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Vol 2. Issue 42.



RIVERTOWNS Dispatch

Local News,
Locally Sourced
~

June 26, 2026

\$2⁵⁰

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ARDSLEY — DOBBS FERRY — HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON — IRVINGTON



Hats off

Members of the Irvington High School class of 2026 toss their caps at Matthiessen Park on Saturday, June 20. For photos and stories about the high school graduations that happened before this issue of the Dispatch was printed, turn to pages 7 and 17 for Dobbs Ferry, pages 9 and 19 for Hastings, and pages 11 and 20 for Irvington. Next week's issue will include photos and a story about Ardsley, which was June 25.

Feiner clears primary hurdle en route to 19th term

BY AMY BOCHNER

GREENBURGH — Incumbent Paul Feiner moved a step closer to clinching his 19th term as town supervisor of Greenburgh after winning the Democratic primary on June 23.

Feiner, who has been in office since 1991, received 4,931 votes while challenger Barry McGoe, an Ardsley village trustee, received 3,825 votes. The general election will be Nov. 3.

The primary followed a tense campaign between the two candidates. McGoe, 59, was endorsed by the Greenburgh Democratic Committee, Congressman George Latimer, County Executive Ken Jenkins, State Assemblymember MaryJane Shimsky, County Legislator David Imamura, Ardsley Mayor Steve Edelstein, Dobbs Ferry Mayor Christy Knell, Hastings Mayor Tom Drake, and Irvington Mayor Arlene Burgos.

Feiner, 70, received endorsements from the Working Families Party, Central Westchester Indivisible, and the New York League

Continued on page 4

60 units proposed for former school site

*Housing would be
for 'active adults' over 55*

BY AMY BOCHNER

HASTINGS — A new proposal for 16 Villard Avenue, site of the former St. Matthew School, which closed in 2005, received mixed feedback during the meeting of the Hastings Planning Board on June 18.

The 2-acre, L-shaped parcel is occupied by a 15,000-square-foot building that would be replaced by a three-story, 60-unit rental

apartment building for "active adults" over the age of 55, an associated clubhouse, 67 garage spaces, and 20 surface spaces.

The apartment building would consist of 18 one-bedroom and 42 two-bedroom units. Fifteen percent of the units would be affordable. The communal amenities would include an arts and crafts space, a lounge, a fitness center, a kitchenette, a gathering space, and decks. The proposal also includes a bocce court, a pickleball court, and a community garden.

In attendance at last week's meeting were

the applicants, Anup Misra and Jon Burley, who sought view preservation advisory and site plan approval from the board. Also present were Kory Salomone of law firm Zarin & Steinmetz, project architect Sal Coco, engineer Rich Williams, planner Paul Vernon, and traffic consultant John Canning.

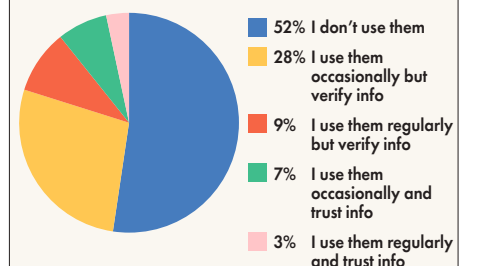
Coco, from BHC Architects, shared visual studies illustrating the architectural character of the proposal and how it fits into the surrounding neighborhood. The intent, he

Continued on page 4

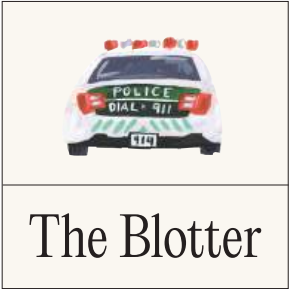
— You Answered —

How do you use your neighborhood
social media groups?

As answered by 149 readers of the Rivertowns Dispatch



Vote at rivertownsdispatch.com/the-weekly-poll



The Blotter

ARDSLEY

Loan, fraud attempt: An unidentified woman with a fraudulent New York State ID attempted to secure a \$35,000 home equity loan at Trustco Bank, 33 Center St., on Wednesday, June 17. She requested a \$25,000 cashier's check and \$10,000 cash. She left, without the money, after the bank manager became suspicious.

Wanted no more: A 32-year-old Ossining resident was turned over to the New York State Police, which had a warrant for his arrest, on the evening of Wednesday, June 17. Officer Kenneth Cordero stopped the defendant for a vehicle-and-traffic vio-

lation on Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A).

Contempt arrest: A 24-year-old Port Chester resident was arrested for violating an order of protection at the Apple Motor Inn, 775 Saw Mill River Road, on the morning of Thursday, June 18. She was charged with criminal contempt in the second degree, a misdemeanor. Det. Brendon Mavra made the arrest.

Shoplifting arrest: A 49-year-old homeless man was arrested for shoplifting \$119.17 worth of items from CVS, 725 Saw Mill River Road, and then fleeing from police on the afternoon of Thursday, June 18. He was charged with four misdemeanors — petit larceny, resisting arrest, obstructing governmental administration in the second degree, and criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree. The weapon was a razor blade knife. Office Kenneth Cordero made the arrest.

Assault arrest: A 28-year-old Hartsdale resident was arrested for pepper spraying a 59-year-old man in the parking lot at McDowell Park after the two of them were involved in a collision on Heatherdell Road on the evening of Sunday, June 21. She was charged with assault in the third degree, a misdemeanor, and leaving the scene of a property damage auto accident, a violation. Officers Kenneth Cordero and Nino Kalmeta made the arrest.

DOBBS FERRY

Suspended license: A 34-year-old Dobbs Ferry resident with a suspended driver's license was arrested for aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the third degree, a misdemeanor, on Transvaal Street on the morning of Monday, June 15.

Shoplifting arrest: A 39-year-old Yonkers res-

ident was arrested for shoplifting \$330.04 worth of items from Stop & Shop, 390 Broadway, on the afternoon of Monday, June 15. He was charged with two misdemeanors — petit larceny and criminal possession of stolen property in the fifth degree. Officer Jairo Hidalgo made the arrest.

Check, fraud: On June 18, Mercy University security reported that a \$13,518.47 check issued by that school was altered and then cashed on May 8. The name of the payee was changed. Mercy reported a similar theft, involving a \$129,000 check, on May 26.

Assault arrest: A 43-year-old Dobbs Ferry resident was arrested for punching a police officer at Doubleday's Restaurant, 83 Main St., on the morning of Friday, June 19. She was charged with assault in the second degree, a felony, criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth de-

gree, a misdemeanor, and disorderly conduct, a violation. Det. Jeff Jee made the arrest.

Burglary arrest: A 45-year-old Brooklyn resident and a 42-year-old Yonkers resident were arrested for burglarizing Hudson Social, 11 Station Plaza, on the morning of Friday, June 19. The arrests resulted from a report by an alarm company and then a caller who was behind the defendants' vehicle, which police stopped in Ardsley. The defendants were charged with four felonies — burglary in the third degree, grand larceny in the third degree, criminal mischief in the third degree, and criminal possession of stolen property in the third degree. They were also charged with possession of burglar's tools, a misdemeanor. Det. Jeff Jee made the arrests.

Tires slashed: The passenger side tires of a 2021
Continued on page 21

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Sun **Brunch 12pm-3pm** 2pm-10pm

RESERVATIONS



ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER ORKIN LEWIS

Jazz impresarios to retire after decades of high notes

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

TARRYTOWN — Mark Morganelli and Ellen Prior's paths first crossed when they were in kindergarten, 66 years ago, though they didn't meet until two decades later. Now, 47 years after Morganelli presented his first concerts under the name Jazz Forum, and 41 years after he married Prior and established Jazz Forum Arts as a nonprofit, the couple will retire from the organization together.

Morganelli has served as executive and artistic director since the beginning, while Prior has been Jazz Forum Arts' associate director for 11 years, in addition to decades of assisting with a variety of tasks, from concessions to fundraising, without a title. Their last day will be June 30. Current program director Darrian Douglas, a drummer, will take over as executive director, while current marketing director Clara Winder, a Dobbs Ferry native, will become chief operating officer.

Morganelli and Prior lived in Dobbs Ferry from 1991 to 2015, before moving to Tarrytown and opening the Jazz Forum Club there in 2017. In 2000, Jazz Forum Arts launched a summer series of free outdoor performances at Dobbs Ferry Waterfront Park that has since expanded to include Tarrytown, Ossining, Sleepy Hollow, and for the first time this summer, Irvington.

"It's been so intimately intertwined with our personal life because Jazz Forum Arts was us, and of course was Mark," Prior told the Dispatch. "He did it. He had a little help here and there, he had people who came and worked for him for some period of time, but mostly he did it on his own."

Morganelli told the Dispatch that the key to Jazz Forum Arts' success and longevity has been "artistic excellence and community support." In addition to the thousands of attendees at free outdoor concerts and ticketed events, the Montefiore Einstein hospital system has been the presenting sponsor of the club and outdoor concerts for about 12 years.

"To get that kind of support from both corporate and individuals has led us to where we are now," Morganelli said.

Morganelli, a horn player, started



Ellen Prior and Mark Morganelli at the Jazz Forum Club

producing events at his loft at 50 Cooper Square in Manhattan in June 1979, following a six-week trip in Europe performing and writing album reviews for Poland-based Jazz Forum Magazine. The owners of the magazine invited Morganelli to open a club using their name, and soon after returning home to New York, at 24 years old, he did that. Over the next four years he presented more than 1,000 concerts, first at the loft and then at another location at Broadway and Bleecker in Manhattan.

"The motivation was to have a venue that would be open to the public and encourage both emerging and established artists to perform there and give them a welcoming environment in which to perform," Morganelli explained.

Around the time the second Jazz Forum

location closed, Morganelli and Prior met at their 10-year reunion for North Shore High School on Long Island. Although they also attended elementary and middle school together, and were even in the same kindergarten class at Glen Head Elementary School in 1960, neither recalls speaking to each other until the reunion. The couple married two years later, in July 1985, one week before Morganelli launched the Riverside Park Arts Festival in Manhattan, which was the event that launched Jazz Forum Arts as a nonprofit. Dizzy Gillespie and Wynton Marsalis were among the organization's founding board members.

The Riverside Park Arts Festival lasted 12 years, during which time Morganelli and Prior moved to Dobbs Ferry, and Jazz Forum Arts launched the Tarrytown Jazz

at the Music Hall series, which took place from 1992 to 2013.

Prior, who previously worked in book publishing, human resources, and management consulting for nonprofits, plans to take her time figuring out what she'll do next, but says she's making "a commitment to ease."

"There was about six months when I would get very teary every time I thought of not doing this, and then I got a lot stronger about it, and right now, at this very moment, I'm getting teary again," Prior said.

Her husband plans to focus on being a musician, which he has done less frequently while booking and producing thousands of live events featuring other artists. Morganelli has no plans to stop performing, which he's been doing since he picked up a trumpet

Continued on page 14

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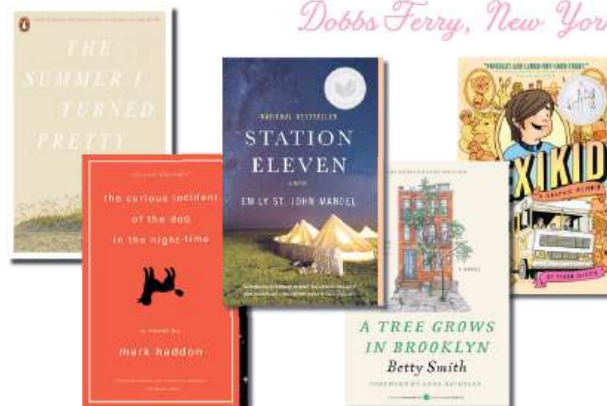
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Housing proposal
Continued from page 1

said, is “to create an active social gathering area for residents, preserving views of the Hudson River.”

The apartment building, he said, would use various materials, facade articulation, and building proportions to provide a more residential character, avoid a monolithic appearance, and break down the overall mass of the structure. Canning conducted a survey that found minimal impact to traffic, amounting to 17 trips during the weekday morning peak hour and 19 during the peak afternoon hour.

The applicants sought three variances. The first relates to development coverage. The proposed project has a total development coverage of 63.6%, while the

maximum requirement is 50%. Another variance is for the height of the retaining wall, which exceeds the 6.5-foot maximum allowed because the applicants sunk the building into the landscape to preserve views, so some of the retaining walls ended up higher.

The third variance is related to density, because a 60-unit project would require a total of 90,000 square feet. The property in question is 88,617 square feet, meaning the applicants are asking for a variance of 1,383 square feet.

Although the project is consistent with the recommendations of the Village’s comprehensive plan, the Village’s planner, Patrick Cleary, described the development’s challenges, explaining that there are 11 variances needed — not three.

These include one for the clubhouse’s

height, which is proposed to be 26 feet when the maximum is 15. The Villard driveway width exceeds the maximum and meets the road at a 45-degree angle when 90 degrees is the requirement. Other variances include ones for the number of parking spaces, of which there are supposed to be 97, and one for the dimension of those spots.

Members of the planning board expressed support for the project’s goal of building housing for seniors in Hastings, but were critical of the current design. One of the key concerns was the number of variances needed, which planning board chair Eva Alligood attributed to the “intensity” of the project.

Alligood referenced the “massing” of the project, stating, “It is very unusual for us to have, in the middle of our town, a building that long and uninterrupted and that

massive.” She suggested decreasing the number of units and breaking up the building.

Another challenge for this project is view preservation and the impact on the site’s neighbors. Twenty-seven residents spoke during the meeting’s public comment portion. Many shared the planning board’s support for senior housing, while also expressing concerns with how the building would affect their view of the Hudson River and Palisades. Others worried about the noise of construction and the pickleball courts, or that the traffic impact would be more significant than the survey’s findings indicate. Like Alligood, multiple speakers supported decreasing the scale of the project.

The planning board kept the public hearing open. The applicants must now revise their plans to incorporate the feedback before the next meeting, on July 16.

Feiner wins primary
Continued from page 1

of Conservation Voters.

The election was also preceded by ongoing tensions between Feiner and Greenburgh Town Council members Joy Haber, Ellen Hendrickx, Gina Jackson, and Francis Sheehan over the Town’s finances. That conflict has played out during Town Board meetings and through email blasts that were also posted on the Town’s website.

Following the election, McGoey released a statement on Facebook and Instagram congratulating Feiner and thanking residents

for “their engagement and participation in this primary election.” He encouraged “all Democrats to come together in unity as we prepare for the important midterm elections.”

Feiner told the Dispatch that he is “more energized” than he’s ever been about the job.

“This was the most difficult campaign in my career because every major elected official in the county and the Democratic Party leadership fought hard to defeat me,” he said. “But we must look forward.”

Feiner wants to focus on helping small businesses in Greenburgh’s six villages,

referencing the Town’s “Business of the Month” program. He also wants to freeze assessment changes for up to five years, address the issue of affordability, lobby State lawmakers to include more funds in the budget for repaving State roads in Greenburgh, find ways to consolidate services to save money, and establish internal/external groups to seek grants.

Other goals Feiner has include creating “realistic, specific plans to address a new court [and] police headquarters” for Greenburgh as well as continuing to mentor students.

The morning after his win, Feiner sent

an email to the mayors of the six villages, expressing his interest in working together. He proposed meetings with each mayor to discuss their thoughts on how he “can be a better town supervisor, and how the Town can work better with your village.”

“Although most of the village mayors did not support my re-election efforts,” he wrote, “I want to reassure you that I will do whatever I can to help your village during the next two and a half years. I also am reflecting on the constructive criticisms Barry [McGoey] made during his campaign and hope to implement some of his ideas. I always benefit from having an opponent.”

Congratulations Graduates!



Congratulations to our bright, curious, joyful prekindergarten graduates as they embark on their kindergarten journey! A heartfelt thank you to the wonderful teachers at Community Nursery School for nurturing our little learners and adventurers.





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ARDSLEY

— Coming Up This Week —

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

Summer Reading Club Kick-off Party and Parent Coffee

Saturday, June 27, 11 a.m.–noon

Ardsley Public Library

For kids finishing grades K–5 and their parents. Registration and rules at ardsleypubliclibrary.org

Car Show Benefiting Ardsley First Responders

Saturday, June 27, 5–8 p.m.

Ardsley Middle School

Admission: \$20. Featuring classic cars and motorcycles, food trucks, music, and raffles

Dog Park Grand Opening

Sunday, June 28, 2:30 p.m.

McDowell Park, 439 Heatherdell Road, behind Field 4

Senior Barbecue

Wednesday, July 1, noon

Ardsley Community Center

Library Garden Tour

Wednesday, July 1, 3 p.m.

Ardsley Public Library

School Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 1, 7 p.m.

High school library

Independence Day Celebration

Friday, July 3, 2–4 p.m.

Bicentennial Park

Featuring live music, ice cream, and reading of the Declaration of Independence

Municipal Office Closure

Friday, July 3

In observance of Independence Day

Correction

Leftovers from the Jewish-Muslim Fellowship Dinner at Woodlands Community Temple were donated to the Open Arms Shelter in White Plains, not to Hope's Door as reported last week.

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at amy@rivertownsdispatch.com



Jeffrey Kinsey, Erica Finegan, Margarida Neto, and Christina Schilli

Jenkins honorees recognized for service

Neto, Finegan, Kinsey, and Schilli receive awards

BY LAURA SCHILLER

“You deserve all that!” an excited third-grader shouted from the audience as Christina Schilli stepped off the stage at Ardsley High School, her arms full of flowers, thank-you cards, and handmade posters from students.

Moments earlier, Schilli had reflected on the rewards of spending 25 years teaching at Concord Road Elementary School, where she forged lasting relationships with generations of students and colleagues. In recognition of her service to the district, she was presented with a Jenkins Award.

Schilli was one of four honorees recognized during the Ardsley PTSA’s annual Jenkins Awards ceremony on June 17. Established in 1953, the awards recognize exemplary service to the Ardsley community. Recipients receive lifetime membership in the New York State PTSA, and a donation is made in their name to the Jenkins Memorial Scholarship.

Also honored were Concord Road kindergarten teacher Margarida Neto, Ardsley PTSA leader Erica Finegan, and Ardsley High School music educator Jeffrey Kinsey.

PTSA co-president Jaya Iyer opened the event speaking about the significance of the awards.

“Every year, this ceremony reminds us of something that Ardsley does really well — producing people who give far more than anyone has any right to ask of them and then, somehow, find more to give as well,” Iyer told the audience.

Presenting the first award, Concord Road parent Christina Paparo described Neto, the Sunshine Award honoree, as a beloved presence at Concord Road.

“Margarida’s sunny disposition follows her everywhere. She picks up her students each day with a song and a smile. She forms incredibly close connections with her students and their families. And long after students leave Concord Road, her impact stays with them,” Paparo said.

“I love my job. I love these children. They’re the ones who make me smile and sing every day,” Neto said, dressed in a pink suit.

The second recipient, Finegan, was recognized for years of leadership and volunteer service. Lynna Kane, former co-president of the PTSA, and Rebecca Berry, co-president of Ardsley Music Partners, presented the award to Finegan, who has served as PTSA president, co-president, and co-founder of Ardsley Music Partners.

“If there were an Olympic event for stepping up and getting things done, Erica would have a gold medal,” Kane said. “And knowing Erica, if that event existed, she would be the one organizing it, recruiting volunteers, baking brownies, and asking what else needs to be done.”

Berry praised Finegan’s approach to leadership.

“She leads with kindness, treats everyone with respect, and believes deeply in the potential of young people,” Berry said. “She knows the smallest gesture, a word of encouragement, a listening ear, an open kitchen, and a willingness to help, can have the greatest impact.”

Presenter Inga Peter, a parent in the district, next highlighted Kinsey’s impact on generations of music students at the high school.

“Through programs such as concert band, wind ensemble, the award-winning jazz band, the More than Mozart Club, and AP Music Theory, Dr. Kinsey has created opportunities for students to grow not only as musicians, but as confident, connected, and inspired

young people,” Peter said.

Accepting the award, Kinsey reflected on the community he has built in the band room.

“The band room is a special place,” Kinsey said. “One of the first things I set out to do was create an environment where students wanted to be in the band room all the time. I can tell you now that I’ve succeeded, because I’m not getting anything done anymore,” he joked, drawing laughter from the audience.

Led by Kinsey, the Ardsley High School jazz band performed two musical interludes during the ceremony.

In the final presentation, parent Lili-ana Hernandez praised Schilli’s impact on students.

“You understand that teaching is more than sharing knowledge. It is inspiring confidence, encouraging growth, and helping students discover and foster their potential,” Hernandez said.

Accepting the award, Schilli reflected on the challenges and rewards of teaching.

“I wish I could tell you that every day in the classroom is sunshine and rainbows, but the fact is, this job is hard, like, really hard. Some years are harder than others, but each year presents new challenges and obstacles,” Schilli said.

“Through it all, my colleagues have been my anchor,” she continued. “Their support, encouragement, and willingness to stand beside me through both the difficult moments and the rewarding ones have made all the difference.”

Iyer closed with a lighthearted note to remember waterproof mascara at next year’s ceremony, and thanked the recipients for their contributions to Ardsley.

“You have each, in your own way, made this community more than the sum of its parts,” Iyer told the Jenkins Award recipients. “We are lucky that you chose Ardsley, and even luckier that you stayed.”

ARDSLEY

Contracts awarded for bus garage and parking lot

BY AMY BOCHNER

The conversion of a residential property adjacent to Concord Road Elementary School into a bus garage and parking lot moved ahead with the approval of five contracts by the Ardsley School Board during meetings on May 16 and June 4.

The contracts are part of the \$53,499,000 capital plan which was supported by a \$49,999,000 bond that voters approved in 2024. One of the items included was construction of a 3,400-square-foot bus maintenance building on Alexander Hamilton Avenue, along with a bus lot connected to the existing drive.

In 2019, voters approved the district's acquisition of the 1.3-acre property for \$879,000 in a special referendum. According to an FAQ posted by the district prior to the vote, what prompted the proposed purchase was increasing enrollment and the potential of future capacity issues.

There is currently a former private home on the site, which will be demolished as part of the project. On May 16, the school board granted a contract of \$368,000 to Gentile Construction Corp. for that work.

During the June 4 meeting, four more contracts were approved — \$8,378,000 to ML Inc. for construction of the building; \$324,000 to VFR Contracting for plumbing; \$350,111 to Sun-Dance Energy Contractors, Inc. b/d/a



The former private home on Alexander Hamilton Avenue

Markley Mechanical for the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system; and \$712,345 to Naber Electric Corp. for electrical work.

The contracts total \$10.1 million, which Joseph Urbanowicz, the district's director of buildings and facilities, said was on budget.

Prior to the 2024 vote for the capital plan, the district released a document with rationale for each of the projects. This stated that the district's maintenance equipment, some vehicles, materials, supplies, and workshop were being housed under instructional space.

A separate building was necessary for storing gas-powered equipment, combustible materials, and other supplies. There was also a need for additional parking for cars on campus.

According to Urbanowicz, the property will have a total of 45 spaces. The total bus parking area will be approximately 40,000 square feet, with new pavement and a retaining wall.

This was the final project in the capital plan that needed to go through the bidding process. Construction is anticipated to begin this summer and be completed by early 2027.

— COMMUNITY BRIEFS —

Outstanding novice teacher

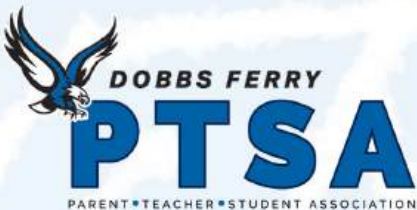
Ardsley High School educator Ava Petrillo received an outstanding novice social studies teacher award from the Westchester Lower Hudson Council for Social Studies (WLHCSS). She was nominated by colleague Derek O'Donnell.

Trills and Thrills

The Ardsley High School Orchestra and Concert Band participated in the annual Trills and Thrills Assessment Festival in Neptune, N.J. on May 29, with the orchestra receiving a superior rating and the concert band receiving an excellent rating.

Quiz bowl champs

Ardsley Middle School's Quiz Bowl Club placed first at the Long Island Quiz Bowl Alliance Regional Championships on May 31. They were undefeated in the middle school division after 10 games, earning 4,455 total points. Eighth-grader Michael Moopenn-Morris earned the second most individual points in the middle school division.



Congratulations to the Springhurst Class of 2026 on Stepping Up to 6th Grade! We can't wait to see what you do next!



DOBBS FERRY

— Coming Up This Week —

River Jam and Food Trucks

Friday, June 26, 5–9 p.m.

Waterfront Park

The concert series kicks off with

Kickn Nash, 7 p.m.

Children's Book Nook

Saturday, June 27, and Sunday,

June 28, 1–4 p.m.

Keeper's House, 15 Walnut St.

Explore a special selection of books and interactive displays in a new cozy space

Night at the Museum for Ages 5+

Monday, June 29, 4–5 p.m.

Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Hands-on astronomy activities, fossil creating, and interactive learning

Registration required at

childrens@dobbsferrylibrary.org

Trivia Night

Tuesday, June 30, 7 p.m.

Memorial Park

Stuffy Sleepover

Wednesday, July 1, 5–6 p.m.

Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Bring a stuffed animal for a storytime and art project for all ages

Registration required at childrens@dobbsferrylibrary.org

Municipal Office Closure

Friday, July 3

In observance of Independence Day

Movie on the Trail:

"Captain America: The First Avenger"

Friday, July 3, 8:30 p.m.

Keeper's House

Bring your own chair or blanket and refreshments

River Jam and Food Trucks

Friday, July 3, 5–9 p.m.

Waterfront Park

The concert series continues with Sounds of Valor, 7 p.m.

Got news?

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



Charles Hough and Mateus Hertz-Bird. Photo by Tom Warren

Wind and wisdom mark commencement

BY LAURA SCHILLER

"Graduations at the waterfront are always unique," Dobbs Ferry High School Principal John Falino said as he opened commencement ceremonies on Saturday, June 20. Wind churned whitecaps on the Hudson River and sent dresses, hair, and gowns whipping in every direction. Amid the gusts, it seemed miraculous that the 110 graduates' caps remained in place.

Falino noted that the class of 2026 was the district's 125th graduating class. He acknowledged the board of education, teachers, parents, administrators, and support staff before introducing board of education president Brooke Bass.

"To the class of 2026, today is a celebration of achievement, perseverance, growth, and possibility — the culmination of years of hard work and the beginning of a future filled with opportunity," said Bass, who then addressed graduating into a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence.

"No technology can replace the qualities that make you uniquely you," she noted. "In a world increasingly filled with generated content, authentic voices will stand out."

Returning to the podium, Falino delivered a message about possibility and purpose.

"You stand here with your futures wide open," he told graduates. "Your path right now is unknown. Your identities are still being discovered, and the possibilities are endless."

Referencing the New York Knicks' recent championship, he added, "Truly, anything's possible."

Falino highlighted the seniors' accomplishments, noting that 54 of them — 49% of the class, an all-time high — completed two full years of International Baccalaureate coursework. For the first time in school history, several students also earned both the New York State Seal of Biliteracy and the Seal of Civic Readiness. He praised the

students' participation in the arts, including the musical production "Pippin," which received eight Metro Awards nominations, and applauded the school's athletes, who were "crushing it across the board."

Drawing on "Pippin," the story of a young person searching for identity and purpose, Falino said many graduates may be asking themselves similar questions about who they are and how they will make their mark. He shared his own experience, recalling that as a high school graduate he expected to open a deli, and did not discover his passion for education until years later.

"It's completely OK if you don't have it figured out yet," he said. "You're just getting

"Dobbs Ferry offers an incredibly supportive and inclusive environment."

Salutatorian Angela Crowe

started, and without a doubt, you'll have to pivot along the way."

Falino urged the seniors to give themselves grace, trust that their purpose will emerge, and remember they will always have a home in Dobbs Ferry.

Salutatorian Angela Crowe, a National Merit semifinalist bound for Northwestern University, used her address to express gratitude for the community that shaped her. Acknowledging the uncertainty students feel as they prepare for the future, she focused on the positive.

"Dobbs Ferry offers an incredibly supportive and inclusive environment," she said. She expressed confidence in her fellow graduates, adding, "I have already seen what this class can accomplish when we put our minds to the things we care about."

Schools Superintendent Kenneth Slentz took an unconventional approach, reflecting on his own graduation 39 years ago.

"Here's what I came up with," he told graduates. "I remember absolutely nothing about that day."

After polling former classmates, he found many shared the same experience. Quoting cognitive psychologist Dan Willingham's observation that "memory is the residue of thought," Slentz said he realized the lasting memories of high school were not ceremonies or speeches.

"It was my friends," he said. "I so loved my friends and valued the friendships that got me through difficult times and celebrated successes with me."

Slentz urged the senior to invest in the relationships around them rather than the distractions competing for their attention.

"The people sitting to your left and right, front and back, matter," he said.

Valedictorian Christopher Doherty, who will attend Amherst College on a pre-med track, reflected on the relationships and experiences that defined his high school career.

A standout runner and soccer player, Doherty said athletics helped him find both purpose and friendship. Looking back on the past four years, he realized his most meaningful memories were tied less to goals and achievements than to the people who shared them.

"In reality, I always cared so much more about being able to run with my friends," he said.

Doherty recalled long conversations, late nights after events and races, and the small moments that made school feel like more than a place to learn. "The people and these moments have kept me coming back to this," he said.

The school octet, led by Georgia DeFalco, sang John Denver's "Leaving on a Jet Plane" before the seniors received their diplomas one by one. By then, the wind had slightly eased.

DOBBS FERRY

Bond business benefits from tech accelerator program

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

With her budding business, ZuzLab, Dobbs Ferry resident Lisanne Biolos is aiming to help municipalities, hospitals, and school systems save money, raise funds to complete large-scale projects, and provide locals with efficient opportunities to invest in those projects.

ZuzLab takes its name from a second-century Jewish coin called “zuz.” The company’s digital platform, which focuses on the issuing of municipal bonds, is driven by blockchain technology developed by Biolos’ co-founder, Seth Goldstein.

Biolos has lived in Dobbs Ferry for 22 years. She now works full-time with ZuzLab, after 15 years in various roles with the accounting firm KPMG, including talent development. Goldstein, who spends equal time living in Riverdale and Pittsburgh, is a computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon.

This spring, Biolos and Goldstein joined seven other Westchester-based tech companies in the 10-week Element 46 Tech Accelerator startup program, which ended June 11 with a Demo Day of participants pitching their ventures to potential investors, government officials, and other contacts.

Biolos and Goldstein first piloted ZuzLab four years ago in Pittsburgh, with a focus on



Lisanne Biolos of Zuzlab

helping small businesses raise money. That initial inspiration came from seeing small businesses struggle to survive the pandemic.

“It’s a complicated area, and it was challenging in that space right at the beginning because of regulations,” Biolos explained.

About a year ago the pair pivoted to focus on supporting municipalities, hospitals,

schools, and other issuers of municipal bonds, for whom they recognized the same technology had the potential to reduce costs.

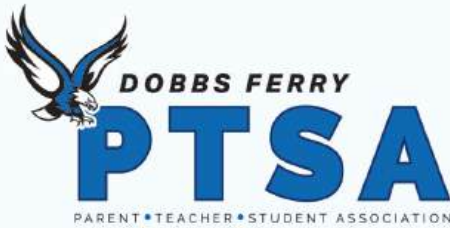
“We saw a way that they could save a significant amount of money, and that’s good for the schools and the hospitals,” Biolos said. “It’s good for the taxpayers, it’s good for a lot of people other than the bankers in the middle.”

ZuzLab has the infrastructure to save municipal bond issuers money by making it possible for individuals to buy the bonds at their primary issuance, instead of the bonds going through middlemen before being sold to individuals. Under normal circumstances, middlemen are a necessary part of the process because of the vetting that needs to happen for an investor to buy a municipal bond.

“It’s so time consuming to vet somebody as an investor who’s able to buy the bond at primary issuance, so only people or large institutions that are already in the system can buy bonds when they are first issued,” Biolos explained. “So what happens is the institutions get it, and broker dealers and people in the middle will buy a big chunk and then sell smaller chunks. They take a little piece, and then it gets to a person at the end, like you or me, who buys one. So we’re paying more for that same thing.”

ZuzLab uses blockchain technology and smart contracts that help to automate the vetting process, so that individual investors outside of a large institution can be pre-vetted to buy bonds at primary issuance. Adding the possibility for more individuals to buy the bonds earlier, at a reduced cost, increases the demand for the bonds.

Continued on page 14



Congratulations to the Dobbs Ferry Middle School Class of 2026 on Stepping Up to 9th Grade! We wish you the best as you begin your high school journey!





HASTINGS- ON-HUDSON

— Coming Up This Week —

Farmers Market

Saturday, June 27, 8:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue
For details, visit hastingsfarmersmarket.org

Hastings on Jazz

Sunday, June 28, 3–5:30 p.m.
VFW Plaza
The weekly summer series continues with the Eric Person/Duane Eubanks Quintet
Rain location: Hastings Public Library

Music Time with Adam Hart

Tuesday, June 30, 10:45–11:15 a.m.
Hastings Public Library
For ages 10 months–5 years and their caretakers

Mahjong

Tuesdays, 12:30–2:15 p.m., and
Wednesdays, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.
Hastings Public Library
To play, call 914-478-3307 or
leave your name and number at the
Circulation Desk

Movin' the Mind & Groovin' the Balance

Tuesday, June 30, 1–2 p.m.
Hastings Public Library
Movement class for people with Parkinson's
disease or balance challenges

Knitting and Crocheting

Tuesday, June 30, 2:30–5 p.m.
Hastings Public Library

Family Film Screening

Tuesday, June 30, 5–6:45 p.m.
Hastings Public Library
Featuring Disney's animated "Moana"

The Introverts Book Club

Friday, July 3, 4–6 p.m.
The Good Witch Coffee Bar,
134 Southside Ave.
Email amanning@hastingslibrary.org
for details

Municipal Office Closure

Friday, July 3
In observance of Independence Day

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at
amy@rivertownsdispatch.com



Members of the class of 2026 toss their mortarboards.

Grads urged to act with honor and grace

BY RITA WALTON

Though the weather forecast had threatened showers, the rain held off for Hastings High School's 118th commencement at Reynolds Field on Thursday, June 18.

The ceremony started with the 112 seniors marching onto the field in green robes as the high school orchestra played "Pomp and Circumstance." Once the students were seated, the high school chorus sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" and then seniors Michael Leydon and Emmy Taylor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Principal Andrew Clayman welcomed the audience and thanked those who had made the event possible. Clayman said he had attended the senior internship project presentations this spring, and found the scope of the projects astounding. He described one student who used combinatorics, which is

an area of mathematics primarily concerned with counting, to try to beat the stock market. What Clayman found interesting was that the project took as a given that there's uncertainty in the world.

"The world is messy and full of complications and unpredictability," Clayman noted. "This uncertainty will continue to accelerate as we enter the age of A.I."

Graduates can create community and chart their own paths, Clayman said. They can commit to what the Knicks did to win the NBA championship — never giving up, no matter the odds.

"You need passion, compassion, and people to walk with you," Clayman recommended.

Class president Andre Forrest spoke next. "We were 112 peers living in glass houses," he said. "No test results or relationships were

kept secret. Hastings is so small that there was a lack of privacy. But this also allowed me to connect on a deeper level and create a web of relationships. As we leave the small bubble of Hastings, I hope we embrace the new experiences we're about to encounter."

Forrest noted that he will attend college in California, though he had only visited once. "We can introduce ourselves without the expectations that have followed us. Now it's time to find our own way," he concluded.

Guest speaker Gregory Stephens taught math at Hastings High School for 22 years, until Dec. 31, 2025. He was introduced by Clayman as a graduate of all three Hastings schools who earned a B.A. in economics and government at Oberlin College, an M.A. in mathematics education from Teachers College, Columbia, and an Ed.D. in educational

Continued on page 21



Fiery end

Hastings Volunteer Fire Department Assistant Chief Frank DeSouza participates in a flag retirement ceremony hosted by American Legion Post 1195 on Farragut Avenue on Sunday, June 14, which was Flag Day.

HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON

Highline owner talks about opening first cannabis dispensary

BY TIMOTHY REUTER

The Rivertowns Dispatch Podcast recently spoke with Jake Reinus, CEO and general counsel of Highline Cannabis, LLC, which opened this past March. The Highline is the only cannabis dispensary in the Rivertowns. The transcript excerpted below is lightly edited for clarity. You can listen to the full interview on Spotify or Apple Podcasts or visit anchor.fm/rivertownsdiscpatch.



Rivertowns Dispatch Podcast (RDP):
Why did you decide to open a dispensary in Hastings?

Jake Reinus: Well, I guess that's a two-part question. Why open a dispensary — because that's a question that I sometimes ask myself — and why Hastings-on-Hudson? I decided to open a dispensary because I've been a consumer of, and advocate for, responsible cannabis use for a very significant part of my life. I'm not really a consumer of alcohol, so cannabis has been my vice of choice for a long time.

As an attorney, when they legalized cannabis I saw it as a very interesting opportunity. Basically, the law was new, the industry was new, and it was a chance for me to learn about this new lucrative industry that was



Jake Reinus at The Highline

heavily regulated, so obviously needed a lot of legal services for the operators...

During that process I met my now business partner — at the gym of all places. He's a serial entrepreneur. We talked a lot about business and finance, aside from cannabis. As he learned what I was doing, he gained interest. And as I kind of learned more about what I was doing, I gained interest in becoming an operator myself. And so, we kind of combined forces and decided to give it a shot on our own.

RDP: So that brings us to the decision to open a dispensary. And now, as you said, the second part of the question: Why Hastings?

JD: So, I grew up in Chappaqua, pretty nearby, about a 20-minute drive from Hastings, a similar community. My business partners also grew up nearby in Greenville, a town that I didn't even know existed until I met them, but it's nestled right there, between Hastings and Scarsdale, I think. And so we really wanted to be in Westchester. Our goal

was to be as local as we could to our roots where we grew up, the communities we were familiar with, and we felt like we understood and could represent really well. So, you know Westchester has slim pickings as far as where you're allowed to operate a dispensary.

Initially a municipality is able to opt out of having a dispensary at all, right? At least 50% of the towns in Westchester County decided that they did not want to host a dispensary. That included Chappaqua, Scarsdale and Greenville. So, off the bat, we were not able to set up exactly where our roots were, but we still had plenty of opportunity. We became familiar with the towns that were open to having a dispensary, and Hastings really stuck out to us. It's a very charming community; it's got a lot of its own unique character.

RDP: There's a segment of the Hastings community that is very upset about your presence here. What is your response to people who say you are located too close to where children's activities are taking place and that your product is fundamentally unhealthy?

JR: We try to remain positive when we face the critics. Fortunately, we've learned that although it's a kind of a loud bunch,

Continued on page 21

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IRVINGTON

— Coming Up This Week —

“Needles at Noon”

Saturday, June 27, 12–1:30 p.m.

Irvington Public Library

Lori Cohen joins the weekly yarn craft meetup to help with knitting and crocheting

Exhibit Reception:

Greenburgh’s Black History

Saturday, June 27, 2:30–4:30 p.m.

Irvington Public Library

Farmers Market

Sunday, June 28, 9:30 a.m.–1 p.m.

Main Street School, 101 Main St.

For details, visit

irvingtonfarmersmarket.org

Stories in the Park

Monday, June 29, 10:45–11:15 a.m.

Scenic Hudson Park

Relocation to Irvington Public Library

due to wet conditions will be announced by 10 a.m. at irvingtonlibrary.org

Pajama Storytime for Ages 3+

Tuesday, June 30, 7–7:30 p.m.

Irvington Public Library

Registration required at irvingtonlibrary.org

Sidewalk Chalking

Wednesday, July 1, 10:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Irvington Public Library

Congressman George Latimer

Mobile Office Hours

Thursday, July 2, 1–4 p.m.

Irvington Public Library

Municipal Office Closure

Friday, July 3

In observance of Independence Day

Fireworks Display

Saturday, July 4, 9:15 p.m.

Matthiessen Park

Rain date July 5

“Treason of the Blackest Dye”

On view Saturdays and Thursdays, 1–4 p.m., through August

McVickar House, 131 Main St.

Got news?

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



Will Richman walks up the aisle with his classmates.

Grads get messages of love and connection

High school bids farewell to 130 seniors

BY CAMERON WEINER

The sun and the wind, as well as family and friends, turned out for the Irvington High School graduation at Matthiessen Park on the morning of Saturday, June 20.

The commencement began at 9:30 with the high school concert band, led by Debra McCumber, performing four marches as proud parents and other attendees found seats.

Twenty minutes later, the class of 2026 filed to the stage, waving to members of the audience. The band then played the national anthem, before Principal Jon Hirsch walked to the podium.

Hirsch thanked many people for making the event possible, including the board of education, district leadership, custodial team, and PTSA. He then turned his attention to the 130 graduating students, who he said he was proud to greet “on the top step [of the entrance to the school] every single morning.”

Hirsch centered his speech around the idea of “doppelgangers,” pointing out that each student has his or her own doppelganger waiting in the future. He told the class that they would all eventually face the same question: “To what extent do I honor the person I am, and to what extent do I honor the person I will become?” He also asked them what their future selves will look like. “What passions and talents will you build upon? How will you respond to heartbreak and disappointment?”

Hirsch ended his address by reminding the class of 2026 that they are “Bulldogs for life” and congratulating them on moving on to their next phase.

Following Hirsch, Schools Superintendent Mara Ratesic stepped to the podium to impart her wisdom to the group. She compared 2026 to the 1990s, pointing out that how people studied, talked, and communicated was different 30 years ago. However, “Technology will never change your ability to empathize and connect,” Ratesic said.

“There has never been a nicer group of students who have graduated in the history of schools.”

Principal Jon Hirsch

She concluded by reassuring the departing students that “Irvington is where you are from. It is a place you can return to whenever you need support, connection, or a bit of nostalgia. That will never change.”

School board president Suzyn Brunenavs then addressed the class, followed by senior class president Julia Welter, classmate Will Richman, salutatorian Lucy Acharekar, and valedictorian Joshua Greenbarg.

In his speech, Greenbarg discussed the concept of love, referring to Simon Cowell, the British TV personality and a judge on

the show “America’s Got Talent.”

Greenbarg said that Cowell’s famous catchphrase — “I don’t like it, I love it” — serves as a reminder for everyone to love each other. In a time where “we have reached our maximum capacity for hatred,” Greenbarg encouraged his peers to “love, love, and love some more.”

Greenbarg went on to discuss what’s loved at Irvington High School — sports, theater, and even classes. But he argued that it wasn’t the activities that were loved, but the people themselves. “Take away each other, and Irvington High School is nothing but a building on a hill,” he said. Greenbarg ended by saying, “Class of 2026, I don’t like you guys, I love you!”

After Greenbarg’s speech, the seniors walked up to receive their diplomas, their names read out by student council members. The class of 2026 then took a lap around the seats filled with audience members before returning to the stage.

Hirsch declared that the seniors had met all graduation requirements and invited the student choir to perform the school’s alma mater. Finally, he instructed the graduates to stand, move their tassels from right to left, and toss their green and white caps into the air as the audience applauded and the band erupted in another song.

Speaking after the ceremony, Hirsch said, “There has never been a nicer group of students who have graduated in the history of schools.” Dean of students Ferhad Razzak added, “It was a perfect day for a perfect class.” His message to the class of 2026 — “Come and visit!”

IRVINGTON

Team of 10-year-olds claims title at First In Math competition

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

A trio of 10-year-old fourth-graders from Irvington's Main Street School took first place over all other fourth-graders in the statewide First In Math competition held by the New York State Education Department. After qualifying as regional champions in March, Oren Fielman, Nora Mojtabae-Zamani, and Sofia Teich went to Albany on June 13, where they took on nine other regional champions and earned the top score in a game called Factor Wheels.

In the game, students work with squares that have two numbers on each square, and try to arrange them in ways that create circles with four numbers that have the highest common factor possible. The common factor is the number of points the team gets for each circle. For example, the numbers 18, 36, 63, and 81 all have a common factor of nine, so a circle with those numbers would earn nine points. After completing three different-sized boards, Oren, Nora, and Sofia had earned the most points out of all of the fourth-grade teams, and joined the second- and third-place teams in the judging round, where they had to explain their strategy.

Fourth-grade teacher Stephanie Saputo and K-5 math and science instructional coach Molly Stern worked with the trio over nine practices before the state competition.



Sofia Teich, Oren Fielman, and Nora Mojtabae-Zamani

"It's so much fun that you all got first place, and I'm so proud of you, and also I think having experiences like that, whether you win or not is really important," Stern told the students during a conversation with the Dispatch. "I think students get a lot out of these experiences even if they don't win. It's just an amazing bonus if they do."

Oren and Sofia took part in the state competition in Albany last year, as third-graders,

with a different teammate, and missed making the top three. With another year of learning under their belts, and the addition of Nora, who also had ballet and piano recitals the following day, they were redeemed.

"Sometimes it's really hard, but I just enjoy doing the math and it feels really good when I figure out a problem," Nora explained. "I wasn't nervous for the competition at all; I was more nervous for ballet and the piano."

"It was really fun because they have really good personalities," Sofia said about her teammates. "So it was fun to get to know them more, and doing the math, it was good to have teammates that I could collaborate with."

The team spent practices not only working out math problems, but also laughing together. They considered a slew of creative team names, starting with "The Number Cucumbers," then moved on to "The Perplexing Puffer Fish," "The Perplexing Puffer-cumbers," and finally "The Puffer Artichoke-berchokes" — a combination of puffer fish, cucumbers, and artichokes, which Oren has a particular affinity for.

"I had a picture of an artichoke and that picture really inspired us to win," he told the Dispatch. "I wrote 'the luck of the artichoke' on the picture."

"The camaraderie and sense of humor on this team I think really helped for practice to always be fun," Stern noted. "We had really productive practices. We were almost too silly, but not too silly. That they were able to do math, and have a sense of humor about it, I think was a part of their magic as a team."

To qualify for the team, Irvington students in third, fourth, and fifth grade, along with students throughout the state, played an online game called the 24 Game. The 24

Continued on page 14

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The Agenda

SATURDAY JUNE 27

Car Show Benefiting Ardsley First Responders

ARDSLEY

5–8 p.m. / \$20. Ardsley Middle School, 700 Ashford Ave. Featuring classic cars and motorcycles, food trucks, music, and raffles.

Classic Rock: Lords of Hawthorne

ARDSLEY

9 p.m. / No cover charge. Saw Mill Tavern, 925 Saw Mill River Road. Reservations encouraged. smtavern.com

Children's Book Nook

DOBBS FERRY

1–4 p.m. / Free. Keeper's House, 15 Walnut St. Explore a special selection of books and interactive displays in a cozy space. Also on Sunday. aqueduct.org

Buzz & Bloom: Kids' Pollinator Adventure

TARRYTOWN

10 a.m. / Free. Lyndhurst, 635 S. Broadway. Featuring a horticulturist-guided tour and a hands-on gardening activity. Registration required. lyndhurst.org

An Audience with Poe

TARRYTOWN

3, 5, 7 p.m. / \$65 (includes drinks and snacks). Historic Hudson Valley's Library, 639 Bedford Road. Final day of this run of immersive retellings of four classic Edgar Allen Poe tales. Recommended for ages 16+. Advance tickets required. hudsonvalley.org

Jazz Pianist Bill Charlap

TARRYTOWN

7 and 9:30 p.m. / \$45, \$40 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. Also on Sunday, 4 and 6 p.m. jazzforumarts.org

Mexican Icon Pedro Infante

SLEEPY HOLLOW

8–9 p.m. / Pay what you want. St. Teresa of Avila Church, 130 Beekman Ave. Live performance presented by Hudson Valley Writers Center and ID Studio Theater. writerscenter.org

American Revolution 250 Commemoration

SLEEPY HOLLOW

11 a.m. / Free. Old Dutch Church, across the street from Philipsburg Manor, 381 N. Broadway. Memorial service, followed by a gathering at the Revolutionary Soldiers Monument at Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. Refreshments at 1:30, musical production of "This Man's a Spy" at 2:30. visitsleepyhollow.com

"Cake!"

YONKERS

1–6 p.m. / Free. Blue Door Art Center, 13 Riv-



"North from Palisade Boat Club," by John Maggiotto of Hastings, is on view in Upstream Gallery's 35th Anniversary Show, closing with a reception on Sunday, June 28, in Hastings.

erdale Ave. Opening reception for exhibit of creative birthday cakes to celebrate the 250th. On view along with "Red, White, Blue and You" through July 25. Thursday and Friday, 3–6 p.m.; Saturday, 1–6 p.m. bluedoorartcenter.org

SUNDAY JUNE 28

Dog Park Grand Opening

ARDSLEY

2:30 p.m. / Free. McDowell Park, 439 Heath-
erdel Road, behind Field 4.

35th Anniversary Show: Closing Celebration

HASTINGS

2–5 p.m. / Free. Upstream Gallery, 8 Main St. Hours: Thursday-Sunday, 12:30–5:30 p.m. upstreamgallery.com

Outdoor Live Music: Syl Dubenion

DOBBS FERRY

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

Hastings on Jazz

HASTINGS

3–5:30 p.m. / Free. VFW Plaza, 558 Warburton Ave. The weekly summer series continues with the Eric Person/Duane Eubanks Quintet. Rain location: Hastings Public Library, 7 Maple Ave. destinationhastings.org

Golden Girls Tribute Show

IRVINGTON

12–2 p.m. / \$33–\$71. Irvington Theater, 85 Main St. Drag parody for age 21+. irvington-theater.com

Bird Walk

TARRYTOWN

7–9 a.m. / Free. Lyndhurst, 635 S. Broadway.

Led by Saw Mill River Audubon. For adults and ages 8+. Registration required. sawmillriveraudubon.org

Community Block Party

TARRYTOWN

12–4 p.m. / Featuring live music, local eats, sidewalk displays, face painting. sleepyhollow-tarrytownchamber.com

Gilded Age Tea

TARRYTOWN

12:30–3:30 p.m. / \$107. Tarrytown House Estate, 49 E. Sunnyside Lane. A brief tour of Biddle Mansion and King Mansion is followed by traditional afternoon tea. For ages 12+. puddingsandbiscakes.com/calendar

"Stories Across Generations"

SLEEPY HOLLOW

5–9 p.m. / \$40–\$100. Philipse Manor Station, 300 Riverside Drive. Jewish poetry and prose workshop for all ages. Register: writerscenter.org

TUESDAY JUNE 30

Jazz: Chris Conte Duo

HASTINGS

7–9 p.m. / No cover charge. Uncle Lefty's, 583 Warburton Ave. uncleleftys.com

Trivia Night

DOBBS FERRY

7–9 p.m. / Free. Memorial Park. Up to six people per team; ages 18 and up. Sign up at dobbsferry.gov/recreation-department

WEDNESDAY JULY 1

Astronomy for Grown-ups

YONKERS

2 p.m. / \$23 for adults, \$16 for seniors, \$14 for ages 3–18, free for members. Hudson River Museum, 511 Warburton Ave. Planetarium show, "250 Years of Stargazing," explores what astronomers knew at the time of the American Revolution and how that's evolved. Reservations recommended. hrm.org

THURSDAY JULY 2

Hastings' Own "JZ"

DOBBS FERRY

7–9:15 p.m. / No cover charge. Mirabella Cocina Latina Restaurant & Bar, 1 Hamilton St., in Rivertowns Square. Pianist Jasper Zimmerman is joined by bassist Miles Gilbert and drummer Nicolas Mayor to play jazz and Latin jazz. mirabellacocina.com/calendar-dobbs-ferry

PaperWorks 2026: Transformations

HASTINGS

12:30–5:30 p.m. / Free. Upstream Gallery, 8 Main St. The annual juried exhibit of works on paper, including drawing, collage, printmaking, and painting, is on view through July 19. Opening reception July 5, 2–5 p.m. upstreamgallery.com

Steel Passion

TARRYTOWN

7–9 p.m. / Free. Pierson Park, 238 W. Main St. Tarrytown's 10-piece steel drum band kicks off the summer concert series presented by the Tarrytown Recreation Department. tarrytownny.gov

Sunset Tour

YONKERS

6:30 p.m. / \$100. Untermeyer Park and Gardens, 945 N. Broadway. Led by head gardener Timothy Tilghman. Purchase tickets at untermyergardens.org

FRIDAY JULY 3

Movie on the Trail

DOBBS FERRY

8:30 p.m. / Free. Keeper's House, 15 Walnut St. Screening of "Captain America: The First Avenger." Bring your own chair or blanket and refreshments. aqueduct.org

Jazz Vocalist Alexa Barchini

TARRYTOWN

7 and 9:30 p.m. / \$35, \$30 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. jazzforumarts.org

Revolutionary Tea Party

SLEEPY HOLLOW

July 3–5 / 12–3 p.m. / \$20. Philipsburgh Manor, 381 N. Broadway. Includes a grazing box, sweets, and beverages. For all ages. hudsonvalley.org

Opinion

The Dispatch welcomes letters to the editor about subjects related to the Rivertowns. Letters must be no more than 300 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 rivertownsd Dispatch.com/contact-us

School board and superintendent need to rebuild trust

To the Editor:

In Hastings, the turf issues seem to concern both the toxicity of the product as well as the loss of trust. Like many, I worry about both. The board of education (BOE) and superintendent have not made a sincere effort, in my opinion, to repair the loss of trust which is vital in our village. They seem more focused on completing their project. I have not seen any action by them to rebuild what has been lost. For many of us, the toxicity of the turf with PFAS weighs along with the toxicity of the communication by the BOE. Make some real effort, please. Our superintendent is paid almost \$100,000 more than the police commissioner of New York City and the mayor of New York City. I would expect and hope for some real leadership in providing honest and clear communication.

Steven Goldfinger

HASTINGS

Upcoming ban on PFAS in turf remains 'the only standard'

To the Editor:

As the Rivertowns Dispatch reported, Hastings Board of Education (BOE) president Alex Dal Piaz claims in his affidavit that the board understands "PFAS free and containing no PFAS to be synonymous with not intentionally adding or using PFAS in the manufacture or production of artificial turf"; and that "not intentionally adding or using" is "consistent with documentation from a meeting held by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation on June 11, 2025" ("District outlines position on synthetic fields," June 12, 2026).

A problem with this is the DEC billed the June 11, 2025 meeting as "an informal, pre-rulemaking stakeholder meeting." DEC officials said repeatedly throughout the meeting that while the DEC was "considering" interpreting the law as banning intentionally added PFAS (Nicole Orabona) "right now this is just the language that we are considering" (Conor Shea); and given the "concern about unintentionally added PFAS" the DEC would "take this into consideration in developing the rule making" (Shea).

Legislative director Anthony Macerelo of the office of Sen. Brian Kavanagh (sponsor of the carpet law bill) confirmed just three weeks

ago that, currently "the only standard is in the statute, which requires that on or after Dec. 31, 2026, no carpet... sold or offered for sale in the state shall contain or be treated with PFAS substances for any purpose" (personal communication, June 2, 2025).

Allowing the impression that the June 11 meeting was anything other than an "informal, pre-rulemaking discussion" and then retrojecting comments to justify BOE statements of June 9 and May 29 is sadly the sort of sleight-of-hand we have come to expect. As for Mr. Dal Piaz's double-down claim that "New York State has certified all of these products as PFAS-free" (Oct. 27, 2025 Community Forum) this was then, and is now, categorically untrue.

Rabbi Mark Sameth

HASTINGS

Property tax system needs to be fixed

To the Editor:

According to Google, Westchester County has the highest property tax in the U.S. How it is calculated is confusing and unfair, considering it is based on the value of your home, which may or may not have anything to do with how much money you have in the bank or your ability to pay.

Local government sells all homeowners the same product, but charges us different amounts for the same services. If you live in Dobbs Ferry, you can send as many kids as you please to the public schools. You can set out as much garbage for pickup as you have. If you call the police, they will rush to help you regardless of the size of your home or where it is located. And you are welcome to go sit in any park in the village. Village streets are maintained with no tolls. These services are paid for by local property taxes.

Perhaps we are supporting too many office workers and administrators. Perhaps the school systems need combining. Someone who has the authority has simply got to step up and help.

Something is truly rotten with this system.

Peggie and Larry Blizard

DOBBS FERRY

Find a way to manage deer other than bow hunting

To the Editor:

Killing deer by bow hunting is a cruel and ineffective practice that will not solve the concerns of a human/deer shared ecosystem.

There are better methods to coexist and manage habitat conflicts.

"Bow hunting is not considered an instant kill method (unless the arrow penetrates a vital organ like the heart, which is uncommon). Dozens of studies show high crippling rates even when the most modern bow hunting methods are used. Crippled deer often succumb to injury, blood loss, shock, and other secondary complications, which may take hours, or even days."

Fawns stay with their mothers from one to two years. Dead mothers mean orphaned fawns whose cries we've heard when their mother leaves them for a few hours. What is our obligation to fawns whose mothers never return?

Deer killing will not permanently reduce herds or solve human concerns. Females produce twins and triplets when there is less competition for food, and neighboring deer migrate to less densely populated locations. Black-legged ticks are carried by "over 100 hosts," so the risk of Lyme will persist.

Are we morally, psychologically, or practically prepared to deal with the fallout from a contract to kill that was not voted on by the people paying for it — the residents of Hastings? Are we prepared to talk to our children and grandchildren about maiming mothers and leaving fawns to fear and starvation? Are we prepared for the consequences of children or adults happening upon injured deer?

We're increasingly expected to accept cruelty toward humans, animals, and our natural environment. If we are to give hope to young people and continue to be the caring community I have known Hastings to be in my 30 years here, we must call out cruelty and moral injury. I don't want my taxes to pay for killing. There are better methods to manage deer if we take the time to bring in the appropriate studies and experts.

Amy Lieberman

HASTINGS

Plan for artificial turf ignores EPA's guidance about PFAS

To the Editor:

I thank the Dispatch for your continued coverage of artificial turf concerns in Hastings, but I'm dismayed about the use of the term "trace amounts" to describe PFAS, aka forever chemicals, found in the product selected by the District and approved by the Board of Education. "Trace" is not a measurement, it is an interpretation, in this case, one supplied by a company paid by the turf manufacturer.

Actual testing of the plastic blades and

backing materials (conducted by a reputable laboratory) found more than 10 different kinds of PFAS, with the most dangerous, PFAO, in every sample. Testing of seven samples showed a range of PFOA values averaging at 0.317 nanograms per kilogram (kg). This may not sound like much, but the fields won't have the equivalent of one sample, they will have billions of PFAS-containing blades.

The multipurpose field at Burke will be approximately 8,000 square yards. Using the consultant's estimate of 1.7 kg of plastic turf grass per square yard, the field will require a minimum of 13,600 kg or 15 tons of artificial turf, which multiplied by 0.317 nanograms per kg, equals 4,311 nanograms of additional PFOA — just one of the forever chemicals found, in just one of the two fields.

Is this a lot? If you like using AI, enter 6023 nanograms and ask what it means for drinking water and in other contexts. You will see that the U.S. EPA classifies PFOA as a toxic substance which has no safe amount of exposure and recommends people reduce exposure to all PFAS due to demonstrated health risks, including cancer. So why is Hastings doing the opposite of EPA guidance by putting in PFAS-containing artificial turf for our kids to play on?

There has to be a better choice to protect our kids.

Rachel Thornton

HASTINGS

F.I.S.H. to be suspended due to insurance concerns

To the Editor:

It is with sadness that we must announce that F.I.S.H. (Friends in Service Helping) will be suspending service on July 1.

This all-volunteer community service has afforded Hastings' senior citizens free rides to medical appointments for over 50 years. We have been able to schedule 30-40 rides each month in recent years and are keenly aware that both riders and drivers have benefited from the friendly, neighborly interactions the program provides.

Unfortunately, concerns about insurance liability have caused us to step back from managing the program.

We hope that a way forward can be found to reinstate the F.I.S.H. program with proper insurance in place.

In the meantime, here are two alternative programs for riders in need: Paratransit (transportation.westchestercountyny.gov) or TRA (Hello@my-TRA.org)

Lynda and Martin Merchant

HASTINGS



Congratulations to the Dobbs Ferry High School Class of 2026!

Kamryn Addis
Delbar AfsharGhotli
Jose Arroyo
Katherine Baizan
Leon Bajic
Samuel Bass
Abigail Bates
Hudson Bayer
Joshua Beltran
Vladyslav Berezyuk
Emily Berk
Alexa Blakeley
Jane Bolger
Clemens Brass
Irma Bravo
Ryan Brennan
Nola Brown
Riley Caffentzis-Horn
Ava Chabert
Alyssa Cherico
Peter Chimos
Luke Conneely
Daniel Cordon
Jatin Costa
Angela Crowe
Joseph Curanovic
Etien Dega
Emily DeLeon
Elena Diaz
Sloane DiSimone
Christopher Doherty
Matthew Doherty
Caileigh Doyle
Leo Fasman
Anthony Ficarrotta
Mahalia Fine
Kayla Friery

Nicolas Galland
Gabriel Galvan
Rohan Garten
Mark Guerrierio
Francesca Guido
Mateus Hertz-Bird
Charles Hough
Katie Hung
Tessa Hunt
Joshua James
Femi Joshua
Thomas Joslin
Grace Karkar
Daniel Koplik
Emmett Kushner
Uden Lama
Anthony Lojano
Mariah Loran
Natasha Martinez
Alban Matoshi
Jack Matteo
Juniper McGrath
Brianna Medina
Parker Medlin
John Mertens
Elvin Meshi
Emma Meshi
Ryan Mohl
Esmeralda Moranheras
Olivia Núñez
Molly O'Brien
Mary O'Dea
Evan Ommen
Sidhartha Paul
Kaitlin Peralta
James Pessin
Samira Phillips

Jaylen Pinto
Valeria Porcallo
Josephine Pralle
Brianna Quezada
Maimuna Rahman
Dylan Ravage
Valentina Rego
Amelia Rerrie
Abraham Rivas Martinez
Mason Roberto
Oliver Rodriguez
Reynaldo Roman
mira Romano
Riley Rosenberg
Abigail Rubio
Chloe Runge
Hailey Samudio
Evan Schwartz
Dylan Selimaj
Warren Shealy
Jack Shemonoski
Kellen Singleton
Nastiek Smith
Adelino Stifanic
Gianna Stone
Laila Storms
Mya Ustares
Evelyn Vazquez
Graciela Vergara
Jack Volpicelli
Phillip Vuletic
Eleanor Walker
Lyla Wallen
Jarreal Yarborough
Giselle Zhinin
Beatrice Zumbo



— MOMENTS —

Dobbs Ferry High School Graduation

Waterfront Park, June 20
Photos by Tom Warren





Congratulations to the Hastings High School Class of 2026!

The Hastings High School Alumni Association Welcomes You into the Family!
It is through the generosity of HHS Alumni that we are able to award the following
scholarships to these graduating seniors:

Charles O. Aschmann Scholarship for Excellence
Lukas Kovac

—
Augie Andronica Memorial Scholarship
Maxwell Boyd

—
*Larry Kent Benjamin Scholarship for the
Study of Information Technology*
Andre Forrest

—
*Sarah Elizabeth Black Memorial Scholarship
for Compassionate Medicine*
Tavia Seitz

—
Julius Chemka Community Scholarship
Jack Reynolds

—
Class of 1962 Merit Scholarship
Auden Esposito

—
*Class of 1973 Vocational, Technical, and
Trade School Scholarship*
Miranda Beato

—
Class of 1980 Taking on Challenges Scholarship
Anthony Laboy

—
Coach John Costello Memorial Scholarship
Dylan Heilakka

—
Coaches' Scholarship
Roland Soeiro

—
*Colb Family Chemistry Scholarship in
Honor of James Pressley*
Ronan Zweifler

Gulish Family Art Scholarship
Seren Zamore

—
James V. Harmon Community Scholarship
Andrew Ciszewski

—
*Michael & Eric Kantor Scholarship for
Mathematics and Engineering*
Jacob Klugerman

—
Philip S. Klipp Memorial Scholarship
Alexis Schur

—
*Lee Kaiser and James Kennedy Future
Educators Scholarship*
Julian Carnavali

—
*Ronald Wilson Lindemann
Athletic Scholarship*
Rian Kacmarczyk

—
*Bernard J. O'Brien Leadership
Scholarship*
Aidan Curtis

—
Richard Thomas Family Music Scholarship
Salem Nicholson

—
Coach Richard Bub Memorial Scholarship
Sebastian Montequin and
Lola Norlander

—
*Rita Zaratzian Tribute to Music
Teachers Scholarship*
Devin Muldoon

Congratulations to All!

For more information about our organization, or to make a donation, please go to our website at www.hohalumni.org.





— MOMENTS —

Hastings High School Graduation

Reynolds Field, June 18



— MOMENTS —

Irvington High School Graduation

Matthiessen Park, June 20



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

NOTICE TO BIDDERS CONSTRUCTION INSPECTION & AMP; TESTING RFP

Hastings-On-Hudson Union
Free School District
Hastings-On-Hudson, NY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:

CONSTRUCTION TESTING
AND INSPECTIONS FOR
DISTRICT-WIDE ADDITIONS
AND ALTERATIONS

Released: June 25, 2026

HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON
UNION FREE SCHOOL
DISTRICT
27 Farragut Ave.
Hastings-On-Hudson, New
York 10706
Attention: Maureen Caraballo

NOTICE TO PROPOSERS CONSTRUCTION INSPEC- TION & TESTING AGENCIES

The Board of Education of
the Hastings-On-Hudson
Union Free School District is
issuing this Request for Pro-
posals (RFP) for the selection
of a construction inspection
and testing agency in con-

nection with certain capital
improvement projects to be
undertaken within the Has-
tings-On- Hudson Union Free
School District’s facilities at
Burke Estate, Farragut Middle
School, Hastings High School,
Hillside Elementary School.

The successful agency will be
required to perform all nec-
essary inspections and tests
required in connection with
the capital improvements, in-
cluding inspections and testing
required by laws, ordinances,
rules, regulations, or order of
public authorities, the General
Conditions of the Contract for
Construction, and the plans
and specifications for each
project. You are invited to sub-

mit proposals in accordance
with this RFP.

Proposals will be received un-
til 2:00 p.m. on July 2, 2026
at the Hastings-On-Hudson
Union Free School District,
27 Farragut Ave, Hast-
ings-On-Hudson, NY 10706.
Attention Maureen Caraballo,
Business Official/Treasurer.
Proposal forms may be ob-
tained at the aforementioned
office. The Hastings-On-Hud-
son Union Free School District
reserves the right to reject any
proposal or to accept part of
any proposal.

By: Hastings-On-Hudson
Union Free School District
District Clerk

PHOTO WALL



CAT OF THE WEEK

Lila is one of the Paws Crossed Animal
Rescue’s Pets of the Week. Reach out to
adoptions@pawscrossedny.org to learn more!

The Blotter

Continued from page 2

Kia parked on Elm Street
were slashed between
Thursday, June 18 and
Friday, June 19.

Check fraud: On June
20, a Dobbs Ferry res-
ident reported that a
\$6,270 check he mailed
to the IRS on April 7 was
altered and deposited on
April 20. The name of
the payee was changed.
The IRS had notified him
earlier this month that
the payment had not been
received.

DWI arrest: Two Dobbs
Ferry residents were

charged with crimes af-
ter being involved in a
fight outside Doubleday’s
Restaurant, 83 Main St.,
on the morning of Sun-
day, June 21. A 42-year-
old man was arrested for
driving while intoxicated,
a misdemeanor, while a
25-year-old man was cited
for disorderly conduct, a
violation. Officers Antho-
ny Muratore and Jona-
than Sordellini made the
arrests.

HASTINGS

Ravensdale accident:

A 68-year-old driver
who was westbound on
Ravensdale Road and a
69-year-old driver who

was turning left onto Ra-
vensdale from Rosedale
Avenue collided on the af-
ternoon of Tuesday, June
16. The 68-year-old was
transported to a hospital.

Suspended license:

A 25-year-old Yonkers
resident with a suspend-
ed driver’s license was
arrested for aggravated
unlicensed operation of a
motor vehicle in the third
degree, a misdemeanor,
and cited for an expired
registration, a violation,
on Warburton Avenue on
the evening of Tuesday,
June 16.

Deer put down: Police
put down an injured deer

on Washington Avenue
on the morning of Friday,
June 19.

Theft from gardens: On
June 19, a Hastings resi-
dent reported that lumber
and a lock were stolen
from his plot at the Zinss-
er Community Gardens on
May 4.

Suspended registration:

A 29-year-old Scarsdale
resident was arrested for
a suspended vehicle reg-
istration, a misdemeanor,
on Broadway on the after-
noon of Friday, June 19.

Theft thwarted: An un-
identified youth attempt-
ed to steal a scooter on

Warburton Avenue on the
afternoon of Friday, June
19. The scooter’s owner
confronted the youth, who
fled.

Reckless riders: Three
youths under the age of
16 were stopped for riding
e-bikes in a reckless man-
ner on Warburton Avenue
on the evening of Sunday,
June 21. The youths were
released to their parents.
E-bike riders must be 16
or older.

IRVINGTON

Theft of tools: Three pow-
er tools were stolen from
a truck parked on Erie
Street on Tuesday, June

16, between 3:41–3:45
a.m., according to security
camera footage. The tools
and truck belong to a con-
tractor based in Valhalla.
The thief had not been ar-
rested as of June 23.

Theft of hedge trimmer: A
hedge trimmer was stolen
from a storage shed at Sce-
nic Hudson Park on Tues-
day, June 16, between 8:30–
9 a.m. The trimmer belongs
to the Irvington Recreation
and Parks Department.

Coyote sightings: Coyotes
were reported on Hud-
son Road West and at
the middle/high school
campus on the morning of
Monday, June 22.

Hastings graduation

Continued from page 9

leadership from Fordham University.

Stephens began his remarks by noting
that the role of the commencement speaker
is to offer wisdom, then added “I don’t have
nuggets of wisdom.” Rather, he suggested,
“Maybe to act with honor and grace. I can
say that I love teaching and I loved teaching
you as students.”

“Two years ago, I had the first of many
seizures and I learned that I have cancer
everywhere, including my brain,” Stephens
shared. “But I lived through four brain
operations, radiation, chemotherapy, and
immunotherapy. I am grateful to my wife
and children. I tell you this background to
emphasize that attitude is everything. It’s
the only thing you can control.

“You can’t make yourself happy through
willpower alone,” he continued, “but it’s a skill
that you can practice, as is kindness. I choose
to seize the day. You have to choose to be a

person who’s kind and grateful — in every sin-
gle second of every interaction. It’s a decision,
a way of life. I’m often overcome by gratitude
for sunshine, for my family, for my students.”

In closing, Stephens said, “I don’t have
any advice for setting goals, just advice on
who you choose to be. You choose every sin-
gle second of every single day who you are.
I’m proud of you.”

The audience rose in a standing ovation
as Stephens made his way back to his seat.

Salutatorian Rian Kacmarczyk, who will
study physics at Vassar College, then spoke,
quoting Kierkegaard’s reflection that life can
only be understood backwards, but has to
be lived forwards. Kacmarczyk asked, how
then can we make the right decisions for
the future?

“We can trace what we learned at Has-
tings,” he said. “I can trace what I learned on
Career Day, on Project Share, at Midnight
Run, at track meets where I was dead last.
Hastings taught us to be kind and to re-
cognize the humanity of others. And as the

book ‘Wonder’ taught us, when given the
choice between being right or being kind,
choose being kind. I hope we can say we
were the kind ones.”

Valedictorian Carlin McKinnon was next
on the podium. McKinnon will attend the
College of William & Mary, where she plans
to study history and anthropology. McKin-
non noted that she was thankful to many
people, including Clayman, her family,
teachers, coaches, and directors.

“I like to think that I’ve grown in Has-
tings,” McKinnon said. “My goal as a fresh-
man was just to fit in, to go unnoticed. But as
I progressed, I longed for people to have pos-
itive things to say about me. I found greater
community when I switched my mindset
from wanting to be unnoticed to wanting
to make a positive impression.”

McKinnon spoke about the importance
of giving back to the community. “I’m sure
all of us have made a positive impact on
at least one person. We’ve all helped and
touched at least one person at Hastings.”

Podcast

Continued from page 10

it is a pretty small group and so we do our
best to just be the good neighbors that we’ve
insisted that we’re gonna be. As far as our
location being too close to where children
are, I mean there’s children everywhere.
We focused on really good security at our
door to make sure that no child could ever
come onto our premises. And they don’t,
and they won’t.

As far as our product being fundamen-
tally unhealthy, like anything in modera-
tion, it can be OK and done responsibly. I
think adults should have the right to choose
if they want to use that product. And cer-
tainly alcohol, as I’ve mentioned before, is
at least as unhealthy — if not, you know,
significantly more unhealthy — than can-
nabis. But people tolerate its use, its sale,
and have for quite some time. And I don’t
see any reason why we can’t fit into that
umbrella of tolerance.

Sports

EDITED BY ROB DIANTONIO



Dobbs Ferry's Anthony Ficarrotta with his teammates after breaking the Section 1 scoring record. File photo by Rob DiAntonio.

Ficarrotta prepares for next chapter on the court

BY MATEUS HERTZ-BIRD

Four months have passed since Dobbs Ferry's Anthony Ficarrotta broke Todd Scott's all-time Section 1 basketball scoring record of 2,055 points on Feb. 6. Just one month later, the Eagles' season came to an end at the Westchester County Center, where they finished as Section 1 Class B runners-up as Woodlands completed its third consecutive championship run.

Ficarrotta finished his senior season averaging 37.8 points and 13 rebounds per game while totaling 2,280 career points. He was later named a first-team all-state selection by the New York State Sportswriters Association. Now, the Dobbs Ferry star is focused on the next chapter of his basketball career, at St. Thomas Aquinas College.

"All I can do is prepare myself to the best of my ability so that I can have a smooth transition and hopefully make a positive impact as soon as possible," said Ficarrotta, who returned to the baseball diamond this past spring and was named all-section.

When asked about his training regimen this summer, Ficarrotta's response revealed the commitment required to compete at the college level. He trains twice — and sometimes three times — per day, five days a week.

"From 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., I work out all week," Ficarrotta. "I do St. Thomas Aquinas' lifting program three times a week, and the other two days I do cardio and abdominal work. Then from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., I do basketball workouts consisting of shooting and guard work."

To top it all off, Ficarrotta will often play pickup basketball in the evenings.

For any college athlete, the jump from high school competition to the college game can be a significant adjustment in terms of strength, athleticism, and speed.

Ficarrotta is also embracing an unexpected challenge before he even arrives on campus in Sparkill, across the river in Rockland County. St. Thomas Aquinas is entering the upcoming season under new leadership following an offseason coaching change.

The Division 2 program first reached out to Ficarrotta in the fall of 2024 as he prepared for his junior season. He took the interest seriously because of the Spartans' impressive record.

Credit goes to former coach Tobin Anderson, who took over in 2013 and saw St. Thomas Aquinas establish itself as a Division 2 powerhouse. Since 2015, the Spartans have won eight East Coast Conference championships and reached the NCAA Tournament in 10 consecutive seasons.

Anderson left in 2022 to become the head coach at Fairleigh Dickinson University. His successor, former assistant Matt Capell, continued that strong performance, compiling a 93-33 record over four seasons. This offseason, Capell departed to join Anderson's staff at Tennessee Tech, opening the door for John Allessi to take over the program.

"The coaching change was a very sudden thing, but these changes are very normal in today's college basketball," Ficarrotta said when asked about Allessi's hiring in April.

"I knew I had to wait around and see who ended up getting the job. I loved STAC and everything they stood for throughout the process, so I felt it was only right to wait it out. Coach Allessi ended up getting the job, and I made sure to meet with him. Nothing has changed for me. I'm still ready to go out there and give the coaching staff everything I have every single day."

Rather than view the transition as a setback, Ficarrotta sees it as an opportunity.

"My goals for my freshman season are to become a better basketball player, get used to the college-level physicality, and adjust to the speed of the game," he said. "With four starters transferring, I hope to earn court time as soon as possible and contribute to the team's success."

Ficarrotta's commitment to improvement has been evident throughout his basketball career, a trait that those around the Dobbs Ferry program have witnessed firsthand.

"Anyone who has had the pleasure of playing with, training or working alongside Anthony Ficarrotta knows that he has an incredible work ethic," Dobbs Ferry manager Charles Hough said. "The level of dedication and preparation that he has exhibited throughout all levels of his basketball career will certainly serve him well at the next level."

For Ficarrotta, the focus remains on making the most of his first season with the Spartans.

"I'm overall just excited to have the opportunity to keep playing the game I love," he said. "It's going to be a grind, but I look forward to going out there and trying to earn myself a spot."



Four Irvington athletes to play at collegiate level

On Irvington High School's signing day, June 9, the Bulldogs saw four members of the class of 2025 sign letters of intent to continue their athletic careers. Pictured from left to right: **Malcolm Miloszewicz** (baseball, Purchase College), **Ethan Gartlan** (cross country/track, Swarthmore College), and **Declan Lyons** (cross country/track, Holy Cross). Not pictured: **Jaxen Brewster** (baseball, Russell Sage College) will play their respective sports at the collegiate level.



Ten Ardsley athletes sign letters of intent

Ardsley celebrated the signing of 10 senior student-athletes as they officially committed to continuing their athletic careers at the collegiate level during Ardsley High School's annual college commitment-signing day on June 1.

This year's ceremony recognized students recruited to compete in NCAA Division 1, 2, and 3 programs. Families, coaches, teachers, and administrators gathered to honor the dedication, perseverance, and achievements of these athletes as they prepare for the next chapter of their academic and athletic journeys.

The athletes included (pictured above, left to right, back row to front row): **Carter Bucci** (Hobart and William Smith College, baseball), **Lucas Kaplan** (Macalester College, football), **Ahmady Dolcine** (Marist College, football), **Sofia Haber** (Gettysburg College, softball), **Leah Burriss** (Bates College, basketball), **Brodi Kessler** (Point Park, lacrosse), **Trent Schlosser** (University of St. Joseph, lacrosse), **Sienna Kay** (Muhlenberg College, lacrosse), and **Alessandra Finnerty-Vidal** (SUNY Cortland, cross country and track and field). Not pictured: **Mio Martin** (Washington University in St. Louis, track and field).

Spring sports awards

BASEBALL

ALL-SECTION
Anthony Ficarrotta, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Andrew Ciszewski, **Hastings**, senior
Theo Suniewick, **Hastings**, junior
ALL-SECTION HONORABLE MENTION
Hunter Hamlet, **Ardsley**, junior
Justin Corniel, **Irvington**, junior
Navy Minkoff, **Irvington**, senior
ALL-LEAGUE
Carter Bucci, **Ardsley**, senior
Hunter Hamlet, **Ardsley**, junior
Andrew Zendel, **Dobbs Ferry**, junior
Andrew Ciszewski, **Hastings**, senior
Aidan Curtis, **Hastings**, senior
Andrew Rizzo, **Hastings**, senior
Johnny Sbrega, **Hastings**, senior
Theo Suniewick, **Hastings**, junior
Justin Corniel, **Irvington**, junior
Ben Epple, **Irvington**, junior
Brian Kim, **Irvington**, senior
Navy Minkoff, **Irvington**, senior
John Salvatore, **Irvington**, sophomore
ALL-LEAGUE HONORABLE MENTION
Jake Evan, **Dobbs Ferry**, sophomore
D.J. Kollar, **Dobbs Ferry**, sophomore

SOFTBALL

ALL-SECTION
Haley Albano, **Ardsley**, senior
Sofia Haber, **Ardsley**, senior
Victoria Baron, **Dobbs Ferry**, eighth grade
Emily Marron, **Dobbs Ferry**, sophomore
Lola Norlander, **Hastings**, senior
Siri Rosenberg, **Hastings**, senior
ALL-SECTION HONORABLE MENTION
Bella Feldman, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Noemi Ippolito, **Ardsley**, freshman
Mia King, **Ardsley**, eighth grade
Kamryn Addis, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Nicolette Giorgio, **Dobbs Ferry**, junior
Izzy Doherty, **Hastings**, junior
Ella Rizzo, **Hastings**, freshman
Nia Kilbury, **Irvington**, senior
ALL-LEAGUE
Haley Albano, **Ardsley**, senior
Bella Feldman, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Tessa Guernah, **Ardsley**, junior
Sofia Haber, **Ardsley**, senior
Noemi Ippolito, **Ardsley**, freshman
Mia King, **Ardsley**, eighth grade
Bela Abraham, **Dobbs Ferry**, sophomore
Kamryn Addis, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Victoria Baron, **Dobbs Ferry**, eighth grade
Nicolette Giorgio, **Dobbs Ferry**, junior
Lucy Logan, **Dobbs Ferry**, freshman
Emily Marron, **Dobbs Ferry**, sophomore
Izzy Doherty, **Hastings**, junior
Lola Norlander, **Hastings**, senior
Hazel Sabella, **Hastings**, junior
Ella Rizzo, **Hastings**, freshman
Siri Rosenberg, **Hastings**, senior
Alex Barth, **Irvington**, sophomore
Nia Kilbury, **Irvington**, senior

ALL-LEAGUE HONORABLE MENTION
Summer Lopez, **Ardsley**, junior
Kayla Marx, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Samantha Morganelli, **Ardsley**, freshman
Emma DeFilippis, **Dobbs Ferry**, eighth grade
Olivia Hochleutner, **Dobbs Ferry**, freshman
Gianna Stone, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Sophia Pereira, **Hastings**, senior

BOYS' LACROSSE

ALL-SECTION
Nick Grados, **Irvington**, senior
ALL-LEAGUE
Liam Gallante, **Ardsley**, senior
Jackson Kearns, **Dobbs Ferry**, junior
Peter Kilroe, **Dobbs Ferry**, sophomore
Ryan Mohl, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Dylan Ravage, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Luca Chen, **Hastings**, sophomore
Chris Callahan, **Irvington**, senior
Soren DeYonker, **Irvington**, senior
Saxon Frank, **Irvington**, junior
Nick Grados, **Irvington**, senior
Grant Malakoff, **Irvington**, junior
Harrison Malakoff, **Irvington**, junior
Josh Tatz, **Irvington**, junior
D.J. Ufer, **Irvington**, sophomore
ALL-LEAGUE HONORABLE MENTION
Nate Fallon-Jablon, **Hastings**, junior

GIRLS' LACROSSE

ALL-SECTION
Mairead Gowran, **Ardsley**, senior
Sienna Kay, **Ardsley**, senior
Federica Ricciardella, **Irvington**, senior
ALL-LEAGUE
Juliette An, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Mairead Gowran, **Ardsley**, senior
Sienna Kay, **Ardsley**, senior
Krista Kelly, **Ardsley**, senior
Hazel McGourty, **Ardsley**, junior
Sophia Pecora, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Lily Tiernan, **Ardsley**, senior
Lyla Vega, **Ardsley**, senior
Juliet Curanovic, **Dobbs Ferry**, freshman
Caileigh Doyle, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Megan Hartnett, **Dobbs Ferry**, sophomore
Scarlett Kilroe, **Dobbs Ferry**, freshman
Molly O'Brien, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Mary O'Dea, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Hollen Peet, **Dobbs Ferry**, junior
Alina Abrams, **Hastings**, junior
Mila Angoff, **Hastings**, senior
Federica Ricciardella, **Irvington**, senior
Natalie Rushford, **Irvington**, senior
Lizzy Villa, **Irvington**, eighth grade
ALL-LEAGUE HONORABLE MENTION
Helene Dillon, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Abigail Bates, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Olivia Malinowski, **Dobbs Ferry**, freshman
Mia Martinez, **Dobbs Ferry**, junior
Hanna Lambert, **Hastings**, sophomore
Rory McKinnon, **Hastings**, sophomore

FLAG FOOTBALL

ALL-SECTION
Elise O'Brien, **Ardsley**, junior
Mya Ustares, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
ALL-SECTION HONORABLE MENTION
Khloe Knoesel, **Ardsley**, junior
Morgan Macri, **Ardsley**, junior
Jane Bolger, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Leia Brandon, **Dobbs Ferry**, freshman
ALL-LEAGUE
Meghan Berry, **Ardsley**, freshman
Khloe Knoesel, **Ardsley**, junior
Morgan Macri, **Ardsley**, junior
Elise O'Brien, **Ardsley**, junior
Jane Bolger, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Leia Brandon, **Dobbs Ferry**, freshman
Claire Turner, **Dobbs Ferry**, junior
Mya Ustares, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Sara Welter, **Irvington**, senior
ALL-LEAGUE HONORABLE MENTION
Ella Barrocas, **Ardsley**, freshman
Morgan Hamlet, **Ardsley**, freshman
Ava Santavicca, **Ardsley**, junior
Brooke Perri, **Dobbs Ferry**, sophomore
Samira Phillips, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Yendir Zweibon Quiroz, **Dobbs Ferry**, junior

GIRLS' TRACK AND FIELD

ALL-SECTION
Danae Morgan, **Hastings**, senior
ALL-COUNTY
Czarina Adewunmi, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Zaniya Bell, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Sarah Lenihan, **Ardsley**, freshman
Mioko Martin, **Ardsley**, senior
Danae Morgan, **Hastings**, senior
ALL-LEAGUE
Czarina Adewunmi, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Zaniya Bell, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Maya Laglenne, **Ardsley**, senior
Sarah Lenihan, **Ardsley**, freshman
Hannah Lines, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Mioko Martin, **Ardsley**, senior
Louise Durietz-Bourdain, **Hastings**, junior
Maya Ganeshananthan, **Hastings**, junior
Claire Grushko, **Hastings**, sophomore
Hazel Kuniholm, **Hastings**, junior
Danae Morgan, **Hastings**, senior
Alyssa Schlacter, **Hastings**, freshman
Georgia Schmit, **Hastings**, sophomore
Sage Wrzesinski, **Hastings**, sophomore
Jennifer Schofield, **Hastings**, sophomore
Liliana Brandwein, **Irvington**, junior
Kylie Canton, **Irvington**, senior
Jelena Herceg, **Irvington**, senior
Ruthie Liang, **Irvington**, junior

BOYS' TRACK AND FIELD

ALL-SECTION
Lou Baousson, **Ardsley**, senior
ALL-COUNTY
Lou Baousson, **Ardsley**, senior

Zaire Bell, **Ardsley**, senior
Xavier Estime, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Andrew Herceg, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Ethan Gartlan, **Irvington**, senior
Brody Schimmel, **Irvington**, senior
ALL-LEAGUE
Christian Adler, **Ardsley**, junior
Lou Baousson, **Ardsley**, senior
Zaire Bell, **Ardsley**, senior
John Bonney, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Abel Eldho, **Ardsley**, senior
Xavier Estime, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Justin Friedman, **Ardsley**, senior
Andrew Herceg, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Jonah Londin, **Ardsley**, junior
Nolan Strum, **Ardsley**, freshman
Liam Walsh, **Ardsley**, senior
Luke Calabrese, **Irvington**, senior
Michael Carron, **Irvington**, senior
Glen Feng, **Irvington**, junior
Ethan Gartlan, **Irvington**, senior
Hudson Harcsar, **Irvington**, freshman
Cormac Lyons, **Irvington**, senior
Declan Lyons, **Irvington**, senior
Aaron Portnoy, **Irvington**, junior
Brody Schimmel, **Irvington**, senior
Theo Segerstrom, **Irvington**, senior
Alex Shevrin, **Irvington**, senior

BOYS' TENNIS

ALL-LEAGUE
Jacob Frank, **Ardsley**, sophomore
Max Zhou, **Ardsley**, senior
Matt Doherty, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Joshua James, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Kyrus Klein, **Dobbs Ferry**, junior
Andre Forrest, **Hastings**, senior
Eli Sundheim, **Hastings**, sophomore
Eldad Frechter, **Irvington**, senior
Connor Maglienti, **Irvington**, junior

BOYS' GOLF

ALL-LEAGUE
Lucas Kaplan, **Ardsley**, senior
Reece Bass-Weiss, **Dobbs Ferry**, eighth grade
Mateus Hertz-Bird, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Charlie Hough, **Dobbs Ferry**, senior
Zach Steel, **Dobbs Ferry**, freshman
Liam Finn, **Hastings**, junior
Anthony Martin, **Hastings**, junior
Sebastian Montequin, **Hastings**, senior
Lucas Gordon, **Irvington**, freshman
Jarrett Ourman, **Irvington**, sophomore
Anthony Panarelli, **Irvington**, junior

GIRLS' GOLF

ALL-LEAGUE
Anya Foley, **Irvington**, junior



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