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Vol 2. Issue 29.

March 27, 2026

# RIVERTOWNS Dispatch

Local News,  
Locally Sourced  
~

\$2<sup>50</sup>

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



Susan Lebovitch of Hartsdale, whose parents and in-laws survived the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz, writes on the canvas placed over the spot where the antisemitic graffiti was found.

## Inter-village scavenger hunt plays to the environment

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL  
REGION — Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, Irvington, Tarrytown, and Sleepy Hollow are collaborating on a scavenger hunt, with cash prizes and bragging rights on the line — and even higher stakes for the environment.

The five-week-long Rivertowns Earth Month Scavenger Hunt, which begins Sunday, March 29, aligns with Earth Month, which is recognized internationally as April.

Locally, the scavenger hunt, in which teams will earn points for completing tasks such as identifying invasive plants or donating to food banks, is being organized by a coalition of commissions and sustainability task forces in all six municipalities, known collectively as the Rivertowns Intervillage Sustainability Network (RISN). Irvington's sustainability director, Charlotte Binns, organized a similar scavenger hunt in Irvington, called Trick or Triage, in October of last year,

*Continued on page 14*

## Community counters hate with light

*Residents unite against antisemitic graffiti*

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL  
IRVINGTON — The Irvington community is responding with a wave of positivity after an explicit antisemitic statement was found on a wall inside the pedestrian underpass at the village's Metro-North station on Monday, March 23. As of March 26, the culprit had not been arrested.

On March 23, shortly after 7 a.m., the Irvington Police Department alerted the MTA Police Department about the graffiti, which appeared to be written in crayon, and was expunged by 10 a.m. By the next evening, the same wall was covered with

a canvas on which community members wrote messages about love and kindness under the title "Wall of Light."

The response was organized by Dobbs Ferry's Chabad of the Rivertowns and its leader, Rabbi Benjy Silverman.

"My immediate reaction was we've got to get to that space," Silverman told the Dispatch. "Someone tried to create a space of darkness, and we're not going to only erase it, but transform it into a place of light."

By the time the event started at 7 p.m., the underpass was overflowing with people, prompting Silverman to move the gathering outside, next to the southbound platform. There he led attendees in singing a song, in Hebrew, about unity, and encouraged the crowd to recast the occasion as one of unity

and compassion. Phrases like "I love Jewish people," "Love wins," "Say no to antisemitism," and "Our love is greater" covered the canvas taped over the spot where the graffiti was found.

"Events like this [graffiti] are definitely concerning, but at the same time seeing the response of the community and the wider community is very encouraging," Silverman said.

Silverman thanked the Irvington police for their swift response and Mayor Arlene Burgos for showing up at the train station within hours of the discovery of the graffiti, as well as at the gathering on Tuesday. Burgos called the graffiti a "blatant act of antisemitism."

*Continued on page 4*

— You Answered —

**The Rivertowns Pizza Bracket, Round 1:  
What is your favorite pizzeria, by village?**

As answered by 442 readers of the Rivertowns Dispatch

**CHAMPION**

To be announced in the Friday, April 3, issue

Stagioni Ardsley

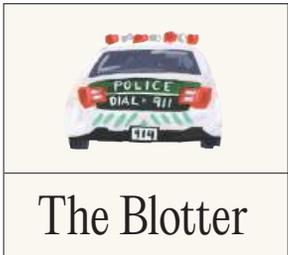
Sam's Ristorante Italiano Dobbs Ferry

Pizza Grill Hastings

Tony's Irvington

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## The Blotter

### ARDSLEY

**Shoplifting arrest:** A 45-year-old Yonkers resident was arrested for shoplifting \$547.51 worth of items from CVS, 725 Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A), on the morning of Monday, March 16. He was charged with petit larceny, a misdemeanor. Sgt. Jon Goldstein made the arrest.

**Wanted no more:** A 29-year-old New York City resident was turned over to the Danbury Police Department in Connecticut, which had a warrant for his arrest, after he appeared in Ardsley Village Court on the afternoon of Monday, March 16. His appearance was for his arrest on Jan. 7 for using a fraudulent driver's license and a stolen credit card

number to buy \$4,153 worth of items from Mosiello & Sons Jewelers, 545 Saw Mill River Road, on March 8, 2025.

**Unauthorized purchase:** An Ardsley resident's credit card information was used to order an iPhone for \$929 on Tuesday, March 17. The order was canceled before the phone was shipped to an unoccupied home in Ardsley.

**Gift card fraud:** An Ardsley resident bought three \$100 Apple gift cards at CVS, 725 Saw Mill River Road, in response to a fraudulent email that appeared to be from a colleague. She did not supply the sender with the numbers of the gift cards.

**Buses and building entered:** Minibuses and a former home adjacent to Concord Road Elementary School were found entered on March 21 and 22, respectively. The Ardsley School District plans to build a bus garage and parking lot at that site.

**Shoplifting arrest:** A 21-year-old Yonkers resident was arrested for shoplifting \$88.87 worth of items from CVS, 725 Saw Mill River Road, on the afternoon of Sunday, March 22. He was charged with petit larceny, a misdemeanor. His accomplice escaped. Officer Julian Pina made the arrest.

### DOBBS FERRY

**Crypto scam:** On March 17, a Dobbs Ferry resident reported that she had been scammed into depositing about \$500,000 into a crypto currency trading platform between July 25, 2025 and Feb. 28, 2026. She had received a message about the platform through LinkedIn.

**Theft from Ulta:** An unidentified woman shoplifted \$3,350 worth of items from the Ulta Beauty at Rivertowns Square on the afternoon of Wednesday, March 18.

**Suspended license:** A 22-year-old Peekskill

resident with a suspended driver's license was arrested for aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the third degree, a misdemeanor, on Cedar Street on the morning of Sunday, March 22.

### HASTINGS

**Suspended license:** A 42-year-old Bronx resident with a suspended driver's license was arrested for aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the second degree, a misdemeanor, on Broadway (Route 9) on the morning of Monday, March 16. He was also cited for three violations — improper license plates, an unregistered vehicle, and an uninsured vehicle.

**Theft of package:** An unidentified man stole a package from outside a home on Old Broadway on Tuesday, March 17, at 11:07 a.m. The theft was recorded by a security camera. The package contained a Wi-Fi motherboard worth \$100.46.

*Continued on page 14*

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# Retirement spurs thanks for 30 years of service

BY AMY BOCHNER

HASTINGS — A strand of pink letters spelling out “Who said you could leave?” hung above a table of gifts for Lisa O’Reilly at the James Harmon Community Center on March 24. Throughout the crowded room were community members touched by O’Reilly over her 30 years working for the Hastings Parks and Recreation Department.

O’Reilly grew up in Yonkers and moved to Hastings in 1988, where she raised four children. Her work with the Village began part time in the early ’90s, and in 2003, she was hired as the full-time recreation assistant.

At her retirement party on Tuesday, attendees referenced some of the memorable events O’Reilly organized over the years. Among them were the annual Memorial Day parade, Halloween pumpkin carving and window painting, and the Terry Ryan Memorial Run. During an open mic, resident Jim Metzger, who has photographed events in Hastings over the past 25 years, said there is “one person in every photograph, and that’s Lisa.”

Many at the send-off, like resident Mindi LoCicero, first met O’Reilly through the Village’s day camp, which all four of LoCicero’s grandchildren attended. O’Reilly’s colleagues also shared high praise for her. Rafael Zaratzian, the Village’s technology director, described her heart as “the biggest that I’ve ever seen in a person.” Police Chief David



Lisa O’Reilly at the James Harmon Community Center

Dosin called her “the easiest person to work with.” Communications/cable access director for WHOH-TV Jen Corso said she’s going to miss “walking in the office every morning and seeing [O’Reilly as] the first face I see.”

According to Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo, the chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Commission, O’Reilly’s work has been “pivotal” in the community.

“She always made it seem like it was no

big deal,” she said. “She was always happy to do it. She’s always gone out of her way to make this village special. It was more than a job. It was a mission, almost like this is what she was meant to do.”

A trait many attendees admired about O’Reilly was her dedication to veterans. O’Reilly’s father served in the Navy, which she said instilled in her “a great respect for the military.” She was central in Hastings receiving

designation as a “Purple Heart Village” in May 2017 to honor military members wounded or killed in combat. Of the Memorial Day parade, which O’Reilly took over years ago, recreation leader Nicole Higgins said, “She just kept it so lively and so happy, and she got the military so involved. I just really like how she’s so patriotic and she loves her country. She always makes sure we do a table for people who are missing in action or prisoners of war. She cares so much about our residents.”

Hastings’ downtown advocate, Barbara Prisament, told the Dispatch that all the food for the event was donated by local restaurants, including Bread & Brine, Slices, Bistro House, DiRiso, Maud’s, Sakura, Pizza Grill, Uncle Lefty’s, Harvest on Hudson, and Divino. For dessert, there was cake from Aromé Patisserie and almond cookies from By the Way Bakery. Flowers were donated by Terrapin Rose Gardens.

Another community member in attendance was Susan Rutman of Concerned Families of Westchester, which hosts weekly vigils and protests at VFW Plaza. She shared her appreciation for O’Reilly’s support over the years.

“Lisa’s just been an incredible joy to interact with,” she said. “Totally positive energy, always very helpful and supportive in a non-partisan way. She’ll be very dearly missed. It’s going to be big shoes to fill.”

*Continued on page 4*

# DOBBS FERRY ER

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Left: Raffaele Milizia, MD  
Emergency Department Medical Director

Right: Evan Ou, MD  
Dobbs Ferry ED Site Director

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## Antisemitic graffiti

Continued from page 1

“Deterrence comes from both accountability and community culture,” Burgos told the Dispatch. “It’s important that incidents like this are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. But just as important is continuing to build a community where hate has no foothold, through education, dialogue, and strong partnerships across different groups. When people see a united community that responds decisively and constructively, it sends a clear message that this behavior will not define us.”

On the evening of March 25, a community listening session was held at the Shames JCC in Tarrytown and was led by professional facilitator Hannah Dubin of Hartsdale. Participants expressed a range of emotions — including anger, fear, and sadness — and shared suggestions for next steps.

“To me, the greatest act of defiance is joy,” stated Adam Weiss, the CEO of the Shames JCC and a resident of Irvington. “If we don’t continue to be joyful, then these people win.”

Rabbi David Holtz of Temple Beth Abraham in Tarrytown told the Dispatch that he feels safe and supported by his neighbors.

“What’s wonderful about the Rivertowns is that the faith communities here stand together,” Holtz said. “I was at a meeting of the Rivertowns Clergy Association and we talked about our support for one another. And it’s not just Jews who are affected by this, it’s everyone of every religion who has a

kind heart and understands that the world is a very complex place.”

In Hastings, on March 9, explicit stickers directed at Israel were found on two signs near the middle/high school and on parking pay stations. In a statement, Hastings Police Chief David Dosin shared that the person responsible for placing the stickers was identified, and that “following consultation with the District Attorney’s Office and a thorough review of the circumstances, it was determined that the facts of the case did not meet the legal threshold necessary to pursue criminal charges.”

Rabbi Jay Stein of the Greenburgh Hebrew Center (GHC) in Dobbs Ferry agreed that while he feels safe in the Rivertowns, he’s concerned about the safety of Jewish people nationwide. He cited the Anti-Defamation League, which has reported an increase in antisemitic incidents in the U.S. since the attack by Hamas on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, and Israel’s armed response in Gaza. Stein noted that GHC is one of several synagogues in the area that has enhanced security following the 2018 mass shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh.

“I do think it’s more dangerous to be Jewish and show it in America,” Stein said. “I think it’s on an uptick because there’s a lot of anger in this country right now at a lot of different things, and the rhetoric in our country has exploded in terms of violence. I just think that the anger in this country has reached a fever pitch, and because of that very few people are safe from ideologically motivated hate.”

Since the graffiti in Irvington was on MTA

property, it’s under the jurisdiction of the MTA Police to investigate. The punishment could vary from fines to prison depending upon the charge(s).

“I think it’s extremely important to find who did this,” Stein said, “It’s for our criminal justice system to decide, but I do think it’s important to bring people like this to justice. People should be held accountable for their actions.”

Beyond that, Stein wants to talk with the culprit about why he or she has an issue with Jewish people, and help him or her gain a greater understanding of Jewish people and culture. Holtz also believes that education should be a part of the consequence.

“I think that they need to spend time speaking to a rabbi or a teacher who can actually answer questions,” Holtz said. “The best thing would be, ‘Let’s talk about why you felt the need to do it, and let me try to answer some of your complaints.’”

While the MTA Police Department is taking the lead, Burgos told the Dispatch that the Irvington Police Department is supporting the investigation.

“There must be appropriate legal consequences in line with the law, and the investigation will determine the specifics,” Burgos said. “Beyond that, I believe there is also value in accountability that includes education, helping ensure that those responsible understand the real harm caused by their actions. Our goal is not only justice, but also preventing future harm and reinforcing the values that hold our community together.”

## Lisa O’Reilly

Continued from page 3

During the party, Mayor Tom Drake stood behind a microphone and asked the crowd, “How do you plan a party for the person who plans all the parties?” before answering, “You invite the entire village.”

Along with former Mayors Niki Armacost, Peter Swiderski, and Lee Kinnally, Drake shared proclamations honoring O’Reilly, which included State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins declaring March 24, 2026, Lisa O’Reilly Day in New York State. The Westchester County Board of Legislators recognized March 27, 2026, as Lisa O’Reilly Day. County Executive Ken Jenkins declared O’Reilly a distinguished citizen of Westchester. Gov. Kathy Hochul, U.S. Congressman George Latimer, and New York State Assemblymember MaryJane Shinsky all wrote citations for O’Reilly honoring her work with the Village.

In addition, Richie Pesci, the commander of American Legion Post 1195, gave O’Reilly a plaque for her commitment to veterans.

Although O’Reilly is retiring from her role as recreation assistant, she will continue to serve on the Martin Luther King Jr. Committee, which hosts an annual program honoring the slain civil rights leader, and with Project SHARE. She called the support shown to her by the community “humbling.”

“Every single one of you,” she told the crowd, “when I worked with you or for you, I showed you the utmost respect, because I felt respected.”



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## ARDSLEY

— Coming Up This Week —

### Call for Volunteers:

#### Rivertowns Repair Café

Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.  
Sleepy Hollow Senior Center, 55 Elm St.  
Sign up to volunteer at [repaircafehv.org](http://repaircafehv.org)

### Lego Challenge for Ages 5 and Up

Monday, March 30, 11:30 a.m.  
Ardsley Public Library  
Register at [ardsleypubliclibrary.org](http://ardsleypubliclibrary.org)

### Paper Animation Workshop for Ages 7–12

Tuesday, March 31, 2 p.m.  
Ardsley Public Library  
Register at [ardsleypubliclibrary.org](http://ardsleypubliclibrary.org)

### Senior Event: Easter Basket Making

Wednesday, April 1, noon  
Ardsley Community Center

### Municipal Office Closure

Friday, April 3  
In observance of Good Friday

### Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 4, 11 a.m.  
Pascone Park  
Bring your own basket

### Art Exhibit by Alex Lawton

Village Hall  
The painter is a 2016 graduate of  
Ardsley High School  
On view through March

### Local Board Positions Open

The Village is accepting applications from residents interested in serving on a board, commission, or committee  
Visit [ardsleyvillage.civicweb.net/Portal/BoardApplication](http://ardsleyvillage.civicweb.net/Portal/BoardApplication)

### Public Art Program

The Ardsley Arts Commission invites artists to submit proposals for installations, including paintings, photography, textile, and needlework, in the Village Hall Gallery  
Email [artscommission@ardsleyvillage.gov](mailto:artscommission@ardsleyvillage.gov) requesting a proposal form

### Food Scrap Composting Kits

Available at village hall; \$20 for residents

### Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at [amy@rivertownsdispatch.com](mailto:amy@rivertownsdispatch.com)



Ardsley High School sophomore Taiga To empties a bag of soy during the Rise Against Hunger meal packing.

## Cares Day broadens sense of community

BY AMY BOCHNER

Students, parents, Girl Scouts, and representatives from local nonprofits packed bags, baked dog biscuits, and cut vines on March 21 as part of the annual campaign to show that the Ardsley community cares.

Each year since 2008, with the exception of 2020, the Ardsley Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) has organized Ardsley Cares Day, an intergenerational volunteer event to provide goods and services to charities and supportive organizations across Westchester. The 2026 committee was led by co-chairs Meredith Strongin, Jaya Iyer, Aimee Bamberger, and Sarika Chawla, who is the PTSA's secretary.

Overall, about 300 people participated in the event, which was based at Ardsley High School, where volunteers packed approximately 700 hygiene, activity, and snack bags. This was the first year Ardsley Cares Day was held in conjunction with the annual Rise Against Hunger meal packaging event.

Various drives were held leading up to Ardsley Cares Day, to collect food, clothing, books, and personal hygiene products. Also conducted on site were drives for musical instruments for Ardsley Music Partners, sports equipment for Sporting Goods for Good, and — courtesy of Girl Scout Troop 1675 — dance costumes for the Horace Greeley School in Queens.

Upon entering the cafeteria on March 21, volunteers were greeted with a table for GiGi's Playhouse Westchester, a Down syndrome achievement center, where they could write positive words on a paper mural that will be hung at the Playhouse's new space at 1055 Saw Mill River Road. Fidget toys were spread out on the next table, which was run by Sensory Haven, a new playspace in Yonkers.



Wanida Friedman and Preeti Chadha prepare sibling kits for Maria Fareri Children's Hospital.

Two organizations hosted informational booths. The first, Sustainable Westchester, shared details on programs like GridRewards, which allows Con Edison customers to earn cash by reducing energy use. Ardsley's stormwater management assistant Lorraine Kuhn discussed individual ways to keep the Saw Mill River and Sprain Brook clean, while handing out reusable grocery bags and toothbrushes made of recycled plastic.

Representatives from parent organization Ardsley Heart encouraged attendees to spin a wheel and write about their favorite local spots or fun memories of the village. The responses were added to tote bags the organization will give to new residents to help familiarize them with the community and feel welcome. Sticky notes covered a board with people's favorite local green spaces, including the Greenburgh Nature Center, South County Trailway, and Pascone Park.

Several tables were operated by students. AHS junior Brendan Berlin helped volunteers organize 25 bags of clothes for 914 Cares, while high school junior Kimya Sood and seniors Matthew Gallantar, Charlotte Murray, and Serina Tomioka led CPR and tourniquet demonstrations for the Ardsley-Secor Volunteer Ambulance Corps. Beside them were three tables dusted with flour, where freshmen Jake Rubinstein and Chris Golio helped volunteers make dog biscuits for the Yonkers Animal Shelter.

Across the room, socks and torn T-shirts were piled on a table for Paws Crossed Animal Rescue in Elmsford. Volunteers braided the shirts into dog toys and made cat toys by filling socks with catnip. This station was led by freshman Calvin Rigby, who has a cat adopted from Paws Crossed. Around 400 dog biscuits and dog/cat toys were made.

*Continued on page 16*

ARDSLEY

# Workshop to share animator's passion for hands-on art

BY AMY BOCHNER

For animator Julia Liu, having her first baby two years ago inspired her to promote hands-on creativity among children.

"I don't want my kid to be addicted to screens, to be completely reliant on a robot doing all these things for him," Liu, who moved to Ardsley with her family in 2025, told the Dispatch. "I want him to be able to work with his hands, to read physical books, to make things, and to appreciate it because there's so much fun working through a problem. Even if you totally fail, there's so much gratification from learning."

On March 31 at 2 p.m., Liu will share this passion through a paper animation workshop at the Ardsley Public Library.

While Liu was an undergraduate student at Duke University, a publisher in China

reached out to her to write and illustrate bilingual English/Chinese children's books. Believing in the importance of representation for the Asian American community, Liu wrote five books about different holidays, like Chinese New Year and the Lantern Festival. After earning a degree in physics from Duke, she moved to New York City to attend the School of Visual Arts, where she studied illustration and graphic design.

Since 2012, Liu has worked as an animator, story boarder, and designer. Her work has been featured in animations and advertising campaigns for ShopRite, Spotify, Sesame Street, Oreo cookies, and more.

At the paper animation workshop, Liu will teach attendees how to create a zoetrope, which is a form of animation technology invented in 1833. Zoetropes create the

illusion of motion by displaying a sequence of images showing progressive stages of that motion. The most famous example is "The Horse in Motion," which is a series of images from the 1870s depicting a man on a galloping horse. Attendees will make a 12-frame flipbook that they can then thumb into a zoetrope.

Liu chose a more "old-fashioned" form of animation because she believes "it's more important than ever to bring things back to their roots." On her mind as she organized this event is the rise of artificial intelligence and its impact on art.

"[A.I. has] proliferated everywhere," Liu said. "There're so many companies nowadays, [that] are, like, let's use A.I. to make commercials. I mean, you can generate some random stuff with A.I., but the whole point

of this art form, or any type of art form about storytelling, it's that connection, sharing our stories with each other."

She hopes that through this project, she can encourage attendees to get a deeper understanding of what goes into creating art.

"When you are doing something that is difficult, you learn to appreciate the efforts of the people who make these [things]," she said. "If you've never cooked before in your life, you don't necessarily appreciate fine dining as much. We kind of look at the arts as a magical trick. I hear people saying things [like], 'Oh, I just don't have the talent.' It's not about talent. It's about listening, putting in the effort, trying to find that connection with another person."

To join the waitlist for the March 31 program, email [cbaulch@ardsleylibrary.org](mailto:cbaulch@ardsleylibrary.org).

— COMMUNITY BRIEFS —

### UAlbany Science Symposium

Ardsley High School student *Khushi Karthikeyan* placed first in the physical sciences category at the UAlbany High School Science Research Invitational Symposium

on Feb. 25. Karthikeyan's project is about "Probing Potential Stellar Formation Pathways of Intermediate-Mass Black Holes."

### All-County Musicians

Thirty middle and high school students performed at the All-County Music Festival at White Plains High School on March 7.

*Julien Calabrese, Elizabeth Hassani, Jei Kim, and Ellie Olszowski* performed with the Elementary Band; *Solaei Browne and Suki Iyer* with the Elementary Chorus; *Leo Borton, Faith Choi, Sophie Hwang, Dean Kim, Kara Sue, and Emmelina Wu* with the Elementary Orchestra; *Meghan Berry, Harrie Im, Madeline Jo, Aarsh Kandavalli,*

*Akshaj Sharma, Ryan Yazdanbakhsh, and Molly Zhangbwith* with the Intermediate Band; *Chris Golio, Joseph Thomas, and Felix Valdeon* with the Intermediate Chorus; and *Grace Donaghy, Rhys Ellenberger, Jonathan Hung, Gloria Jeoung, Bella Lim, Annabelle Park, and Robert Park* with the Intermediate Orchestra.



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# DOBBS FERRY

— Coming Up This Week —

**Flashlight Egg Hunt**  
Friday, March 27, 8 p.m.  
Gould Park  
For third-graders and up

**Children's Book Nook**  
Saturday, March 28, and  
Sunday, March 29, noon–3 p.m.  
Keeper's House, 15 Walnut St.  
Explore a special selection of books and  
interactive displays in a new cozy space

**Meet Author Jack Houghteling**  
Saturday, March 28, 2:30–3:30 p.m.  
Dobbs Ferry Public Library

**Learn to Play Chess**  
Tuesday, April 2, 3–5 p.m.  
Dobbs Ferry Public Library  
Register at [reference@dobbsferrylibrary.org](mailto:reference@dobbsferrylibrary.org)

**Planning/Architectural Review Board Meeting**  
Thursday, April 2, 7 p.m.  
Village Hall  
Agenda available at [dobbsferry.gov](http://dobbsferry.gov)

**Municipal Office Closure**  
Friday, April 3  
In observance of Good Friday

**Virtual Comedy Open Mic**  
Tuesday, April 7, 8–9 p.m.  
Hosted on Zoom by the Dobbs Ferry  
Public Library  
Email [tdeery@dobbsferrylibrary.org](mailto:tdeery@dobbsferrylibrary.org)  
to sign up  
For ages 18 and up

**"Color Between the Reins"**  
Dobbs Ferry Public Library  
Watercolor exhibition of equine art  
by Lena Knudson, a 2012 graduate of  
Dobbs Ferry High School  
On view through March 31

**Dobbs Ferry Food Pantry**  
Food distribution on Wednesdays,  
10:30 a.m.–noon  
South Presbyterian Church, 343 Broadway  
For information about donating, visit  
[dobbsferrypantry.org](http://dobbsferrypantry.org)

**Got news?**

Email staff writer Julian Michael Caldwell at  
[julian@rivertownsdispatch.com](mailto:julian@rivertownsdispatch.com)



County Legislator David Imamura, Village Trustee Donna Assumma, State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, State Assemblymember MaryJane Shimsky, Mayor Christy Knell, and Village Trustee Matt Rosenberg participate in the ribbon cutting.

## Scraps and sunlight boost sustainability

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

Elected officials and volunteers celebrated a new food scrap drop-off shed and a solar panel installation on March 20 at the public works department on Stanley Avenue, south of Rivertowns Square. Mayor Christy Knell and members of the village board, along with state and county lawmakers and Sustainable Dobbs Ferry members were on hand for a ribbon cutting at the food scrap shed.

Dobbs Ferry residents can drop off compostable food scraps such as egg shells, banana peels, and other leftovers at the shed at 1 Stanley Avenue, where they will be picked up weekly and taken to locations in Cortlandt and Valhalla for composting

instead of incineration.

As of this month, the department of public works will begin to play a more active role in regularly cleaning the bins, and lining them with bags that will be changed weekly.

"This glorious food scrap shed is going to really enhance the experience of bringing your food scraps here and hopefully encourage more people to do it," Knell said before cutting the ribbon. "I started to do food scraps at home, and the process of bringing it in your car and dropping it off somewhere can be really discouraging if it's not a pleasant experience. So having this kind of Taj Mahal food scrap site is going to make me want to do it even more."

New solar panels on top of the DPW

garage went online in December 2025, with five times the capacity of the solar panels that were installed there in 2012, but stopped working within the past two years. The panels are estimated to generate 264,000 kilowatt-hours per year, which is enough to power 20 houses. The energy from the solar panels will be applied to the DPW building, Village Hall, and the local power grid where it can be used as an additional source for municipal facilities. As a result, Village Hall on Main Street is now Dobbs Ferry's first net-zero carbon building.

"After going through the Climate Smart Communities program, we continued to push for things we could do, and we saw that

*Continued on page 15*



### 'Remind Us'

Jarred Bosch-Watford, David Hochberg, Claire Van Bever, and Joe Laluzerne perform an excerpt of "Remind Us" during a MorDance program at Hudson River Landing, 145 Palisade St., on Friday, March 20. Titled "In Her Hands: Women Driving Change," the program honored Women's History Month. It included a discussion among MorDance founder Morgan McEwen of Hastings, who choreographed "Remind Us," Yale University professor Jennifer Klein, and Mahri Stainnak, who was fired from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management after President Trump signed an executive order ending diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility initiatives in the federal government.

DOBBS FERRY

# Hastings-bred author's historical novel reframes 'American'

BY AMY BOCHNER

In his new novel, "The Forest," Jack Houghteling examines American identity during the pre-Revolutionary era, an idea he will share with the Rivertowns community this weekend, March 28-29.

Houghteling grew up in Hastings and now lives in Manhattan, where he works as a journalist for The Financial Times. His first book, "Goodman," was published in 2022, followed by "Sunnyside" in 2023. "The Forest" was released by Alien Buddha Press on March 25. The Dobbs Ferry Public Library will host a "Meet the Author" event with Houghteling on March 28, which will be followed by a reading at the Hastings Public Library on March 29.

While all three books have a distinctive, first-person narrator, the first two follow characters in a contemporary setting, while "The Forest" takes place in 1723.

The story begins with three wealthy and prominent men commissioning an eccentric Albany-based scholar named Samuel Kip to write about the first 100 years of the New York colony. In addition to his writing abilities, Kip was chosen for his connection to his great-grandfather, Jessé de Forest — a Huguenot separatist and the leader of a group of Walloons, many of whom were the earliest European settlers of the land that



Jack Houghteling (photo by Jim Metzger) and the cover of his novel "The Forest"

now encompasses the area in and around New York City. As he recounts the stories of his great-grandfather and other early settlers, Kip explores what it means to be an "American" 50 years before the country's founding.

"You could argue that that word was, at most, in its infancy, but he's talking about the early European settlers of this land," Houghteling told the Dispatch. "My hope for the book is for it to make people... realize deep down that what it means is this incredible tapestry that we'll never fully understand. I hope on the other end, that people can find

connective pathways to take this book, and to have it communicate with their own uncertainties about what their country means."

Houghteling said the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence prompted him to write a historical novel that examines the nuances of American identity.

"Living in any nation state, we search for collective meaning, [which] is subject to where the land of the country technically ends and begins, how old the country is, what type of people comprise the country," Houghteling said. "But I think we tend a lot of times

away from complexity and toward things that we can share and identify communally."

He continued, "We all have these myths. For better or worse, probably mostly for worse, we tend toward the positive myths, and try to shirk the negative myths... the thing that I was interested in was, how can we tend, in a literary way, back toward an acceptance of a people that's maybe more complex than a basic 'This is the flag. This is our song. This is what it means to be an American.'"

This process of accepting this complexity includes the acknowledgement of both "the good and the bad."

"We often think about commemoration positively... but for the narrator, he's writing what he thinks is this artistic disquisition on the colony," Houghteling said. "For him, the idea of death is more present than you would find in a typical political document like the Mayflower Compact. I think that's what 'The Forest' is — this idea of commemorating the ordinary. It's taking into account everything, the good and the bad, life and death."

The Dobbs Ferry talk will take place from 2:30-3:30 p.m., while the Hastings program will be in the library's Orr Room from 2-4 p.m. Registration is not required for either event. "The Forest" can be read on Houghteling's Substack @jackhoughteling or purchased on Amazon for \$11.25.

I opened this studio because barre3 classes had me actually feeling good and connected to my body at the end. I used to think the point of working out was to be exhausted, but barre3 really builds endurance, strength, and mental clarity.

—Becca, barre3 Rivertowns owner and Dobbs Ferry resident

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	<b>MOTHERHOOD RISING: TENDING THE ROOTS</b> Mamas & babies 6 weeks - 18 months A supportive circle in nature for new mothers and their babies.	Weekly 4/14 - 5/13 Tues. 4 - 5:15 PM Weds. 10 - 11:15 AM Lenoir Preserve
	<b>WISE OWLS</b> Adults 60 & up Nature-based circle for active movement, thoughtful conversation, reflection, and shared wisdom.	Weekly 4/30 - 5/21 Thurs. 1-2:30 PM Lenoir Preserve
	<b>DANCE EMBODY</b> Women Monthly gathering for connection and somatic exploration, where dance is a sober meditation and freeform revelation.	Second Thurs. 7-9 PM Monthly 2/12 - 6/11 I.K Benjamin Community Center

wayfindersontheudson@gmail.com  
wayfindersontheudson.com  
@wayfindersontheudson



# HASTINGS- ON-HUDSON

— Coming Up This Week —

## Farmers Market

Saturday, March 28, 9:30 a.m.–1 p.m.  
Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue  
The winter market convenes every other  
Saturday through May  
For details, visit [hastingsfarmersmarket.org](http://hastingsfarmersmarket.org)

## Mobile Shredder

Saturday, March 28, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.  
Chemka Pool parking lot

## Earth Month Bioblitz

Sunday, March 29, 9:30–10:30 a.m.  
Meet at Chemka Pool parking lot  
Ann Mackey and Jan Clough lead a walk in  
Hillside Woods and demonstrate how to record  
nature observations in the iNaturalist app

## Artist Talk and Tour

Sunday, March 29, 1:30 p.m.  
Village Hall

Meet Dobbs Ferry artist Neil Lavey, followed  
by a tour at 2 p.m. of his exhibit “River  
Dreamer” on view through April 3

## Senior Trip to Hastings Historical Society

Monday, March 30, 12:30 p.m.  
Observatory Cottage, Draper Park,  
407 Broadway  
Sign up by emailing  
[senioroutreach@hohny.gov](mailto:senioroutreach@hohny.gov)

## Throwback Family Film Night

Monday, March 30, 5 p.m.  
Hastings Public Library  
Screening of the 1971 film “Willy Wonka and  
the Chocolate Factory”

## Municipal Office Closure

Friday, April 3  
In observance of Good Friday

## Terry Ryan Memorial Run

Sunday, April 12, 11 a.m. for the 5K and  
10:15 a.m. for the 1-mile Fun Run  
Start and finish at the high school  
Register (\$5–\$20) at [hastingsrecreation.org](http://hastingsrecreation.org)

## FISH (Friends in Service Helping)

Drivers needed for rides to medical  
appointments  
Call 914-999-2090 to volunteer

## Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at  
[amy@rivertownsdispatch.com](mailto:amy@rivertownsdispatch.com)



The Rev. Lauren Kuratko at Grace Episcopal Church

# Rector reflects on her path to priesthood

BY TIMOTHY REUTER

The Rivertowns Dispatch Podcast spoke recently with the Rev. Lauren Kuratko, the rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Hastings since August 2019. 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/rivertownsdispatch](http://anchor.fm/rivertownsdispatch).

**Rivertowns Dispatch Podcast (RDP):** *Can you tell us a bit about Grace Church's history?*

**Rev. Lauren Kuratko:** Grace Church was founded in 1867 — we have Admiral Farragut to thank. Admiral Farragut was the one who fought in the Battle of Mobile Bay and said, “Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead.” He got some money for his work in the war and some of that money he gave to help found Grace Church, which was at that time a chapel of Zion [Episcopal Church], which is up in Dobbs.

We were originally downtown, and then in 1925 we were given this land that we're on at the Five Corners intersection by the Cook family... We were supposed to build a new church within five years and maintain the Cook family cemetery in perpetuity. So those of you who regularly walk on the Aqueduct and you look down at Grace Church and you see those, I think it's six gravestones, that's the Cooks.

**RDP:** *Let's talk a little bit about you and your journey. How did you decide*

*to become an Episcopal priest?*

**LK:** I'm from Montgomery, Alabama, and I went to Rhodes College, which is a small liberal arts school in Memphis, Tennessee. Go Lynx! And when I was at Rhodes, I went to church regularly at the Episcopal church down the street from the college. One Sunday, after receiving communion, I was praying and I had this overwhelming feeling that I was supposed to be a priest.

This was in the late 1990s. I'm a woman. I had never seen a woman priest at that point. We'd been ordaining women in the Episcopal Church since 1979. I just hadn't encountered them.

In my family, there was a good amount of pressure to be a doctor of some kind. And so, I had decided before this moment with God, I had decided that I wanted to be a doctor, which was

not ideal because I don't like the sight of blood. Like this was never gonna work out.

So, I have this moment. I get home from church, I call my mom who is in Montgomery and I say, “Mom, I have something important I need to tell you.” And my mom said, “I have something important I need to tell you too.” But she's a really good mom, so she let me go first. So I tell her this story, that I had a vision in church that I was supposed to be a priest and I don't know what that's like, but I'd like to explore it. And I think that might be what I should do. And she starts crying. And I thought I was in so much trouble because I wasn't going to be a doctor, but that's not why she was crying.

The same morning, she had opened her Book of Common Prayer, which is our book that we use for our prayers, and on the page that it opened to was a piece of stationery for my summer job. And the page was the ordination of priests. And she had this idea that I was supposed to be a priest. I would call that a God moment. That was God working very hard to get my attention. And it worked.

**RDP:** *We are living in a moment that seems particularly chaotic, with increasing political polarization, the dismantling of public health infrastructure, and intense armed conflicts in Ukraine, Iran, and Lebanon, among other places. What role does religion or God play in providing comfort in turbulent times?*

**LK:** There's so much going on in our world right now and it is so hard. I would say one of the things that we do is we gather together as people of faith. We come together. I would say come worship in whatever your religious tradition is. You're welcome to come to our church. I'd love to see you. But anyone, to come together, to be in community, to be with other people who are also struggling with these things, who are wondering what to teach their children.

Let's have those conversations together as parents, as intergenerational folks. What did people that lived through this a generation ago do with their kids? What do our kids want to hear? Answer the questions they ask. So I would say first, very, very important, worship together, be in community together, be in conversation with God.

## HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON

— ASK THE DISPATCH —

### What is a bioblitz?

BY JANINE ANNETT

A bioblitz is a communal effort that takes place over a specific period of time, with the goal of identifying and recording as many species as possible in a designated location. Participants use tools like the iNaturalist app to help create a record of plants, animals, and fungi for purposes of research and conservation (for more information on iNaturalist, watch the “CBS Sunday Morning” story about iNaturalist called “How a fun nature app aids science”).

Bioblitzes use community science (sometimes called citizen science or participatory science), enabling anyone to contribute meaningful data to scientific understanding of important environmental issues. Bioblitzes can help monitor species, see if new species are showing up in a certain area, or even lead to the discovery of a new species. Information from bioblitzes has provided data for research papers, guided conservation decisions, and helped protect species.

Hastings residents can participate in the Earth Month Bioblitz from April 1–30. Participants can photograph whatever living things (plants, animals, insects, birds, or fungi) they find in their own yards or on walks around town and upload them to the iNaturalist



Ann Mackey and Jan Clough check iNaturalist in Hillside Woods.

app or website. Bioblitz participants can let the app identify the species or try to identify the species themselves, and get help from the community of more than four million registered iNaturalist users. Observations made in Hastings and uploaded to iNaturalist during April will automatically be recognized as belonging to the Earth Month BioBlitz.

The 2026 event marks the seventh annual bioblitz taking place in Hastings. The first Hastings bioblitz was organized by former village resident Patrick MacKenzie. Devon Cummings set up this year’s community

bioblitz in iNaturalist (and has done so since 2022), and Haven Colgate, chair of the Hastings Conservation Commission, promotes the bioblitzes and organizes events related to them.

To kick off this year’s bioblitz, Ann Mackey and Jan Clough will guide people on a walk through Hillside Woods on Sunday, March 29, from 9:30–10:30 a.m. All ages are invited. Walkers will meet at the kiosk by the Chemka Pool parking lot and are encouraged to bring their smartphones and to download the iNaturalist app and set

up an account ahead of time. As part of the walk, Mackey and Clough will explain how to add photos into iNaturalist.

Mackey is an avid birder who credits Hastings resident (now away at college) Julien Amsellem with helping to spark her interest in the field when he led bird walks in Hastings. Clough is more knowledgeable about plants.

“I see a role for everybody in contributing observations,” Mackey told the Dispatch. “People can make as few or as many observations as they want during the bioblitz. You could make one observation in the course of a month, something that strikes you as interesting. Or you could make a practice of walking through the woods a couple of times and making sure you observe 10 things during that time. You can do it at your own scale, and then collectively it’s useful information.”

Bioblitz participants can use photos, descriptions, and even sounds to identify species in iNaturalist. It’s ideal to include several pictures per observation, including one from far away and one from close up.

“There will be a proposed identification, and you can either accept that, or you can override it and enter your own,” Mackey explained. “It gets uploaded to the iNaturalist site, and then other people can validate it. For instance, what I’ll do is I will go into iNaturalist, click on identify, and look for ‘birds in New York State.’ Where I can validate

*Continued on page 16*



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# Easter

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# IRVINGTON

— Coming Up This Week —

## Living Forest Speaker Series

Saturday, March 28, noon  
O'Hara Nature Center

Join terrestrial ecologist Tom Wessels for "Reading the Landscape," a talk and walking tour in Irvington Woods Park  
Register at [irvingtongreen.org/events](http://irvingtongreen.org/events)

## Knitting and Book Talk

Saturday, March 28, 2 p.m.  
Irvington Public Library

Join Irvington writer and graphic designer Ellen M. Shapiro for knitting, a brief reading from and discussion of her historical novel for middle-schoolers, "The Secret Buttons," and book signing

## Municipal Office Closure

Friday, April 3  
In observance of Good Friday

## Spring Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 4, 10 a.m.  
(rain date April 11)  
Memorial Park

For toddlers to 9-year-olds; bring your own basket

## "Twyla Tharp: A Choreographic Genius"

Saturday, April 4, 2 p.m.  
Irvington Public Library  
Hybrid presentation by Toni McKeen  
To attend via Zoom, register at [irvingtonlibrary.org](http://irvingtonlibrary.org)

## Stewardship at O'Hara & Irvington Woods Park

Saturdays, April 11 and 18, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.  
Meet at O'Hara Nature Center,  
170 Mountain Road  
Help with tree planting and maple syrup boiling. Pizza for volunteers at noon  
Register at [irvingtonny.gov/25/recreation-and-parks](http://irvingtonny.gov/25/recreation-and-parks)

## "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](mailto:julian@rivertownsdispatch.com)



C.J. Reilly, David Orwig, and other walk participants outside the O'Hara Nature Center on March 21.

# 'Living Forest' series offers talks and walks

BY TIM LAMORTE

Starting in January, the Village of Irvington began hosting a free, five-part speaker series called "The Living Forest," aimed at engaging and educating attendees about forces affecting their immediate ecosystems.

Funded by a \$15,000 New York State grant obtained by State Assemblymember MaryJane Shimsky, the series kicked off with a packed presentation by Douglas Tallamy at Irvington Theater on Jan. 14. Tallamy is a professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware whose book "Nature's Best Hope" was a New York Times bestseller.

The series shifted to the O'Hara Nature Center on Saturday, March 21, with a presentation by David Orwig, a senior ecologist

at Harvard Forest, a 4,000-acre research site owned by Harvard University in Peterborough, Mass. Titled "Reading the Forest: What Tree Rings and Plots Reveal," Orwig's slideshow was followed by a walk to the old-growth section of the 233-acre Irvington Woods.

C.J. Reilly, the director of the O'Hara Nature Center, led the walk and introduced Orwig and participants to the oldest known inhabitants of the Irvington Woods: two white oaks, dated at 318 and 316 years old based upon core samples extracted by Reilly and verified by Orwig.

In May 2024, those two trees contributed to the Irvington Woods being added to the Old-Growth Forest Network, a non-profit program founded in 2012 that honors

protected public and private forests across the United States. In Westchester, the 1.18-mile Big Tree Loop at Rockefeller State Park is also part of the network.

During the walk with Orwig, Reilly shared tidbits of information about the woods, such as the fact that the most abundant trees are American beech, black birch, and sugar maple, and the oldest trees are chestnut oak, pignut hickory, red oak, white oak, and yellow birch. He also pointed out the dozens of sugar maples tapped this winter, which resulted in about 5 gallons of syrup.

From 2021-23, Orwig was Reilly's mentor while Reilly received training through Harvard Forest's K-12 Schoolyard Ecology Program. During his studies, Reilly

*Continued on page 15*



## Bach with a twist

Soprano Holly Thomas dances with tenor Brenten Megee during a performance of the "Coffee Cantata," which was part of the "Best of Bach" program the Szabo Chamber Music Society held at Irvington Presbyterian Church on Sunday, March 22.

## IRVINGTON

# Cosmo Building team slows pace of plan for redevelopment

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

The owner of the 19th-century Cosmopolitan Building on South Buckhout Street is slowing the push to transform that commercial property into a hotel and to add residential units.

The project was introduced to the village board of trustees in September 2025. Building owner Carlos Pedro wants a change in pace in order to give his development partner, Socius Development Group, more time to shore up details, such as how to add the required affordable housing units to the project.

“I’m not a developer, but I’ve really come to understand that a project of this complexity really needs proper study,” Pedro told the Dispatch. “So we’re no longer looking to push it for summer of this year, where we need to get approvals by then. We’re taking our time and making sure we have all of the answers to all of the questions before we push forward.”

Pedro is the CEO of Carvi Properties, which bought the 129,000-square-foot, three-story commercial building in 2023. The building houses a mix of tenants, including the Eileen Fisher Renew store, The Lark, Au Ciel Flowers & More, and design agency Inwork. Pedro began considering converting the building into a hotel after learning that Eileen Fisher

would not renew its lease beyond May of this year, which created a heightened sense of urgency for the project to be approved.

“We expressed very early on that we were going to have to go through the process at a really accelerated pace, something that is kind of unprecedented,” Pedro said. “The reason for that was the issue of losing our anchor tenant and the stress that was going to cause, and trying to minimize the delay in between being vacant and what to do next after that.”

Pedro has since signed new leases for tenants with flexible enough terms that he can continue pursuing plans to convert the property without needing Village approval as soon as he previously thought.

In a March 5 letter to the Irvington Board of Trustees, the Irvington Housing Committee shared general support for the project, and encouraged the board to push Pedro and his developers to make sure their plans include a sufficient amount of affordable housing. Village code states that for all new residential developments with 10 or more units, “no less than 10% of the total number of dwelling units must be created as fair and affordable housing units.” Those units can either be included in the proposed development or added elsewhere in the village.

“We don’t feel like it’s something that could be done in this building, given the nature of the project, and we have to get a certain brand of hotel,” Pedro said. “So we’re looking for alternative sites in the village that could house it.”

“I think our primary concerns are with the difficulty in finding a property to redevelop or land to build on, and the amount of time it takes to execute either,” Housing Committee co-chair Deborah Flock told the Dispatch. “I think it’s a good idea for Carlos to nail down the details of his proposal before going further in the approvals process, which is the point we were making in the letter. We need to be comfortable that what he’s proposing is actually feasible.”

Going solely by the 10% rule, rounded up, the project’s 18 residential units would require at least two affordable housing units. That requirement could increase depending upon the size of the affordable units, which must add up to 80 percent of the average floor area of the market-rate units.

Pedro noted that the developers have yet to come up with a proposed location, number of units, and sizes for the units. They are also considering other details of the project, such as the application of historic tax credits for preserving original features of the building.

“These are things that we understand need to be fleshed out, and we’re actively studying it and making sure that the plan is rock solid before we go for a full site plan approval,” Pedro said. “I would just say we’re moving slower and being more deliberate to make sure we don’t skip anything.”

Flock emphasized that the Housing Committee is willing to support the project as long as it meets the determined number of affordable housing units. At the same time, she shared that adding affordable housing units off site could become complicated.

“If he’s building new units, even once he IDs a parcel for such a development, that would require filing another condominium offering plan with New York State, and more,” Flock said.

In addition to 78 hotel rooms and 18 residential units, the proposal includes an 8,200-square-foot wellness center for hotel guests and the general public; a 4,000-square-foot restaurant with indoor and outdoor seating; and a 5,000-square-foot event space. The design also calls for the removal of the red brick addition on the north side of the building, and restoration of the façade now hidden by the addition. The project is not on the schedule for any upcoming planning board or board of trustees meetings.



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**MAUNDY THURSDAY**  
April 2nd 7:00PM at Aldersgate Methodist Church

**GOOD FRIDAY**  
April 3rd 7:00PM at St. Barnabas

**EASTER SUNDAY SUNRISE SERVICE**  
April 5th 6:30AM at Jenkins Rock, Irvington Reservoir

*Parking available at the cross section of  
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Aldersgate United Methodist Church 600 Broadway Dobbs Ferry 914 693 0446  
Irvington Presbyterian Church 25 N. Broadway Irvington 914 591 8124  
St. Barnabas Episcopal Church 15 N. Broadway Irvington 914 591 8194

# The Agenda

## SATURDAY MARCH 28

### Classic Rock: Damani Quartet

**ARDSLEY**  
9 p.m. / No cover charge. Saw Mill Tavern, 925 Saw Mill River Road. Reservations encouraged. [smtavern.com](http://smtavern.com)

### Children's Book Nook

**DOBBS FERRY**  
Noon–3 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](http://aqueduct.org)

### Meet Author Jack Houghteling

**DOBBS FERRY**  
2:30 p.m. / Free. Dobbs Ferry Public Library, 55 Main St. The Hastings native's third novel, "The Forest," will be available for purchase and signing. [dobbsferrylibrary.org](http://dobbsferrylibrary.org)

### Farmers Market

**HASTINGS**  
9:30 a.m.–1 p.m. Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue. The winter market convenes every other Saturday. For details, visit [hastingsfarmersmarket.org](http://hastingsfarmersmarket.org) and follow the market on Facebook.

### The Living Forest Speaker Series

**IRVINGTON**  
Noon / Free. O'Hara Nature Center, 170 Mountain Road. Join terrestrial ecologist Tom Wessels for "Reading the Landscape," a talk and walking tour in Irvington Woods Park. Register at [irvingtongreen.org/events](http://irvingtongreen.org/events)

### Knitting and Book Talk

**IRVINGTON**  
7–8 p.m. / Free. Irvington Public Library, 12 S. Astor Street. Join Irvington writer and graphic designer Ellen M. Shapiro for knitting, a brief reading from and discussion of her historical novel for middle-schoolers, "The Secret Buttons," and book signing. [irvingtonlibrary.org](http://irvingtonlibrary.org)

### Jazz Vocalist Karrin Allyson

**TARRYTOWN**  
7 and 9:30 p.m. / \$35, \$30 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. [jazzforumarts.org](http://jazzforumarts.org)

### Young Musicians of Westchester

**GREENBURGH**  
2 p.m. / Free. Greenburgh Public Library, 300 Tarrytown Road. Flutist Zoe Rabinowitz and pianist Oliver Rivera perform. [greenburghlibrary.org](http://greenburghlibrary.org)

### Pilates for Pets

**ELMSFORD**  
10–11 a.m. / \$30. Paws Crossed Animal Rescue, 100 S. Warehouse Lane. Register at [pawscrossedny.org](http://pawscrossedny.org)



Dobbs Ferry native Neil Lavey leads a tour of his exhibit "River Dreamer" at Hastings Village Hall Gallery on Sunday, March 29.

### Jewish Film Festival

**PLEASANTVILLE**  
Various times through April 6. Jacob Burns Film Center, 364 Manville Road. A wide range of fiction films and documentaries showcase personal stories and a broad perspective on history, culture, and society. [burnsfilmcenter.org](http://burnsfilmcenter.org)

### Feeder Watch

**YONKERS**  
10 a.m.–noon / Free. Lenoir Nature Preserve, 19 Dudley St. Learn to identify backyard birds and help count them for a citizen science project run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Also on Sunday, 2–4 p.m. [hras.org](http://hras.org)

### Birdwatching with Saw Mill River Audubon

**PLEASANTVILLE**  
8 a.m. / Free, \$6 parking fee. Rockefeller State Park Preserve, 125 Phelps Way. For ages 8 and up. Register at [sawmillriveraudubon.org](http://sawmillriveraudubon.org)

## SUNDAY MARCH 29

### Artist Talk and Tour

**HASTINGS**  
1:30 p.m. / Free. Village Hall, 7 Maple Ave. Meet artist and Dobbs Ferry native Neil Lavey and hear him discuss his creative process at

2 p.m. His exhibit "River Dreamer" is on view through April 3.

### "Dino-Light"

**TARRYTOWN**  
2 p.m. / \$32–\$37. Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. Lightwire Theater blends puppetry, technology, and dance in a show for all ages. [tarrytownmusicall.org](http://tarrytownmusicall.org)

### Ella & The Bossa Beat

**TARRYTOWN**  
4 and 6 p.m. / \$25, \$20 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. [jazzforumarts.org](http://jazzforumarts.org)

### Rivertowns Repair Café

**SLEEPY HOLLOW**  
10 a.m.–2 p.m. / Free. Senior Center, 55 Elm St. [repaircafehv.org](http://repaircafehv.org)

### Pianist Itay Goren Concert

**GREENBURGH**  
2 p.m. / Free. Greenburgh Public Library, 300 Tarrytown Road. [greenburghlibrary.org](http://greenburghlibrary.org)

### Waterfront Walking Tour

**YONKERS**  
1 p.m. / \$3–\$6. Philipse Manor Hall State Historic Site, 29 Warburton Ave. Learn about the historic downtown area on a 1-mile walk. [philipsemanorhall.com](http://philipsemanorhall.com)

## TUESDAY MARCH 31

### Jazz, Funk & Sultry Blues

**HASTINGS**  
7–9 p.m. / No cover charge. Uncle Lefty's, 583 Warburton Ave. Featuring Bianca Grooves with Sammy Wags. [uncleleftys.com](http://uncleleftys.com)

## WEDNESDAY APRIL 1

### Little Green Thumbs

**PLEASANTVILLE**  
Noon–1 p.m. / \$4 per child, free for parent/guardian; \$6 parking fee. Rockefeller State Park Preserve, 125 Phelps Way. Hands-on program for ages 4 and up. Registration required. [rockefellerstateparkpreserve.eventbrite.com](http://rockefellerstateparkpreserve.eventbrite.com)

### Full Moon Hike

**PLEASANTVILLE**  
7:15 p.m. / \$4. Rockefeller State Park Preserve, 125 Phelps Way. 4-mile guided hike lit by this month's "Pink Moon." Registration required. [rockefellerstateparkpreserve.eventbrite.com](http://rockefellerstateparkpreserve.eventbrite.com)

## THURSDAY APRIL 2

### Jazz & More

**DOBBS FERRY**  
7–9:30 p.m. / No cover charge. Mirabella Cocina Latina Restaurant & Bar, 1 Hamilton St. in Rivertowns Square. Featuring Jeff Barone on guitar and David Janeway on piano.

### Terrific Trees

**PLEASANTVILLE**  
Noon–1 p.m. / \$4 per child, free for parent/guardian; \$6 parking fee. Rockefeller State Park Preserve, 125 Phelps Way. Interactive program for ages 5 and up. Registration required. [rockefellerstateparkpreserve.eventbrite.com](http://rockefellerstateparkpreserve.eventbrite.com)

## FRIDAY APRIL 3

### Gray Smulyan

**TARRYTOWN**  
7 and 9:30 p.m. / \$35, \$30 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. The six-time Grammy-winning baritone saxophonist celebrates his 70th birthday with live jazz. Also on April 4. [jazzforumarts.org](http://jazzforumarts.org)

### Highlights Tour

**YONKERS**  
3 p.m. / \$15 for adults, \$9 for seniors and students, \$8 for ages 3–18, free for members and children under 3. Hudson River Museum, 511 Warburton Ave. A docent-led tour of "Modern Women / Modern Vision: Photographs from the Bank of America Collection." explores the history of photography and the role of women in shaping it. [hrm.org](http://hrm.org)

## Scavenger hunt

Continued from page 1

that used the same Goosechase app participants will use for the Earth Month Scavenger Hunt.

Binns serves as RISN’s game instigator, coming up with competitive and fun ways to get local residents to support their natural environment. The official list of activities will be shared on March 29, with the scavenger hunt providing tiers of tasks worth varying amounts of points.

“There are things like trivia, where you can easily Google the answers, but in the process of answering this local ecological trivia, you will learn about the history of the ecosystem in our corridor,” Binns told the Dispatch. “Then there are actions where you show that you’re composting or recycling. And there’s actually going to a location and special event and completing an action, and documenting that you’ve done it.”

Binns added that riding the Beeline bus instead of driving a car, bringing a damaged appliance to a repair café instead of throwing it away, and attending a local Earth Month event will also be on the list of ways to earn points. Participants can join together in teams

and register at the RISN website, where they’ll receive directions on how to document their activities to earn points. The team with the most points will earn a \$500 cash prize.

Participants can earn points by completing tasks in their own municipality, as well as in any of the other participating communities. All of the points earned by a team will also go toward the collective total for that team’s municipality. At the end of the competition, the municipality with the most points will earn at least \$3,000 for a project chosen by their sustainability group.

“People are going to be benefitting up and down the Rivertowns, and at the same time, it’s a competition,” Binns said. “So, if I’m from an Irvington team and I’m going to a Hastings event, I’m earning points for Irvington, but Hastings gets me at their event. So it’s both a collaborative win-win and a friendly competition.”

If Irvington wins, the money will go toward the Irvington Arts and Culture Committee’s upcoming Butterfly Gallery Pollinator Garden project along Main Street, while Hastings would use its winnings to add a flower garden at Exit 12 off the Saw Mill River Parkway. Ardsley would dedicate the funds to planting trees in municipal spaces throughout the village, and Dobbs Ferry has

targeted sprucing up of the 9/11 Memorial at Waterfront Park, installation of deer fencing in Chauncey Park, and supporting a pollinator project in Gould Park. Binns believes that because the communities are neighbors, any positive step that supports the environment in one municipality is a benefit to them all.

“There’s a lot of cross-over,” Binns noted. “We are one ecological corridor, we’re fighting the same fights, and we have different resources. Each municipality has different offerings, [for example] different restaurants that serve organic food.”

The scavenger hunt encourages participants to visit local shops, parks, restaurants, food scrap drop-off sites, and more locations that appear on a digital Rivertowns sustainability map that Binns created in 2023. The map can be found on the RISN website, which also hosts a calendar of events like planting days, vine removal outings, and community garden cleanups.

“On the sustainability map you’ll see things like emergency shelters, all of the places you can drop off waste, all of the health and wellness places, all of the places that serve consciously sustainably sourced products, and all of the open spaces,” Binns said. “I hope to reach a lot more people with

awareness about all of the great resources that we have in this corridor for sustainable living. And I hope for people to continue using our sustainability map and events calendar and participating more regularly.”

Gift baskets will go to the teams who show the most creativity in completing the tasks, and for certain activities, extra points will be given out to teams who complete them in costumes.

“We’re just gamifying motivation for engagement, and showing in the process all of the ways you can get involved,” Binns concluded. She likened the competition to the state’s Climate Smart Communities program, which offers municipalities the opportunity to earn hundreds of thousands of dollars in grant money by completing sustainability tasks that earn points. “It’s a roadmap for earth stewardship engagement in the region. And we’re trying to make it fun as well.”

The Rivertowns Earth Month Scavenger Hunt is free to join and will last from Sunday, March 29 to May 3. A closing event that will also celebrate the winners will take place on May 7 at the Irvington Senior Citizens Center, 29 Bridge St. Teams are welcome to register any time from now through the end of April. To join the competition and check out the sustainability map and calendar, visit [resilientrivertowns.org](http://resilientrivertowns.org).

## Blotter

Continued from page 2

**Intoxicated teen:** An intoxicated 15-year-old from White Plains turned up on the doorstep of a home on Stanley Avenue on Thurs-

day, March 19, at 11:30 p.m. The teen was transported to the Westchester Medical Center. Thirty-five minutes later, at 12:05 a.m., police dispersed more than 100 youths from a spot in Hillside Woods

called “The Padj.”

**Secured, not stolen:** The father of a 13-year-old reported that his son’s bicycle was stolen from outside Farragut Middle School between March 18-22. Police

then learned that school personnel had secured the bike inside to prevent it from being stolen.

**Burglary arrest:** A 29-year-old man was arrested for forcing open a

door to his mother’s unoccupied home on Farragut Avenue on Tuesday, March 24. He was charged with two felonies — burglary in the second degree and criminal mischief in the second degree — and

remanded to the Westchester County Jail. That morning, police received reports about the defendant yelling on Warburton Avenue and Hillside Avenue, and driving erratically on Main Street.

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## Food scraps and solar

Continued from page 7

the solar panels on the DPW building were no longer working correctly, and we saw an opportunity to get some grants,” explained Janet Roseff, co-chair of the Zero Waste Committee of Sustainable Dobbs Ferry.

The improvements resulted from a survey of village residents conducted by Sustainable Dobbs Ferry last year. A separate study on food scrap collection in the Rivertowns completed in November estimated that drop-off sites in Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, Irvington, Elmsford, Sleepy Hollow, and Tarrytown were capturing 3%–5% of total food scraps generated across the municipalities.

“We found one of the things was that with

the drop-off here [at the DPW site], people didn’t want to come down here because of the smell, and we thought this needs to be updated,” Roseff said.

A grant from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation provided \$15,880 to spruce up the drop-off site, while the Village covered the remaining \$5,295 cost of the project.

“We all are responsible for keeping the planet healthy and alive, and it starts with very small actions like making sure if you can, you’re collecting food waste and putting it in a place that it becomes compost,” State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins told the Dispatch at the event.

“I’m very proud of Dobbs Ferry,” said State Assemblymember MaryJane Shimsky, who is a Dobbs Ferry resident. “We can pass all

of the laws, make all of the policies we want, and whether they stay or they don’t stay, it doesn’t help our environment unless the work gets done on the ground. And we are going to need Dobbs Ferry and all of the Dobbs Ferrys in our state and in our country to take initiatives like this shed.”

In a compost facility, food waste is rotated and separated so it can receive oxygen and decompose into rich soil. In a landfill it decomposes in an anaerobic environment without oxygen, because it’s buried in plastic trash bags, and produces methane, which negatively affects air quality.

The new shed is meant to make the drop-off area more aesthetically pleasing and inviting for residents. The County picks up the food scraps from Dobbs Ferry and other municipalities, allowing the cost to be

less than if the Village transported the food scraps to a composting facility.

“We subsidize it and if we didn’t do that, it would cost about \$120 per ton,” explained Peter McCartt, Westchester County’s director of energy conservation. “The garbage [that is incinerated in Peekskill] is only \$33 per ton, so we charge \$33 per ton, then we collect it and make compost out of it.” The County holds events throughout the year where it gives the compost back to residents.

Through New York State’s Clean Energy Communities program, the Village received two separate point-based designation grants totaling \$425,000, which covered more than half of the \$759,000 total cost of furnishing and installing the solar panels. The solar array is expected to save the Village \$45,000 per year on energy.

## ‘The Living Forest’

Continued from page 11

learned about tree coring and research plots, which he then shared with student interns in Irvington.

In 2021, Reilly and students set up 10 research plots in Irvington as part of Harvard Forest’s “Our Changing Forest” program. In 2022, they set up four plots to monitor the impact of beech leaf disease. In the near future, Reilly plans to establish 10 locations to monitor the population of red-backed salamanders, whose presence is an indicator of forest health.

“The Living Forest” series will continue

with three more talk-then-walk events. This Saturday, March 28, “Reading the Landscape” will be the focus of Tom Wessels, a terrestrial ecologist and professor emeritus at Antioch University New England, located in New Hampshire.

On Saturday, April 11, deer management will be the subject of a presentation by Bernd Blosser, a professor of natural resources at Cornell University’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Reilly earned a master’s degree in natural resources and environment from Cornell while on a sabbatical from the Village of Irvington between August 2024 to June 2025.

The series will conclude on Saturday, May

2, with “Agriculture as Conservation” by ornithologist Elijah Goodwin, the director of ecological monitoring at Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture in Pocantico Hills.

“The Living Forest” programs all run from 12–1:45 p.m. For more information, including registration links, visit [irvingtongreen.org](http://irvingtongreen.org).

The series piggybacks on efforts to restore the Irvington Woods by removing invasive vegetation, planting native vegetation, and reducing the deer population through bow hunting.

For trees and shrubs, the Village of Irvington was awarded a federal grant of \$112,652 in 2024 and a New York State grant of \$382,316 in 2025. In addition, the

nonprofit Greater Irvington Land Trust received a \$16,000 grant in 2025 to plant a swamp milkweed and native plant meadow, which was supplemented by \$3,000 from GILT, \$2,500 from the Village, and \$2,500 in donations collected by GILT.

While volunteers help with the vegetation, the Village has hired a company to remove trees, and a bow hunter, Peter Kelley, to thin the deer population. This fall, Kelley will return to Irvington for the third straight year and to Dobbs Ferry for the second. The Village of Hastings is considering hiring him for the first time. In Irvington, Kelley harvested 26 deer in 2024 and 21 in 2025.



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RESERVATIONS



# Classies

The Dispatch Classies are for person-to-person ads and notices to the community. Submissions are due by 12 p.m. Monday for that Friday's paper. To purchase, go to [market.rivertownsdispatch.com/classies](http://market.rivertownsdispatch.com/classies)



## PUBLIC NOTICES

### PUBLIC NOTICE — SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Irvington will hold a special meeting on Wednesday, March 25, 2026 at 7PM at Village Hall, 85 Main Street, Irvington.

Katie Bugna, Clerk-Treasurer Irvington, NY  
March 19, 2026

### PUBLIC HEARING — 2026-27 OPERATING BUDGET

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Irvington will hold a public hearing on April 6, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at Village Hall, 85 Main Street, Irvington, NY (or via Zoom) to consider the 2026-27 operating budget and 2026-27 water and

sewer rates for the Village of Irvington. Please check the calendar on the Village website for meeting details.

A copy of the 2026-27 Tentative Budget is available on the Village website WWW.IRVINGTONNY.GOV or in the office of the Village Clerk-Treasurer, 85 Main Street, Irvington, NY

Katie Bugna, Clerk-Treasurer  
March 20, 2026

### HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON PUBLIC HEARING — 2026-2027 BUDGET

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: That the Mayor and Board of Trustees of the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson hereby schedule a Public Hearing for Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 7:00 PM or soon thereafter for the purpose of considering the proposed budget for the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson, New York for the fiscal year beginning June 1, 2026 and ending May 31, 2027. A copy of the proposed budget is available at [www.hohny.gov](http://www.hohny.gov). Said budget provides that the maximum compensation

proposed shall be \$4,000 per year per Trustee and \$8,000 per year to the Mayor.

The meeting will be conducted in person at the Village Hall Meeting Room, 7 Maple Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, New York.

The meeting will be able to be seen live on Channel 75 (Cable), or Channel 43 (FIOS), or streaming live on [www.whoh-tv.org](http://www.whoh-tv.org). If the meeting is held remotely, members of the Village Board of Trustees and Village Officers and staff participating in the meeting will be participating remotely through videoconference.

The Board at such time and place will hear all persons in support or opposition to such matter.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ANTHONY P. COSTANTINI  
Village Clerk/Treasurer

For information regarding access for persons with disabilities, please visit [www.hohny.gov](http://www.hohny.gov) or call 914-478-3400 Ext. 610.

Publish:  
The Rivertowns Dispatch  
March 27, 2026



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CONNECT WITH HUMANS

Looking for a piano teacher, a dog walker, or a conversation? Our Classies are for real people, reaching real people — no bots, no algorithms, no AI. Make your requests and share your news here in the Announcements — [market.rivertownsdispatch.com/classies](http://market.rivertownsdispatch.com/classies)



## HOT TIP

### PLANT CROPS NOW

Peas, spinach, and lettuce can go in the dirt now, but tomatoes and peppers still need a few more frost-free weeks.

## Bioblitz

Continued from page 10

somebody else's identification, I will click that I agree with their identification, or if I notice something that I disagree with, I will propose an alternate identification. Basically, they're sort of crowdsourcing the identification. So you can propose something, but it doesn't count as what they call 'research grade' unless somebody else has come along and validated it." If two people agree and a third person disagrees, it becomes a pending identification again until a consensus is reached.

Colgate is organizing additional events during April, including a tour of the Lower Burke Estate wetland restoration area on Saturday, April 11, at 11 a.m. with Hastings resident Don Erwin, who has spearheaded the removal of invasive vegetation, and planting of native vegetation at that site, which the Hastings School District owns. Hastings resident Matt Hobby will lead a tour of the Exit 12 riparian restoration project, which he has stewarded, on Sunday, April 19, at 11 a.m. Additional events will include a tour of Zinsser Community Gardens, a bird walk, and another walk in Hillside Woods (exact dates and times to be announced). The Conservation Commission will also host a "State of the Woods Part 4" meeting on April 26, 2-4 p.m., at the James Harmon Community Center to present updates on the Hillside Woods Restoration Project.

For more information on Hastings' bioblitz, visit [www.inaturalist.org/projects/hastings-on-hudson-2026-earth-month-BioBlitz](http://www.inaturalist.org/projects/hastings-on-hudson-2026-earth-month-BioBlitz)

## Ardsley Cares Day

Continued from page 5

Among the other activities were packing toiletries for The Sharing Shelf in Port Chester. Those kits included shampoo and soap, along with messages of encouragement. Other kits were made for the siblings of children receiving treatment at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital in Valhalla. Parent-led organization Ardsley Community Enrichment hosted a table where volunteers packed food bags for the Midnight Run in Dobbs Ferry, which serves the homeless in New York City.

In the gym, 117 people packed 20,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger. While music blasted from the speakers, volunteers funneled ingredients into bags before passing them to the weighing, labelling, and sealing stations. These provisions will make their way to the organization's partners in Central America, South America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia.

Leading this effort was Rise Against Hunger representative Adia Ledbetter, along with AHS sophomores Taiga To, Zaamil Rabbani, Berk Sucu, and Ryan Sue. These students had raised \$8,500 for the cause through a walkathon in November and a trivia night at Saw Mill Tavern on March 11.

While most of the activities took place at AHS, other volunteers participated in a cleanup and invasive vine cutting at Pascone Park, and a cleanup at McDowell Park. A readathon took place at the Ardsley Public Library, where gently used children's books were collected for donation.

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## Sports

EDITED BY ROB DIANTONIO

## Hastings eyes repeat behind experienced core

— SOFTBALL PREVIEW —

BY ROB DIANTONIO

## Hastings

For the first time in program history, Hastings reached the mountaintop last spring. Now comes the challenge that defines great teams: staying there.

Entering her 14th season, coach Kaitlin Degnan returns a group that knows exactly what it takes after a 16-7 campaign capped by a dramatic 10-9 win over Dobbs Ferry in the Section 1 Class B final. The Yellow Jackets are built not only on talent but on continuity.

“We are returning 10 out of 12 players from last season who possess great leadership qualities,” Degnan said. “I find our greatest strengths being our speed, base running IQ, and the strength of our pitching staff.”

That pitching staff starts with senior Siri Rosenberg, a fifth-team all-state selection who went 9-4 with 112 strikeouts last year while also hitting .447 with 34 hits and 15 RBIs. Rosenberg is committed to Skidmore College. She is joined by junior Hazel Sabella, who posted a 6-2 record with a 3.10 ERA and 52 strikeouts.

Behind the plate, senior captain Lola Norlander returns and is coming off an all-section honorable mention season where she hit .429 with 33 hits, 22 RBIs, and 14 stolen bases. She’s committed to Keuka College. Senior Sophia Pereira (.364, 24 hits, 11 doubles) provides consistency in center field.

The lineup is further bolstered by freshman shortstop Ella Rizzo, who made an immediate impact in 2025 with a .347 average and 26 hits.

Hastings will also look for contributions from a pair of newcomers in sophomore



Ardley’s Sofia Haber was all-state as a junior.



Hastings senior catcher Lola Norlander was all-section honorable mention last season. File photos by Rob DiAntonio.

Sofia Gagliano (P) and junior Minah Choi Phillips (INF).

With Norlander, Rosenberg, and Pereira serving as captains, the Yellow Jackets have leadership at every level of the field, and the expectations reflect that experience.

Degnan said the goals are clear: “Win League, win the section, team ERA less than 3.90, and a team batting average of .374.”

With speed, pitching depth, and a veteran lineup, Hastings has the pieces in place to make another deep postseason run.

—  
Ardley

Few programs in Section 1 have the combination of pitching and lineup depth that Ardley brings into the season. Under veteran coach Noreen Degnan, now in her 18th year, the Panthers are coming off a 15-6 season that included a league title before falling to Hendrick Hudson 3-1 in the Class A semifinals.

With seven returning starters, Ardley once again looks like a contender.

Everything begins in the circle with senior captain Sofia Haber, one of the most decorated pitchers in the area and a team captain. A four-time all-section selection and third-team all-state pick last year, the Gettysburg College commit went 15-6 with a 2.20 ERA and is closing in on 600 career strikeouts.

She also hit .388 with 24 RBIs last year.

Ardley also returns senior captain Haley Albano, who hit .400 with 30 hits and 25 RBIs while starring in center field, and shortstop Emma Philp, who hit .477 with 33 hits, 30 RBIs, and five home runs.

“Sofia will lead us in the circle,” Degnan said. “Haley was a force to be reckoned with last season in center field and made some amazing catches. Emma has a cannon for an arm, with some amazing footwork. She’s a phenomenal contact hitter with a beautiful swing.”

Junior Tessa Guernah, a captain, returns for her fourth varsity season and will contribute at first and third base. Sophomore Bella Feldman (pitcher/first base) is coming off an honorable mention all-section season.

Noemi Ippolito, now a freshman, earned all-section honorable mention last year and brings speed and defensive strength at second base. Eighth-grader Mia King continues to develop behind the plate after earning honorable mention all-section honors in 2025.

Degnan emphasized the strength of the lineup. “We are a powerful hitting team and one through nine I feel can put the bat on the ball,” she said.

Ardley will be tested early, including a trip to play top competition from the state at the Mudville Tournament on April 18.

## Dobbs Ferry

The sting of last year’s one-run loss in the section final still lingers.

But for Dobbs Ferry, that experience may be exactly what fuels the next step.

Coach Kim Reznicek enters her 11th season after guiding the Eagles to a 14-8 record and a narrow 10-9 loss to Hastings in the Class B final. While the roster features some younger players stepping into larger roles, the expectations haven’t changed.

“This is not a rebuilding year for us,” Reznicek said. “It’s a continuation of the standard that has been set.”

A big reason for that confidence starts with junior captain Nicolette Giorgio, who was all-section honorable mention last year. She led the Eagles with 24 RBIs and tied for the team lead with 28 hits last season. She took over the shortstop position late last season and enters her first full season as the starter at that position. “She continues to establish herself as the backbone of the team and remains a catalyst at the top of the lineup,” Reznicek said.

Senior captain Kamryn Addis returns as one of the top defensive center fielders in the league. Addis hit .344 with 22 hits last season and brings a strong presence at the top of the lineup. Gianna Stone adds stability

*Continued on page 18*

## Sports

## Rivertowns teams target growth as new season starts

— BOYS' LACROSSE PREVIEW —

BY ROB DIANTONIO

## Irvington

Year nine under Mike Schaefer brings a mix of stability and transition for Irvington, which finished 12-5 a season ago before a narrow 9-8 loss to Blind Brook in the Section 1 Class D quarterfinals.

There's no shortage of returning talent. Senior attackman Nick Grados, an all-league selection in 2025, headlines the offense. Senior Chris Callahan provides experience in the midfield and junior Saxon Frank adds another strong option at attack. Defensively, Irvington returns a strong backbone with senior Soren Deyonker and junior Josh Tatz, both all-league players, along with junior goalie Harrison Malakoff, who also earned all-league honors last spring.

That group gives the Bulldogs a reliable core on both ends, though one key departure looms large. Alex Zinman, an all-section face-off specialist, transferred to Brunswick School, leaving Irvington to adjust at the X. That's where a newcomer like senior Ryder Spino will play an important role, while freshmen Jack Klatell and Conner Gredick are first-year varsity players expected to contribute at midfield.

Schaefer acknowledged that the transition will take time, but it's a process the program is embracing.

"Our roster consists of multi-sport student athletes," he said. "The returning players have embraced a large group of first-time lacrosse players from all grades. Naturally, the new guys will take a little while adjusting to varsity lacrosse. We hope to be considerably better by late April, early May."

That timeline could define Irvington's season. Early growing pains are likely, especially with so many new faces stepping into varsity roles. But the ceiling rises if the pieces come together.

"Our expectations are to improve from



Irvington senior attackman Nick Grados is the Bulldogs' leading returning scorer. File photo by Rob DiAntonio.

one week to the next," Schaefer said, "and compete for a league title with Dobbs Ferry, North Salem, and Haldane."

The Bulldogs bested host O'Neil 17-8 in their opener on March 20. Grados led the way with seven goals and five assists. Frank (4G, 1A), Grant Malakoff (3G, 2A), Liam Wade (1G, 1A), D.J. Ufer (1G), Spino (first varsity goal), and Harrison Malakoff (10S) also contributed. Irvington (1-1) lost to Sleepy Hollow 11-10 in overtime on March 24. Frank (3G, 1A), Grados (2G, 2A), and Wade (2G, 1A) paced the squad.

## Dobbs Ferry

After a 6-11 season that ended with a first-round playoff loss to Haldane, Dobbs Ferry enters the season under coach Drew Maier with defined goals.

Leading the way is junior attackman Jackson Kearns, an all-league selection who piled

and 86 strikeouts.

Dobbs also adds several newcomers expected to contribute, including sophomore Ella Rizzo (P), sophomore Bela Abraham (2B/OF), freshman Lucy Logan (C/OF), freshman Olivia Hochleutner (1B/3B), and eighth-grader Emma DeFilippis (2B/OF). That group adds versatility, speed, and depth across the field.

Reznicek said early success will come down to how quickly the group comes together.

"There may be moments where we're still learning how to play together, simply because the mix is new," she said. "But that combination is also what makes this group so exciting."

Execution will be critical, especially in close games.

"Success will come down to doing the little things right every single day," Reznicek said.

up 48 goals and 20 assists last season as the team's second-leading scorer. The team captain anchors an offense that Maier believes will be the team's strength.

Offense is "where we have the most experience and talent," said Maier, who enters his ninth season as head coach.

Senior captains Ryan Mohl and Dylan Ravage bring leadership and versatility in the midfield, while junior Killian O'Connor provides a key presence at midfield and on face-offs.

In net, junior Kola Rukaj returns to handle the bulk of the work, giving the Eagles a familiar piece to build around defensively — even if that side of the field remains a work in progress. James Pessin is a senior captain for the Eagles who plays defense.

"Our defense is still relatively young and inexperienced," Maier said, "and will likely be doing a lot of learning as the season progresses."

Freshmen Hunter Fuerst (face-off/midfield) and Rook Portwood (attack) add youth to the mix.

"Our goals for this season are to compete for a league championship, win a playoff game, and to beat Irvington in the annual rivalry game at 'Lax for Lupus,'" Maier said.

Dobbs lost to host Valhalla 14-5 in its opener on March 24.

## Ardasley

A new era begins at Ardsley. Bryan O'Loughlin takes over as head coach following a 3-13 season, inheriting a small roster competing in a developmental league without a junior varsity pipeline. It's a situation that presents challenges, but also opportunity for immediate growth.

Senior attackmen Liam Gallante and Brodi Kessler lead the offense, while senior Robert Sanchez anchors the defense. Junior goalie Jackson Rosenfeld returns between the pipes, and the midfield features juniors Tristen Roberts and Robbie Miele, giving Ardsley experience across key positions.

"Limiting defensive mistakes, taking care of the ball, and being disciplined at the plate will be key. In tight games, the margin for error is small, so our focus will be on staying present and trusting our preparation."

## Irvington

Continuity is a powerful thing in high school softball and Irvington brings plenty of it into the new season. Coach James Madison, entering his third season as the varsity head coach, returns all nine starters from a team that went 7-12 and reached the Class A sectional playoffs last year.

"Our team strength is returning all nine starters who have been playing together for three years," Madison said. "We will be fun to watch."

The core is led seniors Nia Kilbury and

Freshman Wilson Donnep is among the newcomers expected to contribute right away, adding to a group that O'Loughlin believes has both skill and work ethic.

Captains Gallante, Sanchez, and Miele will be tasked with setting the tone for a program looking to take a step forward.

"The goal is to show growth throughout the year and work toward a .500 record," O'Loughlin said. "A playoff berth from our league is in the cards, and I believe we have the skill and work ethic to win our league; however our non-league games are challenging and will test what kind of team we will be."

That balance — between development and competitiveness — will define Ardsley's season. On the field, the strengths are clear.

"Our main strength is the skill on our offense and our defensive pace of play," O'Loughlin said. "We have a lot of multi-sport athletes who are ready to put the work in."

Ardsley opened the season with a 17-7 road loss to Westlake on March 23. Roberts (3G, 1A), Gallante (2G), Miele (1G, 2A), Tyler DeCosta (1G, 1A), Conor Lenihan (1A), Sanchez (1A), Donnep (1A), and Rosenfeld (19S) led the team.

## Hastings

Hastings also has a new coach this season with Alex Munoz taking the reigns of a squad that went 2-14 last season. The Yellow Jackets are also in the developmental league.

The Jackets have a 16-man roster led by all-league returner Anthony Laboy, a senior midfielder. Three other seniors on the roster are attackman/midfielder Jack Reynolds, defensive midfielder Thomas Mooney, and attackman/midfielder Ian Lee.

Hastings has a quartet of juniors in Paul Consorte (A), Nate Fallon-Jablon (G), Max Park (A), and William Tenthoff (A). A young roster has eight sophomores on it: Jake Chen (D), Luca Chen (M), Romeo Casano-Anonellis (M), Sam Kastner (D), Nate Labowsky (A/M), Ryan Lee (M), Henrey Lockard (D/M), and Griffin Runyan (G).

Kayla Clinton, who were all-section honorable mention selections in 2025. Kilbury returns in the circle and in the outfield, while Clinton anchors the infield at shortstop.

Senior Madison Maldonado (C/INF), sophomore Alex Barth (CF/P), junior Chloe Swift (3B), sophomore Ashley Shapiro (INF), senior Maddy Barth (INF), and senior Sophie Sareil (OF) round out a group of experienced returners.

Irvington also has some talented younger players like eighth-grader Cassidy Reichgott (2B/P), freshman Aniya Patel (OF), freshman Samara Luftwig (OF), and freshman Jordan Henry (INF).

"We want to keep playing hard and grow," Madison said. "The team expectation is to play hard, compete, make sectionals again, and give our seniors a season to remember."

## Softball preview

Continued from page 17

in left field, giving Dobbs Ferry an experienced and reliable outfield unit.

"One of our biggest strengths this season is the balance we have between experienced returners and a talented group of younger players stepping into larger roles," Reznicek said.

Sophomore Emily Marron is coming off an all-section honorable mention year, hitting .400 with 26 hits — including 10 for extra bases — while emerging as a key run producer in the middle of the lineup. She plays third base.

In the circle, eighth-grader Victoria Baron returns after an impressive debut season in which she recorded 10 wins, a 3.74 ERA,

## Sports

## Hastings aims for another deep postseason run

— BASEBALL PREVIEW —

BY ROB DIANTONIO

## Hastings

There's no shortage of cohesion in Hastings — even with a new voice at the top. Scott Stampfl steps in as head coach after serving as an assistant under Dom Cecere, inheriting a program that reached the Section 1 Class B championship game last season. Stampfl, now entering his 11th season as a varsity head coach (10 at Yonkers High), isn't looking to reinvent anything. Instead, the focus is on sustaining what's already working.

"Expectations are to continue the strong culture built by coach Dom Cecere Jr., work hard every day, play for each other, and make a long playoff run," Stampfl said.

That culture starts with a veteran-heavy core. The Yellow Jackets bring back a strong group of seniors, including pitchers Drew Ciszewski and captain Aidan Curtis (OF), along with versatile contributors like Matt Corbo (1B/P) and Avi Rothstein (P/INF/OF). Up the middle, Johnny Sbrega patrols center field while Andrew Rizzo anchors second base. Both are captains.

Theo Suniewick, a junior catcher and one of the team captains, is expected to play a key role as a leader handling the pitching staff.

Hastings' depth extends beyond its returning group. A wave of underclassmen and newcomers — including sophomores Eli Dube (P/SS) and Andrew DiLeo (P), along with juniors Ethan Malat (SS/3B) and Anthony Moore (P) — should provide added flexibility on the mound and across the field.

The strength, according to Stampfl, is less about individual talent and more about collective mindset. "We have strong chemistry with team-oriented goals," he said.

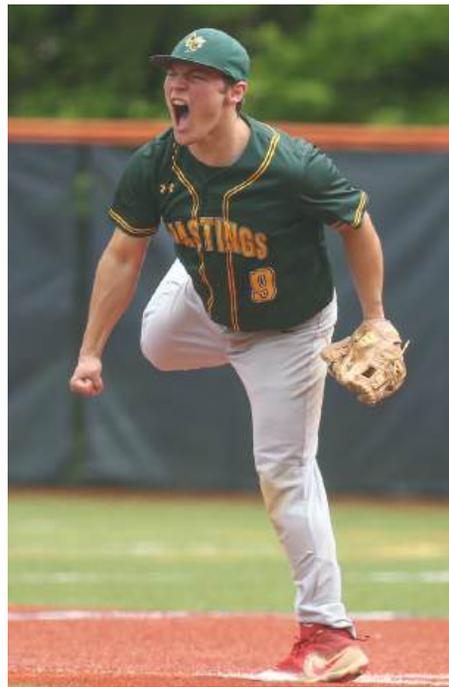
Coming off a 14-11 season that ended one win shy of a sectional title, Hastings has both the experience and the internal expectations of a team that believes another deep postseason run is well within reach.

Stampfl earned his 100th career win as Hastings opened the season with a 6-2 road win over Blind Brook on March 25. Ciszewski (win, 3.2IP, 7K), Curtis (save, 2.2IP, 4K, 2-4, 2R), Rothstein (2RBI), and Julian Carnavali (RBI) led the way.

—  
Ardsley

Ardsley's record from last season doesn't tell the full story. The Panthers finished 8-14 and were eliminated in the opening round of the Class A sectionals, but injuries and inexperience played a major role in shaping that outcome. Now, with a healthier roster and more seasoning across the board, longtime coach Jeff Caldara believes this group has a chance to take a meaningful step forward.

Entering his 29th season as head coach — and 34th overall — Caldara is focused on growth and staying competitive deep into the season.



Hastings senior Andrew Rizzo. File photo by Rob DiAntonio.

"Our goals are to make the sectionals and to play for as long as possible," he said. "Expectations for guys who saw playing time last year are to be better players this year."

A big part of that optimism centers around senior pitcher Carter Bucci, a co-captain. Limited to just eight innings last season while recovering from Tommy John surgery, Bucci is expected to return to a more prominent role on the mound.

Senior shortstop Nate Caldara, a co-captain, provides a steady presence at the top of the lineup and was all-section honorable mention in 2025. He hit .420 last season with 16 runs, 10 stolen bases, and 11 RBIs, while leading the team in both on-base and slugging percentage.

Hunter Hamlet, a junior first baseman, is another key piece. He was among the team's top hitters in 2025 before suffering a fractured ankle early in the season.

Ardsley also gained valuable experience from a group of underclassmen thrust into action last year. Sophomores Jonah Goldberg (CF), James Sheerin (P/INF), and Jiei Tomioka (P/OF) all saw time at the varsity level, with Sheerin and Tomioka earning midseason call-ups.

"I believe our strength will be on the mound," Caldara said. "We have depth and guys who've had success in years past. I also believe one of our strengths is the connection the guys have with one another."

The Panthers dropped their season opener 7-1 to visiting Pleasantville on March 24.

—  
Dobbs Ferry

Dobbs Ferry enters the season in a transitional phase — but not without direction. The Eagles went 6-14 last season and fell in the Class B quarterfinals, but coach Frank Adamo sees a group that is beginning to establish its foundation, even with a roster that leans heavily on underclassmen.

"We have a lot of newcomers to the varsity

program, so it's important that we come together and develop a true team identity," Adamo said.

Leadership will be critical in that process, and Dobbs Ferry has a trio of captains tasked with setting the tone: seniors Anthony Ficarrota and Jatin Costa, along with junior Brendan Marron. Ficarrota, Section 1's all-time leading scorer in basketball, adds athleticism and versatility as a pitcher and outfielder. Costa provides experience on the mound and at first base, while Marron is the anchor behind the plate.

"Although we are a young team, our strength lies in our leadership," Adamo said. "Our returning players understand the level of commitment and the expectations that come with this program."

Other returners include sophomores Jake Evan (SS) and Don Anthony DiLorenzo-Troy (2B/C), and juniors Ian Foley (P/OF), Drew Kimerling (P/OF), and Andrew Zendel (P/3B).

Newcomers include junior Henry Brewer (OF), junior Rommel Eusebio (OF), freshman Ian Hwangbo (P/IF), sophomore David John Kollar (C/OF), sophomore Brendan Molina (P/OF), and sophomore Rodger Frisch (P/1B).

The Eagles earned a 6-2 season-opening win over host Irvington on March 26. Zendel went 4 for 4 with a double and two RBIs, while recording the win on the mound in relief. He pitched four innings of one-hit ball and struck out six. Ficarrota allowed no hits and struck out five over the first three innings. Costa (RBI), Hwangbo (first varsity hit, RBI), and Kimerling (first varsity hit, RBI) also contributed.

—  
Irvington

Irvington enters the season with a clear focus: steady improvement. After a 4-15 campaign that fell short of sectional qualification, the Bulldogs return a mix of experienced upperclassmen and developing younger players under fourth-year coach Rocco Cipriano.

"Our expectation is to compete in every game," Cipriano said. "Our goal is to grow as a team, learning from early-season mistakes to ensure we are a stronger program during the late-season push."

Senior catcher Brian Kim, the team's captain, will be central to that effort. His leadership behind the plate and ability to manage the pitching staff provide stability.

Navy Minkoff, a senior pitcher and shortstop, gives Irvington a versatile option both on the mound and in the field. Juniors Justin Corniel and Ben Epple play third base and center field, respectively.

One area where the Bulldogs already have an advantage is team chemistry.

"A significant strength of this team is our unity," Cipriano said. "The upperclassmen have done an excellent job guiding the younger players early on."

In Irvington's 6-2 season-opening loss to Dobbs, Corniel (triple) and Epple (RBI double) led the team.

Irvington  
rebounds  
with win  
over Ardsley

— GIRLS' LACROSSE ROUNDUP —

BY ROB DIANTONIO

Irvington rebounded from a slow start with a 9-2 victory over visiting Ardsley on March 23. The Bulldogs, who improved to 1-2 on the season, were paced by senior Sophia Im, who tallied three goals and two assists. Federica Ricciardella (2G, 1A), Lillian Isom (2G), Lizzie Villa (1G), and Maddie Okun (5S) contributed.

Ardsley, which dropped to 2-1, was led by Lyla Vega (1G, 1A), Juliette An (1G, 1A), and Sienna Kay (11S).

Irvington opened the season with a pair of losses to visiting Pleasantville (18-0, March 19) and host Briarcliff (15-5, March 21). Villa and Leila Schneider netted two goals each against the Bears.

Kay, a senior goalie, made her 300th career save and finished with 13 stops in Ardsley's 10-6 win over visiting Sleepy Hollow on March 19. Mairead Gowran sparked the offense with five goals and one assist. She also gathered six draw controls and eight ground balls. Anna Gallante (1G, 2A), Vega (1G, 1A), Lyv Pulver (1G), Krista Kelly (1G), An (1G), Lily Tiernan (2A), and Hazel McGourty (1A) contributed.

The Panthers cruised past visiting Port Chester 14-2 on March 21. Tiernan (1A), Kelly (1A), and An scored three goals apiece. Gallante added two goals and an assist while Pulver tallied a goal and three assists. Vega and Sophia Pecora each scored. Kay made four saves.

—  
Eagles open with  
two wins

Dobbs Ferry opened the season by cruising past host Yonkers 18-2 on March 19 for new coach Allison Burt's first win. Scarlett Kilroe (4G, 1A, 11DC), Grier Rowan (2G, 1A), Abigail Bates (1G), Olivia Malinowski (1G), Molly O'Brien (1G), Katherine Kelly (1G, 2A), Mary O'Dea (1G, 1A), Juliet Curanovic (1G, 2A), Cara Hartnett (1G, 1A), Makenna Ryan (1G), Irma Bravo (1G), Isabella Vicchio (1G), Chloe Hogan (1G), Kat Baizan (1G), and Claire Coughlin (6S) led the way.

The Eagles moved to 2-0 with a 17-7 win over visiting Sleepy Hollow on March 24. Kilroe (2G, 3A, 17DC, 4CTO), O'Dea (4G, 3A), Curanovic (2G, 2A), O'Brien (3G, 1A), Megan Hartnett (3G), Hollen Peet (2G, 2A), Kelly (1G), and Malinowski (7GB) paced the team.



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