

REGION — Following in the steps of Irvington and Dobbs Ferry, Hastings has hired a bow hunter to reduce the village's deer population starting this fall. On June 2, the board of trustees approved a contract with Peter Kelley of Kelly Deer Management (KDM) to reduce deer density and support long-term regeneration of Hillside Woods.

Hastings' past attempts to manage deer include a seven-year contraception program that began in 2014, in which 72 female deer were injected with a birth control drug and tagged. In the spring of 2024, the Village had a fence installed to keep deer out of 30 acres of Hillside Woods.

On March 3, Mayor Tom Drake introduced the idea of hiring Kelley to bow hunt in Hillside Woods. Over the last three years, he said, the Hastings Police Department had received reports about 12 accidents involving motor vehicles and deer.

The \$49,500 contract with Kelly includes \$2,500 for a 28-day deer density survey,

Continued on page 19

Juneteenth brims with purpose and pleasure

Celebrations to be held in Ardsley and Irvington

BY AMY BOCHNER

REGION — Juneteenth will be commemorated throughout the Rivertowns with movement, music, and education next Friday, June 19.

One of these celebrations is the 7th Annual Irvington Juneteenth Freedom Day Block Party, which will take place at Scenic Hudson Park from 4–7 p.m., led by committee co-chairs Injy Sullivan and Nicole Goldberg. The theme for this year's event is

fearlessness. According to Sullivan, this was inspired by a quote from writer Audre Lorde, who said "When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid."

A highlight of the event will be demonstrations from the 40+ Double Dutch Club, which is a national movement made up of women over the age of 40 who enjoy the game involving jumping two long ropes rotating in opposite directions simultaneously. Sullivan believes double Dutch embodies the event's theme of fearlessness. "There's an intimidation factor when the

ropes are going, and you have to be bold to just jump in and give it a try," she said. "Trying something new in front of friends and neighbors, or doing something that's a little bit of a risk, it takes courage to do that."

The goal is to "get people up and moving," Sullivan added. Steve Dillard will teach attendees how to line dance, while the Ice Cold Experience drumline, composed of young people from Mount Vernon, will return for the second straight year. Also attending is DJ Sofh Thee Sage. Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

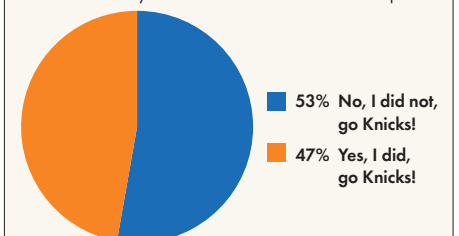
Sullivan, who is a leadership coach, is also

Continued on page 14

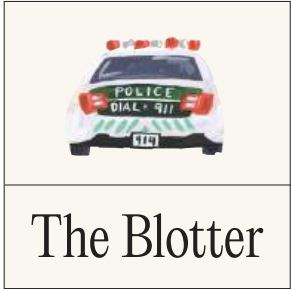
— You Answered —

Did you know the term 'knickerbocker' was coined by the Rivertowns' own Washington Irving?

As answered by 110 readers of the Rivertowns Dispatch



Vote at rivertownsdispatch.com/the-weekly-poll



The Blotter

ARDSLEY

Wanted no more: Three people wanted for missing village court appearances related to past arrests were apprehended between June 1-4. The defendants were a 25-year-old Pomona resident arrested for aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the first degree and criminal possession of a forged instrument in the second degree on March 12, 2023; a 56-year-old Yonkers resident arrested for petit larceny on Sept. 14, 2025; and a 34-year-old Mount Vernon resident arrested for criminal contempt in the first degree and petit larceny on March 16, 2025.

Suspended registration: A 35-year-old Bronx resident was arrested for a suspended vehicle registration, a misdemeanor, and cited for no insurance, a violation, on Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A) on the afternoon of Monday, June 1.

Vehicles entered: Six unlocked vehicles were entered on Euclid, Lincoln, and Prospect avenues between Saturday, June 6, and Sunday, June 7. Nothing was stolen.

DOBBS FERRY

Motorcycle mischief: An unidentified motorcyclist damaged the driver's side mirror of a 2025 Toyota Highlander on westbound Ashford Avenue, at Broadway (Route 9), following a verbal exchange with the driver of that SUV on the afternoon of Wednesday, May 3. The motorcyclist fled through the Mobil

station and then north on Broadway.

Theft from Ulta: An unidentified man and woman shoplifted \$3,408 worth of fragrances from the Ulta Beauty at Rivertowns Square on the evening of Wednesday, June 3. The theft was reported to the police on June 4.

Reckless driving arrest: A 35-year-old driver from the Bronx who was westbound on Lawrence Street was arrested after he crossed the double yellow line and collided with a 34-year-old cyclist who was southbound on the South County Trailway on the evening of Friday, June 5. The defendant was charged with reckless driving, a misdemeanor, and cited for three vehicle-and-traffic violations. The cyclist was transported to the Westchester Medical Center. Officer Denis Brucciani made the arrest.

Shoplifting arrest: A 30-year-old Dobbs Ferry resident was arrested for shoplifting \$230 worth of items from Stop & Shop, 390 Broadway, on the afternoon of Sunday, June 7. He was charged with petit larceny, a misdemeanor. Officer Michael Marron made the arrest.

HASTINGS

Suspended license: A 48-year-old White Plains resident was arrested for aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the third degree, a misdemeanor, and cited for not using his headlights, a violation, on Farragut Avenue on the evening of Monday, June 1.

Vehicles entered: Eleven unlocked vehicles were entered on Ashley Road, Bevers Street, Cedar Street, Fenwick Road, High Street,

Hudson Street, Prince Street, and Rose Street between Thursday, June 4, and Friday, June 5. The stolen property included a Macbook Pro laptop, \$200 cash, \$2 cash, and a handbag.

Suspended license and registration: A 45-year-old Bronx resident was arrested for aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the third degree and for a suspended registration, both misdemeanors, on Farragut Avenue on the evening of Thursday, June 4.

Suspended license and registration: A 56-year-old Bronx resident was arrested for aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the third degree and for a suspended registration, both misdemeanors, on Farragut Parkway on the evening of Sunday, June 7.

RIVERTOWNS Dispatch

PUBLISHER Allison Schulte
allison@rivertownsdispatch.com

EDITOR Tim Lamorte
tim@rivertownsdispatch.com

SPORTS EDITOR Rob DiAntonio
rob@rivertownsdispatch.com

STAFF WRITERS
Julian Michael Caldwell
julian@rivertownsdispatch.com
Amy Bochner
amy@rivertownsdispatch.com

CONTRIBUTORS
Janine Annett
janine@rivertownsdispatch.com
Timothy Reuter
timothy@rivertownsdispatch.com
Laura Schiller
laura@rivertownsdispatch.com

LISTINGS EDITOR Jennifer Gold
jennifer@rivertownsdispatch.com

COPY EDITOR Lauren Casper

DESIGN & PRODUCTION Christy Knell

SALES/PARTNERSHIPS
Trinity Godfrey
trinity@rivertownsdispatch.com

INTERNS
Samara Hadi, Mateus Hertz-Bird, James Oley

Rivertowns Dispatch (USPS 025-848) is published weekly on Fridays, except for the last week of the year, for a total of 51 issues annually by The Rivertowns Dispatch LLC, at 145 Palisade Street Suite 200 Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522. Periodicals postage is paid at Dobbs Ferry, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Rivertowns Dispatch at 145 Palisade Street Suite 200. For subscriptions go to: rivertownsdispatch.com/membership

Questions, comments, feedback:
hello@rivertownsdispatch.com
(914) 230-0739


BARRY

★McGOEY★


for Greenburgh Town Supervisor

DEMOCRAT FOR CHANGE


ENDORSED BY:




US Congressman
George Latimer



County Executive
Ken Jenkins



Assemblymember
MaryJane Shimsky



County Legislator
David Imamura

Ardsley Mayor **Steven Edelstein**
Hastings-on-Hudson Mayor **Thomas Drake**

Dobbs Ferry Mayor **Christy Knell**
Irvington Mayor **Arlene Burgos**

PAID FOR BY THE GREENBURGH DEMOCRATIC TOWN COMMITTEE

BARRYFORGREENBURGH.COM

VOTE FOR BARRY IN THE JUNE 23 DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY! EARLY VOTING JUNE 13-21

ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER ORKIN LEWIS

Vet honored for defending country and LGBTQ+ rights

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL
DOBBS FERRY — To kick off Pride Month, Dobbs Ferry resident and Air Force veteran Ben Ilany was honored with a proclamation from the Westchester County Board of Legislators for his service and advocacy for veterans' rights and benefits.

Ilany, who is now commander of the James Daley Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 200 in Hastings, had come out as gay at 18, before enlisting in the Air Force three years later, requiring him to conceal that part of his identity once again.

When Ilany enlisted, in 2006, the U.S. military policy known as "Don't Ask Don't Tell" (DADT) was in place. The policy, which was repealed in December 2010 after 17 years, allowed gay, lesbian, and bisexual people to serve in the military on the condition they didn't disclose their sexual orientation. Doing so would be grounds for expulsion.

During the June 1 Board of Legislators meeting, David Imamura, who represents District 12, which covers all four Rivertowns, presented a proclamation naming June 1, 2026 "Ben Ilany Day" in Westchester County.

"In the era of 'Don't Ask Don't Tell,' Ben was already out before joining the military, but despite that he still signed up to serve our country knowing that he would have to hide a part of who he was, while risking his life to fight for a country that in that moment was not fighting for people like him," Imamura said during the meeting.

Imamura introduced Ilany, who grew up in Scarsdale and attended Hobart & William Smith Colleges in upstate Geneva, which he left to join the Air Force as he neared the start of his junior year. Ilany explained that while he didn't support the DADT policy, he was and continues to be proud of his military service.

"The military was a formative part of my young adult gay life," Ilany said, speaking from the podium at the meeting. "It's where I learned to keep secrets and spot trusted friends. It's where I learned to be proud of the person I was becoming."

In addition to serving as commander for VFW Post 200 in Hastings, Ilany works as an investment analyst with Avenue Capital



Hastings Mayor Tom Drake, Dobbs Ferry Mayor Christy Knell, County Legislator David Imamura, Ben Ilany, Jed Ilany, their three children, and Board of Legislators chair Vedat Gashi.

Group. He and his husband, Jed, have lived in Dobs Ferry since 2018 and have three children ages 6, 9, and 11. Ilany recalled that at the time he enlisted and prepared to abide by DADT, he "figured that everybody was sacrificing something to be there [in the military], and this part of my life was what I had to sacrifice."

While in the Air Force, Ilany served as a senior airman, learned Dari Persian, and deployed to Iraq. Four years after enlisting, in 2010, he enrolled at Columbia University. Ilany recalls completing his Columbia application as the sun came up in Mosul, Iraq, after landing from one of his missions. In 2012, he graduated with a B.A. in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies.

While Ilany attended Columbia, there

were debates on campus about whether or not to reinstate the university's Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program, which Columbia faculty had blocked, arguing it would constitute an endorsement of discrimination as exemplified by DADT. After the policy was repealed in 2010, while Ilany was a student, he spoke out at town halls and in interviews about his experience keeping his secret while serving in the Air Force, and advocating for the ROTC program to return to Columbia.

"I said it because I was a veteran who cherished my time in the military," Ilany explained. "I said it because I was a gay person who could identify with the people in that room who felt targeted. And I said it because I believed then what I believe now

— that the military is better when it draws from all of America."

Ilany shared how it wasn't uncommon for him to hear slurs about gay people used by his fellow servicemembers whose lives he depended on, and whose lives depended on him. He also remembered how "gay" was used by peers as a synonym for weak, stupid, or soft. Ilany also shared that while he never came out while he was in the military, conversations with his peers made him confident that if he had been able to reveal his secret, he would be supported.

"The military was also a place where I met curious, open-minded, and tolerant people," Ilany said. "People who read broadly, asked hard questions. People who would've

Continued on page 14

PICTURE BOOK

Dobbs Ferry, New York

PLACE SUMMER READING ORDERS
 PICTUREBOOKNY@GMAIL.COM



INSIDE HUDCO, 145 PALISADE STREET, SUITE 200
 MON-FRI 9AM-5PM + SPECIAL EVENTS | PICTUREBOOKNY.COM

MON-FRI 7AM-7PM
 SAT 8AM-1PM

1053 SAW MILL RIVER ROAD, ARDSLEY
 (914) 693-2350



OrthoCare

PHYSICAL THERAPY & SPORTS REHABILITATION

Orthopaedic • Sports Injuries

Hands On • Manual Therapy Approach • Pre & Post Surgical Care
 Knee and Shoulder • Spinal Rehabilitation • Auto/Work Related Injuries

Most Insurance Plans Accepted
 Including Medicare, Workers Comp, and No Fault

— May 2026 home sales —

ARDSLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

	BD/BA	SQFT	LIST PRICE	SALE PRICE	SP/OLP%
5 Birch Street White Plains	3/2	1,579	\$799,000	\$947,670	118.6%
9 Northern Road Hartsdale	3/2	1,782	\$939,000	\$985,000	104.9%
21 Park Avenue White Plains	3/3	2,130	\$979,000	\$990,000	101.1%
111 Ridge Road Ardsley	5/4	2,698	\$1,150,000	\$1,425,000	123.9%
699 Ardsley Road Scarsdale	5/5	3,834	\$1,689,000	\$1,765,000	104.5%

DOBBS FERRY SCHOOL DISTRICT

41 Devoe Street Dobbs Ferry	3/1	1,034	\$600,000	\$515,000	85.8%
23 Bradley Street Dobbs Ferry	3/2	1,336	\$779,000	\$904,000	116.0%
13 McClelland Avenue Dobbs Ferry	5/4	2,188	\$1,375,000	\$1,505,000	109.5%
9 Constance Avenue Dobbs Ferry	4/5	4,137	\$2,175,000	\$2,700,000	124.1%

HASTINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT

555 Broadway #6E Hastings	1/1	828	\$499,000	\$500,000	100.2%
27 Maple Avenue #3B Hastings	2/2	1,086	\$599,000	\$590,000	98.5%
555 Broadway #2G Hastings	3/2	1,200	\$625,000	\$650,000	104.0%
565 Broadway #4F Hastings	3/2	1,162	\$685,000	\$685,000	100.0%
23 Berrybush Lane Hastings	2/3	2,000	\$849,000	\$825,000	97.2%
22 Olinda Avenue Hastings	4/2	1,544	\$699,000	\$900,000	128.8%

	BD/BA	SQFT	LIST PRICE	SALE PRICE	SP/OLP%
90 Rosedale Avenue Hastings	3/1	1,296	\$849,000	\$915,000	107.8%
6 Berrybush Lane #6 Hastings	3/4	2,725	\$999,000	\$1,055,000	105.6%
65 Euclid Avenue Hastings	3/3	1,701	\$1,200,000	\$1,350,000	112.5%
25 Croton Avenue Hastings	3/3	2,236	\$1,200,000	\$1,425,000	118.8%
21 Kent Avenue Hastings	3/2	1,644	\$1,200,000	\$1,624,024	135.3%
61 Pinecrest Drive Hastings	3/3	2,397	\$1,399,000	\$1,700,000	121.5%
23 Crossbar Road Hastings	5/3	3,122	\$1,999,000	\$2,230,000	111.6%

IRVINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

314 S Buckhout Street #0 Irvington	2/1	850	\$319,000	\$355,000	111.3%
14 S Broadway #7-3A Irvington	2/1	950	\$375,000	\$370,000	98.7%
61 High Street Tarrytown	2/2	835	\$600,000	\$650,000	108.3%
2 Riverview Terrace Irvington	3/2	1,875	\$1,075,000	\$1,385,000	128.8%
180 Taxter Road Irvington	5/7	3,486	\$1,300,000	\$1,420,000	109.2%
20 Riverview Road Irvington	3/3	1,791	\$1,300,000	\$1,508,000	116.0%
15 Marker Ridge #16 Irvington	3/5	3,325	\$1,699,000	\$1,649,000	97.1%
22 Marker Ridge #11 Irvington	3/4	2,675	\$1,694,995	\$1,723,551	101.7%
6 Marker Ridge #3 Irvington	3/5	3,325	\$2,099,000	\$1,959,000	93.3%
27 Dearman Close Irvington	6/8	6,851	\$2,950,000	\$2,725,000	92.4%
5 Belmont Drive Irvington	6/6	6,523	\$3,490,000	\$3,100,000	88.8%
1 Roland Road Irvington	8/7	8,171	\$4,795,000	\$4,250,000	88.6%

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



THE FRANCIE MALINA TEAM

DATA SOURCED FROM ONEKEY® MLS. WHILE BELIEVED ACCURATE, THE INFORMATION IS NOT GUARANTEED. DATA REFLECTS CLOSED RESIDENTIAL TRANSACTIONS FOR MAY 2026 IN THE HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON, DOBBS FERRY, ARDSLEY AND IRVINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

PAUL FEINER

MUCH DONE, MORE TO DO!

Upgraded Street Lights to LED lights

Summer Youth Internship programs

Town Parkland 200 → 614 Acres

52 Years of Bronx River Parkway Bicycle Sunday

New Sidewalks: +12 miles since 2017

376 Affordable Housing Units Approved & Constructed

Helped over 400 Families avoid homelessness

Started first bus Hartsdale ↔ Manhattan

Rumbrook, Knollwood pump station connection, Protects water supply

New Regeneration campus +1500 jobs

Greenburgh Town Hall Rooftop Solar Panels

Dozens of New Playgrounds, Kiddie Pool at AF Veteran Park

Preserved historic Odell House

Rumbrook Park night lights for 700 Little League players

Snow Angels Tech Angels COVID Angels help for seniors

Police Summer Youth Camp for teens

Toughest Ethics Law: No campaign contributions from active contractors, developers

Theodore D. Young Community Center 2nd floor expansion

Old Putnam Railroad Tracks South County Recreational Trail

Upgraded Street Lights to LED lights

Summer Youth Internship programs

Town Parkland 200 → 614 Acres

52 Years of Bronx River Parkway Bicycle Sunday

New Sidewalks: +12 miles since 2017

376 Affordable Housing Units Approved & Constructed

Helped over 400 Families avoid homelessness

Started first bus Hartsdale ↔ Manhattan

Rumbrook, Knollwood pump station connection, Protects water supply

New Regeneration campus +1500 jobs

Greenburgh Town Hall Rooftop Solar Panels

Dozens of New Playgrounds, Kiddie Pool at AF Veteran Park

Preserved historic Odell House

Rumbrook Park night lights for 700 Little League players

Snow Angels Tech Angels COVID Angels help for seniors

Police Summer Youth Camp for teens

Toughest Ethics Law: No campaign contributions from active contractors, developers

Theodore D. Young Community Center 2nd floor expansion

Old Putnam Railroad Tracks South County Recreational Trail

VOTE for PAUL FEINER!

DEMOCRATIC
PRIMARY 2026

Early Voting
June 13-21

Primary Day
June 23

www.paulfeiner.com

Paid for by Friends of Paul Feiner, Carrie Feiner Trenk, Treasurer



ARDSLEY

— Coming Up This Week —

League of Women Voters Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m.
Irvington Presbyterian Church,
25 N. Broadway

Annual meeting will be followed by a light luncheon and presentation of Civic Leadership Award. RSVP: info@lwv-rivertowns.org

Board of Trustees Meeting

Monday, June 15, 7:30 p.m.
Village Hall

Agenda available at ardsleyvillage.gov

Planning Board Meeting

Monday, June 15, 8 p.m.
Village Hall

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 16, 7 p.m.
High school library

Agenda and link available: ardsleyschools.org

Senior Musical Bingo & Ice Cream Social

Wednesday, June 17, noon
Ardsley Community Center

Municipal Office Closure

Friday, June 19
In observance of Juneteenth

Juneteenth Celebration

Friday, June 19, 4–6 p.m.
Pascone Park

The Multicultural, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee presents music, yoga, performances, and food trucks

Movie Matinee: “Hamnet”

Monday, June 22, 2 p.m.
Ardsley Public Library

Register at ardsleypubliclibrary.org

End-of-year Ice Cream Social

Friday, June 26, 6–8 p.m.
Pascone Park

With inflatable attractions, live music, balloon sculptures, and a foam party

Local Board Positions Open

The Village is accepting applications from residents interested in serving on a board. Visit ardsleyvillage.civicweb.net/Portal/BoardApplication

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at amy@rivertownsdispatch.com

— FOUR QUESTIONS WITH —

Stephanie Marquesano

Harris Project founder named woman of distinction

BY JANINE ANNETT

Ardsley resident Stephanie Marquesano, founder of The Harris Project, is dedicated to shedding light on the combination of mental health challenges and substance misuse known as co-occurring disorders. The project is named after her son, who passed away in 2013 at age 19 from an accidental overdose. Marquesano was honored with a 2026 Woman of Distinction award from New York State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins on May 5.

“Stephanie Marquesano embodies resilience, purpose, and leadership,” Stewart-Cousins said. “She built a nationally recognized organization that is changing how we understand and treat co-occurring disorders. Her work is saving lives, supporting families, and giving communities the tools they need to respond with compassion and evidence-based care.”

The Dispatch recently asked Marquesano about The Harris Project and what’s on the horizon for the organization.

Rivertowns Dispatch: How did it feel to get a 2026 Woman of Distinction award from State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins?

Stephanie Marquesano: It was an extraordinary honor, and one that I will carry with me, always. What made it especially meaningful was that the recognition came from someone I deeply admire and consider a role model. Since we first met at an Ardsley Day celebration in 2017, State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins has taken a genuine interest in both my family’s story and the work of The Harris



Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Stephanie Marquesano

Project. From the beginning, she took the time to truly understand co-occurring disorders, the intersection of mental health challenges and substance use issues, asked thoughtful questions, remembered details, and consistently showed up in ways that reflect authentic leadership.

Given the extraordinary women throughout our district, being selected as the 2026 Woman of Distinction was both humbling and deeply meaningful. What meant the most was the opportunity to honor Harris and elevate awareness of co-occurring disorders. This recognition belongs not only to me, but to the millions of individuals and families affected by mental health challenges and substance use issues; to those who are struggling and those who love and support them; to the young people helping to change the conversation through CODA (Co-Occurring Disorders Awareness); and to the educators, prevention professionals, treatment providers, community organizations, and government partners working every day to improve outcomes. I am deeply grateful that Leader Stewart-Cousins chose to shine a light on this issue.

RD: What is one thing you want everyone to know about mental health

challenges and substance misuse?

SM: I want people to understand that one in two people with a substance use issue also struggle with a mental health challenge, yet we continue to talk about and address them separately. More than 21 million Americans have co-occurring disorders, impacting not only individuals, but also families, friends, and entire communities, yet most people have never even heard the term.

That lack of awareness has real consequences. You can’t prevent something you’ve never heard of, and you can’t advocate for better care if you don’t know what’s missing. Too often, young people, families, and even professionals are left trying to navigate systems that were built to address mental health and substance use separately rather than together.

The good news is that recovery is possible. Effective, integrated treatment models exist, and we are fortunate to have access to them here in Westchester County. That should give people hope. It should also remind us that better outcomes are possible when we recognize the whole person and address mental health and substance use together. The more we increase awareness and understanding of co-occurring disorders, the better positioned we are to strengthen

Continued on page 18



‘AMPed’ up

The Ardsley High School Select Chorus performs during Ardsley Music Partners’ annual AMP Fest at the middle school on Saturday, June 6. Ardsley Music Partners is a parent-run nonprofit that supports the school district’s music program. For more information, visit www.ardsleymusicpartners.org.

ARDSLEY

Eighth-graders' parents prepare for high school transition

BY LAURA SCHILLER

While Ardsley eighth-graders spent June 4 riding roller coasters at Dorney Park in Pennsylvania on their end-of-year field trip, another kind of roller coaster was on the minds of parents — the transition to high school this fall.

On June 3, about a dozen parents gathered in the middle school library for a discussion titled “Helping Your Child Make a Healthy Transition to High School.” Led by Student Assistance counselor Allison Mastrogiacom, the presentation addressed common concerns surrounding ninth grade, including peer pressure, healthy decision-making, and substance use.

Drawing on feedback from current ninth-graders, Mastrogiacom began with reassuring news. Many ninth-graders report enjoying the increased independence of high school, having classes with students across grade levels, and the wider range of clubs, sports, and extracurricular activities.

Their advice to incoming freshmen: stay organized from day one and get involved.

At the same time, Mastrogiacom acknowledged the worries many middle school students have as they prepare for the transition. Among the most common concerns are more homework, feeling small and getting lost in the hallways, navigating

a crowded lunchroom, and adjusting to new academic demands.

Those challenges resonated with some parents in attendance, particularly as the high school prepares to implement a rotating drop schedule in which class periods will increase from 40 to 57 minutes and meeting times will vary throughout the week.

Leslie Danon, whose son, Harrison Frind, is the Ardsley Middle School student council president, said she is encouraging him to focus on the opportunities that come with the move to high school.

“I’ve been telling Harrison that he’s going to have so much more freedom in high school,” Danon told the Dispatch. “Even though he’s nervous about keeping up with the schoolwork, he’ll actually have an extra study period now with the new drop schedule.”

While some parents have expressed concerns about the rotating schedule, Danon said she sees potential benefits.

“I’m a little concerned, not because I think it’s a bad idea,” she said. “It’s going to give them opportunities to review tests, go over homework problems that were particularly difficult, have deeper classroom discussions, and maybe even have time to do homework in class.”

The conversation then turned to adolescent development and healthy decision-making.

“The teen brain is changing,” Mastrogiacom

told parents. “It’s not fully developed, so the decision-making, impulse control, and thinking ahead is not all there yet.”

Young people who begin using alcohol, nicotine, or other substances before age 15, she said, are more likely to develop substance use problems later in life.

Mastrogiacom outlined several factors that can influence teen behavior, including anxiety, boredom, peer pressure, and access to substances. She challenged a common perception among younger students that drinking and partying are universal parts of the high school experience.

“There may be a small percentage that does, but many kids have the perception that that’s what people do in high school, and it’s not true,” she said.

She noted that many teenagers view marijuana, nicotine pouches, gummies, and other products as relatively harmless because they are widely available and often marketed in appealing ways.

“Parents are the number-one influence, even during high school, to remain drug free,” Mastrogiacom said. “Research shows parents who talk to their kids about this stuff often have kids who use significantly less.”

As part of a presentation titled “Vaping 101: Essential Facts,” Mastrogiacom reviewed the appearance of vaping devices, their discreet

nature, and the health risks associated with their use. She also displayed examples of vaping products to help parents recognize them.

She encouraged parents to model healthy behavior, set clear expectations around substance use, and maintain open lines of communication with their children. Among her suggestions were helping teens practice ways to refuse offers of alcohol or drugs and establishing a code word they could use if they needed a parent to pick them up from an uncomfortable situation.

Mastrogiacom also recommended several resources for parents, including the podcast “Ask Lisa: The Psychology of Parenting” by Lisa Damour and the Center for Parent & Teen Communication.

For Danon, maintaining a positive outlook on the transition to high school, and especially the new rotating drop schedule, is key.

“In my opinion it’s best to go in with a super-positive mindset,” she said. “When I was talking about it with Harrison, I said, ‘Listen, this is actually good for the ninth-graders coming in.’ Normally, they might feel like the lost souls, intimidated by the upperclassmen. But everybody’s going to be anxious and confused.

“I guess that’s not a good thing,” she added with a laugh, “but it’s all-for-one, and I think people might be a little bit more kind.”







DOBBS FERRY

— Coming Up This Week —

Moonball and Family Fun Day

Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.
Waterfront Park

Annual benefit for the Cure Sanfilippo Foundation and Jacob Moon

Free admission. Register (\$35) for kickball for grades 3–8 at jacobmoonball.com

Trail and Garden Maintenance

Sunday, June 14, 10 a.m.–noon
Chauncey Park

Sign up at eventbrite.com and search “Dobbs Ferry Conservation Advisory Board”

Pollywogs Music

Saturday, June 13, 11:15 a.m.–noon
Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Interactive program for ages 6 months–3 years
Register: childrens@dobbsferrylibrary.org

League of Women Voters Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m.
Irvington Presbyterian Church,
25 N. Broadway

Annual meeting will be followed by a light luncheon and presentation of Civic Leadership Award. RSVP: info@lwv-rivertowns.org

Rivertowns Jewish Festival

Sunday, June 14, 1–3 p.m.
Waterfront Park

Board of Trustees Workshop

Tuesday, June 16, 6:30 p.m.
Village Hall

Agenda available at dobbsferry.gov

Trivia Night

Tuesday, June 16, 7 p.m.
Memorial Park

Virtual Town and Gown Literary Discussion Group

Wednesday, June 17, 7 p.m.

Hosted on Zoom by the Dobbs Ferry Public Library. Discuss “In My Time of Dying” by Sebastian Junger. Email sbramble@dobbsferrylibrary.org for the Zoom link

Library Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 17, 7:30 p.m.
Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Got news?

Email staff writer Julian Michael Caldwell at julian@rivertownsdispatch.com



Ernie Howell holds a proclamation on May 17.

Benefactor passes away in wake of honors

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

Ernest M. Howell of Dobbs Ferry passed away on May 29, less than two weeks after being honored by the nonprofit organization Rivertowns for Refugees, which he supported for the past nine years.

Known as Ernie, Howell lived in the village for 61 years and celebrated his 100th birthday on March 1. He and his wife, Jean Marion Howell, who passed away in 2018, moved to Dobbs Ferry from Eastchester in 1965, a few months after the birth of their fifth and youngest child, Suzanne Mecs.

“He and my mother — a white woman and black man — were married in 1956, and it was not legal for them to be married in many U.S. states,” Mecs told to the Dispatch. The Loving v. Virginia Supreme Court decision that ruled that laws banning interracial marriage were unconstitutional

did not come until 1967.

Mecs added that after Jean passed, “he always had a photograph of her nearby — big ones, upstairs and downstairs. And he would often hold one when we did family shots so that she was still with us.”

The Howells were known for hosting Memorial Day picnics at their home, which they continued doing for roughly 50 years, starting in 1966. Mecs recalls her father telling her that the year before the picnic, when the family was planning to move, a member of South Presbyterian Church convinced the bank to give the Howells the loan they needed to purchase the property, since the bank didn’t want to loan to a Black man.

Howell was born in Davenport, Iowa, in 1926, and earned a full scholarship to Harvard University, where he majored in Russian Area Studies. While attending Harvard,

he made an appointment in Washington, D.C., to interview to join the military during World War II. Mecs shared how, once there, he was turned away.

“He was sitting in the waiting room, and eventually they said, ‘Sorry, Mr. Howell, we don’t have an appointment for you,’” Mecs recounted. “And it was pretty apparent they hadn’t realized he was Black. He was a man in the 1940s at Harvard, and they didn’t expect that.”

Eventually, Howell was able to join the Army and was assigned to a segregated unit. Mecs explained that when he got to basic training, and it was discovered that he had ROTC experience from high school and knew how to type, he was promoted to a position where he oversaw troops and their drills. Howell served from 1944–46

Continued on page 19



Pride on the march

Allan Archer of Ardsley and Devin Trey Campbell of Carmel lead a Pride Month march from the intersection of Cedar and Main streets to Waterfront Park, where a rally was held, on Saturday, June 6.

DOBBS FERRY

— COMMUNITY BRIEFS —

Rivertowns Jewish Festival

Chabad of the Rivertowns will present the inaugural Rivertowns Jewish Festival at Waterfront Park in Dobbs Ferry this Sunday, June 14, from 1–3 p.m. The free event will celebrate Jewish culture through food, music, and family-friendly activities

open to the public.

The festival will feature a performance by the Jon Madof Band, known for its contemporary take on Jewish music. In addition, the festival will include Israeli-style food, a Kona Ice truck, and a range of activities for children, such as inflatable attractions and a foam party (families are encouraged to bring bathing suits). Vendors will also be on-site,



Jon Madof will headline the Rivertowns Jewish Festival at Waterfront Park on June 14. Photo by Marko Dashev.

offering everything from art and baked goods to jewelry and Judaica.

The goal of the event is to create an accessible, joyful gathering where neighbors can connect by the river.

“One of the beautiful things about the Rivertowns is the embracing of all cultures,” Rabbi Benjy Silverman said. “This festival is a fun and meaningful way to share a taste of Jewish culture with the broader Westchester community.”

For more information, visit [Rivertowns JewishFestival.com](http://RivertownsJewishFestival.com).

Golf and pickleball to benefit St. John’s Hospital

St. John’s Riverside Hospital will host its Marty and Iris Walshin Memorial Golf Classic at Ardsley Country Club in Dobbs Ferry, 100 North Mountain Drive, on Tuesday, June 16.

The annual event will include pickleball for the first time. Golfers and pickleball players will enjoy a day of friendly competition, including the opportunity for golfers to win a new car through a hole-in-one contest sponsored by Ray Catena Lexus of Larchmont.

Following the day’s activities, there will be an evening cocktail reception, dinner, silent auction, raffles, and an awards presentation.

Proceeds will benefit St. John’s cardiac services. The hospital operates a pavilion and medical group office in Dobbs Ferry, three pavilions and two medical group offices in Yonkers, a nursing school in Yonkers, and medical group office in Hartsdale.

The Walshin Classic will start with golfer registration and brunch at 11 a.m., followed by shotgun play at 12:30 p.m.; pickleball registration at 1 p.m., followed by round-robin play at 1:30 p.m.; and a cocktail hour at 5:30.

Tickets cost \$850 per golfer, \$3,400 per foursome, \$250 for pickleball with brunch, \$400 for pickleball with cocktails and dinner, \$75 for brunch, and \$250 for cocktails and dinner.

For tickets and more information, visit riversidehealth.org/giving/events.

Little League fundraiser

The Dobbs Ferry Little League 11-and-under boys’ travel team (and their parents) will babysit children from ages 4–10 at House of Sports, 1 Elm St., in Ardsley on Thursday, June 18, from 5:30–8 p.m. The event will support the team’s trip to compete in a tournament in upstate Cooperstown from Aug. 17–22. The cost is \$40 for the first child and \$20 for siblings thereafter. To sign up, visit tinyurl.com/2taf7jvy.

**HUDSON VALLEY
NUMISMATICS**
Making “Cents” of Your Treasure!

Personal Property + Estate Settlement Consultants

With a background in education and decades of professional experience.

WE HELP FAMILIES appraise, insure, divide, sell, or donate lifelong collections. Our specialties are coins, currency, jewelry and all other estate treasure. We work with auctioneers or can make you an offer. IRS, AOA, and USPAP qualifications and ethics.



Plan now to share your vision with the next generation!

Meet us by appointment in our Hastings-on-Hudson office, or arrange a site visit today.
HUDSONCOINS@AOL.COM | 914-649-3317 OR 833-THE-COIN | HVCOINS.COM

UPSTREAM GALLERY

35 Years
In the Rivertowns
22 artists exhibiting

**We thank you for your patronage.
Support the arts, bring some home!**

**June 4th
to June 28th**

**Artists’ Talk
moderated by
Marie-Louise Miller
Sunday June 14th,
2:00 to 5:00pm**

**8 Main Street, Hastings on Hudson
Hours: Thursday to Sunday 12:30 to 5:30**



HASTINGS- ON-HUDSON

— Coming Up This Week —

Friday Night Pride

Friday, June 12, 6–9 p.m.

Warburton Avenue

Live concert, activities, and food vendors. Pre-event, 3:45–5:45 p.m., at The Good Witch, 134 Southside Ave., concluding with a march up to Warburton.

Farmers Market

Saturday, June 13, 8:30 a.m.–1 p.m.

Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue
hastingsfarmersmarket.org

League of Women Voters Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m.

Irvington Presbyterian Church,
25 N. Broadway

Annual meeting will be followed by a light luncheon and presentation of Civic Leadership Award. RSVP: info@lwv-rivertowns.org

Run for a Tree

Sunday, June 14, 9 a.m.

Hillside School parking lot

1.26-mile fundraising race to help stop deforestation. Register (\$5): tinyurl.com/46643m4f Donate at tinyurl.com/sm2mz6sx

Hastings Flea Pride Market

Sunday, June 14, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue

Hastings on Jazz

Sunday, June 14, 3–5:30 p.m.

VFW Plaza

School Board Meeting

Monday, June 15, 6:30 p.m.

Hillside Multipurpose Room

Free Class: Preparing for Emergencies

Wednesday, June 16, 6 p.m.

James Harmon Community Center
Registration required at prepare.ny.gov

Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, June 16, 7 p.m.

Village Hall

Agenda available at hohny.gov

Planning Board Meeting

Thursday, June 18, 7 p.m.

Village Hall

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at amy@rivertownsdispatch.com

District outlines position on synthetic fields

BY AMY BOCHNER

In letters and legal documents, the Hastings School District and Board of Education defended its choice of an artificial turf product for two athletic fields at the Burke Estate.

Responding to a legal petition filed by residents challenging the district's contract for the material to be used, Schools Superintendent William McKersie sent an email to the community on June 3 explaining that the project was going forward, school board president Alex Dal Piaz signed an affidavit, and the district's legal representation provided an affirmation.

Last year, voters approved a \$38.5 million capital bond that was broken up into three propositions. The third centered on replacing two of the grass fields at the Burke Estate with a synthetic multipurpose field and a synthetic softball field. Proposition three was approved by a vote of 1,440–1,369.

On April 8, the school board voted 4–1, with two members absent, to approve a \$5.8 million contract with Laura Li Industries for the two fields, which included \$1.2 million for artificial turf. The approved product is FieldTurf Vertex Prime with Purefill, which has an infill of cork and sand instead of rubber.

On May 4, Hastings parents Aarthi Muthukrishnan, Ariella Gastel, and Rachel Thornton filed a petition with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) challenging the school board's decision. The petitioners sought a stay, or a pause, of the April 8 contract and any related construction at the Burke Estate. The district's challenge to the petition is pending. According to an FAQ on the NYSED website, the commissioner "endeavors" to make a decision within eight to 10 months after the initial petition is filed. Construction at the Burke Estate began June 1, and is estimated to take six to nine months.

Prior to the bond vote last June, the district released a list of preliminary specifications for the artificial turf product, one of which required that it "not be manufactured using PFAS." This stands for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as "forever chemicals,"



The school district's rendering of the multipurpose field planned for the Burke Estate.

which are linked to health and environmental concerns. On Feb. 10, the board updated its specs, which now required "a manufacturer certified letter stating that the synthetic turf shall not contain or be treated with PFAS substances for any purpose."

FieldTurf provided the district with a letter stating that their products do not contain any intentionally added PFAS in its formulation or manufacturing process. The company also provided a memo summarizing the results of testing conducted by PACE Labs and overseen by Gradient, a risk science consulting firm. The results indicated trace levels of multiple PFAS compounds in the artificial turf components.

The memo concluded this was "not indicative of PFAS compounds being used in the products' manufacturing processes." It also stated these concentration levels "do not exceed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) residential soil or drinking water regional screening levels (RSLs)" and are "consistent with the low-level trace PFAS compounds found in soil and rainwater across North America."

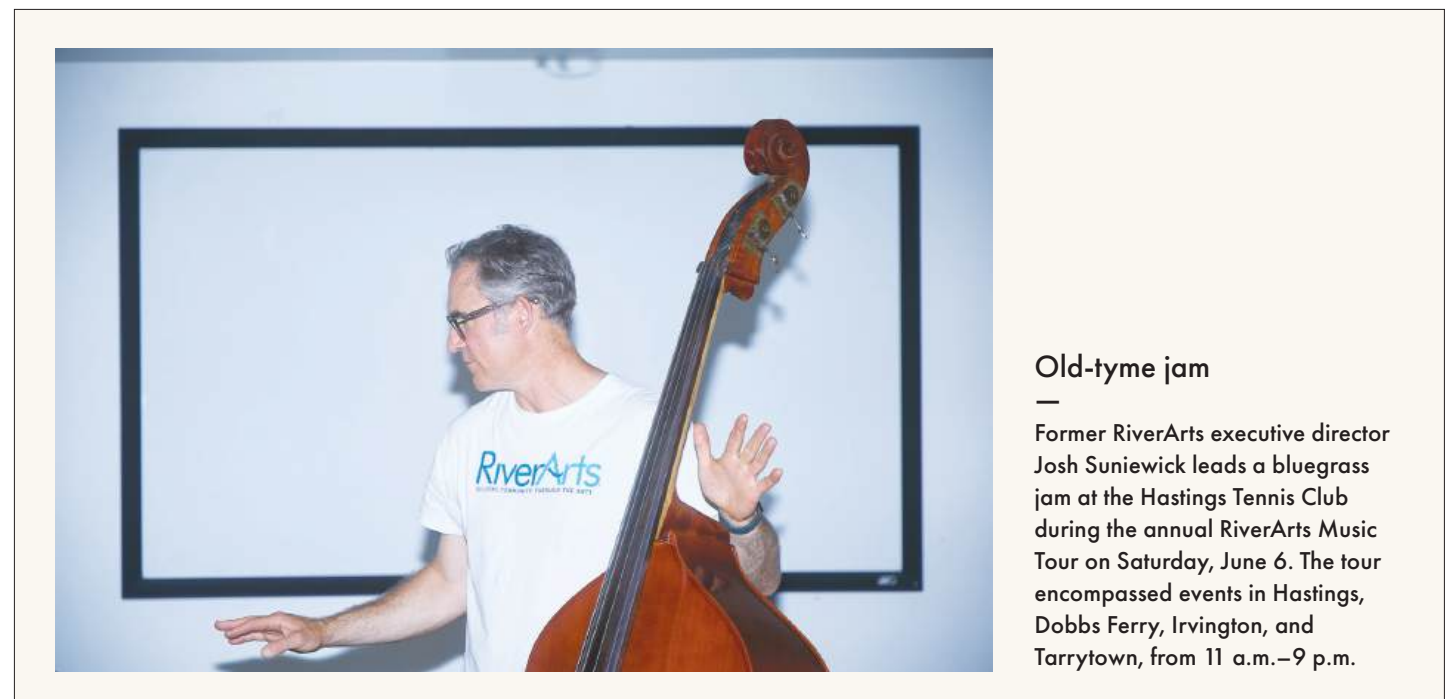
The petition argues that because the letter

did not state the product contains "no PFAS" and the testing indicates the chemicals are present in the product, the awarded contract does not meet the board's specifications. The petition also argues that the district represented in communications with voters "that any installed turf would be free of PFAS."

According to Dal Piaz's affidavit, prior to the bond vote, the district and school board "acknowledge that they changed from referring to the artificial turf requirements as being 'not manufactured using PFAS' to 'containing no PFAS' and 'PFAS free.'" When making this change, the affidavit continues, "the board and district did not believe they were substantively changing the PFAS requirement for the artificial turf." Instead, they were seeking to "utilize the language" contained in Extended Producer Responsibility for Carpet Law, which states that, starting Dec. 31, 2026, the sale of artificial turf containing PFAS or treated with PFAS shall not be allowed in New York State. This law went into effect on Dec. 28, 2024.

The affidavit states, "The board understands PFAS free and containing no PFAS

Continued on page 14



Old-time jam

Former RiverArts executive director Josh Suniewick leads a bluegrass jam at the Hastings Tennis Club during the annual RiverArts Music Tour on Saturday, June 6. The tour encompassed events in Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, Irvington, and Tarrytown, from 11 a.m.–9 p.m.

HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON

Business owners receive guidance on handling incidents

BY TIM LAMORTE

Two months after two men incited a verbal confrontation with a Jewish pizzeria owner about conflicts in the Middle East, the Village of Hastings held a training session to help business owners understand their rights.

Mayor Tom Drake hosted the workshop at the James Harmon Community Center on Main Street on the morning of June 9. Hastings merchants were invited, as were members of the Rivertowns Chamber of Commerce.

The workshop was led by Hastings High School alumnus Andrew Grascia, the chief criminal investigator for the Westchester County District Attorney's Office. Drake and Grascia were colleagues from 2007–2020, when Drake was a criminal investigator for the district attorney's office, where Grascia has worked since 1997. Hastings Police Chief David Dosin also participated.

The attendees included Isaac Garson, the owner of Slices on Main Street. On April 12, Garson was approached on the sidewalk outside his shop by two men, who asked him about Israel, Palestine, and Iran. Videos of the exchange were posted on social media accounts for the Palestine News Network.

One of the men, who was on camera, held

a sign that read "End U.S. aid to Israel." The other, who recorded the video, stated, "We support Oct. 7," referring to the Hamas attack on Israel in 2023.

In a subsequent email blast to the community, Drake described that incident as an "act of antisemitism and hate." On April 15, community members gathered outside Slices to support Garson. In the wake of that rally, one of the two men returned to Slices twice — once when Garson was not there, and once when he was. Garson did not talk with him.

Not engaging was among the guidance offered by Grascia. For instigators who persist, harassment is a possible charge. For those who refuse to leave private property, including businesses, trespassing is a possible charge. He also mentioned the charge of disorderly conduct.

Grascia pointed out that protesting on public property is legal, but preventing people from entering or exiting businesses is not. In Hastings, events that cause people to congregate in public places, including protests, require a permit from the village clerk, according to the village code.

Grascia also touched on the difference between damaging property or defacing it with graffiti (both criminal), and placing

stickers on property, which is not criminal if it's possible to remove the stickers without causing damage.

On March 9, anti-Israel stickers were found on two signs on Hillside Avenue, across from the Farragut Complex, which houses Farragut Middle School and Hastings High School.

One sticker was on a stop sign while the other was on a sign for "Ali Marpet Way," a paved path that connects Hillside Avenue to Reynolds Field. Marpet, who is Jewish, graduated from Hastings High School in 2011 and won a Super Bowl with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 2021.

The person who placed the stickers was identified, but not arrested, following a consultation with the district attorney's office, according to a press release issued by Dosin on March 12.

During the workshop on June 9, Dosin emphasized that evidence should not be touched before police process a scene. He also stressed that all incidents, criminal or not, should be reported to the police. Grascia stated that cases for arresting individuals could be built over time. Dosin added that the police department offers a free security assessment for homes and businesses.

Grascia's slideshow included information about hate crimes, which target people because of their race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity or expression, religious practice, age, disability, or sexual orientation. He explained that what would be freedom of speech to one person, could be hate speech to another person, such as the statement "Free Palestine," the use of which would not fall under the legal definition of a hate crime.

During the workshop, attendee Jessica Galen, the owner of Bloomy Cheese & Provisions in Dobbs Ferry, explained that she instituted an action plan for her employees after the incident at Slices. That plan includes calling the police, calling her, not engaging, and locking the door if necessary. Afterward, she stated that she felt "empowered" knowing she and her staff could ask people to leave.

The workshop on June 9 followed a session for police personnel and elected officials that the Village of Hastings held at the community center on May 26. Grascia participated in that session as did Hastings resident Steven Goldberg, the director of education for the Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center in White Plains.



FIVE STAR SERVICE

FULLY LICENSED AND INSURED

**Residential and Commercial
Interior and Exterior Painting Services**

TIP OF THE MONTH

Extend the life of your exterior paint by washing siding and trim and checking for small repairs. It's a simple way to protect your home, catch issues early, and keep things looking sharp through the warmer months.

(914) 478-3166

579 Broadway
Hastings on Hudson, NY

www.paintingonhudson.com
paintingonhuds@optonline.net

SERVING THE RIVER TOWNS SINCE 1984



New to the Rivertowns?

We're Eyes on Hudson — a family-owned optometry practice and independent eyewear shop. Thoughtful eye care. Beautifully made frames. The kind of local spot you're glad you found early.

Dobbs Ferry | 914-461-0800

@eyesonhudson | eyesonhudson.com

MOSCOT JACQUESMARIEMAGE LOS ANGELES götti THIERRY LASRY AHLEM MASUNAGA



IRVINGTON

— Coming Up This Week —

Free Community Concert

Friday, June 12, 6–8 p.m.

Matthiessen Park Stage

Double bill features Divining Rod Band and Bent Branches

Stewardship at O'Hara & Irvington Woods Park

Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

O'Hara Nature Center, 170 Mountain Road
Register at irvingtonny.gov

League of Women Voters Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m.

Irvington Presbyterian Church,
25 N. Broadway

Annual meeting will be followed by a light luncheon and presentation of Civic Leadership Award. RSVP: info@lwv-rivertowns.org

Farmers Market

Sunday, June 14, 9:30 a.m.–1 p.m.

Main Street School, 101 Main St.
irvingtonfarmersmarket.org

Historical Society Virtual Presentation

Sunday, June 14, 4 p.m.

Char Weigel presents "Spies and Lies: Double Agents in Treason's Crosshairs"

Register: irvingtonhistoricalsociety.org

Library Board Meeting

Monday, June 15, 6 p.m.

Irvington Public Library

Board of Trustees Meeting

Monday, June 15, 7 p.m.

Village Hall

Summer Reading Kick-off

Thursday, June 18, 10:45 a.m. for pre-readers, 4 p.m. for ages 6–11

Irvington Public Library

Municipal Office Closure

Friday, June 19

In observance of Juneteenth

Juneteenth Block Party

Friday, June 19, 4–7 p.m.

Scenic Hudson Park, Bridge St.

Festivities with music, dancing, double dutch, food, and drinks

Got news?

Email staff writer Julian Michael Caldwell at julian@rivertownsdispatch.com



Woodcliff Manor at 76 North Broadway

Broadway proposal clears SEQR hurdle

Review continues for mixed-use plan for 4.2-acre property

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

The Irvington Planning Board has determined Varma RE Development's mixed-use proposal for the 4.2-acre Maxon property, at 76 North Broadway (Route 9), will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment and traffic. During a public meeting on June 3, the planning board also provided the project exemption from State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR), based on a new state law established in May.

The proposed project combines 53 residential rental units (six would qualify as moderate income and six as affordable) and an early education facility, consisting of 13 classrooms for between 155 and 176 children. The early education facility would operate under a franchise agreement with Primrose Schools, a self-described "national system of accredited private preschools that provides a premier early education and child care experience." The plan also calls for the demolition of the 19th-century mansion known as Woodcliff Manor.

First introduced in the summer of 2024, the project has been contested by neighbors, some of whom hired legal counsel to challenge it. Katerine Zalantis, an attorney representing Varma, began the June 3 discussion by citing the "Let Them Build Law," which was signed by Gov. Kathy Hochul on May 27 and provides exemptions for certain projects from requirements of environmental conservation law. The New York State government website states the law is

meant to support building housing faster by "cutting red tape" and providing "exemptions from duplicative environmental review to accelerate housing development that is desperately needed and meets criteria that ensures it does not have significant environmental impacts." The law does not supersede local environmental requirements, permitting, or local zoning.

To qualify for an exemption, the project must be built on "previously disturbed land" connected to existing water and sewer sys-

"Measures have been incorporated into the project's design to sufficiently address all environmental impacts."

Attorney Katerine Zalantis

tems, and fit under the cap of 300 units for urbanized areas outside of New York City, or 100 units in non-urbanized areas.

"For over six decades there has not been an unobstructed view to Woodcliff Manor; rather, for over six decades the view from Broadway has been to a commercial parking lot and an 11,000-square-foot, one-story commercial building that are both sited in front of the house structure," Zalantis said in support of the project.

Zalantis went on to explain that the project meets other criteria for exemption, such as abutting parcels of land occupied

by buildings that are used for industrial or agricultural use; that it doesn't sit in a FEMA designated 100-year flood plain or special flood area; and it's not located in a designated coastal erosion hazard area.

"Under this new law the proposed action is a 'qualified action exempt from the requirements of the environmental conservation law and its implementing regulation,'" Zalantis told the board. "This board should issue a formal determination to that effect. This action has undergone exhaustive SEQR review addressing all relevant environmental impacts, and measures have been incorporated into the project's design to sufficiently address all environmental impacts."

Ashley Ley, an engineering consultant with the New City-based firm AKRF, which has an office in White Plains, spoke about why the project deserves a negative declaration under SEQR, which signifies that it will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment and not require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Even though the planning board voted in favor of an exemption from SEQR, planning board chair Cesar Manfredi explained that the planning board was still enacting a negative declaration in the event that the "Let Them Build Law" is modified or invalidated in the future.

The action was challenged by lawyer Adam Stolorow of Manhattan-based law firm Sive Paget Riesel, who was retained by neighbors. "The board can't have it both ways," Stolorow told the planning board. "Either you can decide that this is exempt

Continued on page 19

IRVINGTON

District responds to concerns about students' screen time

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

The Irvington School District is working with parents of students in grades K-5 to address the issue of screen time on electronic devices during the school day.

At the Irvington Board of Education meeting on June 2, eight parents with children in grades K-3 at Dows Lane or in grades 4-5 at Main Street School shared concerns about the amount of time their children watched videos as a class or used Chromebooks individually.

Justine Baker, who has a child in the first grade at Dow's Lane, explained that situations where her child's class was exposed to screens included snack time, when students were shown a video of someone reading a story, designated "brain breaks" when students were allowed to choose a video to watch, and library time when a smartboard is sometimes used to read stories digitally.

"None of these examples by themselves feels excessive, but taken together, there is the potential for a large portion of a child's day to be spent watching screens and videos," Baker told the school board. "While I fully embrace teaching our kids tech literacy skills, I worry that the videos and screens are being used to replace the human teachers that we value so much for their experience and insight."

Jennifer Neargaard Bowen, who is the

parent of a third-grader at Dows Lane, also encouraged the school district and teachers to seek more opportunities for analog learning.

"Students are experiencing extreme screen fatigue by the end of the school day," Bowen told the board. "So where can teachers assign written homework versus on the Chromebook?" In grades K-3, Chromebook laptops are made available for each student to use for certain activities, but are not sent home with students. In grades 4 and 5, devices may occasionally be sent home to support specific instructional needs or projects.

Irvington Schools Superintendent Mara Ratesic told the Dispatch that she, along with Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Scott Wynne and Director of Technology Jerrod Blair, met with some of the concerned parents during the week after the board meeting. In the course of conversation with parents, Ratesic, Wynne, and Blair explained that a majority of learning at the elementary school level follows the Arts & Letter ELA [English language arts] curriculum and Eureka Math curriculum, which both use physical books and analog notetaking.

"If it can be done better without a screen, it should be done without a screen," Ratesic shared with the Dispatch.

An email sent to parents signed by Wynne, Blair, Dows Lane Principal Andrea Kantor,

and Main Street School Principal Joyce Chapnick echoed Ratesic's sentiment.

"We recognize the importance of preserving and prioritizing analog learning experiences, particularly in the elementary years," the letter reads. "Reading physical texts, writing by hand, engaging in mathematical reasoning with journals and manipulatives, collaborating with peers, participating in discussion-based learning, and creating through hands-on experiences remain central to daily instruction across our K-5 grades. Our use of technology should supplement, not replace, these foundational learning experiences."

During the June 2 board meeting, David Driscoll, who is the parent of a kindergartner, questioned the use of digital technology he considered recreational, rather than educational. Driscoll's examples included the use of video leading entire classes through physical exercise during regular "brain breaks," and the use of individual Chromebooks during "choice time."

"This recreational use of screen time seems not to be aligned with the guidelines that Scott Wynne put forward in his recent email — mainly that the district is 'eliminating any remaining recreational or reward-based screen use during unstructured time,'" Driscoll said during the board meeting.

In her conversation with parents, Ratesic believes the sides were able to address

some of the discrepancies between the policy that has been set, and the experience being relayed to parents by their children. They were also able to collaborate on ways to promote fewer opportunities for screen time under the current policy.

"Parents said, 'Why does a brain break have to utilize a screen?' And we agree," Ratesic said. "So there were several areas where we do think in terms of screen time we can establish some better parameters for our teachers. But the idea that our students are engaged in technology as the default mode of instruction, particularly at the elementary level, is simply not true."

Last school year, a subset of the PTSA was established called Heads Up, which is made of parents committed to promoting responsible technology use in the district. While some parents during the board meeting called for the creation of a new technology advisory committee consisting of parents, administration, and faculty, Ratesic expressed her confidence that Heads Up is a sufficient outlet for those concerns. The superintendent also believes the recent dialog between parents and administration has provided an opportunity to ensure that policy around technology aligns with practice.

"Our teachers are outstanding and, of course,

Continued on page 18



NEW KAWAII

Boba Tea
Bao Buns
Board Games

Let's Play!
New Kawaii
1 Bridge Street
Irvington NY

Haircuts – Beard Trims – Hot Towel Shaves

For any and all ages!



Book now!



10 S. Broadway, Irvington (914) 231-5263

Tuesday – Saturday 9am – 6:30pm

www.executiveprecisionny.com @Executive.Precision

The Agenda

SATURDAY JUNE 13

Moonball and Family Fun Day

DOBBS FERRY

10 a.m.–3 p.m. / Free admission, \$35 for kickball players. Waterfront Park. The annual benefit for the Cure Sanfilippo Foundation and Jacob Moon features mini-golf, cornhole, face painting, local bands, and a kickball tournament for kids in grades 3–8. Food will be available for purchase. Register at jacobmoonball.com

Pulp and Fiber Artistry and Demos

DOBBS FERRY

11 a.m.–3 p.m. / Free. Hudson River Landing, 145 Palisade St. Rivertowns artists Jess Blaustein, Wendy Elman, Janet Sikirica, and Marisa Gonzales Silverstein display their paper and textile works and show their artistic process. Also Sunday.

Paquito D’Rivera Quintet

TARRYTOWN

7 and 9:30 p.m. / \$50, \$45 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. The Grammy Award-winning saxophonist and clarinetist leads the Jazz Forum’s ninth-anniversary celebration. jazzforumarts.org

Murder Mystery

YONKERS

2–4 p.m. / \$15 for adults, \$8 for ages 3–18, \$9 for students and seniors, free for members and children under 3. Hudson River Museum, 511 Warburton Ave. Interactive event created and led by Hudson Valley author and storyteller David Neilsen. For ages 16 and up. Registration required. hrm.org

History Celebration

MOUNT VERNON

1 p.m. / Free. St. Paul’s Church, 897 S. Columbus Ave. Site manager David Osborn explores the story of the Declaration of Independence. nps.gov/sapa/sapaprogsched.htm

SUNDAY JUNE 14

Rivertowns Jewish Festival

DOBBS FERRY

1–3 p.m. / Free admission. Waterfront Park. Featuring live music, Israeli food, Kona Ice truck, vendors, and family-friendly activities including a foam party and inflatables. chabadrt.org

Outdoor Live Music: Chris & Sal

DOBBS FERRY

2–5 p.m. / No cover charge. Hudson Social, 11 Station Plaza. hudsonsocial.com

Run for a Tree

HASTINGS

9 a.m. / \$5 entry fee. Hillside School parking lot. The 1.26-mile fundraising run supports One Tree



Four artists who use fiber and pulp will host a demo and showcase this weekend (June 13–14), 11 a.m.–3 p.m., at Hudson River Landing, 145 Palisade St., Dobbs Ferry.

Planted, an environmental nonprofit that helps reforestation. Register at tinyurl.com/46643m4f. Donate at tinyurl.com/sm2mz6sx.

Maker Hive Festival

HASTINGS

10 a.m.–1 p.m. / Free. Good Witch Coffee Bar, 134 Southside Ave. Explore hands-on making stations, demos, and student showcases featuring circuits, watercolor, printmaking, fiber arts, robotics, arcade games, 3D printing, and community upcycled art project. makerhive.space

Hastings Flea Pride Market

HASTINGS

10 a.m.–4 p.m. (rain or shine) / Free admission. Metro-North Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue (across from railroad tracks). thehastingsflea.com

35th Anniversary Show: Artists Talk

HASTINGS

2–5 p.m. / Free. Upstream Gallery, 8 Main St. Marie-Louise Miller moderates conversations among artists on the history, meaning, and future of the gallery. Closing celebration Sunday, June 28, 2–5 p.m. Hours: Thursday–Sunday, 12:30–5:30 p.m. upstreamgallery.com

Student Art Award Showcase

HASTINGS

3–5 p.m. / Free. Village Hall Gallery, 7 Maple Ave. Presented by RiverArts. riverarts.org

“Hastings on Jazz”

HASTINGS

3–5:30 p.m. / Free. VFW Plaza, 558 Warburton Ave. The weekly summer series continues with longtime Hastings resident and jazz

pianist David Janeway performing with the Patience Higgins Quartet. Rain location to be announced. destinationhastings.org

“Spies and Lies”

IRVINGTON

4 p.m. / Free. The Irvington Historical Society presents Char Weigel’s virtual presentation subtitled “Double Agents in Treason’s Crosshairs.” Register for the Zoom link at irvingtonhistorical.society.org

Tuscany in Tarrytown

TARRYTOWN

5 p.m. / \$52, \$45 for nonmembers. Shames JCC, 371 S. Broadway. Featuring Amanda Pascali performing classic melodies with a modern twist and Italian appetizers. shamesjcc.org

Shakey Graves

TARRYTOWN

7 p.m. / \$48–\$78. Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. tarrytownmusichall.org

MONDAY JUNE 15

Meet-up for Wellness Pros

DOBBS FERRY

10–11 a.m. / Free. HudCo, 145 Palisade St., Suite 200. Connect with those who heal, guide, and inspire. Register at hudco.eventbrite.com

TUESDAY JUNE 16

Progressive Bluegrass

HASTINGS

7–9 p.m. / No cover charge. Uncle Lefty’s, 583 Warburton Ave. Featuring Bees in the Barn. uncleleftys.com

Trivia Night

DOBBS FERRY

7–9 p.m. / Free. Memorial Park. Up to six people per team; ages 18 and up. Teams that compete in at least four of the weekly Trivia Nights through July 21 qualify to win prizes. Sign up at dobbsferry.gov/recreation-department

WEDNESDAY JUNE 17

Rivertowns Chamber Networking

DOBBS FERRY

5–6:30 p.m. / \$25 for nonmembers, free for members. Harper’s, 92 Main St. Register online. rivertownschamber.com

THURSDAY JUNE 18

Outdoor Live Music:

Julie Corbalis

DOBBS FERRY

6–9 p.m. / No cover charge. Hudson Social, 11 Station Plaza. hudsonsocial.com

Jazz Quartet and Jam Session

DOBBS FERRY

7–9:30 p.m. / No cover charge. Mirabella Cocina Latina Restaurant & Bar, 1 Hamilton St., in Rivertowns Square. Featuring Scott Latzky on drums, Tom Christensen on saxophone, Dave Ambrosio on bass, and Steve Einerson on piano. The second set is open to guest musicians. mirabellacocina.com/calendar-dobbs-ferry

FRIDAY JUNE 19

Juneteenth Celebration

ARDSLEY

4–6 p.m. / Free. Pascone Park, 507 Ashford Ave. The Multicultural, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee presents music, yoga, performances, and food trucks.

Juneteenth Block Party

IRVINGTON

4–7 p.m. / Free. Scenic Hudson Park, Bridge St. Irvington’s annual Juneteenth celebration features music, dancing, double Dutch, food, and drinks.

Houston Person Quintet

TARRYTOWN

7 and 9:30 p.m. / \$40, \$35 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. The 91-year-old tenor saxophonist plays bluesy jazz in celebration of Juneteenth. Also on June 20. jazzforumarts.org

Classies

Submissions are due by 12 p.m. Monday for that Friday's paper. To purchase a classified notice, go to market.rivertownsdispatch.com/classies



PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE — 51 MAIN STREET

VILLAGE OF HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON
7 Maple Avenue
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706
Zoning Board of Appeals - Case No. 07-26

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 295-143B of the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson Code, Notice is hereby given that: A Public Hearing will be held by the Zoning Board of Appeals on Thursday, June 25, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Meeting Room, Municipal Building, 7 Maple Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, New York. The Hearing will be held on the application of Kariyhm Kelly for relief from the strict application of Village Code Section 295-20B(8) for the approval of a previously installed fence on top of a retaining wall, in the side yard of her single-family dwelling located at 51 Main Street. Said

property is located in the CC Zoning District and is known as SBL: 4.80-59-6 on the Town of Greenburgh Tax Maps.

Non-conformity details of the proposed fence/wall are as follows:

1. Fence on Top of a Wall: Existing - N/A; Proposed - 10.2 ft.; Required Max. - 6.5 ft. {295-20B(8)}; Variance Required - 3.8 ft.

The Zoning Board of Appeals will, at this time and place, hear all persons in support of such matter and any objections thereto. Plans will be available for review at the Building Department or on the Village web site, www.hohny.gov, on or about the Friday prior to the meeting. Josh Heitler, Chair, ZBA

LEGAL NOTICE — 82 ROSEDALE AVENUE

VILLAGE OF HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON
7 Maple Avenue
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706
Zoning Board of Appeals - Case No. 08-26

Notice of Hearing before the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson,

New York. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 295-143B of the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson Zoning Code, Notice is hereby given that: A Public Hearing will be held by the Zoning Board of Appeals on Thursday, June 25, 2026, at 7:00 P.M., in the Meeting Room, Municipal Building, 7 Maple Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, New York. The Hearing will be held on the application of Gabriel Smedresman for relief from the strict application of the Village Code Sections 295-69F1(a) w/ 295-55A for a front yard addition on his single-family dwelling, located at 82 Rosedale Avenue. Said property is located in the R-7.5 Zoning District and is known as SBL: 4.80-73-11 on the Town of Greenburgh Tax Maps.

Non-conformity details for the addition are as follows:

1) Front Yard Setback: Existing & Proposed - 19.3 ft.; Required - 25 ft. {295-69F1(a)}; Variance Required - 5.7 ft.
2) Extension of an Existing Non-conformity {295-55A}

The Zoning Board of Appeals will, at this time and place, hear all persons in support of such matter and any objections thereto. Plans will be made avail-

able for review at the Building Department and on the Village web site, www.hohny.gov, on or about the Friday prior to the meeting date. Josh Heitler, Chair, ZBA

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that the Ardsley Village Zoning Board of Appeals, 507 Ashford Ave., Ardsley, NY, will conduct a public hearing at 8 p.m., June 24, 2026, on a variance application of Patrick Babis & Sarah Rosati, 587 Ashford Ave. (Corner Lot #6.80-65-21; R-3 District), for a proposed single-story addition and new patio & wall, where existing & proposed north side yards on Eastern Dr. are less than the 20 ft. minimum required by Village Code §§ 200-26B & 200-89. All wishing to be heard are invited to attend and to email comments to: llomasso@ardsleyvillage.gov. Application materials may be viewed in the Village Clerk's office during office hours (Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.). Meeting information also is posted at www.ardsleyvillage.gov/calendar. Tasha Macedo
Zoning Board Secretary
Village of Ardsley

Synthetic turf fields

Continued from page 9

to be synonymous with not intentionally adding or using PFAS in the manufacture or production of artificial turf." The document states that this is consistent with documentation from a meeting held by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation on June 11, 2025, that states "Consistent with other laws that restrict PFAS in consumer products in NYS, DEC will apply PFAS restriction in a manner similar to restrictions on intentionally added PFAS."

The affidavit also disputes the petitioners' assertion that the Gradient memorandum establishes the product does not comply with the specification that the turf is not to contain PFAS. The petitioners, the document states, "fail to take into account that the samples in which PFAS is detected included one of the laboratory equipment blanks." This "calls into question whether the detectable traces of PFAS were caused by the lab equipment or turf material being tested." The affidavit also states that due to widespread use and the presence of PFAS in the environment, products may still contain the chemicals even if they were manufactured without using or intentionally adding them.

In an email to the community, McKersie stated that the district has been "committed to adhering" to the state laws applicable now and after Jan. 1, 2027, and that "the documentation provided by FieldTurf, demonstrates this compliance and that the turf is manufactured without intentionally added PFAS."

The petitioners challenged this, telling the Dispatch that "The email's assurance of compliance relies on documentation provided by FieldTurf and interpreted by a company hired by FieldTurf, not on independent verification." The testing conducted by PACE Labs, they continued, "detected PFAS in this product."

The petitioners describe the phrase "manufactured without intentionally added PFAS" as a "legal loophole that was identified prior to the bond vote as such, since PFAS can be present in a product as a byproduct of manufacturing without being intentionally added."

They also pointed to a section of the "Affirmation in Opposition to Request for Stay" signed by the district's attorneys, which states that, even if the New York State commissioner of education determines the FieldTurf product "does not comply with the district's bid specifications and that petitioners have provided sufficient evidence that the FieldTurf turf samples actually contain any PFAS," various legal precedents "establish the board had the authority to waive this noncompliance with the bid specifications."

The petitioners interpret this as the district conceding "the board had the authority to waive noncompliance with the PFAS specification — the same specification voters were told would protect their children."

"This is the same PFAS-free specification that was promoted to voters before the June 2025 bond vote and then further updated in the RFP [request for proposals] requirements in February 2026," the petitioners said. "You can't use a promise to win a vote and then argue you were never bound by it."

Juneteenth

Continued from page 1

hosting a Juneteenth student workshop with Ardsley Heart, a parent-led organization that seeks to foster students' sense of belonging, at the Ardsley Community Center.

As of press time, the limited seating of 10 fifth- and sixth-graders was maxed out. The students were tasked with reading half of "Tristan Strong Punches a Hole Through the Sky" by Kwame Mbalia prior to the workshop, where there will be a discussion and craft based on the book.

The Village of Ardsley's Juneteenth Celebration will take place at Pascone Park from 4-6 p.m. Demetria Jones, co-chair of the Village's Multicultural, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, is leading the event, which seeks to pay homage to Black history.

"Our history is still alive in what we do," Jones said. "The music, the artwork, performances, dance, meditation. All that correlates to where we came from in Africa and our early years coming to America."

Chris Slaughter, an author and public speaker specializing in education and poetry, serves as the event's emcee. He will read an educational piece to the audience, which will coincide with a performance by African drummer Kamau Ptah. There will be a live DJ, along with a performance from the Concord Road Children's Choir.

Similar to Irvington, Ardsley's event shares a focus on "moving with intention," Jones said. There will be demonstrations



The Ice Cold Experience drumline will perform at Scenic Hudson Park in Irvington.

from the 40+ Double Dutch Club, as well as yoga with Ardsley resident and movement coach George Meikle. Food trucks will offer Caribbean, Peruvian, and Tex-Mex cuisine for purchase.

Jones hopes the festivities bring the community together, and show "how we celebrate camaraderie [and] how we celebrate togetherness."

Sullivan shared a similar sentiment, saying that the playfulness and joy of the Juneteenth spirit are "something not only the community

needs, the world needs right now."

"Juneteenth is a time to celebrate liberation from enslavement, and yet we still have a lot of work to do until everyone in this country is truly free," she said. "We hope that people can laugh together and have fun, try [something] new and meet someone new and feel more connected to each other. The more connected we feel to our community, the more resilient we will be during these unprecedented — and sometimes very scary — times."

Ben Ilany

Continued from page 3

shrugged off my secret and bought the next round [of drinks]. The institution required silence, but not all of the people did."

Ilany used his speech to connect the discrimination against gay, lesbian, and bisexual people in the military to the present challenges faced by transgender members of the U.S. military.

In January 2025, President Donald Trump signed an executive order claiming that "a false 'gender identity' divergent from an individual's sex cannot satisfy the rigorous standards necessary for military service." The order added transgenderism to a list of medical conditions that make a person unfit to serve. On June 1, an appellate court ruled that the order illegally bans transgender people from the military, but the ban remains in effect.

"The whole architecture of exclusion ran on a single premise: that loving who we loved was evidence that we were broken," Ilany said of DADT. "It took decades of fighting to dismantle that premise, and what is being done to transgender Americans right now in the military, in the firearms registry, in the immigration system, in the medical record, is the same premise."

During the same meeting, the board of legislators also recognized Croton Pride, which is a community organization dedicated to LGBTQ+ connection, advocacy, and celebration.

Opinion

The Dispatch welcomes letters to the editor about subjects related to the Rivertowns. Letters must be no more than 350 words, submitted by Monday at noon for that week's issue, and include the names, home addresses, and phone numbers of their writers. No letter is guaranteed publication. To submit a letter, visit rivertownsdispatch.com/submissions

Hastings mayor believes McGoey can revivify town board

To the Editor:

Recently, I have been asked by many people to share my perspective on the upcoming town supervisor election. I have decided to make an endorsement and would like to explain my reasoning.

I have known Paul Feiner for most of my life, and he and my father did great work together when they were young in their government careers. I have the utmost respect for him and appreciate his dedication to the people of the Town of Greenburgh and Westchester County.

Since taking office in 2021, I have closely followed the work of the Town government. While differing viewpoints are a natural and important part of the democratic process, I believe effective government depends on collaboration and mutual respect. Throughout my tenure, I have worked to foster that spirit on our village board. Unfortunately, I have observed increasing division and acrimony within the town board.

As mayor, I believe it is my responsibility to advocate for the interests of our village and support leadership that will best serve both our community and the town as a whole. For these reasons, I am endorsing Barry McGoey for town supervisor. During our previous careers, I had the opportunity to observe Barry's leadership as he guided one of New York's largest unions. His integrity, professionalism, and effective leadership earned him respect throughout the region. His experience as a first responder, navigation of complex employment issues, and elected experience in Ardsley make him a candidate whom I can stand behind.

Most importantly, I believe Barry possesses the leadership skills, temperament, and collaborative approach necessary to restore a greater sense of harmony to the town board. A more constructive and cooperative Town government will benefit all of the residents and communities it serves, and I look forward to working with him should he be elected.

Tom Drake

MAYOR OF HASTINGS

Exchange student program seeks host families for the fall

To the Editor:

Having lived in Hastings for more than a

year, I continue to be inspired by the strong sense of community that makes this village such a special place to call home. As a staff member with AFS-USA, I was especially pleased to see Zak, an exchange student from Malaysia, welcomed to Hastings High School this past spring semester. Zak had a wonderful experience with both the school and his host family, demonstrating the positive impact that international exchange can have on everyone involved.

This fall, AFS-USA is seeking host families for high school students from around the world who are eager to experience everyday American life, attend local schools, and share their own cultures and perspectives with the families and communities that welcome them.

One student hoping to find a host family is Francesco, a warm and curious 16-year-old from Italy. Francesco brings positive energy wherever he goes and is excited to improve his English while immersing himself in American culture. He enjoys music, cooking, and sharing cultures, and collects Legos, vinyl records, and Funko Pops. His mother describes him as an excellent cook and exceptionally tidy. Most of all, Francesco is looking forward to becoming part of a supportive host family and building meaningful relationships.

Families of all kinds — single adults, couples, retirees, and families with or without children — are encouraged to host. The most important qualifications are a welcoming spirit and an openness to cultural exchange.

Hosting an exchange student is a meaningful way to bring the world into your home while helping a young person build lifelong connections and understanding. AFS-USA provides comprehensive support, including local volunteers, orientation resources, and 24/7 assistance throughout the hosting experience.

Hastings has a long history of welcoming exchange students, and we would love to see that tradition continue. To learn more about hosting this fall and view student profiles, visit afsusa.org/host.

Julie Ball

HASTINGS

Greenburgh officials respond to audit with action plan

To the Editor:

Greenburgh officials addressed the issues highlighted in the forensic audit and posted a corrective action plan on the Town website. I also sent a detailed response to the NYS comptroller.

To demonstrate progress in addressing the deficiencies in the forensic audit, I asked the town board to hire the same forensic auditor

to return later this year and verify that the corrective measures the Town is taking are remediating each item. If any of the corrective actions are not effective, the firm should recommend alternate practices other local governments use that can help accomplish that objective. The auditor indicated they could do the work for about \$15,000. This would involve interviews with key individuals about the process modifications and updates, as well as review of the underlying documentation.

I also asked that the audit be made current — to include 2024, 2025, and 2026. The audit the board commissioned ended in 2023. I welcome the forensic report. It should be used as a guide, not a political weapon.

1) Greenburgh has had a balanced budget, and often surplus, every year.

2) There is no deficit, no money has been stolen, no major amounts of money have been lost.

3) The Town has earned a AAA bond rating year after year.

4) Our services, and the staff who provide them, are the best.

5) The funds needed for a new Town Court — \$7.4 million — are allocated and “in the bank.” The board approved one resolution specifically allocating the \$7.4 million for a courthouse — never approved any other resolutions reserving additional funds for the courthouse.

6) A program for collection of unpaid taxes has been in place for years. We had our first auction of foreclosed properties recently and plan two additional auctions within the year. I have written to taxpayers who owe money, offering to help them avoid foreclosures by working out tax agreements and connecting families with non-profit agencies that can help.

Paul Feiner

GREENBURGH TOWN SUPERVISOR

Greenburgh needs McGoey's outlook as town supervisor

To the Editor:

Barry McGoey is running for Greenburgh town supervisor in this month's Democratic primary. He holds a degree in finance, is an attorney, served as president of the Yonkers firefighters' union, and is currently an Ardsley trustee. I first met Barry at a union rally, then saw him at the pool and at school events with his children.

From my interactions with Barry, I learned that leaders can fight with conviction, lead with compassion, and support others when needed. He has fought for workers' rights while supporting his family and community. Barry demonstrates the ability to collaborate,

lead, support good work, and, most importantly, drive meaningful change and reforms.

Greenburgh faces fiscal challenges and needs a fresh outlook to address them directly. Barry is the candidate who can best handle this moment. Learn more about Barry, his experience, and his vision at www.barryforgreenburgh.com. I encourage you to vote for Barry, whether early (June 13–21) or on Election Day (June 23).

Jodie Reaver

ARDSLEY

Feiner remains committed to serving Greenburgh residents

To the Editor:

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse Paul Feiner for re-election as Greenburgh town supervisor in the June 23 Democratic primary.

As a student at Ardsley High School with a strong interest in political science and public service, I have had the opportunity to learn from Paul over the past year. He has been an incredible mentor who is always willing to take time to listen to students, answer questions, and encourage civic engagement.

What stands out most about Paul is that his heart is truly in the work. His commitment to serving residents can be seen in programs such as the Snow Angels initiative, which helps seniors and residents who need assistance during winter storms, and the Tech Angels program, which connects volunteers with adults who need help navigating technology. These programs address real community needs and improve people's daily lives.

As someone who loves history, I especially appreciate Paul's commitment to preserving Greenburgh's heritage. His efforts to save and preserve the historic Odell House ensured that an important piece of our community's past would be protected for future generations. His leadership demonstrates that progress and historic preservation can go hand in hand.

I also deeply admire Paul's ethics. At a time when many people are concerned about the influence of money in politics, Paul has maintained a policy of not accepting campaign contributions from active Town contractors or developers. That commitment reflects the integrity and independence that residents deserve from their elected officials.

Greenburgh has benefited tremendously from Paul's leadership, experience, and dedication. I encourage voters to support his re-election on June 23.

Ryan Levenson

SCARSDALE *The writer is a resident of the Ardsley School District*

Continued on page 18



Architectural Distinction. Enduring Beauty.

1 Belmont Drive, Dobbs Ferry

Inspired by the grandeur of English country estates, this exceptional 6,000-square-foot, five-bedroom residence was designed in 1912 by renowned architect Wilson Eyre as one of the original homes in Irvington's coveted Ardsley Park. Set on 1.7 beautifully landscaped acres, the home showcases a handsome brick façade, slate roof, soaring bay windows, and four working fireplaces.

A dramatic wood-paneled entry hall with triple-height windows introduces gracious principal rooms that overlook the picturesque grounds and open directly onto a full-

length terrace, creating a seamless indoor-outdoor lifestyle. Renovated in 2024, the refined kitchen wing features a light-filled chef's kitchen, separate butler's pantry, and inviting breakfast room.

A walk-out lower level with family room, fireplace, bar, fitness area, bath, and sauna enhances everyday living, while a full-size walk-up third floor offers exceptional expansion potential. Moments from the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail, Halsey Pond, and the Ardsley-on-Hudson Station.

\$3,100,000



www.fordsussmanteam.com



William Ford-Sussman
(914) 420-6161



— MOMENTS —

Wake Me Up

“Wake Me Up” was the title of the program that Amanda Kupillas Dance students performed twice at Irvington Theater on Saturday, June 6. Kupillas directed the 20 numbers, which were choreographed by her and her school’s instructors. Megan Roe was the stage manager, with lighting and sound by Edward Hansen, and set design and installation by GreenLight Fabrication.



Feiner remains responsive to the needs of constituents

To the Editor:

In times like these, news can break faster than press release dates can keep up with. But there's one thing that doesn't change — Paul

Feiner's concern for you and his responsiveness to your concerns. I saw this early on in Paul's career as Greenburgh town supervisor when my parents would reach out to him for help getting the lightbulb changed in the streetlight on our dead-end block. My folks were not the type of people to make such a call, but they heard Paul was very attentive, so they found their courage and called him. First of all, they spoke to him directly and second of all, the bulb was changed within

24 hours. I knew right then that Paul was no ordinary politician. Years have passed, but Paul has not changed. If anything, he is even more responsive now. Seriously, I don't know of any other politician who gives out his cellphone number and answers it. Paul is a treasure and well worthy of our vote. Please be sure to get to the polls on June 23 and vote for Paul. Paul gets things done.

Susan Vairo

DOBBS FERRY

Stephanie Marquesano

Continued from page 5

prevention efforts, identify concerns early, reduce stigma, and connect people to the support they need before a crisis occurs.

RD: What are some of the biggest accomplishments you've had through the work of The Harris Project?

SM: One of the accomplishments I am most proud of is helping bring co-occurring disorders into conversations where it was previously absent. When I launched The Harris Project in 2013, very few people were talking about the connection between mental health challenges and substance use issues, particularly among young people.

Over the last 12 years, I have had the privilege of working alongside extraordinary collaborators across government, healthcare, education, prevention, philanthropy, and the nonprofit sector to turn awareness into action. Through CODA, we created a

youth-led movement that empowers young people to learn about co-occurring disorders, engage in meaningful conversations, and become part of the solution.

Building on that foundation, we developed a first-of-its-kind co-occurring disorders prevention curriculum, funded by the Westchester County Opioid Response Initiative and created in collaboration with Partnership to End Addiction. Today, the curriculum is being implemented in high school health classes and community- and faith-based settings across Westchester County, helping young people and the adults who support them better understand co-occurring disorders and recognize concerns earlier.

We have also helped expand access to integrated treatment, family support, and recovery services through federal, state, and local partnerships, while our public awareness campaigns have challenged stigma and reached audiences nationwide.

Ultimately, what I am most proud of is that young people, families, and communities are

finding language, resources, and support that simply did not exist when Harris died. While there is still much more work to do, I am encouraged by the growing number of people and organizations committed to ensuring that no one has to navigate these challenges alone.

RD: What's next for The Harris Project?

SM: What excites me most is seeing co-occurring disorders gain recognition in places where it was once absent. I am particularly excited about continuing to grow CODA and the co-occurring disorders prevention curriculum, helping more young people, families, educators, and communities understand these issues before a crisis occurs. I am now a consultant with the national Opioid Response Network, creating additional opportunities to share what we have learned with counties, states, and organizations across the country so they can build on proven approaches rather than starting from scratch.

Screen time

Continued from page 12

well-meaning individuals, but I do think we do have an opportunity to say, "This is what we say we do; is this what we actually do?" Ratesic told the Dispatch. "As an example, we should not be showing students movies as a reward. We say we don't do that, and we just want to make sure that is something that's being consistently followed up with our faculty."

I remain passionate about the power of storytelling to create change. From "You Don't Know the Half Of It" (a public service campaign and short film) to "The Missing Issue" (a 48-page special edition of US Weekly), our public awareness campaigns have helped bring co-occurring disorders to audiences far beyond traditional prevention and healthcare settings. We are currently developing a third campaign, focused on younger adolescents, because the earlier we begin these conversations, the greater our opportunity to improve outcomes.

Most importantly, I am encouraged by the growing recognition that mental health and substance use must be addressed together. My hope is that we continue building systems, policies, and communities that recognize the whole person, so that no young person or family spends years searching for answers that should have been available all along.

For more information about The Harris Project, visit theharrisproject.org.



Now Open!

piccola
MARKET AND ROTISSERIE

empanadas
FRESH PASTA
sauces
READY MEALS
desserts

WITH
GLUTEN-FREE AND DAIRY-FREE
OPTIONS AVAILABLE

25 Cedar St, Dobbs Ferry
(914) 407-0014
piccolamarket.com



Deer

Continued from page 1

which will be conducted prior to the hunting program. The survey involves placing trail cameras in the woods and analyzing the camera data to estimate deer density across the management area.

Kelly offers three hunting program options: basic, moderate, and “aggressive,” which differ in price and number of hunts. Hastings chose the moderate program, which supports one to two hunts per week.

Kelly’s process includes an on-site

assessment of terrain, vegetation, and signs of deer. He will map deer trails, food sources, bedding areas, and sanctuaries using GPS and mapping software. This will be used to identify property boundaries to define the manageable areas, as well as the high-use deer areas and strategic management locations.

Cameras will be deployed in strategic locations to monitor and track deer activity in real time. Transition corridors from neighboring properties will also be monitored. Other factors in Kelley’s analysis include overlaying deer movement data with wind and weather patterns, and assessing how

environmental conditions influence deer behavior.

For the hunts, the contract states that Kelley will “plan optimal management locations, timing, and conditions” based on the collected data. He will also, “minimize disturbance through strategic hunter entry and exit routes.”

The program includes an end-of-season report and deer removal. Kelley donates the meat to a program called Hunters for the Hungry.

Earlier this year, on March 10, the Dobbs Ferry Board of Trustees approved a \$37,500

contract with Kelly to hunt deer with a bow for a second year at the Juhring Preserve. Kelley culled 19 deer in 2025.

On April 6, the Irvington Board of Trustees rehired Kelley to hunt deer with a bow for the third year in a row at a cost of \$48,880. Kelley culled 26 deer in 2024 and 21 in 2025. The board also approved a \$3,600 contract with Forest Management Solutions to analyze plant population data collected by volunteers in the Irvington Woods.

In Westchester County, deer hunting season starts Oct. 1 and ends Dec. 31.

Ernie Howell

Continued from page 7

and never went overseas.

After graduating from Harvard in 1947, Howell spent time abroad, during the next 20 years working with the Asia Foundation at posts in Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Dhaka, Karachi, and Saigon. In 1969, he shifted careers and joined F.I. DuPont & Co. as a stockbroker, financial adviser, and portfolio manager. He moved on to Drexel Burnham in 1973, which through a series of mergers and acquisitions, became Morgan Stanley. Howell was with the firm until his death.

“I think he was very proud of the early work that he did more in the nonprofit sphere with the Asia Foundation,” Mecs said. “But also, once he left that realm and worked in the investment sphere, I think he still sort of took that attitude of wanting to help

everyday families to secure their own financial well-being for the good of themselves and their families and their communities.”

Most recently, Howell was a contributor to Rivertowns for Refugees, which helps refugees from other countries get established in Westchester by helping to pay their rent, find jobs, sign up the kids for school, and set up medical appointments. The current president of that organization, Niall Cain, a 1979 graduate of Dobbs Ferry High School, was a boy when he first met Howell, as he and his siblings went to school with Howell’s children.

Speaking with the Dispatch after Howell’s passing, Cain described Howell as “just a lovely, lovely man. He’s always been so gentle. His whole demeanor is gentle and very smart with his background.”

Rivertowns for Refugees typically covers a family’s first three to four months of rent.

Cain believes Howell’s donations over the years would have been able to cover that for at least a couple of families. On May 17, Rivertowns for Refugees honored Howell with a gathering at Howell’s home that

“(Howell) took that attitude of wanting to help everyday families to secure their own financial well-being.”

Suzanne Mecs

was attended by State Assemblymember MaryJane Shimsky and Dobbs Ferry Mayor Christy Knell.

“Of course, the big need was funding, and

Ernie was so generous that we decided to have a little event for him,” Cain said. “We put together a collage of all of the families we’ve supported over the years, and three of the families came to the event.”

Mecs remembers her father as someone who valued family and had the skills to cultivate a vibrant community around him and his family.

“He was not only a great listener, he was also very good at framing questions so that people talked and opened up to him,” Mecs said. “And I think that just allowed him to learn so much and make connections with people.”

In addition to Suzanne, Howell is survived by his children Mark, Patricia, David, and K. Babe, as well as six grandchildren: Michael, Christopher, Andrea, Jason, Ariel, and Damian.

A memorial service for Howell is scheduled for Oct. 11 at South Presbyterian Church.

RIVERTOWNS
Dispatch

From nursery school to college, celebrate every milestone!

Create a keepsake your family can hold onto for years to come in our Graduation Editions with a Graduation Photo Wall submission and a special congratulatory message.

Nursery school graduates

PHOTO WALL



WAY TO GO, CASEY

You are going to love elementary school! We are here for you every step of the way.
Love, Mom and Dad

PHOTO WALL



SUMMA CUM LESLIE

The real world doesn't know the gift it's getting. You are so amazing, we love you so much.
—The whole fam

High school & college graduates



market.rivertownsdispatch.com/photo-wall-checkout-page

76 North Broadway

Continued from page 11

and you can go down that road and we can litigate that, or you can issue a negative declaration and go down that road and we’ll litigate that.”

Ley explained that tearing down Woodcliff Manor, which has been challenged by village residents during previous meetings, cannot be considered a significant adverse impact. Ley told the planning board that the site is not eligible for listing on a state or national registry of historic places as determined by New York State Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation; hasn’t been listed on a Westchester County list of historic places, and has not been designated a local landmark under village code. She went on to describe the traffic studies completed by Varma and their proposed traffic mitigation measures — which include mandatory staggered drop-off and pickup times — as comprehensive and sufficient enough to avoid significant negative traffic impacts. Stolorow maintained he believes that to be false.

“We’ve submitted ample evidence that there is potential significant impact, and that a positive declaration is required,” Stolorow said. “The traffic mitigation is fiction; not enforceable. Asking parents to stagger the pickup of their children, we believe, is against state law allowing access to children, but in any case, there’s no way for the Village to come in and enforce against the applicant.”

Planning board member Laurie Davidowitz responded to Stolorow’s claims, explaining that the annual special permit required for the project, and one-year probationary period during which the applicant owes reports about traffic impact to the village, will serve as instruments to enforce the measures.

The planning board and Stolorow are also at odds about what percentage of the project’s gross floor area will be used for nonresidential purposes. The Let Them Build Law requires that projects eligible for exemption from SEQR have a gross floor area of less than 20% for commercial, retail, community facility, or other nonresidential uses.

Village attorney Marianne Stecich explained that the building department calculations found the number to be roughly 19% for the project, while Stolorow believes that residential parking spaces should be considered accessory use, bringing the calculation to nearly 50%, and making it ineligible for exemption.

The next step for the project is to receive a public benefit bonus from the Board of Trustees granting Varma the right to build the project in exchange for providing affordable housing. That benefit was contingent on the results of SEQR. According to Stecich, the Board of Trustees will set a public hearing before voting on that bonus. Final approval of the project would come from the Architectural Review Board, after further Zoning Board approval, and site plan approval from the Planning Board.



From first birthdays to 75ths.

Unique venue - Great décor partners - Just party locally!

HUDCO

Rent our space for your party: 914 - 479 - 0011 www.hudco.co

Sports

EDITED BY ROB DIANTONIO

Local athletes rise to the occasion at state qualifier

— TRACK AND FIELD ROUNDUP —

BY ROB DIANTONIO

The road to Rochester runs through some of the toughest competition in New York State, and several Rivertowns athletes punched their tickets to the biggest stage of the outdoor track and field season at the Section 1 state qualifying meet from June 3–5.

The three-day meet, held at Hendrick Hudson, Arlington, and Suffern high schools, determined which athletes would advance to the state championships on June 13–14 at Webster Schroeder High School, near Rochester.

Ardasley's girls led the local contingent with an impressive showing in Class B, qualifying four entries for the state meet, while athletes from Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, and Irvington also earned coveted spots among New York's best.

Ardasley's state qualifiers were highlighted by sophomore Zaniya Bell, senior Mioko Martin, and sophomore Czarina Adewunmi, while the Panthers' 4x100-meter relay team also captured a state berth.

Martin soared to a winning jump of 18 feet, 5.5 inches in the long jump to secure her place at states, while Adewunmi qualified by winning the triple jump with a mark of 37-10½. Bell earned her state berth in the 100-meter hurdles after clocking a time of 15.71 seconds to place first, smashing a school record in the process.

The Panthers' 4x100 relay team of Martin, Bell, Adewunmi, and Sarah Lenihan put together one of the top performances of the meet, winning the event in 49.13 seconds.

"Everything is coming together perfectly right at the peak of this championship



Irvington's Brody Schimmel competes in the javelin.

season," Ardsley girls' coach Henry Leone said. "For Mio, dominating the long jump meant prioritizing speed, trusting her instincts, and completely going for it. For Zaniya, it was an unforgettable, historic performance, breaking a 37-year-old school record from 1989 in the 100 hurdles. For Czarina, it came down to execution and fully trusting her run-up in the triple jump. And for the 4x100 team, patience was the deciding factor — mastering the baton exchanges and resisting the urge to take off too soon."

Leone said the focus heading into the state championships is simply enjoying the experience and continuing to improve.

"My only expectation is that they enjoy the moment, give it their absolute best as they always do, and chase down a few more PRs," Leone said. "If medals come our way, great, but no matter what, we are incredibly proud of the girls."

For the Ardsley boys, senior Lou Baousson earned a trip to Rochester after placing second in the 400-meter hurdles with a time of 56.30 seconds.

Hastings' boys were led by sprint star Kai Ghalib, who continued his dominant postseason by qualifying for states in two events. Competing in Class C, Ghalib finished first in both the 100-meter dash and 200-meter dash. The sophomore crossed the line in 11.27 seconds to win the 100 before returning to claim the 200 crown in 22.53.

"My goal was to make states in at least one event, so making it in both is super exciting," Ghalib said. "One of the keys for me was being controlled in the prelims so that I had a lot left in the tank for the finals. I also took recovery between the two days of state quals very seriously, making sure to sleep, stretch, and hydrate."

Ghalib said his goals at states are to achieve a personal record in both events. "I'd like to make the finals or even medal in at least one," he added.

On the girls' side, senior Danae Morgan once again delivered for the Yellow Jackets. She earned a state berth in the shot put after winning the event with a throw of 36-10.

Morgan narrowly missed qualifying in a second event, placing second in the discus with a throw of 97-0.

Teammate Claire Grushko, a sophomore, qualified for states in the 1,500 meters with a time of 4:50.91, good for fifth place.

Dobbs Ferry senior Chris Doherty will head to Rochester as one of the area's top distance runners after qualifying in both the 800 and 1,600 meters.

Competing against one of the deepest distance fields in Section 1, Doherty placed third in the 800 with a personal record of 1:54.01 before taking fifth in the 1,600 with



Ardsley's Mioko Martin made states in the long jump. Photos by Jim MacLean.

a PR of 4:19.59. Both performances met the qualifying standards needed to advance.

"I think the key to my success in both races was to put myself as close to the front as possible," Doherty said. "Making sure that I was giving myself a shot to win for as long as I could in both races dragged me to qualifying marks."

The senior plans to carry that same mindset into the state championships.

"I really want to take risks and put myself in an aggressive position at the start of both of my races," Doherty said. "Winning a state title is also something I feel like has to be in the mind of every athlete competing this weekend, and believing that I am good enough to win a state championship is something that motivates me a lot looking forward to the meet."

Irvington's lone state qualifier, senior Ethan Gartlan, delivered a strong performance in the Class C boys 3,200-meter run.

Gartlan crossed the finish line fourth in 9:34.64 to secure his spot at states.

"Ethan just focused on racing on Thursday, and he dealt very well with the brutal heat," Irvington coach Chris Barry said. "He ran a terrific race — gutsy and smart."

There were some other notable performances at the state qualifying meet. Ardsley's boys had a pair of second-place finishes and personal bests in the relays in the 4x100 (43.31) and 4x400 (3:26.75). Zaire Bell, Xavier Estime, Baousson, and Andrew Herceg were on the 4x100 with John Boney, Baousson, Estime, and Herceg on the

Continued on page 23

Sports

Eagles survive late scare to punch ticket to state semis

BY ROB DIANTONIO

The pressure kept building.

Spackenkil had already trimmed a three-run deficit to one. The tying and go-ahead runs stood on second and third base. Two outs sat on the scoreboard. Every pitch felt like it carried the weight of an entire season.

Standing in the circle was an eighth-grader. Waiting at first base was a freshman. Neither blinked.

Victoria Baron induced a line drive to first baseman Olivia Hochleutner, who squeezed it for the final out as top-seeded Dobbs Ferry escaped with a 4-3 victory over Section 9 champion Spackenkil in the Class B regional final on June 5 at Monroe-Woodbury High School.

“The most impressive thing was the composure,” Dobbs Ferry coach Kim Reznicek said. “Not even just the pitcher. Obviously, Victoria is Victoria. But Olivia making that play — she’s one of the best defensive first basemen. There’s so many intangible things that make her so great.”

The win improved the Eagles to 19-3 and sent them to the state semifinals for the first time since 2010. Dobbs will face Section 11’s Babylon on June 12 at Greenlight Networks Grand Slam Park in Binghamton. If the Eagles win, they will play either Chatham of Section 2 or Susquehanna Valley of Section 4 in the state championship game the following day.

The game didn’t begin smoothly for the Eagles. Spackenkil took a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning on a sacrifice fly that ended with an obstruction call at home plate. Center fielder Kamryn Addis made a strong throw home and catcher Lucy Logan appeared to apply the tag, but the runner was ruled safe because of obstruction.



Dobbs Ferry’s softball team gathers with the plaque after winning the regional title. Photos by Rob DiAntonio.

Still, Dobbs Ferry never appeared rattled. The Eagles’ confidence stems from months of preparation.

“My practices have been so hard — I’m trying to make them harder because they’re doing everything right in practice every single day,” Reznicek said. “I’ve been harping on defense, and they’re really coming through.”

That calmness paid off in the top of the third inning, an inning that has become something of a trademark for Dobbs Ferry throughout the postseason.

Logan started the rally with a single before Hochleutner followed with a hit of her own. Emma DeFilippis then tied the game with an RBI single to score Logan.

“I was just looking for a good pitch,” DeFilippis said. “I really wanted to hit the ball and get us started. We stayed calm and everyone supports each other. We make sure not to stress because we know we can turn it around.”

Addis followed by ripping a two-run single to give Dobbs Ferry a 3-1 lead. Emily Marron then delivered an RBI single to make it 4-1.

Marron finished with three hits and an RBI, while Logan and DeFilippis each collected two hits.

The Eagles have now produced game-changing third innings in back-to-back playoff victories. “I don’t know, but I wish it would happen in the first,” Reznicek

joked. “It would make things a lot easier.”

DeFilippis offered her assessment. “We always have these innings where we just get it going,” she said. “Everyone really gets into it and it starts the whole game up.”

The four-run burst provided breathing room, but it would not be enough to avoid late drama. Baron scattered five hits, allowed two earned runs, and struck out four while improving her already impressive postseason résumé. What stood out most was the maturity she displayed in pressure-packed situations.

“That’s her time to slow herself down,” Reznicek said of Baron’s deliberate pace between pitches. “After a while, I realized that’s her process. She works hard. The harder you work, the calmer things get for you.”

Baron said her composure comes from trusting the players around her.

“I stay positive and have a good mindset, knowing that my teammates are right behind me and that they have my back no matter what,” Baron said.

That trust was tested in the seventh. Spackenkil scored twice and put the potentially tying and winning runs in scoring position. Suddenly, a game that seemed under control had become a nerve-racking finish.

“Mentally in that last inning, it was a little tough,” she said. “But I decided I needed to stand up. I needed to trust my infield, trust what I could do and just believe in myself.”

Before the final batter stepped in, junior shortstop Nicolette Giorgio walked over to talk with her young pitcher. “I just told her that it’s all her out here,” Giorgio said. “...if she wants this, she’s going to show us how she wants it like she always does.” Giorgio’s

Continued on page 23



(Left to right) Emily Marron connects with a pitch. Kamryn Addis makes the catch in center field. Emma DeFilippis hustles to first base.

Sports

Irvington falls short in lax semifinals to champion Bronxville



— VARSITY ROUNDUP —

BY ROB DIANTONIO

Despite some key players from last season transferring, Irvington's boys' lacrosse squad made it a step farther in the Section 1 Class D playoffs, advancing to the semifinals this spring.

But the run came to an end against second-seeded and eventual champion Bronxville as visiting No. 3 Irvington lost 16-8 on May 29, ending the Bulldogs' season. The Broncos built a 12-3 halftime lead and never looked back.

"Bronxville's offensive skill and depth was too much for us to handle," Irvington senior Nick Grados said. "It was unlike any team

Chris Callahan and Irvington lost to Bronxville in the Section 1 Class D semifinals. *File photo by Rob DiAntonio.*

we have faced this season."

Bronxville went on to defeat top-seeded Pleasantville 14-6 in the championship game on June 2.

In the semifinal loss, Irvington was paced by Liam Wade (3G, 1A) and Grados (1G, 4A). D.J. Ufer (1G, 2A), Chris Callahan (1G, 1A), Jack Klatell (1G), Saxon Frank (1G), and Harrison Malakoff (20S) contributed.

Irvington completed the campaign with a 12-6 record and will lose five seniors to graduation in Grados, Soren Deyonker, Chris Callahan, Ryder Spino, and Max Edibe.

"I'm going to miss this family that I've been so invested in for the last four years," Grados said. "I've just enjoyed every second of this team so much, so it hurts for it to be over."

—
Girls' lacrosse

No. 14 Irvington lost to No. 11 Pawling

Emma Boudrias took second in the long jump (15-9). Georgia Schmit ran to fourth in the 400-meters (1:03.38).

For Hastings' boys, Lachlan Muldoon finished second in the 400-meters (54.46).

Harrison Gredick took fourth for the Irvington boys in the pole vault (12-0). Alex Shevrin was seventh in the triple jump.

Irvington's girls were led by Ruthie Liang, who placed fourth in the 400-meters (59.81). The 4x400 relay was fourth with a squad of Liliana Brandwein, Kylie Canton, Jelena Herceg, and Liang.

—
Throwers shine at Hen Hud

The javelin and weight throw are both not contested at states, but that did not stop local athletes from shining at a throwing event held at Hendrick Hudson on June 3.

Irvington senior Brody Schimmel and junior Abigail Brandwein each won the

event in Class B. Schimmel won with a heave of 164-4 while Brandwein recorded a 91-4. "Abby and Brody have done so well this spring, benefitting greatly from coach [Mike] McQuillan's help," Irvington coach Chris Barry said.

For the Hastings' girls, Danae Morgan won the hammer throw in Class C with a 135-11. Teammate Alyssa Schlacter was second in the javelin (80-9). For Hastings' boys, Maxwell Silva Steeves was second in javelin in Class C (108-5).

Ardsley's Hannah Lines took fourth in the javelin in Class B (60-5) and fifth in the hammer.

Schimmel broke the Irvington school record with a heave of 171-10 in his final meet, the Patriot Plunker Invitational on June 9 at John Jay-East Fishkill. He placed second. Abigail Brandwein had the fourth-best girls' mark with a 90-0.

10-7 on the road in the Section 1 Class D quarterfinals on May 27.

The Bulldogs were led by Lizzy Villa (1A) and Sophia Im, who each netted two goals. Marina Foley, Lillian Isom, and Federica Ricciardella scored one goal each. Goalie Sadie Kilbury made 11 saves.

Irvington (6-12) will graduate a large senior group including Im, Ricciardella, Isom, Maddie Okun, Natalie Rushford, Daisy Hodges, Lena Svigals, and Leila Schneider.

—
Boys' tennis

Third-seeded Irvington fell to No. 2 Rye Neck 3-2 on the road in the Section 1 Division 2 semifinals on May 28.

The Bulldogs won a pair of doubles matches behind the teams of Brandon Chirinos and Hagai Frechter (6-3, 6-2), and Oliver Huang and Levent Sarayli (6-3, 6-1).

Softball

Continued from page 22

message reflected a team-wide mentality that has carried the Eagles this far.

"A big thing about us this year is that we learned how to pick each other up," Giorgio said. "When somebody makes an error or we get out, the next person always comes up and does something to better the team. We don't let anybody get down on themselves because we know it can always pick back up any second."

Moments later, the final batter lined a ball toward first base, and Hochleutner was waiting. The freshman secured the catch, ending the threat and sparking a celebration that sent the Eagles to the state final four.

The victory represented another milestone for a program that came heartbreakingly close to a Section 1 title last season before falling in the championship game. This spring, despite fielding a roster loaded with underclassmen, the Eagles have continued to exceed expectations.

"It means a lot to us," Giorgio said. "After losing last year in the section finals, coming back and winning this year is such a good feeling."

Now they are two wins away from a state championship. Yet nobody inside the Dobbs Ferry dugout appears overwhelmed by the moment.

"A lot of people thought we wouldn't even get this far," Giorgio said. "We really don't have anything to lose. We're just going to try our hardest, play like we have been, and see where it goes."

Baron believes the team's chemistry gives it a chance to keep extending its season.

"We love spending time with each other outside of games and outside of practices," she said. "We have such a sister bond. These girls are amazing people and the states deserves to see us and what we can do."

Track and field

Continued from page 21

4x400. Herceg (22.90) and Bell (23.03) were also fourth and fifth, respectively, in the 200-meter dash. Estime took fifth in the 110-meter hurdles (15.91).

For the Ardsley girls, Adewunmi was third in the 100-meter dash (12.74). Bell was fifth in the 400 hurdles (1:09.61). Maya Laglenne took fifth in the high jump (4-6) while Ana Luisa Vaz Castello was fifth in the pole vault (7-0).

For the Dobbs Ferry girls, the 4x100 relay squad placed second in a PR clocking of 51.98 seconds. Nola Brown, Ava Chabert, Brielle Jean, and Mariah Loran were on the relay. Chloe Runge was fourth in the shot put (27-1¼) and fifth in the discus (60-4).

For Hastings' girls, Prita Berry was second in the high jump (4-9) while teammate



Ardsley's Zaniya Bell (100 hurdles), Irvington's Ethan Gartlan (3,200), and Hastings' Kai Ghalib (100, 200). *Photos by Jim MacLean.*



**Give the Gift of a Mini Vacation
in Scarsdale!**

Pamper your Dads and Grads!

Spa Facials | Massages | CBD Massages | Body & Laser Treatments | Waxing | More!

Gift Certificates for all Tranquility Spa Services available in-store and online:
TranquilitySpa.com with Print-At-Home convenience!

For Over 30 Years

Tranquility  **Spa**

Relax. Renew. Revitalize.

917 Central Park Avenue • 914.713.0066 • www.TranquilitySpa.com
Monday-Friday 10AM-7PM • Saturday/Sunday 9AM-6PM • Ample Free Parking