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Booze-free
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p 7

RIVERTOWNS

Dispatch

Local News,
Locally Sourced

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



ARDSLEY
From Sicilian to Baci
Pizzeria owner returns to his roots
p 5

ICE activity prompts community preparation

BY AMY BOCHNER

REGION Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE) made headlines this past week after the fatal shootings of two men, one in Texas and the other in Maine. As concern over the agency grows, local leaders in the Rivertowns shared their responses to these incidents and plans to protect immigrant residents.

On July 7, Lorenzo Salgado Araujo was killed by an ICE officer during an enforcement operation in Houston. Six days later, on July 13, another ICE agent, in Biddeford, Maine, killed Johan Sebastián Duran Guerrero during a vehicle stop. These incidents occurred six months after the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti, who were killed by ICE agents during Operation Metro Surge in Minneapolis. There have been 19 reported deaths of people in ICE custody since Jan. 3, according to the agency’s website.

These incidents and the overall increased presence of ICE nationwide have been the

Continued on page 4



DOBBS FERRY
Dolly-on-Hudson

Country music and contemporary dance intersected as MorDance debuted “Dolly in the Park” at Waterfront Park in Dobbs Ferry on the evening of Sunday, July 19. Choreographed by Morgan McEwen of Hastings, the founder and artistic director of MorDance, the production featured Evan Ambrose, Arcadian Broad, Sasha Gologorskaya, Katarina Kendall, Emily Okamoto, and Gion Treichler dancing to Dolly Parton songs performed by musicians Kira Metcalf, Allison Kelly, Satoko Mori, and Joanna Quinn.



TARRYTOWN
New leaders strike a new chord
p 3

“The works in this exhibition represent visual explorations.”
Hu Shasha about her art at the Martucci Gallery at the Irvington Public Library
p 10



SPORTS
Panthers build confidence and chemistry p 14

The Poll

What’s your favorite way to enjoy the Hudson River?

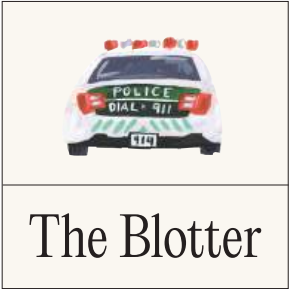
As answered by 138 readers of the Rivertowns Dispatch

58% Taking in the views

35% Walking or hiking nearby

7% Boating or paddling

Vote at rivertownsdispatch.com/the-weekly-poll



The Blotter

ARDSLEY

Strangulation arrest: A 41-year-old Ardsley resident was arrested on July 14 for strangling his spouse at their home on May 25. He was charged with strangulation in the second degree, a felony, as well as three misdemeanors — assault in the third degree, menacing in the third degree, and unlawful imprisonment in the second degree.

Trespass warning: The CVS at 725 Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A) issued a no trespass warning to a 61-year-old homeless man on the morning of Thursday, July 16.

Skunk put down: Police put down a sick skunk that followed a child on Crestview Place on the morning of Sunday, July 19.

DOBBS FERRY

Suspended registration: A 23-year-old Bronx resident was arrested on Broadway (Route 9) for a suspended vehicle registration and no insurance, both misdemeanors, on the morning of Wednesday, July 15. He was also cited for three vehicle-and-traffic violations. Officer Henry Ramos made the arrest.

Theft from Ulta: An unidentified man and woman stole an unknown number of items, including a store manager’s cellphone, from the Ulta Beauty at Rivertowns Square on the morning of Wednesday, July 15.

Theft of motorcycle: An unidentified man stole a motorcycle

being sold by a Dobbs Ferry resident through Facebook Marketplace on the afternoon of Thursday, July 16. The man took the motorcycle for a test ride and never returned. He claimed that Yonkers police stopped him and impounded the motorcycle. He also blocked the seller on Facebook.

Ulta arrest: A 36-year-old Yonkers resident was arrested for shoplifting \$636 worth of items from the Ulta Beauty at Rivertowns Square on the morning of Friday, July 17. The defendant, who was with her 5-year-old son, was charged with petit larceny and endangering the welfare of a child — both misdemeanors. She was also arrested for thefts from Ulta on May 28, June 3, June 20, June 28, and July 11. For those crimes, she was charged with two counts of grand larceny in the third degree and three counts of grand larceny

in the fourth degree — both felonies — and three counts of endangering the welfare of a child. Officer Henry Ramos made the arrest. The defendant was released to the Greenburgh Police Department, which had two warrants for her. In addition, the 62-year-old driver who transported the defendant and her son to Ulta was cited for improper restraint of a backseat passenger, a violation.

False report: On the afternoon of Saturday, July 18, police received a false report from a caller who claimed to be 16-year-old who had shot her mother with an AR-15 rifle at their home on Main Street. The caller was not apprehended.

Theft of tools: Tools were stolen from an unlocked vehicle on Walgrove Avenue between Friday, July 17, and Saturday, July 18.

Continued on page 13

RIVERTOWNS
Dispatch

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ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER ORKIN LEWIS

Plans change as power flows to electric vehicle chargers

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

REGION As more electric vehicle (EV) charging stations are being added throughout Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, and Irvington, two of those village are adjusting the total they plan to install.

In July 2025, the Westchester County Board of Legislators approved a law that allows the County to reimburse 50 percent of the cost for charging station at 79 locations owned by 24 municipalities, not to exceed \$5 million.

Con Edison is covering the other 50% of the cost, with each municipality either contributing nothing, or a small amount, depending on how much they alter their agreements with the County and Con Ed. The grant requires the stations to be installed in locations available to the public. All of the stations will charge two vehicles at the same time.

Of the four villages, Dobbs Ferry plans to install the most stations — either 32 or 34. Twenty-two will be at the parking lot for Waterfront Park and the train station, while 10 will be at village hall. The village board is considering removing two stations planned for Cedar Street, based on a recommendation from the County to install chargers at parking lots and not on streets. The board planned to discuss the rate for the chargers

at a meeting on July 21, which was canceled.

“Having EV charging stations in municipal lots helps level the playing field of who can have an electric car,” Dobbs Ferry Mayor Christy Knell wrote the Dispatch. “The assumption is you would be able to charge it at home, but if that’s not possible for whatever reason, we want to make it accessible to more of the community.”

Last year the Village decided against 24 stations considered for the 99 Cedar Street municipal parking lot at the corner of Palisade Street, after launching a partnership with Somers-based Kearney Realty & Development Group, which unveiled a preliminary proposal to build 38 units of mixed-income housing at the location as well as a total of 12 units at two empty lots on Cedar Street.

Irvington’s plan, which was updated this spring, consists of 12 stations. So far, three new stations were installed, and one older station replaced, at both Scenic Hudson Park and at the Fieldpoint parking lot at the intersection of Main Street and Broadway (Route 9). Irvington plans to install one new charger and replace one existing one at the library parking lot, and install two new chargers at the O’Hara Nature Center, where none exist. The rate to use the chargers is \$0.30 per kilowatt hour (kWh).

In May, the Irvington Village Board

canceled a plan to install a total of nine chargers at the East Sunnyside Lane parking lot, the Ardsley-on-Hudson Train Station, and on South Buckhout Street. Residents of the Half Moon apartment complex on South Buckhout objected to the installation of three chargers on that street. During a public hearing hosted by the village board, residents expressed concerns about the digging and trenching necessary to install the chargers, as well as complaints about a lack of community involvement in the decision about their location.

In an email to residents, Mayor Arlene Burgos took responsibility for the lack of earlier communication, and cited community opposition and the cost of changing the locations. She explained that because the County’s grant program is closed, the Village would need to pay for chargers at locations other than those that were approved by the County and Con Ed.

“That means EV charging access, particularly for residents who would not otherwise have EV charging near their homes, may be delayed or remain similarly cost-prohibitive to install in these locations,” Burgos wrote in her message.

Hastings’ has installed 13 of its 19 stations. Five are at the Zinsser Commuter Lot off Southside Avenue, two at the parking lot next to Maud’s Tavern on Southside

EV charging stations approved through County/Con Edison program		
Ardsley	18	
Dobbs Ferry	34	
Hastings	19	
Irvington	21 (12 planned)	

Avenue, two at Zinsser Park off Edgars Lane, and four at the Steinschneider parking lot off Spring Street between Warburton and Southside. Village Clerk Anthony Costantini told the Dispatch that Hastings hopes Con Ed will turn on the stations before the end of the summer.

Hastings also plans to install a total of six stations around village hall — on Maple Avenue and in the parking lot. That installation will coincide with the completion of a geothermal project at village hall that requires other electrical work with Con Ed. The cost of using the stations in Hastings will be \$0.35 per kWh.

Ardsley has installed seven stations at McDowell Park and seven at Pascone Park. Four more will be added at village hall. As in Hastings, the rate is \$0.35 per kWh.

New leaders strike a new chord at Jazz Forum Arts

BY LAURA SCHILLER

REGION Less than a month into his tenure as executive director of the nonprofit Jazz Forum Arts, Darrian Douglas has landed one of his dream bookings — Grammy-winning vocalist Cécile McLorin Salvant, who will headline a fundraiser in December.

On July 1, Douglas and Chief Operating Officer Clara Winder, a Dobbs Ferry native, succeeded Jazz Forum Arts founder Mark Morganelli and his wife, Ellen Prior, who retired after 41 years. Douglas had been director of programs since 2025, while Winder had been the marketing manager since 2017.

In addition to operating the Jazz Forum Club in Tarrytown, Jazz Forum Arts hosts free summer concert series in Dobbs Ferry, Irvington, Tarrytown, Sleepy Hollow, and Ossining.

“My first exposure to live jazz was at their free summer concerts in Dobbs Ferry when I was a kid,” Winder said. The 2013 Dobbs Ferry High School grad, who has known Morganelli and Prior since childhood, added that hiring the right artistic leader to take over from them was critical.

“I was skeptical they’d be able to find someone who could replace the presence Mark had,” she said. “It was really important for



Clara Winder and Darrian Douglas at the Jazz Forum Club

me to be able to work with a professional musician. I think some of the best arts organizations have musicians as artistic directors.”

An accomplished drummer and educator, Douglas co-founded the Second Line Arts Collective — a nonprofit music education and training outfit — in New Orleans before joining Jazz Forum Arts.

In his new role, booking big-name performers is part of his vision, as is introducing audiences to rising artists. One of his first changes has been scheduling emerging musicians for single engagements this summer rather than requiring them to sell two-night runs.

“I gave everybody one night, and that’s a little bit easier of a lift,” he said.

Douglas also wants the club to reflect contemporary jazz and attract younger audiences

without losing longtime supporters.

“You’ll notice there will be way more women playing, and way more diversity at the club,” he said. “At the same time, I want to honor the people who’ve been coming here for decades.”

Beyond the music, Douglas and Winder aim to reach a new generation through expanded digital marketing, community partnerships, and new programs.

“I’d like to create opportunities for people to come into the club outside of the show,” Winder said. “Get to know us, hang out, enjoy music together — kind of creating a third place at the club.”

She envisions vinyl listening sessions, adult education classes, and other free events that invite people to visit even when there

isn’t a performance.

Douglas also wants to raise the profile of Jazz Forum Arts’ five music education programs, which serve students in grades K-12.

“If we teach kids about jazz from kindergarten through high school, they’ll appreciate it like the generations before,” he said.

That mission involves “Jazz Forum in School,” which brings professional musicians into classrooms. That program is expanding from Sleepy Hollow into schools across the Rivertowns and Yonkers.

Winder recalled students lining up after a recent school performance to shake the musicians’ hands. “That was probably my favorite part,” she said.

Though Douglas envisions changes, the welcoming atmosphere that has defined Jazz Forum Arts since its founding will remain. Drawing on his Mississippi roots, Douglas said hospitality is central to his leadership philosophy.

“If you come to Jazz Forum, you’re going to hear some good music, eat some good food, have a good drink, laugh, and hang out with friends,” he explained. “Everybody who comes into our club says the same thing: It feels like home.”

Jazz Forum Arts presents 32 free concerts during July and August at Waterfront Park in Dobbs Ferry, Matthiessen Park in Irvington, Pierson Park in Tarrytown, Horan’s Landing in Sleepy Hollow, and Henry Gour-dine Park in Ossining. The Jazz Forum Club also presents concerts every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and its art gallery is open to the public. For a full lineup, visit jazzforumarts.org.

ICE
Continued from page 1

subject of recent and upcoming protests by local organizations. NYCD16|15 Indivisible, a progressive advocacy group which covers the Rivertowns, held a demonstration outside Citizens Bank in Yonkers on July 18. On July 25, Concerned Families of Westchester, which holds weekly vigils at VFW Plaza in Hastings, will take part in a protest at Delaney Hall, an immigrant detention center in Newark, New Jersey, where there have been recent hunger and labor strikes.

While some residents express concern about ICE through demonstrations and protests, village officials have been preparing behind the scenes for challenges related to immigration enforcement.

Shortly after the 2024 election, Neighbors Link in Mount Kisco, a nonprofit resource center for immigrants, began hosting meetings with municipal leaders to plan for the impacts of changes to immigration policy, such as mass deportations.

According to Sleepy Hollow Mayor Marjorie Hsu, who at the time was not a village official, the idea for these meetings came out of a conversation between her, Neighbors Link Executive Director Carola Bracco, and Westchester County Legislator David Imamura, who represents Ardsley, Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, and Irvington. Hsu, who became mayor on Dec. 1, 2025, described the relevance of ICE policy to Sleepy Hollow, as half of the village's population is Latino or Hispanic.

Following a pilot in Sleepy Hollow, Neighbors Link brought this training to other municipalities, primarily ones with high immigrant populations. During these meetings, the nonprofit facilitates "tabletop exercises" in which municipal leaders discuss how to support immigrants in their community with challenges such as the detention or possible deportation of a loved one. The conversation centers on how to ensure collaboration and communication between different organizations, from the government and school district to food pantries

"Families that are preparing for the possible detention of a family member [are] just living with that anxiety."

Neighbors Link Executive Director
Carola Bracco

and houses of worship. The goal, Bracco told the Dispatch, is to get leadership on the "same page."

After the fatal shootings of Good and Pretti in January, Ardsley Mayor Steve Edelstein reached out to Imamura, an Irvington resident, who thought of bringing the program to his own district. Neighbors Link met with officials from Ardsley, Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, and Irvington and their respective

school districts to "go through what a potential ICE raid would be like, and brainstorm how to best approach government action if an ICE raid occurred in the Rivertowns," Imamura told the Dispatch. These four villages also passed resolutions earlier this year, either condemning the incidents in Minneapolis or limiting police engagement with ICE. To his knowledge, ICE has not been in Imamura's district during his time in office, which began in 2023.

In addition to these meetings, Bracco said Neighbors Link's services are in "extremely high" demand. The organization, which seeks to educate communities on the increasing complexity of immigration law, offers free legal services to immigrants from 23 attorneys and paralegals. After taking office, the Trump administration implemented hundreds of new policies related to immigration law, which Bracco said changes frequently. For many clients, the pathways for pursuing legal status have narrowed, with some losing their work authorizations as a result of these policy shifts. Along with immigrants, more employers in fields like construction or health-care are reaching out to the organization for help, as they are losing employees whose work authorization has been taken away.

Another challenge is the mental health consequences related to uncertainty surrounding immigration policy and the heightened national presence of ICE. Neighbors Link has seen increased demand for services related to coping with this anxiety. As a result, the organization has implemented

a mental health component to its parent education programs.

"Not only are parents fearful — fearing for their lives and scared of their families being torn apart — but their children face the same fear," Bracco said. "Families that are preparing for the possible detention of a family member [are] just living with that anxiety."

In Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown, mental health is among the concerns raised in meetings held regularly by the Villages with the school district, nonprofits, police, and other community organizations. ICE agents executed warrants in Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown in 2025. These conversations center on supporting families before, after, and during potential situations involving immigration enforcement.

"We're doing the best we can to educate people before the fact," Hsu said, "and then also making sure that we have resources lined up to support children and family members, in partnership with schools and other community organizations for the worst-case scenario."

With ICE receiving funding increases over the past year and a half, Hsu emphasized the importance of maintaining open communication within the local community.

"It's just a volatile situation, and all of us are trying to do the best we can to meet with other concerned groups on a proactive basis," she said. "We're continuing to evolve our local protocol to figure out how we best support our immigrant neighbors."

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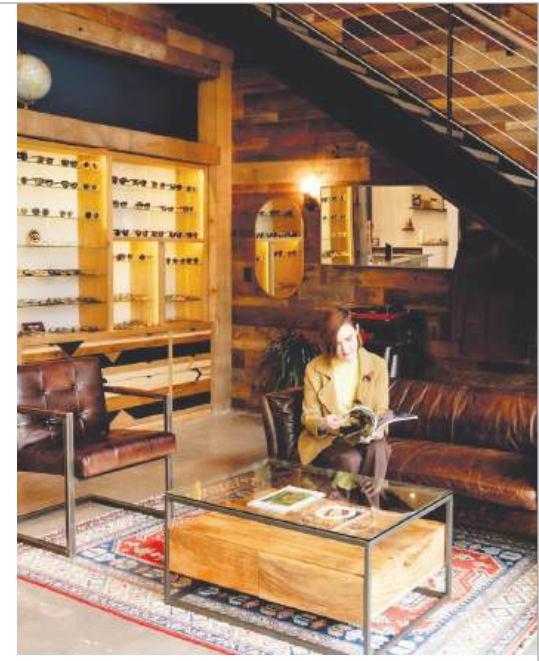
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ARDSLEY

Board of Trustees Work Session

Monday, July 27, 7:30 p.m.
Village Hall. Agenda available
at ardsleyvillage.gov

Ardsley Panther Booster Club Meeting

Tuesday, July 28, 6:30 p.m.

High school teachers' lounge
Learn about supporting
district athletic programs

Senior Event: Pizza & Bingo

Wednesday, July 29,
noon–1 p.m.
Ardsley Community Center

Summer Reading Club: Dinolympics

Thursday, July 30, 5 p.m.
Ardsley Public Library
For kids who've just finished
grades K–5. Register at
ardsleypubliclibrary.org

Mobile Shredder

Saturday, Aug. 1, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Concord Road Elementary
School

Summer Concert Series: The Clapton Project

Saturday, Aug. 8, 6–8 p.m.
Pascone Park
Free; bring a blanket or chair

to sit on the lawn

Ayo Obi Ardsley Tennis Tournament

Saturday, Sept. 19, and Sunday,
Sept. 20. Rain dates: Sept.
26–27. Fee: \$25 Ardsley
resident, \$35 nonresident
Register: ardsleyny.myrec.com

Booster Club summer meeting

The Ardsley Panther Booster Club, which supports the district's student athletes and sports programs, will meet in the high school teachers' lounge on July 28 at 6:30 p.m. According to co-president Jodie Reaver, the main agenda items include how to support fall athletes during Homecoming Week (Oct. 4–10), the Hall of Fame event (Oct. 8), and concessions support at home games. There will also be discussion of media day for athletes, with emphasis on seniors.

Curbing, milling, and paving contracts approved

The Ardsley Board of Trustees approved two contracts related to street maintenance at a special meeting on July 21.

On June 1, the board awarded a contract for the 2026 Curb Installation and Replacement Project to Tony Casale, Inc., for \$361,830. No contract award was made at that time for any alternate work, because this required further action and approval from Westchester County for supplemental funding, according to the July 21 resolution.

Since the earlier meeting, the Village received the necessary authorization and approval. The July 21 resolution awarded Tony Casale an additional \$456,170 for alternate work, bringing the total contract amount to \$818,000.

The board also approved another resolution, which referenced a cooperative relationship among the Villages of Ardsley, Hastings, Irvington, Sleepy Hollow, and Tarrytown, for the solicitation of bids for milling and resurfacing various streets. The contract was awarded to ELQ Industries, for a base bid totaling \$1,625,709.63, which includes two alternates and would be apportioned to each municipality. The initial resolution estimated Ardsley's share would cost \$428,695.50, with a base bid of \$329,431.50 and \$99,264 for the additional work in the alternate. Like with the curb installation project, the new resolution regarding milling stated that no award was made on June 1 for Alternate 1, as this required further action and approval for supplemental funding from the County. The Village received this authorization and approval, allowing the board to increase the previously awarded base bid to also include the additional work.

— Amy Bochner

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at
amy@rivertownsdispatch.com



Chris Weinstein at Baci in the Square

Baci in the Square owner returns to his roots

BY AMY BOCHNER

Nothing — not cancer, bankruptcy, or arson — can stop Chris Weinstein from making pizza. The owner of Ardsley's newest, and fifth pizzeria, Baci in the Square, recently shared how a passion that started in the village brought him back 35 years later.

The Montrose resident had a rebellious childhood in Yonkers, before moving to Ardsley at age 10. The name

of the pizzeria is an homage to one of his first jobs. When he was 15, he began working at Sicilian in the Square, a pizzeria owned by Gaitano Nardi, who is now 94. Down the street from Addyman Square, Nardi taught Weinstein how to make his first pizza.

Sicilian in the Square operated for 30 years in the village. For 35 years, Nardi and Weinstein didn't cross paths. This changed when Nardi's grandchildren followed Weinstein on Instagram.

In May, the two reunited in front of Baci in the Square. Although the oven had been set up two weeks prior, Weinstein waited for Gaitano to make Baci in the Square's first pizza.

While showing photos taken of the reunion, Weinstein told the Dispatch, "This is what it was all about for me. I could close tomorrow. I still won."

Weinstein's experience with Nardi shaped the trajectory of his life and career. Even during the most difficult moments, Weinstein found motivation and inspiration to continue pursuing his passion of making good pizza.

At age 18, Weinstein moved to Tucson,

Arizona. Two years later, he opened his first restaurant, Poppy's Pizzeria, which was razed by arsonists in 1999. According to Weinstein, this incident was the result of "a problem with the local cartel."

"The previous owner used to allow them to keep a lot of weed there," he explained. "They went out of business. I was the new guy, and they came in and told me that they wanted to [store drugs in the store]. I told them no way... So I refused, and they said no, we're gonna do it, or you're gonna go out of business. I told them to do what they got to do."

Soon after that he "got the hell out of Tucson," and returned to New York, where he opened various pizzerias over the years.

Ten years ago, Weinstein was diagnosed with cancer, and given a prognosis of 12 months. Following a year of treatment, his cancer went into remission. At the time, Weinstein was bankrupt, relying on food stamps, and in need of a plan. He rented the kitchen of a local bar in Montrose before earning enough money to buy a storefront down the street. This became Pizzeria Baci which Weinstein continues to run with his son, Cameron, 21.

Weinstein's cancer journey not only impacted his perspective on life, but also his approach to pizza.

While going through treatment, he grew concerned with the potassium bromate, a carcinogen, present in some flours. He also developed a dough recipe that uses a sourdough starter, which makes the pizza "much more digestible." This is fermented for a minimum of 48 to 72 hours and cooked at 650 degrees.

Weinstein takes the quality of his food

seriously, stating that he is the "only person that's ever made the dough."

"I don't trust nobody yet, so I make every batch of dough," he said. "I roll every ball."

Pizzeria Baci gained popularity during the Covid 19 pandemic, when the pizzeria was one of the few local stores to remain open. Weinstein also found a successful advertising strategy by making comedy skits for social media, several of which garnered over a million views.

Two years ago, a friend informed him of a space for rent in Ardsley. At the time, Weinstein was not interested in opening a new business, but became intrigued by the spot's proximity to where Sicilian in the Square used to be. He negotiated a lease, and opened Baci in the Square on July 15.

Customers can purchase a slice for \$5–\$6, and a pie for \$21–\$30. The pizzas offered are "old-fashioned" and "authentic."

"I like the greatest hits, but I like to do them closely," he said "I mean, I love a Margarita, but it's got to be done the right way, and that takes time and a lot of effort."

After overcoming challenges in his personal and professional life, Weinstein finds pizza to be a source of positivity, one that he'd like to share with the Ardsley community.

"I just love pizza," he said. "When I was a kid, I would always have great memories of family, friends, baseball teams, soccer teams... it's always around pizza."

Baci in the Square, 471 Ashford Avenue, is noon to 8 p.m. every day except Tuesday. The pizzeria's phone number is 914-688-5301. For more information, visit www.baci-inthesquare.com.



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DOBBS FERRY

Dinosaur Movie Marathon
Saturday, July 25, 1–9 p.m.
Dobbs Ferry Public Library
“The Land Before Time,” for kids, 1 p.m. “Journey 2: The Mysterious Island,” 3 p.m. “Dinosaur 13,” 5 p.m. “The Valley of Gwangi,” for ages 18+, 7 p.m.

Children’s Book Nook
Saturday, July 25, and Sunday, July 26, 1–4 p.m. Keeper’s House, 15 Walnut St. Explore books and interactive displays in a new cozy space —
Book Club
Wednesday, July 29, 6–7 p.m.

Dobbs Ferry Public Library
Discuss “The Everlasting” by Alix E. Harrow —
Saxophonist Christopher McBride Concert
Wednesday, July 29, 6:30–8 p.m. Waterfront Park. Family-friendly Jitterbugs Jam

begins at 5:30. Cancellation due to inclement weather will be announced by 2 p.m. at jazzforumarts.org —
T-Rex Tea Party
Thursday, July 30, 4–5 p.m. For ages 3–6. Dobbs Ferry Public Library. Register:

childrens@dobbsferrylibrary.org —
River Jam and Food Trucks
Friday, July 31, 7–9 p.m. Waterfront Park —
Movie on the Trail: “Moana”
Friday, July 31, 8:30 p.m. Keeper’s House. BYO chair

Slentz’s contract extended

Dobbs Ferry Schools Superintendent Ken Slentz has signed an extension to continue working with the district through June 30, 2029. This locks Slentz in for an additional year on top of the three-year extension he signed last summer, which was set to end in 2028. Slentz is slated to make \$317,956 for the 2026–2027 school year, which is a 3% increase from this past school year.

Slentz has been superintendent since 2022, after four years leading the Ballston Spa Central School District in upstate Saratoga County, and four years as superintendent of the Skaneateles Central School District in Onondaga County prior to that. He’s also worked with the New York State Education Department as associate commissioner of Curriculum, Instruction and Field Services, and deputy commissioner of P-12 education.

“It continues to be a privilege to work for the Dobbs Ferry Board of Education, and with the Dobbs Ferry community on both our near and long-term planning,” Slentz wrote the Dispatch. “We have a great deal of work underway on behalf of our students, and I am grateful to the board for providing me with the additional time to complete the tasks that we have set out.”

Plan for \$3,000 prize

Dobbs Ferry is making plans for the \$3,000 the Village won by beating out Ardsley, Hastings, Irvington, Tarrytown, and Sleepy Hollow in a regional environmental-themed scavenger hunt this spring. Separate teams of residents from Dobbs Ferry, collectively earned the most points of any village in the Rivertowns Earth Month Scavenger Hunt, by completing tasks such as riding a Bee-Line bus, planting trees, and identifying and removing invasive plants.

The village board is planning to put the funds toward two projects: renovation of the 9/11 Memorial at Waterfront Park with native plants and the installation of deer fencing for a new Miyawaki miniforest at Chauncey Park. In April, the community volunteer group Sustainable Dobbs was awarded a \$1,800 Community Grant from the Greater Irvington Land Trust to support the creation of the miniforest, which is meant to support biodiversity, reduce storm-water runoff, provide environmental education, and serve as a community volunteer project at Chauncey Park.

— Julian Michael Caldwell

Got news?

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



Molly and Matt Ferguson at DrySpace

DrySpace stakes out the zero-proof market

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

A husband-and-wife team is calling the shots at DrySpace, Westchester’s first and only non-alcoholic bottle shop, located on Cedar Street. Matt and Molly Ferguson opened for business on Friday, July 17, with more than 200 alternatives to traditional beers, wines, and spirits, and just in time for Matt to serve his original zero-proof cocktails during the Dine Out Dobbs event on July 19.

“We exist as a place of education and we want people to be able to come in and taste basically anything that’s on our shelves before they buy it, and learn about the options out there,” Matt told the Dispatch.

“We love the idea of allowing people to try it out first and go home knowing they’re going to enjoy it,” Molly added. Molly shared that she’s seen customers who still consume alcohol come in to buy products for friends who don’t.

The Fergusons were introduced to the non-alcoholic bottle shop business by an acquaintance who worked with one in Canada. That company was interested in expanding in the U.S., but increased tariffs last year aborted that venture. The Fergusons, however, decided to go ahead themselves. Though they had never lived in Westchester (and now reside in Queens), they spent time in the Rivertowns while living in New York, which is where they met two decades ago

before relocating to California in 2015.

“There are currently about 35 or so non-alcoholic bottle shops across the United States,” Matt said. “We spoke with several of them in person, and we decided that it was an idea we could really get behind because it serves the community, and it was something Molly was passionate about, being sober for most of the time we’ve been together.”

Her decision to stop drinking alcohol almost two decades ago was an impetus

“There are currently about 35 or so non-alcoholic bottle shops across the United States.”

Matt Ferguson

for the couple, who have been married for 12 years, to open DrySpace.

“For almost 18 years, I’ve only had water, coffee, and the occasional soda,” Molly said. “And being introduced to this [business] has opened my eyes to what’s been lacking for the sober community, and even people who aren’t sober, but just want something different and don’t feel like having a drink that night.”

DrySpace also stocks what are known as functional drinks, which are drinks with

adaptogens — natural herbs, fungi, roots, or vegetables that could help a person feel calmer or more social over time, or improve mood or sleep. Adaptogens have been staples of Eastern medicine for centuries.

While Matt still drinks alcohol, the appeal for him isn’t the alcohol itself, but the practice of mixing cocktails. DrySpace doesn’t sell any of Matt’s own, but the shop does stock some that he describes as “cocktails in a can.” They also sell alternative spirits, choosing those that Matt and Molly have found make good mixers. For example, there’s Abstinence Cape Agave Mezcal Alternative, which sells for \$30 a bottle, while Almave Blue Agave Spirit goes for \$48. All of their beers sell as singles for either \$5 or \$6, and when customers buy five, the sixth comes free.

The spirit replacements often don’t aim to be exact non-alcoholic replicas of a spirit, such as whiskey or gin, but provide tea-based or vinegar-based alternatives with a different flavor. In addition to the health benefits of consuming less alcohol, the Fergusons find that alternative spirits provide an opportunity to get creative in ways that provide more enjoyment than swapping out one alcoholic drink for a non-alcoholic replica. “If I was to try to mix four or five different cocktails, playing around, I wouldn’t be able to consume all of them,” Matt explained. “I’d either be wasted or I’d have to waste a bunch of alcohol dumping it out.”

DrySpace, at 37 Cedar St., is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m.–7 p.m., and Sunday from 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

Upstream Artists: *Summer Two*
On view July 23 to August 9
Reception Sunday, July 26, 2 - 5 pm

ACOSTA
ALVAREZ
BELK
BOWEN
SP COOPER
DEAHL
DENAHY
GIORDANO
GOLD
GOLDBERG
GOLDSTEIN
GRECO

GUPTA
MACMURDY
MAGGIOTTO
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TIP OF THE MONTH
Summer sun and rain can take a toll on wood surfaces. Now is the perfect time to clean, stain, or seal your deck to prevent fading, cracking, and moisture damage. Not sure which product is right for your deck? Stop by and ask our team.

548 WARBURTON AVE. MON – FRI 7:30AM–5PM
HASTINGS ON HUDSON, NY SAT 8AM–5PM

www.hastingspaintandhardware.com
Hastingspainthardware@gmail.com



Farmers Market
Saturday, July 25, 8:30 a.m.–1 p.m. Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue. hastingsfarmersmarket.org

Cardboard Boat Regatta
Saturday, July 25. Chemka Pool. Begin building vessels at

10 a.m.; races start at 3 p.m.

Hastings on Jazz
Sunday, July 26, 3–5:30 p.m. VFW Plaza. The weekly summer series continues with the Matt Garrison Quartet. Rain location: Hastings Public Library

Movin' the Mind & Groovin' the Balance

Tuesday, July 28, 1–2 p.m. Hastings Public Library. Movement class for people with Parkinson's disease or balance challenges.

Grateful To Be Alive Concert

Tuesday, July 28, 6–9 p.m.; rain date July 29
MacEachron Waterfront Park

Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, July 28, 7 p.m. Village Hall
Agenda available at hohny.gov

Family Bingo Night
Wednesday, Jan. 29, 5–6 p.m. Hastings Public Library
Email amanning@hastingslibrary.org to register

Safe Rides for Teens
Friday and Saturday nights, 10 p.m.–1 a.m. Call 914-478-2471

Board approves agreements regarding athletic fields

The Hastings Board of Education approved three resolutions related to upgrades to the Burke Estate athletic fields on July 14. The work is part of the district's capital bond project, which was broken up into three propositions and approved by voters in June 2025. The third proposition centered on the installation of two synthetic turf fields at the Burke Estate, where construction began on June 1.

The board approved two amendments to its agreement with architectural firm LAN Associates, which is creating construction documents. The first is for Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) inspections. At the meeting, district treasurer and business official Maureen Caraballo explained that, as the ground is being disturbed at the site, weekly or biweekly inspections are required to ensure that no storm water runoff, sediments, or pollutants from the work goes into nearby waterways or neighboring properties. If that is to be found, she continued, mitigation is required. LAN Associates will alternate with landscape architecture firm LA Group in conducting these inspections. This contract change increases the expense by \$8,000, with an additional \$1,500 per week if the project takes longer than six weeks.

The board also approved an amendment related to the design of additional improvements to the existing baseball field. Caraballo said new ideas and conditions to address cropped up throughout the design process. The additional improvements include two bleacher spectator areas, a batting cage, two bullpens, water access for maintenance purposes, access from the parking lot down to field elevation, and extending the height of the backstop netting 40 feet. The physical work will be funded by administering change orders using a portion of the contingency allowance. The cost of the design service is \$40,000. With both amendments approved, the contract's revised total cost is \$498,000.

The third resolution related to the capital bond project was for a recommendation to award a proposal for third-party controlled inspections and a testing vendor. The New York State Education Department building guidelines and governing building code require that the district ensure that specific material and construction installations are tested and inspected by a qualified third-party agency. Four vendors submitted responses to the request for proposal. These were analyzed by Triton Construction, which recommended the contract be awarded to Tectonic Engineering Consultants, Geologists and Land Surveyors. The board approved this recommendation.

— Amy Bochner

Audit results in high- and medium-risk ratings

Review assesses 11 functions of school district

BY AMY BOCHNER

The Hastings Board of Education approved the findings of an annual performance audit on July 14, which described potential areas for improvement in the district.

Accounting firm Cherry Bekaert conducted the assessment, which is dated April 6, 2026. The document's stated objective is to provide the district with a "clear, prioritized understanding of the risks affecting its internal control environment, taking into account the district's strategy, governance structure, compliance obligations, and key operational and financial processes during fiscal year 2025."

According to Schools Superintendent Bill McKersie, a yearly risk assessment is "standard, and even best practice."

The audit categorized the district into 13 functional areas, or "functions," and assessed 11 of these for risk factors, the likelihood of a "serious event" occurring, and the impact of said event on finances or operations.

The assessed functions were given risk ratings, which reflect both inherent risks of the programs/services, as well as the organization's complexities, such as what resources are available, board/management priorities, or prior audit results. The audit states that a high risk rating is not "an evaluation of management effectiveness." How critical a function is to the organization's operation also factors into the risk rating.

An example the audit describes is how, for the function of "Payroll and Purchasing," the risk rating score for most districts will be relatively higher than other areas because of the financial significance of these operations.

For the Hastings School District, the audit found six high-risk areas and five medium risk. Based on the information gathered during the risk assessment, 14 internal audit plans were developed. The document states that most of the functions did not have an overall high risk rating, and these recommended internal audit plans focus on specific activities within the function's scope that were rated higher risk. While prioritizing all internal audit plans is recommended during the year, the document highlights four of the 14, the first of which relates to information technology (IT).

A challenge the district faces is growing IT risks driven by expanding student data privacy and security requirements by state and federal laws. The state-mandated restrictions on student personal internet-enabled devices, the audit states, "have proven difficult to operationalize," which led the district to "incur unbudgeted costs for additional district-owned laptops and device storage that were not fully offset by state funding."

Compounding this risk is the district's lack of a technology director, a historically small IT staff, as well as rising technology expenses tied to computer-based testing and districtwide tech support needs. The recommended audit would assess the district's IT governance structure, staffing constraints,

and processes related to funding.

Also highlighted is a Student Services Risk Management Review Audit, which covers transportation, special education, security, technology use, and other services.

The auditors found that this area faces elevated risks because of "staffing shortages, budget constraints, and policy gaps that limit effective instructional oversight, special education compliance, student behavior management, and security." The recommended plan would provide insight on whether the district's governance, policies, and staffing over these services are operating effectively to protect student welfare and outcomes. Some of the key risk areas that would be reviewed are special education compliance and quality, technology safeguards, behavior management, and staff workload assessment.

The third highlighted plan is related to "Purchasing & Accounts Payable," and would focus on the capital bond and construction. The audit described the district as facing "moderate" risks from challenges in "consistently obtaining software and vendor data protection agreements" which could expose the district to cybersecurity or compliance issues. There is also "a need for strong contract monitoring and vendor oversight" related to the \$38 million capital improvement bonds approved by voters in June 2025. The recommended audit plan would determine whether purchasing activity complies with district policy and state law

Continued on page 13



Dar, sans sunset

Due to rain earlier that day, the Village of Hastings' annual Sunset Concert Series wrapped up with a performance by Dar Williams at the Hastings High School auditorium on the evening of July 21. Next Tuesday, July 28, the Village will host a concert by the Grateful Dead cover band Grateful To Be Alive at MacEachron Park from 6–9 p.m. The rain date is July 29.



IRVINGTON

Rivertowns Repair Café: Irvington
Saturday, July 25, 11 a.m.–3 p.m. Eileen Fisher, Inc., 2 Bridge St., Suite 230
Sign up to volunteer at repaircafehv.org/irvington
—
“Needles at Noon”

Saturday, July 25, noon–1:30 p.m. Irvington Public Library
Lori Cohen joins the weekly yarn craft meetup to help with knitting and crocheting
—
Farmers Market
Sunday, July 26, 9 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Main Street

School, 101 Main St.
irvingtonfarmersmarket.org
—
Architectural Review Board Meeting
Monday, July 27, 8 p.m.
Village Hall. To attend via Zoom, visit irvingtonny.gov for the link

Pajama Storytime, Ages 3+
Tuesday, July 28, 7–7:30 p.m.
Irvington Public Library
Registration required at irvingtonlibrary.org
—
Community Coyote Information Session
Wednesday, July 29, 6 p.m.

Irvington Court Room, 85 Main St. To attend via Zoom, visit irvingtonny.gov
—
Sizzling Summer Stories
Thursday, July 30, 10:45–11:15 a.m. Irvington Public Library
Register: irvingtonlibrary.org



Hu Shasha's painting “Pink on Pink”

Hu Shasha at Martucci Gallery

Chinese-born painter Hu Shasha of Cortlandt is showing 19 recent works combining acrylic and oil painting on wood panels at the Martucci Gallery in the Irvington Library, through next Friday, July 31. Shasha titles her latest exhibit “Pages / Places,” which she says is inspired by a Chinese saying that translates to “Read 10,000 books, travel 10,000 miles.” Writing to the Dispatch, Shasha explained that the phrase expresses the “belief that knowledge and lived experience should exist in dialogue with one another.”

Several of the pieces in the exhibit, which were created between 2021–2026, are part of Shasha's “Mountain Series,” which was inspired by the landscape along the Hudson River. Her “Scholar's Stone” series reconstructs the light, shadow, and symbolic forms of stones in the Chinese garden at the Met, creating contemplative spaces that invite viewers to mentally wander through the landscape of the paintings.

“The works in this exhibition represent visual explorations from different stages of my practice,” Shasha wrote the Dispatch. “Some employ the luminous colors of the digital age, while others pay homage to art history. Several pieces combine classical painting techniques with contemporary technologies and experimental processes.”

The Martucci Gallery at the Irvington Public Library, 12 S. Astor St., is open during library hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 10 a.m.–5 p.m., and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m.–9 p.m.

— Julian Michael Caldwell

Got news?

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



The DPW facility between South Buckhout and South Astor streets.

Proposal for relocating DPW draws opposition

Three scenarios include move to Cyrus Field Road

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

Irvington residents are voicing their opposition to a new location proposed for the Department of Public Works (DPW), part of an ongoing effort to upgrade municipal facilities. Since last fall, the Village of Irvington has been working with New York City-based Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners (BBB) on revamping the firehouse, police headquarters, and DPW garage.

In June, BBB presented three potential scenarios. The firm is continuing to collect community input as it further hones options. In September, before a public presentation, BBB will submit a Draft Facilities Planning Report with a single recommended path. After choosing one option to pursue further, the Village will undertake a more detailed analysis of the upgrades and relocations, which could result in alterations to the plan.

Relocation of the DPW from its current site on South Buckhout Street, near the train station, to the current location of the police firing range on Cyrus Field Road, appears in all three scenarios. All three also recommend using the current DPW property for housing and mixed-use development, and removing a DPW transfer site near the O'Hara Nature Center to restore it to natural parkland.

During the public comment segment of the village board's July 20 meeting, several residents spoke in favor of keeping the firing

range as is, citing environmental concerns if the DPW relocates there. When the firing range isn't in use, it maintains the qualities of an unspoiled open space that some residents don't want to change.

“We're told not to worry, that environmental review will come later, after a preferred direction is selected,” Irvington resident Leon Eidelman told the board. “And when all three scenarios depend on one site, the review that comes after the choice doesn't inform the decision, it ratifies the decision.”

Resident Josh Nathan also called on the Village to abandon the DPW relocation option, contending that putting the facility there would increase traffic in a dangerous area to drive, putting residents and DPW employees at risk.

Irvington resident Michael Hanna, who serves as the community engagement adviser for the project, believes BBB's analysis proves that moving the DPW to the proposed location offers environmental benefits to the community and reduces the footprint of the DPW elsewhere in Irvington.

“It restores to nature a large DPW transfer site next to the Irvington Wood's Peter Oley Trail system, moving it to a non-public, already disturbed site at the police gun range,” Hanna told the Dispatch. “The new site would offer modern environmental safeguards that the current site, in a flood zone, does not.”

Hanna explained that while it's possible that another site emerges as an option for the DPW, BBB's review of alternatives suggested by the Facilities Planning Committee

found those options were not feasible. Hanna also believes that relocation, in the long run, would be less expensive for taxpayers. Relocating and using the current DPW site for housing and mixed-use development could bring revenue from the sale of the land, retail tax, and property tax which would offset the cost of the project for taxpayers. Hanna explained that in addition to not generating that revenue, rebuilding the facility in place could require the Village to pay for a temporary relocation during renovations.

In an email message blast on July 21, Mayor Arlene Burgos thanked residents for their input and emphasized that none of the scenarios has been fully developed financially, and that the Village has not approved any sites.

“If the board determines that any location warrants further consideration, no final decision would be made until all required environmental reviews, engineering studies, traffic analyses, and other assessments are completed,” Burgos wrote. “Those studies are intended to answer many of the questions residents are asking before, not after, any final decisions are made.”

During the July 20 meeting the village board voted to hire New York City-based urban planner Karp Strategies, LLC, to prepare a fiscal impact analysis of potential mixed-use development on Village-owned properties, to determine how potential development could affect Village revenues and expenditures. No date has been set for the September presentation.

The Agenda

SATURDAY JULY 25

Live Rock Music: Digging for Sharks

ARDSLEY

8 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

Rivertowns Repair Café

IRVINGTON

11 a.m.–3 p.m. / Free. Eileen Fisher, Inc., 2 Bridge St., Suite 230. repaircafeh.v.org

The Spirit of Jazz

TARRYTOWN

3 p.m. / \$15. The Pocantico Center, 200 Lake Road. Tribute to clarinetist and tenor saxophonist Ken Peplowski, featuring the John Pizzarelli Trio and pianist Rossano Sportiello and presented with the National Jazz Museum in Harlem. Purchase tickets at rbf.org/pocantico/events

"A Midsummer Night's Dream"

TARRYTOWN

7 p.m. / \$59, \$84 includes dinner. Lyndhurst, 635 S. Broadway. M&M Performing Arts Company's production of Shakespeare's romantic comedy is set in the 1960s and performed in the Palm Court's open-air theater. Final performance on Sunday. Appropriate for ages 8+. lyndhurst.org

Rip Van Winkle's Journey

TARRYTOWN

8 p.m. / \$65. Washington Irving's Sunnyside, 3 W. Sunnyside Lane. Immersive outdoor theater experience with live music and curated drinks. Final performance on Sunday. Recommended for ages 10+. Advance tickets required. hudsonvalley.org

Tribute Band: EagleMania

TARRYTOWN

8 p.m. / \$42–\$39. Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. tarrytownmusicall.org

Vibraphonist Simon Moullier

TARRYTOWN

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

Summer Saturdays: Hive and Honey

SLEEPY HOLLOW

11 a.m.–3 p.m. / \$18, \$15 for ages 18–25 and 65+, \$13 for children. Philipsburg Manor, 381 N. Broadway. Themed events and hands-on activities to explore the importance of honeybees, including baking honey gingerbread, dipping



The Grateful Dead tribute band Grateful To Be Alive will perform a free concert at MacEachron Waterfront Park in Hastings on July 28, with a rain date of July 29.

beeswax candles, and sampling local honey. Purchase timed-entry tickets at hudsonvalley.org

Tales of a Traveller with S'mores

SLEEPY HOLLOW

8 p.m. / \$25. Sleepy Hollow Cemetery North Gate, 540 N. Broadway. Enjoy spooky tales by Washington Irving while toasting marshmallows over an open fire. For ages 12+. sleepyhollow-cemetery.org

SUNDAY JULY 26

Outdoor Live Music: Lord Tenor

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 Matt Garrison Quartet. Rain location: Hastings Public Library, 7 Maple Ave. destinationhastings.org

Brazilian Guitarist Flavio Silva

TARRYTOWN

4 and 6 p.m. / \$25, \$20 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. jazzforumarts.org

"When All the Men Wore Hats"

SLEEPY HOLLOW

4–6 p.m. / \$25. Philipse Manor Station, 300 Riverside Drive. Author Susan Cheever, the eldest daughter of John Cheever, is joined by her brother, writer and editor Benjamin H. Cheever, to discuss their father's life and work. Register at writerscenter.org

Summer Butterfly Walk

YONKERS

10 a.m. / \$20. Untermyer Park and Gardens,

945 N. Broadway. Purchase tickets at untermyergardens.org

TUESDAY JULY 28

Grateful To Be Alive Concert

HASTINGS

6–9 p.m. / Free. MacEachron Waterfront Park. Rain date: July 29. The Grateful Dead cover band gives a free concert.

Rock, Blues, and Folk

HASTINGS

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

WEDNESDAY JULY 29

Outdoor Concert: Saxophonist Christopher McBride

DOBBS FERRY

6:30–8 p.m. / Free. Waterfront Park. A pre-concert family-friendly Jitterbugs Jam begins at 5:30. Cancellation due to inclement weather will be announced by 2 p.m. on Facebook and at jazzforumarts.org

Matinee Movie

TARRYTOWN

2–3:45 p.m. / Free. Warner Library, 121 N. Broadway. Screening of the 1946 film "The Time of Their Lives" starring the iconic comedy duo Abbott & Costello. warnerlibrary.org

Cooking Demo and Pasta Making

IRVINGTON

6:30 p.m. / \$85, discount for unlimited members. The Lark, 50 S. Buckhout St., G107. Interactive class led by Flours Pasta and Bakeshop. thelark.club/events

THURSDAY JULY 30

Outdoor Live Music: Vinnie Piazza

DOBBS FERRY

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

The Jazz Spectrum Trio

DOBBS FERRY

7–9:30 p.m. / No cover charge. Mirabella Cocina Latina Restaurant & Bar, 1 Hamilton St., in Rivertowns Square. Featuring Mitch Shornick on drums, Sarah Cion on piano, and Bob Ginery on bass, plus guest musicians. mirabella-cocina.com/calendar-dobbs-ferry

Riverfront Concert: Barry Stephenson

IRVINGTON

6:30 p.m. / Free. Matthiessen Park. Parking is not permitted in the Bridge Street lots. Cancellation due to inclement weather will be announced by 2 p.m. on Facebook and at jazzforumarts.org

Waterfront Concert: the wINDOW

TARRYTOWN

7–9 p.m. / Free. Pierson Park, 238 W. Main St. Featuring nostalgic and classic rock. Presented by the Tarrytown Recreation Department. tarrytownny.gov

FRIDAY JULY 31

Live '60s Music: Hank and the Hustlers

ARDSLEY

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

River Jam and Food Trucks

DOBBS FERRY

7–9 p.m. / Free. Waterfront Park. The summer concert series continues with live music. dobbsferry.gov/recreation-department

Movie on the Trail

DOBBS FERRY

8:30 p.m. / Free. Keeper's House, 15 Walnut St. Screening of Disney's 2016 animated classic "Moana." aqueduct.org

Riverside Concert: The Femme Fighters

IRVINGTON

7–9 p.m. / Free. Matthiessen Park. Parking is not permitted in the Bridge Street parking lots.

Outdoor Jazz: Vocalist Brianna Thomas

TARRYTOWN

6:30–8 p.m. / Free. Pierson Park, 238 W. Main. St. A pre-concert family-friendly Jitterbugs Jam begins at 5:30. Cancellation due to inclement weather will be announced by 2 p.m. on Facebook and at jazzforumarts.org

Continued on page 12

The Agenda

ONGOING

Farmers Market

HASTINGS

Saturdays, 8:30 a.m.–1 p.m. Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue. The market is open weekly through November. For details, visit *hastingsfarmersmarket.org* and follow on Facebook.

“The Times They Are A-Changin’:
Hastings in the 1960s”

HASTINGS

Observatory Cottage, Draper Park, 407 Broadway. Open the first Saturday of each month (except August), 2–4 p.m., and Mondays and Thursdays, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. On view through October. *hastingshistoricalsociety.org*

Farmers Market

IRVINGTON

9 a.m.–1 p.m. Main Street School, 101 Main St. The market is open weekly through November. For details, visit *theirvingtonfarmersmarket.org* and follow the market on Facebook.

“Between Pages / Between Places”

IRVINGTON

Martucci Gallery at Irvington Public Library, 12 S. Astor St. Shasha Hu’s exhibit of paintings is on view through July 31. *irvingtonlibrary.org*

“Treason of the Blackest Dye”

IRVINGTON

1–4 p.m. / Free. McVickar House, 131 Main St. The Irvington Historical Society hosts a showcase of Revolutionary Westchester 250’s research about Benedict Arnold and British Major John André. On view Saturdays and Thursdays, 1–4 p.m., through Aug. 8. *irvingtonhistoricalsociety.org*

Octagon House Tours

IRVINGTON

Various times Thursday–Monday / \$34. The Armour-Stiner Octagon House, 45 W. Clinton Ave. The 1876 Centennial Tour commemorates the 250th anniversary of the United States. Through Sept. 20. For ages 7+. Advance tickets required. *armourstiner.com*

Historic Hudson Valley Tours

IRVINGTON, SLEEPY HOLLOW

Various times. Washington Irving’s Sunnyside, 3 West Sunnyside Lane, Irvington, and Philipsburg Manor, 381 N. Broadway, Sleepy Hollow, a 1750 farm and grist mill. Timed-entry tickets required. *hudsonvalley.org*

TaSH Farmers Market

TARRYTOWN

Saturdays, 8:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Patriot’s Park, 121 N. Broadway. The weekly market continues through the fall. For details, visit *tashfarmers-*

market.org and follow the market on Facebook.

Lyndhurst Classic Mansion Tour

TARRYTOWN

\$5–\$26. Lyndhurst, 635 S. Broadway. The historic mansion offers guided tours encompassing the first and second floors of the mansion, spanning approximately 16 rooms. Offered on various dates and times through Sept. 20. Timed entry tickets required. *lyndhurst.org*

Lyndhurst Upstairs/Downstairs Tour

TARRYTOWN

\$35–\$42. Lyndhurst, 635 S. Broadway. Offered on various dates and times through Sept. 20. Timed-entry tickets required. *lyndhurst.org*

UPCOMING

Concert in the Park

ARDSLEY

Aug. 8 / 6–8 p.m. / Free. Pascone Park, 507 Ashford Ave. The summer concert series continues with the Clapton Project. Bring a blanket or chair to sit on the lawn. *ardsleyvillage.gov/parks-recreation*

Mystic Mingle

DOBBS FERRY

Aug. 5 / 5:30–8 p.m. / \$30. HudCo, 145

Palisade St., Suite 200. Psychic business strategist Francine Tesler shares intuitive insights and group readings. Register at *hudco.eventbrite.com*

Field Day

DOBBS FERRY

Aug. 6 / 3–4 p.m. / Free. Keeper’s House, 15 Walnut St. The Dobbs Ferry Public Library and the Old Croton Aqueduct staff host outdoor games, races, and more. For ages 3+. Registration required by emailing *childrens@dobbsferrylibrary.org*

Summer Shakespeare Festival

IRVINGTON

Aug. 8 / 8–9:30 p.m. p.m. / Free. Irvington Shakespeare Company’s Backlawn Theater at Irvington Presbyterian Church, 25 N Broadway. Outdoor performances of “Acting Shakespeare: An American Odyssey,” a 90-minute one-man musical written and performed by company founder Kamran Saliani of Irvington. Also Aug. 15 and 22. *irvshakepeare.org*

Mark Morganelli Quartet

SLEEPY HOLLOW

Aug. 4 / 6:30–8 p.m. / Free. Horan’s Landing Park, 57 River St. Cancellation due to inclement weather will be announced by 2 p.m. on Facebook and the website. *jazzforumarts.org*

Classies

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



HELP WANTED

SEEKING BABYSITTER

Need help w/ lively 6yo occasional nights/wknds in DF. Pls be flexible, good communicator, have your own transportation. 203-363-4560



PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Formation of Elster Rare Books & Art LLC filed with SSNY on 03/11/2026. Office Location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail process to 12 Hazel Lane Larchmont, NY 10538. Purpose: any lawful act or activities.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

HUMANS CONNECTING WITH HUMANS

Looking for a piano teacher, a dog walker, a couch, or a conversation? The Dispatch Classifieds are for real people, reaching real people — no bots, no algorithms, no AI. Share your news — either here in Announcements or on the Photo Wall -----> *market.rivertownsdispatch.com/classies*



HOT TIP

Grass grows more slowly in summer heat, so raise your mower blade rather than cutting shorter. Taller grass shades the soil, helping lawns stay greener and require less water.

PHOTO WALL



DOG OF THE WEEK

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



CAT OF THE WEEK

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



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Have a burning question about our community, local issues, or something you’ve always wondered? Our team of journalists is ready to dig deep and find the answers you’re looking for. Just ask the Dispatch.



rivertownsdispatch.com/contact-us/

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 rivertownsdispatch.com/contact-us

Dispensary the 'most carefully regulated storefront' on Main Street

To the Editor:

Two letters in your July 3 issue objected to The Highline's presence on Main Street. Both deserve a response.

Tim Cerino writes that he and "basically everyone" he knows in Hastings oppose the shop. That is a statement about his circle, not the village. I no longer live in Hastings, but the great majority of people I know there supported the Village's decision not to opt out, and support the business still. Neither of us has taken a poll.

He reports that the common areas in his building, which houses the store, smell like the dispensary's inventory. But how would he know the source? Nobody consumes cannabis inside a dispensary; it is not permitted. What he smells is his neighbors smoking,

and they were presumably smoking long before The Highline opened. The difference now is that they can buy product tested to comply with the law. If the smell bothers him, that is a matter for his condo association, not the Village.

Suzanne Page writes that the Village opted in "without consultation or discussion." The Village did not opt in. Under the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act, the state Legislature gave municipalities a window to opt out. Hastings declined, because the board saw no reason to bar a legally licensed business. The Village followed the law, with public comment before the vote. Disliking the outcome is not the same as being denied a say.

Cerino calls the shop out of character and too close to the community center. He does not say what he fears, but the proximity argument implies children. So, consider the village: a dozen restaurants serve alcohol, several at sidewalk tables in plain view. Both liquor stores admit children unaccompanied. So does Foodtown, with its beer aisle. Only dispensaries must keep product out of sight from the street, and

only dispensaries turn minors away at the door. The shop is not out of character. It is the most carefully regulated storefront on the street.

Peter W. Shafran
YONKERS

Latimer needs to show 'courage and integrity' regarding the Middle East

To the Editor:

When 189 Democratic congressional representatives, including Hakeem Jeffries and Ritchie Torres, voted for Rashida Tlaib's War Powers Resolution on Lebanon, our CD16 Congressman George Latimer voted "no," making him one of only 22 Democrats standing with Trump and Netanyahu.

Mr. Latimer also voted against a resolution to block sending \$3.3 billion of our taxpayer dollars to Netanyahu's government.

In contrast, Congressman Pat Ryan from nearby CD18 voted in favor of the resolution because, as he posted on his Facebook page, sending that money is "wrong on every level."

He then went further, stating: "I expect groups like AIPAC will not support me in my future elections and frankly, I don't want their support. Hardline stances that refuse to stand up to a corrupt and increasingly dangerous Netanyahu régime have no place in our politics." Congressman Ryan has said he will refund money that was donated to him by AIPAC and accept no more going forward.

We urge our representative, George Latimer — who benefited from over \$14 million in support from AIPAC and related PACs and then recently voted to effectively support the Iran war and continue funding for Israel's retaliatory violence — to show similar courage and integrity.

Iris Hiskey Arno,
Steven Siebert, and Micah Sifry
HASTINGS
Lisa Genn
IRVINGTON

The Blotter

Continued from page 2

HASTINGS

Groundhog in pool:

Greenburgh Animal Control rescued a groundhog from an empty swimming pool on Pinecrest Parkway on the afternoon of Tuesday, July 14.

Wanted no more:

A 46-year-old Yonkers resident was cited for an illegal left turn from High Street to James Street on the morning of Wednesday, July 15. That left turn is prohibited between 7–9 a.m. He was then turned over to the Yonkers Police Department, which had warrants for him for two felonies — robbery in the third degree and grand larceny in the third degree.

Vehicles entered:

Unlocked vehicles were entered on Marion Avenue

between Sunday, July 12, and Monday, July 13, as were vehicles on Columbia Avenue, Clunie Avenue, High Street, Hillside Avenue, and Nepera Place, as reported last week.

Dead deer: An injured deer that was reported on Farragut Avenue on the afternoon of July 15 was found dead at the intersection of Mount Hope Boulevard and Rosedale Avenue on the morning of July 16.

Unauthorized use: On July 16, a Harvard Lane resident reported that a credit card was stolen from his vehicle on July 14, used at gas station in Dobbs Ferry, and then returned.

Mischief arrest: A 13-year-old student was arrested for damaging windows at the Andrus Children's Center on the afternoon of Thursday, July 16. He was charged with criminal mischief in the third degree, a

felony. Officer Stephanie Minor made the arrest. Andrus straddles the Hastings-Yonkers border on Broadway.

Suspended license and registration:

A 22-year-old Bronx resident was arrested for a suspended driver's license and vehicle registration, both misdemeanors, on Washington Avenue on the evening of Friday, July 17.

IRVINGTON

Extortion: Two hundred and fifty dollars was extorted from an Orange County resident who works in Irvington on Thursday, July 16. The victim sent the money, via Venmo, in response to phone calls that threatened to release photos of him.

Suspended license: A 26-year-old Queens resident was arrested for a suspended driver's license, a misdemeanor, on East Sunnyside Lane on the evening of Friday, July 17.

Hastings school audit

Continued from page 9

requirements. Other areas to be reviewed include vendor onboarding and contract monitoring controls to check for the district's effectiveness in preventing overpayments, use of unvetted vendors, and noncompliant or unsupported capital project expenditures.

The final highlighted plan centers on human resources and payroll, and would review workforce capacity and workload management. According to the audit, the district faces "significant human resources risks driven by persistent workload pressures, staffing shortages, and recruitment challenges." Critical vacancies, including

director of human resources, director of technology/information services, and assistant superintendent of pupil personnel services, led to "fragmented responsibilities, strained leadership roles, and weakened organizational cohesion." Other risks include difficulty onboarding employees mid-year; shortages of athletic officials, coaches, and bus drivers; and challenges recruiting and retaining qualified staff because of "strong competition from neighboring districts."

The recommended plan would assess whether the district's current staffing levels, workload distribution, and cross-coverage practices are operating effectively "to prevent backlogs, errors, burnout, and control breakdowns."

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Sports

EDITED BY ROB DIANTONIO

Ardsley builds confidence as part of inaugural league

BY ROB DIANTONIO

With the pressure of the regular season still weeks away, the Ardsley girls' soccer team has spent July focused on something that can be just as valuable as wins and losses: building chemistry.

The Panthers wrapped up the regular season of the inaugural Sleepy Hollow Summer League with a 4-4 record and were scheduled to face Rye Neck in the opening round of the playoffs on July 22. The summer league provides head coach Beau Thompson and assistant coach Frank Savino an opportunity to blend returning varsity players with rising underclassmen, experiment on the field, and continue laying the foundation for the fall campaign.

"I think any time you can get the team together and get different people playing together and just kind of taking a risk in playing soccer, I think that's a good thing," Savino told the Dispatch. "We try to keep it lighthearted and have a good time and get them playing and learning each other's tendencies."

"I told them that from the beginning," he continued. "I'm not going to say a lot. I'm going to say a couple of things, and I want to hear from you guys, and then other than that, go and take a chance. It's been great so far. I think they've really enjoyed it."

Ardsley closed out the regular season with a 6-3 loss to Pleasantville on July 20, but there were plenty of positives to take away from the contest.

Rising sophomore Katharine Toth continued to show her offensive potential by scoring twice in the opening half. Ardsley trailed 3-2 at halftime before rising senior Alexis Fitzsimmons found the back of the net in the second half on an assist from fellow rising senior Ava Santavicca.

The offensive production reflected one of the themes Thompson and Savino have



Katharine Toth scans the field. Photos by Rob DiAntonio.

emphasized throughout the summer: encouraging players to be more aggressive and expand their games without worrying about the consequences that often accompany regular-season matches.

"I think what I like is a lot of them are taking risks and trying things that maybe they wouldn't do in the regular season," Savino said. "We have a couple girls who sometimes are a little timid to shoot the ball. I think in the last couple of games they've kind of said, 'Hey, I'm going to take one touch and try to put it on goal and see what happens.' I'm just

happy to see them kind of trying to expand their arsenal, for lack of a better term."

That willingness to experiment has extended beyond the returning varsity players. Summer league has also given Ardsley an opportunity to integrate younger players who are expected to compete for varsity roles this fall, allowing them to gain valuable experience alongside veteran teammates before the regular season begins.

According to Savino, that transition has been seamless thanks to the culture the program has built over the past several seasons.

"I think even going back to last year, we had a really close-knit team, and we've had a lot of good leaders," Savino said. "I think that trickles down from years past. All the players who kind of set the precedent, I think everyone kind of learns from that."

"So, every time we have underclassmen come up, whether it's in a summer league or for a practice or for the season, there's never any real issues with it. They get along seamlessly, and it's really good to see."

That environment has allowed younger players to become comfortable while also giving returning leaders the chance to grow into bigger roles.

One player who has stood out in that regard has been Fitzsimmons. Already one of the Panthers' most talented players, the rising senior has accepted the challenge of becoming a more assertive leader as Ardsley prepares for the upcoming season.

Savino said her development has gone beyond what shows up on the scoresheet.

"I think Alexis Fitzsimmons has been someone who's stepped up," Savino said. "I've kind of challenged her to be more vocal since she's been on the team because she's a good kid and super talented. I've always challenged her to speak up, and I think she's kind of done that. That's not really a soccer-specific thing, but just in terms of teamwork and things like that, it's been good to see."



Left: Riley Osborne looks for a teammate. Right: Ava Santavicca passes the ball.



Sports

Hastings finds offensive rhythm during summer league

Jacobs nets four goals against Ardsley

BY ROB DIANTONIO

The summer results may not count in the standings that matter most, but both Hastings and Ardsley are finding value in every minute on the field as they prepare for the upcoming boys' soccer season.

Hastings has put together a 5-4 record in the Ossining Summer League, while Ardsley has used the league as an opportunity to give younger players valuable experience against varsity-level competition.

The Yellow Jackets registered an impressive performance on July 20, when they defeated Ardsley 7-0 behind a dominant offensive display. Owen Jacobs led the way with four goals, Elijah Thomas added two, and Cameron Thomas chipped in another as Hastings showcased the scoring punch it hopes will carry into the fall. The Jackets scored twice in the first 5 minutes of the game and never looked back.

The victory was one of five for the Yellow Jackets this summer. Hastings also earned wins over North Rockland (4-1), Blind Brook (3-0), Sleepy Hollow (1-0), and John Jay-East Fishkill (4-1). One of the team's four losses came by forfeit after it was unable to field enough players.

Head coach Joe Callagy said the standings have been secondary to building continuity throughout the program.

"Summer league is a great opportunity to build chemistry for the upcoming season, and to see players of all ages across our program interact on the field," Callagy said. "While doing the summer league doesn't guarantee success in the fall, it definitely helps players and coaches get an idea of our strengths and areas of growth, both as individuals and as a whole group."

One encouraging development has been Hastings' ability to consistently find the back of the net. The Yellow Jackets have scored at least three goals in four of their five victories, a welcome sight after offensive inconsistency plagued the varsity squad in recent seasons.

"Our biggest weakness for the last couple of fall varsity seasons has been scoring goals consistently," Callagy said, "and we are showing throughout the summer that we are capable of doing better in this area."

Attendance has been a challenge throughout the league, however, as vacations, summer jobs, and camps have left many teams with fluctuating rosters from game to game. Hastings has experienced that firsthand, including the forfeit loss.

Still, Callagy has been pleased with his team's approach regardless of who is available.

"We've had a lot of guys away this summer, so sometimes it's been a struggle to get enough players for a game," he said.



Clockwise from top: Hastings' Owen Jacobs goes on the attack as Ardsley's Ethan Menezes runs with him. Ardsley's Jack Parraga battles with a Westlake player for the ball. Hastings' Max Caramanica handles the ball. Photos by Rob DiAntonio.

"However, what I've really liked about our team is that no matter who shows up, the attitude is positive and they are ready to work hard for each other for 60 minutes."

While Hastings has enjoyed success on the scoreboard, Ardsley has taken a different approach to the summer league.

The Panthers are still searching for their first victory but have battled to two draws, including a 2-2 tie against Westlake earlier

on July 20 before facing Hastings in the second game of a doubleheader.

By the time the Panthers took the field for their second contest of the evening, they were running on empty.

"By the second match we were exhausted and three couldn't play due to injuries," Ardsley head coach Luis Lewis said.

Like many high school programs during the summer months, Ardsley has also been

without several varsity players who are away on family vacations or other commitments. That has opened the door for younger players to gain meaningful experience against older competition.

"Most of my high school boys are out on vacation for the summer, so we are playing with boys from all ages, eighth- through 11th-graders," Lewis said. "So hopefully it helps them get better for the varsity season."



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