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Life of service lands honor
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p 11

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Picture book adds a facet
to Holocaust survival
p 12

Vol 2. Issue 28.

March 20, 2026

RIVERTOWNS Dispatch

Local News,
Locally Sourced

\$2⁵⁰

WWW.RIVERTOWNSDISPATCH.COM

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



Bigan Saliani

Iranian residents seek understanding

BY AMY BOCHNER

REGION — The first day of spring marks Nowruz, the Iranian New Year — a 3,000-year-old celebration of rebirth and renewal. As the holiday approaches on March 20, Iranian residents of the Rivertowns shared their perspectives on the ongoing war the U.S. and Israel are waging against Iran and how the community can support their families.

On Feb. 28, the U.S. and Israel began a joint attack on various sites in Iran, which included airstrikes and the assassination of Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Iran responded with missile and drone strikes against Israel, U.S. bases, and U.S.-allied countries in the region.

According to a March 10 report by the

Iranian Red Crescent Society, a nongovernmental humanitarian organization, over 1,300 Iranians have been killed. As of March 13, press releases from the U.S. Department of War have confirmed at least 13 American deaths. The official X account for the Israeli Government Press Office has confirmed 13 Israeli deaths, as of March 18.

In the midst of this conflict, Bigan Saliani, a resident of Irvington for 37 years, often finds himself glued to the news. Born in northern Iran, the retired documentary filmmaker moved to the U.S. in 1967 to attend college.

"I read almost everything they write in the news," he told the Dispatch. "I look at the map where they're bombing and where they're fighting. Mostly it is in the Persian Gulf area, which is the south of the country.

The problem is that they're really hitting Tehran, which has more than 10 million people living there."

Although most of his family members in Iran live outside of the city, Saliani's 78-year-old brother lives in Tehran. Following the American and Israeli attacks, the Iranian government limited internet access, making it difficult for him to contact his family, especially that brother. The last time the two spoke was a couple days before the war started.

"He was pretty worried about the war, but he was also confident that he didn't think it was going to happen," Saliani said. "He and his wife were hopeful... I talked to both of them, and I hope they're safe, but

Continued on page 4

Firm unveils design for upgrades to MacEachron

BY AMY BOCHNER

HASTINGS — Langan Engineering & Environmental Services representatives shared a refined design for MacEachron Park at the March 18 Hastings Board of Trustees special meeting.

Project landscape architect Meredith Juliana and geotechnical engineer Gina Shoregge made the presentation. The goals of the project are to design a sustainable, flood resilient park; increase access to the river; maintain and enhance community amenities; and encourage community wellness. The cost of the project is \$4,424,500, with \$3,500,000 already covered by a grant, as well as an agreement between the Village and the Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO), a subsidiary of British Petroleum.

In December 2023, an agreement between the Village and ARCO obligated the company to provide \$3 million for the 1.3-acre park. ARCO owns 28 acres to the south, which was the former site of the Anaconda Wire & Cable Co.

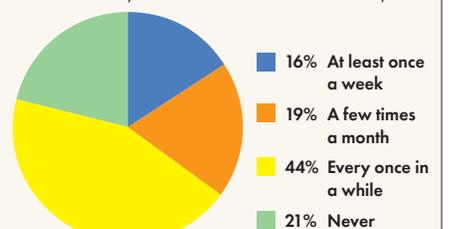
In 2019, shoreline erosion prompted the

Continued on page 14

— You Answered —

How often do you get lunch from local restaurants on weekdays?

As answered by 164 readers of the Rivertowns Dispatch



Vote at rivertownsdispatch.com/the-weekly-poll



The Blotter

ARDSLEY

Assault arrest: A 52-year-old Scarsdale resident was arrested for hitting a juvenile under the age of 18 at a tow yard off Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A) on the evening of Tuesday, March 10. The defendant was charged with assault in the third degree and endangering the welfare of a child, both misdemeanors. The juvenile, who was there to retrieve items from an impounded vehicle, was treated at a hospital.

Shoplifting arrest: A 45-year-old Yonkers resident was arrested for shoplifting \$547.51 worth of items from CVS, 725 Saw Mill River Road, on the

morning of Monday, March 16. He was charged with petit larceny, a misdemeanor.

DOBBS FERRY

Theft of iPhone: An iPhone 7 left on a bench at a bus stop outside 357 Ashford Ave. was stolen on Tuesday, March 10. The owner used the Find My app to determine the phone was in Peekskill and then Cortlandt Manor. The phone was not located.

Students solicited: The unidentified driver of a BMW SUV offered a ride to two Springhurst Elementary School students on Beacon Hill Drive, near Round Hill Road, on the morning of Thursday, March 12. The students declined. The driver left in the direction of Ashford Avenue, while the students descended the staircase toward Springhurst.

Larceny arrest: A 15-year-old resident of The Children's Village was arrested for the theft of a bicycle on

the afternoon of Thursday, March 12. He was apprehended at the parking lot for Stop & Shop, 390 Broadway, and charged with petit larceny, a misdemeanor. Officer Henry Ramos made the arrest.

HASTINGS

DWI arrest: A 54-year-old Hastings resident was arrested for driving while intoxicated, a misdemeanor, on Main Street on the morning of Tuesday, March 10. She was also issued a summons for failing to stop at the stop sign on northbound Farragut Avenue, at Olinda Avenue. Officer Ryan Keys made the arrest.

Hit-and-run summons: A 72-year-old Hastings resident was issued a summons for leaving the scene of a property damage accident, a violation, after hitting the driver's side of a 2005 Ford Econoline parked on the southbound side of Farragut Avenue on the afternoon of Tuesday, March 10.

Broadway egging: Children threw eggs at a house on Broadway (Route 9) on the evening of Tuesday, March 10. The house was not damaged and the children were not caught.

Suspended license: A 47-year-old Pelham resident with a suspended driver's license was arrested for aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the third degree, a misdemeanor, on Farragut Parkway on the morning of Wednesday, March 11. He was also issued summonses for tinted windows and for a broken brake light. Officer Wuilber Maldonado made the arrest.

Wanted no more: Officer Rob Simmonds apprehended a 36-year-old Peekskill resident, who was wanted by the Yonkers Police Department, on Farragut Avenue on the afternoon of Wednesday, March 11.

Phishing attempt: On March 13, a Hastings

resident reported that she had received a phone call from someone who claimed to work for Chase bank and then attempted to extract personal information from her, which she did not provide.

Dead deer: One dead deer was found on Farragut Avenue on the morning of Friday, March 13, and another on Cliff Street on the evening of Sunday, March 15.

IRVINGTON

Rescued from woods: Members of the police department, volunteer fire department, and volunteer ambulance corps rescued an injured 17-year-old Irvington resident from the Irvington Woods early in the morning on Sunday, March 15. The teen called the police at 1:10 a.m., following a gathering of students at Split Rock. He was located by the department's youth officer, Anthony DiNardo, and transported to a hospital.

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

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Public Open House
Sunday, Mar. 22
1-4 pm.

A Spanish Gem in Riverview Manor

30 Southlawn Avenue, Dobbs Ferry

Set in the heart of Riverview Manor, just one block from the Aqueduct Trail, this 1912 Spanish-style home pairs historic grandeur with modern ease. A dramatic double-height living room with carved limestone fireplace and sunset river views anchors the home, flowing to a chef's kitchen and sun-filled entertaining spaces. Four bedrooms, flexible lower level with fireplace, and an expansive, level backyard with multiple terraces complete this rare offering near village life and Metro-North.



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Pioneer showdown nets support for both sides

ARDSLEY — The spectators cheered for both teams as the Ardsley Panthers faced off against the Port Chester Rams at Ardsley High School on the afternoon of Wednesday, March 18.

The 13 players on the home team, and seven players on the visiting team, are all part of the Pioneer League, through which special education students throughout Westchester compete in four different sports during the academic year.

For the Panthers, the showdown was the second of their eight-game basketball season as well as their homecoming. The Panthers also compete in soccer and European handball, but not in volleyball.

Before the tipoff, each player on both teams entered the gym through a balloon arch as he or she was introduced. The scoreboard was reset after each 8-minute quarter.

For the third straight year, coaches Sherril Bastardi and Corsini Ciceron



Sid Vora of Ardsley puts up a shot in the lane.

lead the Panthers, who range from middle to high school. Both Bastardi and Ciceron work as teacher assistants in the

Ardsley School District.

Most of the spectators were members of the high school's spring sports teams.

Referee Jim Longo served as an on-the-court coach rather than as an enforcer of fouls, traveling, and other infractions.

— THE DATA DISPATCH —

The Rivertowns Pizza Bracket

Consider this your official invitation to weigh in on the best slice, beginning with a village-by-village bracket of contenders.

Review the field, then vote in our online poll to decide which eateries advance to the final four:

www.rivertownsdispatch.com/the-weekly-poll.

Lombardo's
10 Hamilton St.

Pizza & Pasta Place
20 Cedar St.

Sam's Ristorante Italiano
128 Main St.

San Gennaro's
225 Ashford Ave.

The Brick Oven
147 Main St.

The Parlor
14 Cedar St.

Pizza Grill
535 Warburton Ave.

Slices
14 Main St.

DOBBS FERRY

HASTINGS



CHAMPION

To be announced in the Friday, April 3, issue of the Rivertowns Dispatch

ARDSLEY

IRVINGTON

Ardsley Cucina
935 Saw Mill River Rd

Fiamma
473 Ashford Ave.

Slyce
27 Center St.

Stagioni
2 Bridge St.

Irvington Pizza Company
106 Main St.

Tony's
2 South Broadway

Iran War

Continued from page 1

I don't know. There's no way I can get in touch with anybody."

For Saliani's son, Kamran, who is half Iranian, the past two weeks have been "a blur."

"It feels like a movie, but it's real," Kamran Saliani said. "I can't believe how long it's been already. [It's] just an unending state of shock at the moment.... There's no way that any of us are going to feel like there's a breath we can take until we hear from our families."

Kamran Saliani grew up in Irvington, where he still lives, and graduated from the high school in 2012. He is the founder and executive director of the Irvington Shakespeare Company. Although he is a longtime resident of the Rivertowns, he expressed anxiety over speaking to other members of the community about the conflict due to "a fear of people thinking things that aren't true about Iranians, like, all of them hate America, or they're all evil." He hopes to dispel these stereotypes by encouraging people to learn about the country's history.

"I don't know how many Americans know that, in the 1950s [Iranians] elected a prime minister, the first democratically elected leader of Iran," Kamran Saliani said. "He was a professor named Mohammed Mosaddegh, and he was actually sort of the beacon of democracy in the region... He developed a parliamentary style of democracy and he's an incredibly inspiring story. Unfortunately, America, the CIA, and MI6 in Britain, overthrew him in a coup and inserted the Shah



Kamran Saliani

of Iran, who then reigned for 30 brutal years until the revolution. I've always felt that if people knew the history, they would realize that Iranians really admire the American style of democracy."

Another reason why he is hesitant to share his perspective is Islamophobia.

"Post 9/11, Islamophobia shot through the country [and] was really terrifying for all families from the region," Saliani said. "It's a survival instinct. I just have to keep my head down and get through this, because you don't know who's out there. You don't know what people read or believe."

He described the lack of support he believes many Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans feel.

"We know that no one's gonna come out for us," he said. "Politicians are not going to come out and be like, 'We're strongly against this.' They're not going to have rallies. We know that there's not going to be a local movement, like 'Stand with America and Iran against war,' 'Stand for peace.' We're all very much aware that we're quote, unquote on our own when these things happen."

Another Irvington resident affected by the war is Reza, an engineer who asked not to be fully identified due to fear of harassment for expressing his beliefs. Twenty-four years ago, he immigrated to the U.S. from Tehran, where his extended family still lives. He believes the conflict is "not about bringing freedom or democracy to Iran."

"Everything that you can imagine has been targeted," he said. "Schools, hospitals, universities, bridges, roads, power plants, residential buildings, high-rises... When you destroy a 20-story building, hundreds of people are living in that building, and they're all affected. They get killed, or they get maimed... These are not military targets. I believe that the purpose of this is just to destroy Iran, the same thing that happened in Gaza."

On March 16, Reza's oldest aunt passed away, with the family unable to have a proper burial due to the war. The 79-year-old woman lived by herself in Tehran, where her children visited every day to cook for her, bring medication, and keep her company. During the past two weeks, the bombardment restricted

their ability to see and help their mother.

"Although my aunt was not killed directly by a bomb, I believe sincerely that she died because of this war, because her kids could not go and take care of her properly," Reza said. "She was alone, and she was maybe hearing all these bombardments. It just breaks my heart that this person, innocent, elderly, and helpless, died for no reason."

For Rivertowns residents who want to support their Iranian neighbors, Reza believes that sharing a "kind word" can help people feel less alone. Kamran Saliani agreed.

"The best thing is [asking], 'Hey, how is your family?' he said. "If you have a friend, you could be like, 'If you want to talk to me, I'll listen, I won't judge.'"

What is most important, Saliani said, is to "keep your mind open."

"Things are always changing and growing, and there's a lot of history to learn as well," he added. "Just remember your humanity. First and foremost, these are children and babies and teenagers and adults. They're human beings, at the end of the day, just like us."

Saliani suggested people contact their elected representatives and share how they feel about the war. He also encouraged people to explore Iranian culture, whether it be the music and art scene, Middle Eastern news outlets, or even learning about Nowruz.

"Iran is 5,000 years old," he said. "There's an immense amount of tradition and pride, but also stories of resilience and love and the arts... To have that as a foundation for myself is very empowering, knowing that I'm part of a culture that's survived everything."



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ARDSLEY

— Coming Up This Week —

Ardsley Cares Day

Saturday, March 21, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
Ardsley High School and throughout the village. Visit ArdsleyPTSA.org/events_ardsley-cares-day

Food Drive for the Dobbs Ferry Food Pantry

Saturday, March 21, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.
Ardsley United Methodist Church,
525 Ashford Ave.
Drop off donations of nonperishable foods and monetary gifts or call 914-693-4225 for a pickup

Readathon and Children's Book Drive

Saturday, March 21, noon–2 p.m.
Ardsley Public Library
Local high school and middle school students read to young children and collect book donations

Live Band Karaoke

Sunday, March 22, 5 p.m.
Saw Mill Tavern, 925 Saw Mill River Road
\$20 for registered performers, \$25 for general admission, \$10 for kids under 18 (includes one complimentary drink and light bites). Register at Ardsleymusicpartners.org/other-events

Board of Trustees Work Session

Monday, March 23, 7:30 p.m.
Village Hall

Rivertown Parents Webinar: IEP and 504 Plans

Tuesday, March 24, 7:30 p.m.
Register at rivertownparents.com

Virtual Lecture: Free Plants

Wednesday, March 25, 7:30 p.m.
Ardsley Pollinator Pathway showcases the free native plants that will be available on Ardsley Pollinator Day (April 26)
Register at Ardsleypollinatorpathway.org

Zoning Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 25, 8 p.m.
Village Hall

Ardsley Makers Circle

Thursday, March 26, 5–6:30 p.m.
Ardsley Public Library

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at amy@rivertownsdispatch.com



Part of the pillow top in the historical society's archive at the Ardsley Public Library.

Heirloom intertwines threads of history

WWI pillow top left to historical society

BY AMY BOCHNER

Now in the archives of the Ardsley Historical Society is a 100-year-old pillow cover, or top, steeped in the village's history, from residents' efforts during World War I to the deeply rooted Acker family.

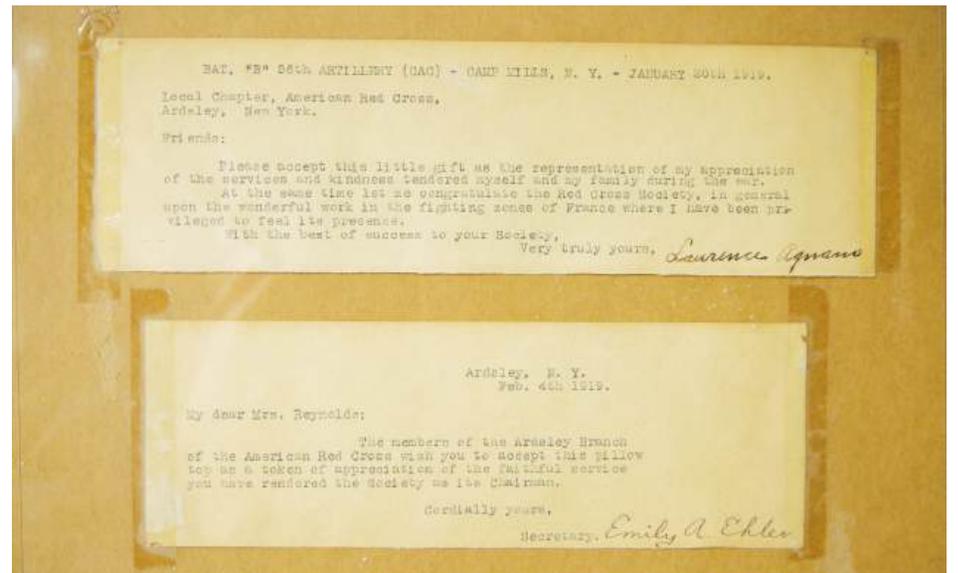
From 1917–1919, French women sold their handmade “sweetheart” pillow tops to American soldiers as keepsakes to send home. In Ardsley, such an heirloom belonged to Marjorie Acker, who passed away last month at the age of 92. She grew up in the village and graduated from Ardsley High School in 1952 as a member of the honor society.

The Ackers were one of Ardsley's oldest families, tracing their lineage back to the Dutch settlers in the 1600s. Up until the early 1900s, generations of the family lived on a farm on Sprain Road, which is now the site of the middle school.

Acker's father, Oscar, served on the village board of trustees and the board of education in the '40s and '50s, and was the superintendent of the Sunday school at Ardsley United Methodist Church for 20 years. His first wife, Edith Mildred Reynolds, passed away in 1928, and in 1931 he married Edna Miller, with whom he had Acker and her brother, Kenny.

Although they weren't related, Acker developed a close relationship with Edith Reynolds' mother, Lida Reynolds. According to Ardsley Historical Society president Gary Rappaport, Acker described Reynolds as having raised her.

During World War I, Reynolds led the Ardsley branch of the American Red Cross. The work she oversaw included knitting



Two notes on the back of the frame that holds the pillow top.

and sewing clothing for soldiers, traveling across the Atlantic to support the war effort, preparing surgical dressings, and supporting the nationwide influenza pandemic response.

In acknowledgement of Reynolds' efforts as a leader, the other Ardsley Red Cross members presented her with a gift in February 1919 — an 18 by 18-inch cotton/silk pillow top embroidered with the French and American flags and the words “Souvenir de France.”

The pillow top had been gifted to the Ardsley Red Cross by Lawrence Agnano of Ardsley, who obtained it in France while serving during the war. In a letter signed Jan. 20, 1919, he expressed gratitude to the Ardsley Red Cross branch for its “services and kindness” to him and his family, as well as for the worldwide relief organization's efforts “in the fighting zones of France.” Six of Agnano's family members are listed on

the World War II memorial in Pascone Park.

Acker's maternal grandfather, John Miller, spearheaded the fundraising effort for the World War I memorial in front of village hall, which Reynolds unveiled on April 5, 1919. Reynolds passed down the pillow top to Acker, who left the heirloom to the Ardsley Historical Society in her will.

Rappaport told the Dispatch that the pillow top and its story are “emblematic” of the village. From Reynolds' efforts with the Red Cross and raising Acker after losing her own daughter, to the Agnano family's service in both world wars, Rappaport said the heirloom represents “the best of us.”

“These stories, these heirlooms, these people — that's what makes a community,” he said. “It's a piece of fabric, but it's a thread that's a part of the cloth that weaves through Ardsley. This is just another one of those things that reminds us of who we are.”

ARDSLEY

Panel offers a primer about serving on the school board

BY LAURA SCHILLER

Ardsley High School students and former board of education members hosted a small group of district residents on Wednesday, March 12, for an information session on how to serve on the board. The event was coordinated by student interns with Ardsley HEART, a nonprofit dedicated to fostering inclusion and engagement within the school district.

Sophomore Zuri Barnes, a member of the student panel, said her involvement began through Impact, a diversity and inclusion club at AHS. “Impact is a club I really enjoy because it shows how students can positively influence our community,” Barnes said. “Joining Ardsley HEART allowed me to make an even bigger impact.”

Classmates Nadia Ozdoba, Raena Sood, and Edona Lumaj joined Barnes to kick off the presentation. “This event was created to answer your questions about the roles and responsibilities of the board of education and to give insight into the personal experiences of former trustees,” Ozdoba explained.

The student panel reviewed the responsibilities of board members, describing four core roles: leader, representative, steward, and advocate. They outlined leadership positions, including board president — the chief facilitator or “conductor” — and vice president, described as a “co-pilot” or strategic

partner. Trustees act as the community’s voice and help oversee district finances and policy, while the student representative provides a perspective that “brings the hallway mentality into the decision-making.”

Students also highlighted qualities that help board members succeed, including strong communication skills, the ability to build consensus, openness to information, and a willingness to collaborate. Effective boards, they added, share a clear vision, pay close attention to budgets and timelines, work as a team, and maintain a growth mindset.

The panel then reviewed eligibility requirements for candidates. Board members must be at least 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, and a resident of the Ardsley School District, which includes part of Dobbs Ferry and unincorporated Greenburgh. In a lighthearted moment, students led a myth-busting game clarifying that board members do not need a specific academic degree, are not paid a salary, and do not need to have children in the district to serve. Prospective candidates must file a petition and collect signatures from 25 neighbors before the application deadline of 5 p.m. on April 20.

The Westchester Putnam School Boards Association will host a workshop for prospective board members on April 9 at 7 p.m. Students reminded attendees that Ardsley’s

school budget vote and board of education election will take place on May 19.

After the student portion, former trustees Natasha Nunez (2018), Nicole Minore (2016–2022), and Matthew Bonney (2015–2021) joined the panel to share their experiences.

Nunez, an Ardsley teacher and Hastings resident, said her interest in the board began after attending a meeting during a special education audit. While she appreciated the district’s transparency, she was concerned about the findings and began speaking with neighbors about their experiences. “Someone who’s an educator should be on the board,” she recalled thinking. She later became the youngest person elected to her district’s board and its first Latina trustee.

Bonney, a tax accountant, said his involvement began after joining an independent finance committee. When a seat opened, the superintendent encouraged him to run. “It kind of just finds you,” he said. “I don’t think anyone lies in bed at night thinking they want to be a board member.”

Minore said she decided to run after previously serving as a village trustee and wanting to contribute more directly to the schools.

All three reflected on the challenges of board service. Minore summed up one of the most difficult challenges in a single word, “Covid,” recalling the complex decisions

involving health, safety, and education during the pandemic.

Bonney said one of the hardest responsibilities was balancing school needs with the financial impact on taxpayers. “Our district is neither wealthy nor struggling,” he said, noting that board members must weigh community resources against school priorities, such as capital projects and facilities improvements.

Looking back, Nunez said she was proud of helping expand integrated co-teaching classrooms and supporting the creation of a district diversity leadership position.

The panel also discussed ways boards stay connected to the community, including surveys, town halls, and inviting students or residents to speak directly with board members about issues affecting the schools.

When asked about the personal rewards of serving, Minore responded openly, saying, “There is no greater joy than being on that stage when the kids are graduating.”

Nunez said the experience showed her the power of advocacy and community collaboration. “Being able to see the community come together and feel like you’ve left a place better than you found it is very rewarding,” she said.

Bonney summed up the satisfaction in heartfelt, universal terms: “This is our home. Wouldn’t you want to make your home better?”



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DOBBS FERRY

— Coming Up This Week —

Flashlight Egg Hunt

Friday, March 20, 8 p.m.
Gould Park
For third-graders and up

Food Drive for the Dobbs Ferry Food Pantry

Saturday, March 21, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.
Ardsley United Methodist Church,
525 Ashford Ave.

Drop off donations of nonperishable foods and monetary gifts or call 914-693-4225 for a pickup

“Get Growing!”

Sunday, March 22, 1–3 p.m.
Dobbs Ferry Public Library

The Dobbs Ferry Garden Club presents an introduction to gardening basics, including plant types, tools, and soil
Register at gardenclubofdobbsferry.org

Egg Hunt

Sunday, March 22, 2 p.m.
High school turf field
For children pre-K through grade 2

Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 6:30 p.m. for the workshop and 7:30 for the regular meeting
Village Hall
Agenda available at dobbsferry.gov

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 7 p.m.
Middle/high school library
Agenda available at dfsd.org

IEP and 504 Plans Webinar

Tuesday, March 24, 7:30 p.m.
Register at rivertownparents.com

Trivia Night

Wednesday, March 25, 7–9 p.m.
Embassy Community Center, 60 Palisade St.
Free; up to six per team, ages 18 and up

Toddler Storytime

Friday, March 27, 10:30 a.m.
Keeper’s House, 15 Walnut St.
Nature-themed storytime and craft activity for ages 2–4

Got news?

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



Frank Farrington marches up Main Street in Tarrytown.

Life of service lands grand marshal honor

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

Lifelong Dobbs Ferry resident Frank Farrington, whose family has been a fixture in the village for more than a century, was honored by his hometown before serving as grand marshal of the 30th Annual Sleepy Hollow St. Patrick’s Day Parade on Sunday, March 15. During a village board meeting on March 10, Mayor Christy Knell presented Farrington, 73, with a proclamation recognizing his

decades of service to Dobbs Ferry.

“I try to take the honor seriously and myself less so,” Farrington told the Dispatch.

During the parade, Farrington, who was born at Dobbs Ferry Hospital, now the Dobbs Ferry Pavilion of St. John’s Riverside Hospital, marched from Tarrytown to Sleepy Hollow with his children and grandchildren behind him.

Farrington traces his Irish lineage back

to a written manifest that describes one great-grandfather, Frank Coffey, leaving Kilrush, County Clare, for Dobbs Ferry in the 1890s with his family, at 9 years old. He believes another great-grandfather, Thomas Farrington, arrived in Dobbs Ferry from Belfast around the 1860s. Today Frank Farrington lives in the home his parents bought in 1949. He has three children and

Continued on page 16

— OBITUARY —

Leah Miriam Stavenhagen

Leah Miriam Stavenhagen of Dobbs Ferry, an advocate for young women living with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a neurodegenerative disease, passed away on Feb. 20, at age 33.

Leah was diagnosed with ALS in 2019, at age 26. In 2021, she created Her ALS Story (heralsstory.org) to provide support for women diagnosed with ALS under the age of 35. The group continues to be run by members, who number more than 150 women around the world.

Leah was born in Seattle on Nov. 15, 1992 and lived with her parents on Bainbridge Island. Her family moved to Princeton, New Jersey, in 1995 (where her sister Melissa was born); to Dayton, Ohio, in 1996; to Olney, Maryland, in 2001 (where her sister Emma was born); and to Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2009.

In Olney, Leah became a dancer and a synchronized swimmer, entering her first national swimming competition at 13. She attended Sherwood High School for

two years before the family of five moved to Denmark, where she graduated from the Copenhagen International School.

In 2015, Leah graduated from the University of Michigan with honors with a triple major (French, Political Science, Comparative Literature) — and a Parisian boyfriend named Hugo Taubmann.

Leah’s dream was to live and work in New York and Paris. She moved first to New York City, and then, through a Chamber of Commerce program, moved with Hugo to Paris to work at the American Jewish Committee. She completed a master’s program in business at HEC (École des hautes études commerciales de Paris) in May 2019.

Leah’s career was cut short by her ALS diagnosis. She moved back to New York in June 2020 for treatment at Columbia University.

Leah was honored for her advocacy, and accepted the awards on behalf of the women of Her ALS Story. Though she led Her ALS Story for nearly five years, she pulled other members into leadership roles and allowed for a range of voices and talents.

Hugo and Leah were married in Paris in October 2020. In March 2022, Leah wrote a book, in French, titled, “J’Aimerais Danser Encore” (“I Would Love to Dance Again”), recalling her love story juxtaposed with her fatal diagnosis.

She and Hugo were on an eight-day trip to Egypt when she died in El Gouna with Hugo and her caregiver, Deborah Ardemani, at her side.

Leah is survived by her husband, sisters, and parents Susan and Jeff Stavenhagen; maternal grandmother, Barbara Asbury; paternal grandmother, Geri Stavenhagen; and many aunts, uncles, and cousins. She was preceded by her maternal grandfather, Charles Joseph Asbury, and paternal grandfather, Monroe Stavenhagen.

A memorial ceremony for Leah was held at the Protestant Oratory Church of the Louvre in Paris on March 14. A celebration of life event will be held in New York in June.

In memory of Leah, donate to the Her ALS Story Retreat (secure.givelively.org/donate/hark-als/her-als-story-2026-retreat) or Project ALS (projectals.donor-support.co/page/leahstavenhagen).

DOBBS FERRY

Students' American Revolution video to compete statewide

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

A team of three Dobbs Ferry Middle School students took first place in the junior documentary category of the region's National History Day competition. Seventh-graders Samuel Abelon, Nefeli Antonogiannakis, and Byrn Lee and their video, "The American Revolution: The Birth of a Nation," are now advancing from the Lower Hudson Valley contest to the state competition on April 26.

Lee, Abelon, and Antonogiannakis are all students of seventh-grade social studies teacher Katia Marques, but not in the same class. In her 18 years at the middle school, this is the first time she has students entered in the National History Day contest. Completing the documentary over several weeks earlier this year required the students to work collaboratively during lunch periods and after school, in addition to working on the project individually.

"When I had parent-teacher conferences, I selected three kids who I knew could work independently, and with some guidance," Marques told the Dispatch. She identified the ideal participants based on "their drive" and ability to manage on their own.

The National History Day contest includes a junior division for students in grades 6-8 and a senior division for students in grades 9-12. Groups can include two to five students,



Samuel Abelon, Nefeli Antonogiannakis, and Byrn Lee

participating in one of four categories: documentary, exhibit, website, or performance. Individual participants only can participate in the fifth category, which is an essay contest.

The Dobbs Ferry team worked on their extracurricular contest project at the same time that all of Marques' classes worked on projects centered around the American Revolution, during a year that marks the 250th

anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

"We all really like history, and aside from being chosen by our teacher, we all thought it would be a really fun and engaging project showcasing our ability to show history," Antonogiannakis said. "Before, we started out knowing a lot of things from school and from our own readings; after, we gained a lot

more information throughout the process."

At times, the documentary's script turns into narration that takes viewers into the moment, as if it's now 1776. Recounting the history in a form that's more narrative than a listing of facts allowed the students to become more engaged with the history.

"I liked how as a nation we stuck together," Lee explained. "Yes, there was some division between the patriots and the loyalists, but overall, we just stuck together through the war and created a better country that wasn't a monarchy under Britain's rule."

While the contest didn't require all participants to focus on the same specific subject, this year's National History Day theme was "Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History." The Dobbs students' project features all three students breaking down the different elements of the American Revolution, while giving viewers a taste of their personalities and, at times, their sense of humor.

"I think in a video it's cool to express how we feel, and in our special tones we can really talk and express [ourselves]," Abelon explained. "And I like technology, so the effects were very cool, which makes the video more interesting and inclusive for everybody."

"I feel like the audio-visual has a greater power than just reading a book because it

Continued on page 14

WAYFINDERS ON THE HUDSON		
	SPRING 2026	Connecting with Ourselves, Each Other, & the Earth!
	BASE CAMP 1st - 8th graders & H.S. Interns Nature connection activities & games, survival skills, social emotional learning, leadership development, community building.	Weekly 4/14 - 6/18 Tues., Weds., or Thurs. 3:45 - 5:45 PM Lenoir Preserve
	MOTHERHOOD RISING: TENDING THE ROOTS 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
	WISE OWLS 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
	DANCE EMBODY 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
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HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON

— Coming Up This Week —

Downtown Eggstravaganza
Saturday, March 21, 10 a.m.

Children ages 3–8 search for plastic eggs filled with candy and toys hidden on the lawns of the VFW, public library, and village hall

“Talkin’ Bout the Revolution”
Sunday, March 22, 2 p.m.

Hastings Public Library
Revolutionary Hastings presents historian and author Todd Braisted to discuss Gen. George Washington’s maneuvers in the Lower Hudson Valley

Lisa O’Reilly’s Retirement Party
Tuesday, March 24, 6–8 p.m.

James Harmon Community Center
Open house with refreshments donated by local restaurants

Superintendent’s Forum

Tuesday, March 24, 6–8 p.m.
Hillside Multipurpose Room

To attend via Zoom and to submit questions, visit ptsahastings.org

IEP and 504 Plans Webinar

Tuesday, March 24, 7:30 p.m.
Register at rivertownparents.com

Senior Lunch and Learn: Aging Smart

Thursday, March 26, 12:15 p.m.
James Harmon Community Center

Register by emailing senioroutreach@hohny.gov

Zoning Board Meeting

Thursday, March 26, 7 p.m.
Village Hall

Agenda available at hohny.gov

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

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



Pam Knell, Kai Ghalib, and Simrin Eklund participate in the discussion about A.I. on March 11.

Teens and seniors bond over tech

Intergenerational Club hosts A.I. discussion

BY AMY BOCHNER

At the most recent program of Hastings High School’s Intergenerational Club, seniors and students shared their perspectives on artificial intelligence, finding common ground in their hopes for and concerns about the technology’s future.

The discussion, which took place March 11 at the James Harmon Community Center, pointed to the mission of the club, which operates in collaboration with the Village’s Youth and Senior councils.

“From what I heard from the people on

the Senior Council who work with us, some seniors kind of feel left out of the community, and they want to continue to be more involved,” high school junior and club co-chair Simrin Eklund told the Dispatch. “The Intergenerational Club allows for both high schoolers and seniors to build connections and relationships with one another that make the seniors feel more seen, and the high schoolers have just a more fun experience in Hastings.”

Through activities such as crafting, game nights, and cooking, and topical conversations such as the one on A.I., the goal is to “unite” the community, according to Eklund.

Founded three years ago by students Frida Belasco and Sofia Eliasi, who graduated last June, the Intergenerational Club is now

co-chaired by Eklund and classmate Alina Abrams, who have been involved since they were freshmen. Their role includes meetings with Senior Council members Pat Bloom and Randi Finkelstein, as well as Youth Council chair Lori Walsh, to plan upcoming events.

For the A.I. program, they teamed up with sophomores Levi Rosenman and Luca Chen, founders of Rivertowns TECH, a free service that provides seniors at-home assistance with computers, cellphones, and other devices.

Rosenman explained how he and Chen came to offer their skills to seniors. “We both felt that there was a gap between what we’re doing in our lives and the elders’ lives, and we just wanted to have something to connect

Continued on page 16



Sprucing up the woods

Hastings resident Maria Silver removes tennis balls and other debris from the woods between the Chemka Pool courts and Hillside School on Sunday, March 15. Silver was joined by Hastings Vine Squad volunteers who pruned invasive vegetation around Sugar Pond.

HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON

Walkable roof cut from planned cafeteria addition

BY AMY BOCHNER

The Hastings School District's business official/district treasurer Maureen Caraballo shared updates about the \$38,475,489 capital bond project at the Board of Education meeting on March 2. The bond consists of three

Hudson Lab students lobby for online safety legislation

Students from Hudson Lab School in Hastings traveled to Albany on March 10 to participate in a statewide Day of Action organized by Common Sense Media, a non-profit that provides reviews for families about books, games, movies, and TV shows, as well as guides for parents about phones, artificial intelligence, and social media platforms.

Common Sense Media representatives began the day with a policy briefing about current legislation aimed at protecting minors from online exploitation, unsafe private chat features, A.I. chatbot risks, and manipulative platform design.

Participants then split into groups to meet

propositions that voters approved last June.

The first phase encompasses districtwide infrastructure upgrades. The second includes additions to the Farragut Complex with new classrooms, cafeteria, and main entrance. The third is the addition of two new artificial turf fields at the Burke Estate and related site work.

According to Caraballo, the district decided to modify the cafeteria addition, which was planned to have two floors, plus a basement and a rooftop space, to align it with the approved budget.

The largest of these changes is the elimination of the proposed walkable roof. Pricing

with lawmakers and their staffs, including New York State Assemblymember Edward Gibbs of Manhattan. Students also met with staff from the office of New York State Sen. Brian Kavanagh to learn more about how legislation moves through the state Senate and how young people can participate in the policymaking process.

Later in the day, students participated in a press conference on the steps of the New York State Capitol, where lawmakers discussed proposed bills, including the Stop Online Predators Act (S.4609A), introduced by New York State Sen. Andrew Gounardes. The legislation would require stronger safeguards on gaming and social media platforms that allow private messaging between minors and strangers.

Hudson Lab School student Lily Slavin, a

member of the fourth/fifth-grade class, spoke at the press conference about the impact of technology and social media on young people.

"I don't think it's fair that children can be exposed to so many harmful things online," Slavin said. "Apps, gaming platforms, and A.I. can make kids feel like they're talking to friends, even when they're not. If there are age limits for things like alcohol because they can be dangerous, then we should also make sure the internet is safe for kids. Children should be able to have fun online without worrying about being hurt, manipulated, or exposed to things they're not ready for."

Hudson Lab School is a K-8 project-based learning school that emphasizes real-world learning experiences. It operates out of Andrus on Hudson at 185 Old Broadway.

by Triton Construction, the project's construction manager, found that the structural requirements for this feature would add more than \$1 million to the cost, with the roofing system upgrade estimated at an additional \$400,000. The district is also reviewing adjustments to the size of the basement, which represents a smaller financial impact.

The core elements of the project will remain intact, Caraballo said, particularly the elevator installation and the additional bathrooms. All of the other elements are trending under budget.

More news included that the district received state approval for the masonry restoration project at the Farragut Complex, as well as for MEP (mechanical, electrical, and plumbing) work at Hillside School. The district is working with its architects to develop construction schedules for these projects. Both are anticipated to span 12 to 16 months, with some work beginning this summer. In addition, the field work for the Burke Estate is out to bid.

The cafeteria addition is expected to be submitted to the State within the next month. A significant portion of site work is planned, and the district is hopeful that it can begin portions of this work in late summer.



Hudson Lab School operations coordinator and admissions associate Yvette Lopez and students at the office of NYS Attorney General Letitia James.

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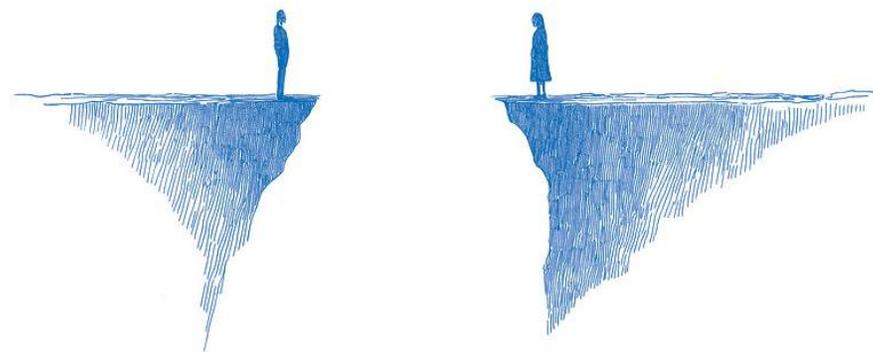
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IRVINGTON

— Coming Up This Week —

“Elder Financial Exploitation and the Role of a Trusted Contact”

Saturday, March 21, 2 p.m.
Irvington Public Library
Register at irvingtonlibrary.org

Farmers Market

Sunday, March 22, 9:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
Main Street School, 101 Main St.
The winter market convenes every other Sunday (except April 5)
For details, visit irvingtonfarmersmarket.org and follow the market on Facebook

Community Sports Equipment Swap

March 22 at the Irvington Farmers Market
Drop off lightly used equipment and take donated gear

Irvington Historical Society: Virtual Lecture

Sunday, March 22, 2 p.m.
Penn State professor Friederike Baer discusses “Incomprehensible Friends and Rebellious Enemies: German Soldiers in the American Revolutionary War.” Register for the Zoom link at irvingtonhistoricalsociety.org

Architectural Review Board Meeting

Monday, March 23, 8 p.m.
Village Hall

Zoning Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 7:30 p.m.
Village Hall

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 7:30 p.m.
High school library

IEP and 504 Plans Webinar

Tuesday, March 24, 7:30 p.m.
Register at rivertownparents.com

Virtual Talk: History of the Beer Can

Wednesday, March 25, 7 p.m.
Register at irvingtonlibrary.org

“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



Olivia La Cruz, Xailey Casseus, and the ensemble. Photo by Maddie Sledge.

Kindness suffuses optimism in ‘Amélie’

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

An imaginative waitress at a Paris café pulls off secret deeds to better the lives of others during the Broadway Training Center’s production of “Amélie” this weekend at Irvington Theater. The musical, adapted from a French-language film released in 2001, had a two-month run on Broadway in 2017, two years after premiering at Berkeley Repertory Theatre in California.

The production by the Hastings-based Broadway Training Center (BTC) features three performances, March 20–23, with a cast of 19 high school students representing all four Rivertowns, as well as other Westchester communities. BTC is led by husband-and-wife co-artistic directors Jason Brantman and Fiona Santos.

“Our leading character, Amélie, spends

most of the show trying to make delightful surprises and miracles happen for other people,” Santos told the Dispatch. “She is having trouble personally connecting with the world, and so it’s her way of trying to make things better for other people, but it also ends up transforming her life and making her into a person who’s more capable of connection.”

Amélie is played by Romy Files, a senior at Croton-Harmon High School in her second year acting with BTC. Files sees Amélie as the kind of person she aspires to be, and hopes others follow suit.

“She just finds the best in other people and she wants so badly for everyone around her to succeed,” Files said. “She brings out the best in the people around her, and I think that’s really admirable.”

While an eight-piece orchestra of

professional musicians accompanies the cast, a lot of the sights and sounds that comprise the set aren’t pre-recorded or pre-built. Instead, it’s the ensemble that uses their bodies and voices to illustrate the scene.

“When Amélie’s heart beats, the ensemble sings what that sounds like, and when a train comes into the station, the ensemble creates that soundscape and physicalizes what a train looks like,” Santos explained. “So, everything that is a part of theater magic is really done by the ensemble.”

“We do use certain prop add-ons,” Brantman added, “but for the most part, all of these things are created with their own voices and their own bodies.”

All students take acting, voice, and dance classes at BTC, with an emphasis on

Continued on page 15

Dig in

Irvington Woods Committee chair Zoe Hamilton-vom Baur and Irvington High School ninth-grader Paxton Kitcharayothin dig a hole for a white oak near the O’Hara Nature Center on Saturday, March 14. In addition to planting trees that morning, volunteers collected sap from sugar maples that was boiled into syrup.



IRVINGTON

‘The Secret Buttons’ adds a facet to Holocaust survival

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

To escape from Nazis, two young girls flee from Austria to England before the start of World War II in a new picture book titled “The Secret Buttons,” written by Irvington resident Ellen Shapiro.

“The Secret Buttons” takes its title from a brief account told to Shapiro by her mother, who was a Holocaust survivor who fled to England from Vienna. Elizabeth Nussbaum Shapiro, who passed away 20 years ago, shared a memory with her then 10-year-old daughter that stuck with her for the past six decades.

“She said, ‘When I was in England during the blackouts and the blitz, I crocheted around diamonds and made them into buttons that I sewed onto sweaters that the refugees wore on the boats to America,’” Shapiro told the Dispatch.

Beyond that one sentence, Shapiro’s mother withheld a lot of the details about the buttons and her experience as a refugee in her early 20s. After landing in England with relatives, she moved to California, where Ellen Shapiro grew up.

“I asked her many questions that I would love to ask her now,” Shapiro said. “I do think I tried, and she always wanted to change the subject. I’ve read books about the personalities of Holocaust survivors, and a lot of them don’t want to talk about it.”



Ellen Shapiro. Photo by Margaret Fox. The cover of the book. Photo by Tim Grajek.



Around a decade ago Shapiro, a graphic designer with two published trade books, became more curious about her mother’s story of the buttons. She began reading more books on the Holocaust and made multiple trips to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., all in an effort to learn if the story could be true, why her mother would need to hide diamonds in buttons, and what her mother’s life must have been like at that time.

Shapiro remembers her mother knitting outfits for her since she was a baby, and after Shapiro’s younger brother graduated

from high school, their mother opened a knitting shop in Inglewood, California. Shapiro looked through her mother’s old knitting books to see if embedding diamonds in buttons was possible.

“I could see that there were little wooden button molds that people could buy that you can crochet around to make matching buttons for your sweater,” Shapiro said. “So now that I know that that’s true, I saw that there really is a story here.”

Shapiro was unsuccessful when she shopped around a book, targeted more for adults, that was based on her mother’s

account. She took the project in a different direction in 2023, after she began teaching Hebrew school classes for grades 5-7 at Congregation Sons of Israel in Briarcliff Manor. When she was having trouble keeping their attention, she decided to ask them what they wanted to learn about, and a significant number of them said the Holocaust.

“It was very mysterious to them,” Shapiro explained. “I thought what I really need to do is make a children’s book that can explain what was going on for fifth-through-seventh-graders at that time who were Jewish.”

Shapiro took the facts she knew about her mother and the Holocaust and applied them to a fictional story about a 12-year-old girl named Anni Blum and her 7-year-old sister Rosie. Anni is a fictional version of Shapiro’s mother — a decade younger than her mother was when she left Vienna. Like Shapiro’s mother, Anni loves to knit and crochet, and crochets around diamonds to make buttons that she sews into sweaters for refugees bound for the U.S.

While most of the story takes place in England, the opening chapter describes Anni in Vienna, walking to the park, which she finds closed, along with a sign bearing a swastika and the words “Jews not allowed.” In Shapiro’s research, she saw photos of

Continued on page 15

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The Agenda

SATURDAY MARCH 21

Ardsley Cares Day

ARDSLEY

9 a.m.–1 p.m. At the high school and throughout the village. Sign up at ArdsleyPTSA.org/events/ardsley-cares-day

Femme Fighters

ARDSLEY

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

Teen Open Mic

DOBBS FERRY

7 p.m. / Free. South Church, 343 Broadway. Visit the_lab_open_mic on Instagram for the link to sign up.

Ukrainian-style Egg Decorating Workshop

HASTINGS

10 a.m.–noon / \$45. The Maker Hive, 416 Warburton Ave. For teens and adults. Register online. makerhive.space

“Amélie: Teen Edition”

IRVINGTON

7 p.m. / \$25, \$20 for students and seniors. Irvington Theater, 85 Main St. Broadway Training Center presents a musical adaptation of the romantic comedy film. Also on Sunday at 3 p.m. irvingtontheater.com

Toast 250! Tavern Night

ELMSFORD

3–7 p.m. / No cover charge. Captain Lawrence Brewing Co., 444 N. Saw Mill River Road. Featuring re-enactors, 18th-century table games, and a trivia game at 5 p.m. Hosted by Revolutionary Westchester 250. rw250.org, captainlawrencebrewing.com

“Othello”

TARRYTOWN

2 and 5 p.m. / \$49. Lyndhurst, 635 S. Broadway. Last weekend for M&M Performing Arts Company’s presentation of Shakespeare’s tragedy. Performances run through Sunday. Appropriate for ages 12 and up. lyndhurst.org

“From Brush to Breath”

TARRYTOWN

2 p.m. / \$25. The Pocantico Center, 200 Lake Road. Poetry workshop inspired by the painting exhibit “Shen Wei: Still/Moving.” Register at rbf.org/pocantico/events

Tramps Like Us

TARRYTOWN

8 p.m. / \$38, \$32 for members. The Ark at the Shames JCC, 371 S. Broadway. Featuring the Bruce Springsteen tribute band. shamesjcc.org



Broadway Training Center’s student performers present “Amélie: Teen Edition” at the Irvington Theater this weekend, March 20–22.

Stillness in Motion: Meditation

YONKERS

3 p.m. / \$15 for adults, \$8 for ages 3–18, \$9 for students and seniors, free for members and children under 3. Hudson River Museum, 511 Warburton Ave. Recommended for ages 14 and up. hrm.org

SUNDAY MARCH 22

Live Band Karaoke

ARDSLEY

5 p.m. / \$20 for registered performers, \$25 for general admission, \$10 for kids under 18. Saw Mill Tavern, 925 Saw Mill River Road. Fund-raiser hosted by Ardsley Music Partners includes one complimentary drink and light bites. Purchase tickets or register with your song selection at ardsleymusicpartners.org/other-events

“Get Growing!”

DOBBS FERRY

1–3 p.m. / Dobbs Ferry Public Library, 55 Main St. The Dobbs Ferry Garden Club presents an introduction to gardening basics, including native plants, tools, and soil, featuring Ardsley Pollinator Pathway chair Carol Sommerfield. Register at gardenclubofdobbsferry.org

A Revolutionary Tea

DOBBS FERRY

2–3:30 p.m. / \$55. Dobbs Ferry Historical Society, 12 Elm St. Interactive tea with historical

storytelling and parlor games. For ages 16 and up. Purchase tickets at eventbrite.com

Kintsugi Workshop

HASTINGS

2–4 p.m. / \$85. The Maker Hive, 416 Warburton Ave. For teens and adults. Register online. makerhive.space

Winter Farmers Market

IRVINGTON

9:30 a.m.–1 p.m. Main Street School, 101 Main St. The market convenes on the second and fourth Sundays of the month (except April 5) through May 17. For details, visit theirvingtonfarmersmarket.org

Virtual History Talk

IRVINGTON

2 p.m. / Free. The Irvington Historical Society presents Penn State professor Friederike Baer to discuss “Incomprehensible Friends and Rebelious Enemies: German Soldiers in the American Revolutionary War.” Register for the Zoom link at irvingtonhistoricalsociety.org

History Lecture: The Irish in Westchester

GREENBURGH

2 p.m. / Free. Greenburgh Public Library, 300 Tarrytown Road. Register at greenburghlibrary.org to attend in person or online.

“Playdates with Po’Jazz”

YONKERS

2–4 p.m. / Free. Blue Door Art Center, 13 Riverdale Ave. Featuring poetry and jazz performances and an art table for kids. bluedoorartcenter.org

TUESDAY MARCH 24

Jazz Standards: Chris Conte

HASTINGS

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

Zodiac Art Workshop

IRVINGTON

7 p.m. / \$75, discount for members. The Lark, 50 S. Buckhout St., G107. thelark.club/events

Teen Poetry Workshop

GREENBURGH

6:30–7:30 p.m. / Free. Greenburgh Public Library, 300 Tarrytown Road. Teen-led workshop for grades 6–12. Register at greenburghlibrary.org

Indie Pop Band: Lucius

TARRYTOWN

5:30 p.m. / \$46–\$74. Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. tarrytownmusichall.org

WEDNESDAY MARCH 25

Virtual Lecture: Free Plants

ARDSLEY

7:30 p.m. / Free. Ardsley Pollinator Pathway showcases the free native plants that will be available on Ardsley Pollinator Day (April 26), and at the Greenburgh Public Library free native tree and shrub sapling giveaway on April 28. Register for the Zoom link at ardsleypollinatorpathway.org

Trivia Night

DOBBS FERRY

7–9 p.m. / Free. Embassy Community Center, 60 Palisade St. Up to six people per team; ages 18 and up.

Hybrid Film Club: “Modern Times”

GREENBURGH

7 p.m. / Free. Greenburgh Public Library, 300 Tarrytown Road. Watch this month’s film in advance, and join via Zoom or in person to discuss. Registration required. greenburghlibrary.org

“The Stars of Spring”

YONKERS

7 p.m. / Free. Lenoir Nature Preserve, 19 Dudley St. Astronomer Alberto Guzman discusses the stars of the vernal equinox. Indoor program, with an outdoor option if the weather permits. hras.org/programs

Continued on page 14

The Agenda

THURSDAY MARCH 26

Jazz & More

DOBBS FERRY

7–9:30 p.m. / No cover charge. Mirabella Cocina Latina Restaurant & Bar, Rivertowns Square, 1 Hamilton St. Featuring Jeff Barone on guitar and Alex Smith on piano.

Author Talk

TARRYTOWN

7–8 p.m. / Free. The Warner Library, 121 N. Broadway. Irvington writer and graphic designer Ellen M. Shapiro discusses and signs copies of “The Secret Buttons,” her historical novel for tweens, teens, and adults.

FRIDAY MARCH 27

Shakespeare & Company: “Hamlet”

TARRYTOWN

10 a.m. / \$43. Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. tarrytownmusichall.org

Film Screening: “Get Out”

TARRYTOWN

7 p.m. / \$11, free for members. Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. tarrytownmusichall.org

Jazz Vocalist Karrin Allyson

TARRYTOWN

7 and 9:30 p.m. / \$35, \$30 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. Also on March 28. jazzforumarts.org

Open Mic

SLEEPY HOLLOW

7:30 p.m. / \$5 per performer. Philipse Manor Station, 300 Riverside Drive. Pre-register for free virtual and in-person audience seats for a hybrid performance hosted by the Hudson Valley Writers Center. Registration required. writerscenter.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

ONGOING

Art Exhibit

ARDSLEY

Village Hall, 507 Ashford Ave. Nine abstract paintings by Alex Lawton, a 2016 graduate of Ardsley High School. On view through March.

“Color Between the Reins”

DOBBS FERRY

Dobbs Ferry Public Library, 55 Main St. Featuring equine art by Lena Knudson, a 2012 graduate of Dobbs Ferry High School. On view through March 31. dobbsferrylibrary.org

“Discard, Reclaim, Nurture by You”

DOBBS FERRY

The Donald Gallery at South Church, 343 Broadway. Exhibit by Hector “Bori” Rodriguez, a formerly incarcerated artist. Artist talk and reception on April 19, 3–5 p.m. On view through May 24. Gallery hours: Tuesday, 12–6 p.m.; Wednesday, 2–4 p.m.; Thursday, 12–4 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. southpres.org

“River Dreamer”

HASTINGS

Village Hall, 7 Maple Ave. Recent works by Neil Lavey of Dobbs Ferry. On view through April 3.

“Eternal Verities, Felt Thoughts”

HASTINGS

Upstream Gallery, 8 Main St. Exhibit of Madge Scott’s latest works. On view through April 5. Hours: Thursday–Sunday, 12:30–5:30 p.m. upstreamgallery.com

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

HASTINGS

Observatory Cottage, Draper Park, 407 Broad-

way. Open the first Saturday of each month, 2–4 p.m., and Mondays and Thursdays, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. On view through October. hastingshistoricalsociety.org

“Treason of the Blackest Dye”

IRVINGTON

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

“The Octagon House: 1876 Centennial Tour”

IRVINGTON

The Armour-Stiner Octagon House, 45 W. Clinton Ave. Celebrate America’s Semiquincentennial with a tour of the eight-sided domed landmark embodying the nation’s independent spirit. Various times through Sept. 20. For ages 7 and up. Advance tickets required. armourstiner.com

“Modern Women/Modern Vision”

YONKERS

Hudson River Museum, 511 Warburton Ave. The exhibit featuring almost 100 images is on view through May 10. Hours: Wednesday–Friday, noon–5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Admission: \$15 for adults, \$8 for ages 3–18, \$9 for students and seniors, free for members and children under 3. hrm.org

MacEachron Park

Continued from page 1

Village to apply for, and obtain, a state grant to evaluate the condition of the park and create a conceptual design for its restoration.

In 2021, the Village worked with the engineering firm Mott MacDonald to develop an existing conditions report, a preliminary environmental assessment, a basis of design report, and the conceptual design. The existing conditions report found that “along the southern shoreline adjacent to Kinnally Cove, the wall is subsiding, rendering the bench and outcropping unsafe. Along the Hudson River shoreline, erosion and high water has resulted in the loss of land and compromised the utility of park benches.”

The Village received another grant in 2023 to help realize the shoreline protection and improved amenities proposed in the conceptual design. This was given to the

Village by the Environmental Protection Fund Grant Program for Parks, Preservation, and Heritage.

In February 2025, the board issued a request for proposals to solicit an engineering firm to complete the conceptual design. Out of the eight firms that applied, the board approved a contract with Langan for \$491,500 in September. Over the next two years, the Village and residents will work with Langan to refine the design

Existing features of the park include a playground, benches, lawn, and a temporary stage. In the new design presented by the Langan representatives, the playground would be updated and moved closer to the seating within the trees. A walking path would loop through the open lawn, seven laps of which would equal one mile. Bench seating would be located throughout the site, with native plantings behind them. The seating within the trees would include upgraded

The final credits and bibliography scroll up the screen in a fashion reminiscent of the “Star Wars” films. At times the music choices create a dramatic effect similar to big-budget, blockbuster thrillers like “Inception” and “Interstellar,” which are the work of Lee’s favorite director, Christopher Nolan.

Marques appreciates the contest for not only encouraging the students to express their creativity free of a teacher’s directions, but for also aligning with the school’s International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Program.

“We have this framework where we’re

picnic tables.

Other features of the design include overlooks, kayak storage, a grilling area, a performance pavilion, a shade structure, rotating educational signage, and site lighting that is night sky friendly.

Along the shoreline, there would be restored riprap, which uses large, angular rocks without mortar to protect from erosion. The design raises the grade of the park by 1.5 to 2 feet, with low points. There would be a rain garden next to the parking lot to help with drainage, filled with plants that naturally filter the water. This would look like a perennial pollinator garden. The park will still flood, but the raised grading would help it drain as quickly as possible, the Langan representatives said.

Raising the grade requires replacing the existing trees within the lawn. The Langan representatives suggested replacing them with native trees like thornless honey locust,

trying to help our students connect the curriculum to other parts of the world that we live in,” Marques explained. “So they did the American Revolution, but they talked about the Haitian Revolution in their project, and the judges even asked them about how it ties to Iran right now.”

After being announced as regional winner on March 7, the trio have until April 14 to submit an updated version of their documentary before the state competition on April 26 at SUNY Oneonta. There, judges will meet with participants to evaluate their

multi-stem river birch, and American sycamore. The trees separating the park from the parking lot would remain.

In the current design, the stage/performance pavilion is next to the parking lot. During the question-and-answer part of the meeting, Adam Hart, who produces the RiverArts Music Tour, suggested moving the orientation of the stage so that the audience faces the Hudson River.

Also in attendance was Allison Muller, the granddaughter of Frances MacEachron, Hastings’ first female mayor and the namesake of the park. Muller asked about what will happen to the bench honoring her grandmother. The Langan representatives said that the bench, as well as the memorial art piece for MacEachron, will remain in the park.

At the meeting, there were boards with photos and art detailing the design, which will be on display in the Hastings Public Library.

work and announce the winners. Lee, Abe-lon, and Antonogiannakis want to participate again next year.

“I think if they make it all the way [to the national competition], I have to see how I can provide more of this for more of our students,” Marques said. “I think that this was a test drive to see if this can be something we do every year, and should we do it as an elective or as a club.”

If the trio takes first place in Oneonta next month, they will advance to the national contest at the University of Maryland in June.

National History Day video

Continued from page 8

becomes more entertaining, and for a lot of people they can gain more information from it,” Antonogiannakis added.

As the most tech savvy of the trio, Abe-lon handled the majority of editing the video, which includes images of important moments in American history, like the Boston Tea Party, and background music that changes throughout the documentary to match the mood of the subject matter.

Opinion

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

Hastings mayor backs incumbent trustees for re-election

To the Editor:

It is my pleasure to endorse the candidacies of Morgen Fleisig and Samantha Merton for village trustee in Hastings-on-Hudson. They have demonstrated

a deep commitment to our community and a thoughtful approach to the work of governing.

Morgen and I have served together on the board of trustees for many years, and his dedication to our village is evident in the care and consideration he brings to issues that shape our future. Morgen has long been a trusted resource on waterfront matters, which is why I asked him to continue serving as trustee liaison to the waterfront.

Samantha is an invaluable member of

the board through her engagement with our senior community, her support of our downtown, and her work with our recreation department, which all strengthen village life.

Both Morgen and Samantha immediately stepped forward to serve as liaisons to the newly formed Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee, which will help guide the prioritization of recommendations outlined in our current comprehensive plan.

Their willingness to take on additional responsibilities reflects the seriousness with which they approach their roles and their shared commitment to the future of Hastings-on-Hudson. They consistently go above and beyond in their roles, always willing to take on additional responsibilities in service to our community, and I hope you will join me in supporting their candidacies.

Mayor Tom Drake

HASTINGS

'Amélie'

Continued from page 11

improvisation. Brantman added, "We really feel that improvisation is at the heart of creating great characters and coming up with great ideas on stage, even during a rehearsal process that has a script. So our students are all very versed in coming up with ideas and taking big risks because of their improv background."

One of the stand-out challenges for the ensemble is creating the sights and sounds of a carousel, including the poles and make-shift horses. Santos recalled the ensemble taking less than 30 minutes to figure out how to bring the carousel to life, with little direction from her and Brantman, who made it a point not to refer to the way previous

productions carried out the story.

"This show is very physically demanding since the ensemble is the set almost, but it allows you to improvise with it," said Ard-sley High School senior Sarah Swires, who plays Amélie's mother, Amadine. "You have to imagine the scene fully before you do it."

Amélie works at Two Windmills Café alongside Gina Wells, a widow portrayed by Hastings High School junior Rosalie Dunn. Dunn recognizes how the ingenuity required of the ensemble is a reflection of Amélie's unconventional outlook.

"I feel like the show is about the beauty in mundane things and how Amélie transforms her pretty regular life into something so imaginative and so creative, and it's really cool to see how she makes her own world out of all of these things that are laid out

in front of her," Dunn explained.

The story is set in the 1990s, with the death of Princess Diana playing a notable role in the plot, and Elton John making an appearance in one of Amélie's fantasies. Since all of the cast members were born well after the turn of the new millennium, "Amélie" has given them the opportunity to get acquainted with another era's culture, fashion, and landline telephones.

"There's so much Lady Diana, so much Elton John," Dunn said. "The culture of the '90s is so engrained in every part of the show and it's so fun. I have a leopard scarf and zebra dress [in the musical]. It's wild."

The directors and cast shared that given the story's plot, and the collaboration required of the ensemble, togetherness is an important theme of the production.

For Files, that's no more apparent than at the café where Amélie works and builds community.

"Everybody knows each other — not just the workers, but also the regulars and the people who are passing by," Files said. "I can't really think of a place that I'm around now that has that mini culture inside of it, and it's really nice to have that highlighted in the story. That's not something you can come across easily nowadays with everything being so individualized."

BTC's production of "Amélie" will be on stage this Friday and Saturday, March 21–22, at 7 p.m. and on Sunday, March 23, at 3 p.m. Tickets cost \$27.70 for general admission and \$22.50 for students and seniors, including fees, at irvingtontheater.com.

'The Secret Buttons'

Continued from page 12

similar signs and learned that often Nazis closed parks before schools.

"Vienna, where my mother grew up, was the testing ground for the Nazis' evil innovations," Shapiro explained. "A lot of them were geared towards one thing: to make life so miserable for Jews that they would leave, and leave their money and valuables behind."

Shapiro discovered that before communications were closed down between Allied and Axis countries in World War II, people

in Austria could send their money and valuables to relatives in England, who would deposit them in a bank. In Shapiro's book, Anni's uncle, Benjamin, has connections to get refugees from England to the U.S., but he has to figure out a creative way for them to be able to bring their assets with them.

"There's a law in England [at the time] that no valuables can leave the country during wartime because it's all needed for the war effort," Shapiro explained. "Uncle Benjamin is able to get the money out of the bank [in Austria] and turn it into diamonds to get them with the refugees to America."

Shapiro used her research to create this fictional scenario that provides an explanation for why and how Anni, and in turn, Shapiro's mother, hid diamonds in sweater buttons. The process didn't leave Shapiro with exact answers about her mother's life, but it magnified her gratitude.

"I am so much more appreciative of my mom," Shapiro said. "I wish I had spent more time with her."

On Saturday, March 28, Shapiro will host a book talk at the Irvington Public Library from 2–2:30 p.m., following the Needles at Noon knitting group that meets on

Saturdays. Since knitting plays a significant role in "The Secret Buttons," Shapiro plans to participate and create a patchwork similar to one that appears in the book. Shapiro is also hosting a book talk for "Tweens, Teens and Adults" at the Warner Library in Tarrytown on Thursday, March 26, from 7–8 p.m.

Signed copies of "The Secret Button" are available at thealphagramshop.etsy.com.

Buy your copy of this local author's book at Picture Book: www.picturebookny.com

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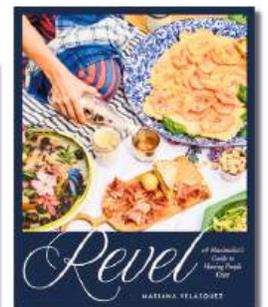
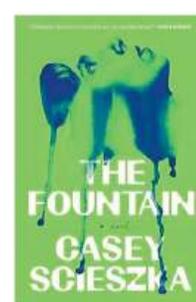
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Frank Farrington

Continued from page 7

10 grandchildren.

“They [his great-grandparents] must be looking down and smiling on that one,” Farrington said.

Growing up in Dobbs Ferry, he attended Sacred Heart School through the eighth grade, before moving on to Dobbs Ferry High School, where he played football and ran track. He earned his bachelor’s degree in elementary education from SUNY Oswego and master’s in special education from The College of New Rochelle, before teaching at the Mary Davidson School for Developmentally Disabled Youth at Letchworth Village Development Center in Rockland County.

Farrington began volunteering as a village firefighter in June 1974, and in 1982 he pivoted careers and joined the New York City Fire Department, where he retired 29 years

later as a captain with Engine 74 in Manhattan. On Sept. 11, 2001, while with Engine 76 in Manhattan, Farrington and his whole unit responded to the 9/11 terrorist attack after the first plane hit the World Trade Center, and all of his unit made it out alive.

“I probably think about parts of that day almost every day, to a degree,” Farrington explained. “Some guys are overwhelmed by it. I just try to think about something else and watch a golf match on TV or get involved in different activities.”

That day almost 25 years ago, and the fact that he’s been surrounded by a growing family since then, have served to put accolades — like the most recent proclamation and being chosen as grand marshal of the parade — in perspective.

“The luckiest thing [in my life] is that my whole unit was able to survive the Trade Center [attack],” Farrington said. “And then the favorite thing [in my life] is being able

to coach my sons and grandkids. I think that time spent with your kids and grandkids is time well spent.”

Farrington has three sons — Frank, Brian, and Kevin — and 10 grandchildren ranging in age from 3 to 12 years old. Farrington has had the opportunity to coach his grandkids in Dobbs Ferry Youth Football, and was an assistant coach on the high school football team during Brian’s senior year. During Farrington’s own senior year, his Dobbs Ferry High School football team posted a winless 0-8 season, and he takes great pride in the fact that all three of his sons played on teams that won a state championship.

“I also kid myself, and I say I wish I wasn’t 0-8, but maybe I go 8-0, and maybe I don’t survive the Trade Center,” Farrington said. “So you take things as they come.”

Farrington’s grandchildren are among the fourth generation of Farringtons, including Frank, who have been altar servers at Sacred

Heart Church. Farrington is a lector and Eucharistic minister at the church. While Farrington retired from the New York City Fire Department in 2012 with lung issues that have kept him from fighting fires since then, he’s continued with the Dobbs Ferry Volunteer Fire Department for nearly 52 years, and now works as a treasurer. He served as chief from 2009 to 2011.

Farrington spent 12 years on the village board in the ’90s and early 2000s, including one year as deputy mayor under former Mayor Joseph Bova. He was also a founding member of the Village’s youth baseball league, and is a current trustee with the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society, where he was once president.

“I try not to dwell so much on the honor,” Farrington said. “It’s nice, but just the feeling that I was able to live in the same area where I grew up. I’ve been very blessed and very fortunate.”

Intergenerational event

Continued from page 9

us closer with them,” he said. “We also both really like technology, and helping people, so we thought to combine it all into one and help older adults with technology.”

Rosenman and Chen are also enrolled in the high school’s two-year Science Research program, and are investigating how learning about technology improves older adults’ confidence and independence. As part of the project, they are looking to gather as many

seniors as they can for a survey that they will conduct within the next two months. Seniors interested in receiving tech help or participating in the survey can contact Rosenman at (914) 409-8671 or Chen at (917) 232-7739.

During the A.I. discussion, more than 20 seniors and students broke off into three smaller groups. The students began by sharing a presentation providing background on A.I. The students answered questions about how the technology works and ways it could be utilized in daily life. As the seniors and students delved deeper into the subject, the

discussion evolved into questions of ethics, how A.I. will affect the job market, and the potential dangers of A.I.-generated photos and videos.

Finkelstein shared what she learned from the discussion.

“It was pretty unanimous that the kids are being instructed in school to not use A.I., so even if they talk about A.I., they were a little bit guarded,” she said. “Another takeaway is their concerns about the jobs that will be available, especially since they might not be able to follow their original passions, because

A.I. might be absorbing those fields.”

Abrams found the two groups’ perspectives on the future to be more similar than different, with both experiencing fear, excitement, and cautiousness. Eklund called the event a success, showing how “connected we all are.”

“Even though the people we had the discussions with were 50, 60 years older, we all had very similar thoughts on technology and the future of technology,” she said. “I felt that it was a really, really great experience. It was still a similar endpoint, but it was a completely different perspective.”




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RESERVATIONS



Sports

EDITED BY ROB DIANTONIO

Bulldogs aim for another deep run in playoffs

— GIRLS' LACROSSE PREVIEW —

BY ROB DIANTONIO

Irvington

Irvington enters the 2026 season looking to build on a strong campaign that ended one step shy of a sectional final.

The Bulldogs advanced to the Section 1 Class D semifinals last spring before falling on the road to Pleasantville, finishing with a 12-6 record. Veteran coach Pat DiBenedetto returns for his 15th season leading the program and welcomes back a large core of experienced players determined to make another postseason run.

Leading the group are senior captains Sophia Im, Federica Ricciardella, Natalie Rushford, and Leila Schneider. Ricciardella earned all-league honors last season and anchors the midfield alongside Im, giving Irvington a steady presence between the lines.

Rushford returns as a key defender after earning honorable mention all-league recognition, while Schneider joins senior attackers Lilian Isom and Lena Svigals to provide scoring punch up front. The Bulldogs also return a solid defensive unit with junior Petra Rancic, sophomore Hazel Kwon, sophomore Emi Doncov, and senior Daisy Hodges expected to play significant roles in front of sophomore goalkeeper Sadie Kilbury, who recorded 85 saves as a freshman.

Irvington will also incorporate several newcomers into the mix. Freshman Skylar Coyne, eighth-grader Lizzie Villa, sophomore Alexis Im, and freshman Marina Foley add depth at attack, while freshman Zoe Gonzalez strengthens the midfield. Sophomore Jordan Friedman and senior Maddie Okun provide additional defensive options.

The Bulldogs' approach remains centered on consistency and effort.

"Our team's strength comes from our commitment to hard work, teamwork, and improvement each day," DiBenedetto said.

Irvington's goals for the season are rooted in maintaining that work ethic while remaining competitive in league play and returning to the sectional tournament. "We expect our athletes to give 100 percent in every practice and game," DiBenedetto said.

The Bulldogs were scheduled to open the season by hosting Pleasantville on March 19 and head to Briarcliff on March 21.

Ardasley

Ardasley enters the spring focused on continuing to build under fourth-year coach Scott Miele. The Panthers finished 7-10 last season and were eliminated by Pelham in the opening round of the Section 1 Class C playoffs, but a group of experienced players



Irvington senior captain Sophia Im returns to the midfield for the Bulldogs. File photos by Rob DiAntonio.

returns with the expectation of pushing deeper into the postseason.

Senior goalie and captain Sienna Kay headlines the returning group after earning all-section second-team honors while recording 104 saves last season. Kay, who is committed to Muhlenberg College, anchors a defense that also includes junior Hazel McGourty, who collected 24 draw controls last season.

Offensively, Ardsley brings back several productive scorers. Sophomore Juliette An returns after tallying 27 goals last season, while senior midfielder Lyla Vega scored 26 goals and earned all-league recognition. Senior Mairead Gowran added 19 goals and dominated the circle with 53 draw controls.

Senior Lily Tiernan, a team captain, provides balance in the attack after posting 11 goals and 20 assists last year, while senior Anna Gallante, another captain, also returns as an attacker.

Several newcomers are expected to play important roles as the Panthers look to take another step forward. Maia Hadi joins the team as a freshman capable of playing both attack and midfield, while sophomore Nasha Nnafie strengthens the midfield rotation. Sophomores Zuri Barnes and Sydney Francis add depth on defense, and junior Paige Lepore provides another offensive option.

Captains Kay, Tiernan, and Gallante will lead a group that has steadily grown together over the past few seasons.

"We have a great group of girls that have

improved tremendously over the past four years," Miele said. "They have laid the groundwork for our newcomers. The girls have a very high expectation for themselves, their teammates, and their coaches. They work very hard every day to meet that."

Ardasley's focus remains on competing in league play and earning another trip to the sectional tournament, Miele added. The Panthers were scheduled to open the season by hosting Sleepy Hollow on March 19.

Dobbs Ferry

A new era begins for Dobbs Ferry this spring. Allison Burt, a 2019 Dobbs Ferry



Ardasley senior Sienna Kay earned all-section in goal last season.

graduate, takes over as head coach after the Eagles finished 7-9 last season and fell to North Salem in the opening round of the Section 1 Class D playoffs.

Dobbs returns several experienced players who will provide leadership. Senior midfielder Molly O'Brien leads the group after earning all-league honors last season while recording 27 goals, seven assists, and 35 draw controls. She enters the season just 13 goals shy of the 100-goal milestone for her career.

Senior attacker Mary O'Dea also returns after a standout campaign in which she earned all-league recognition with 31 goals, nine assists, and 26 draw controls.

Defensively, Caileigh Doyle anchors the unit after causing 15 turnovers last season, while fellow senior Abigail Bates is expected to play a significant role on the back line.

The Eagles also bring back a pair of productive juniors in Megan Hartnett and Hollen Peet. Hartnett tallied 14 goals and 13 assists last year, while Peet contributed 20 goals and controlled 21 draws.

Scarlett Kilroe and Juliet Curanovic, a pair of freshmen attackers who made an impact as eighth-graders last season, return with additional experience and are expected to help lead the offense.

Dobbs Ferry also welcomes freshman Olivia Malinowski on defense and Katherine Kelly in the midfield avs key newcomers.

Captains Doyle, O'Dea, O'Brien, and Bates

Continued on page 19

Sports

Hastings' Morgan earns All-American at Nike Nationals

— TRACK AND FIELD ROUNDUP —

BY ROB DIANTONIO

At the biggest indoor meet of the season, Hastings senior Danae Morgan delivered the kind of performance that validated years of work and perseverance.

Morgan capped her indoor season by earning All-American honors with a seventh-place finish in the weight throw at the Nike Indoor Nationals, held March 12–15 at the Nike Track & Field Center at the Armory.

The Hastings standout saved her best for last, unleashing a personal-record throw of 54 feet, 5½ inches on her sixth and final attempt. The mark not only secured her All-American status, but also stands as the top weight throw by a New York female high school athlete this season.

Morgan's series showed a steady progression as she dialed in her technique throughout the competition. She opened with a throw of 51–0, then improved to 51–9 on her second attempt. Her third throw marked her first personal record of the day at 54–2½, signaling that something special was brewing in the circle.

Even after a heave of 52–7 on her fourth attempt, Morgan wasn't satisfied. On her final attempt, she delivered the biggest

throw of her career.

"For me, earning All-American is nothing out of the ordinary and it was well within reach with the proper mindset and performance," Morgan said. "It's really special to see that I was able to show up when it mattered the most and gain it on such a big stage though."

Morgan approached the national meet with a deliberate focus on preparation and routine, making sure both her body and mind were ready for the moment.

"The key to success throughout the day was obviously the basics like getting a good night's rest, fueling with a pre-meet lunch, and my favorite music album to calm any nerves," she said.

But beyond the routine, Morgan said the biggest factor was her mental approach once competition began.

"What I really dialed in on in order to get the PR was just setting the tone — not for the competition but for myself," she said. "Everything I did was for myself and for my future, so I really just wanted to prove to myself and push myself past my limits and comfort."

The performance also helped Morgan reclaim a distinction she had been chasing throughout the season.

"It's also great to get New York number one back and ending off the season with it,"

she said. "After not having it for such a long time I'm glad that I was able to get it back."

For Morgan, the moment represented more than just a big throw or a national podium finish. It was the culmination of a journey that included setbacks, injuries, and moments of doubt during her development in the event. Now, in her third year competing in the weight throw at the high school level, Morgan said the road to this point required perseverance both physically and mentally.

"To be honest, I had to overcome a lot of mental barriers within this sport and do things that I am not comfortable with in order for the throws to be more optimal for my success," Morgan said. "It took a lot of sweat, tears, and reconsideration whether I wanted to continue the sport or not, and even injuries, for me to realize that this was my passion."

Her performance at nationals affirmed that commitment. Morgan's final throw not only cemented her place among the best high school throwers in the country but also provided a fitting exclamation point to her indoor campaign.

Ardlesley senior Mioko Martin also competed at Nike Nationals, placing 44th in the long jump with a 16–5¾. She also ran in the 60-meter dash, clocking a time of 8.21 seconds.

Irvington senior Aaron Schwartz finished 30th in the pole vault in the emerging elite



Danae Morgan recorded a personal best in the weight throw. File photo by Jim MacLean.

competition with a 12–6¾.

Dobbs Ferry senior Chris Doherty ran the 1,200-meter leg of the distance medley relay for the New York team, clocking a 3:06.4 as the relay posted an overall time of 10:09.87. Doherty also competed in the 800 meters at the New Balance Nationals in Boston on March 14, placing 72nd out of over 200 competitors with a time of 1:55.82.

AHEDI freestyle relay swims to third at states

— BOYS' SWIMMING ROUNDUP —

BY ROB DIANTONIO

The combined Ardsley/Hastings/Edgemont/Dobbs Ferry/Irvington (AHEDI) boys' swimming team wrapped up its season with a standout showing at the New York State championships on March 6–7 at Ithaca College, highlighted by a podium finish from its 400-yard freestyle relay.

The relay team of Dobbs Ferry junior Nikita Ambotas, Hastings freshman Toby Chen, Irvington junior Kelly Franks, and Edgemont's Haochen Yu placed third among public schools with a time of 3:11.60, capping the meet with one of the program's strongest performances on the state stage.

Ambotas opened the race with the fastest split of the quartet at 46.98 seconds, setting the tone before Yu maintained the momentum. Chen followed with a 47.77 split, and Frank anchored the relay with a 47.61.

"I think the biggest key to our success was trust," Ambotas said. "We all believed in each other and knew every guy was going to do his job. We've trained together all season, so we know how each other races and that helped a lot. Our starts and exchanges were sharp, and



Dobbs Ferry junior Nikita Ambotas. File photo by Jim MacLean.

everyone stepped up when it mattered most."

The relay performance served as a fitting finale to a weekend in which AHEDI swimmers produced a number of strong individual and relay efforts against the state's top competition.

Ambotas also delivered one of the top individual finishes for the team. The Dobbs Ferry junior placed eighth in the 100-yard freestyle in 46.56 seconds, earning a spot among the state's top public-school sprinters.

"I felt really good about my 100-freestyle," Ambotas said. "Going into it, I just focused on staying relaxed and sticking to my race plan. I gave it everything I had, and I'm proud of how I finished. Competing at that level pushes you to be better and I'm happy with how I handled the pressure."

Ambotas also competed in the 50-yard freestyle, placing 25th with a time of 21.90 seconds, showcasing his speed across multiple sprint events.

Franks had a strong meet as well, particularly in the 100-yard breaststroke, finishing 11th in 57.82 seconds. The Irvington junior also competed in the 200 individual medley, placing 21st with a time of 2:01.09.

Chen placed 26th in the 200 IM (2:00.76) and 42nd in the 100 breaststroke, while also playing a key role in the 400-freestyle relay.

The younger swimmers also gained valuable experience in distance and relay events. Ardsley freshman Colby Hamel competed in the 500-yard freestyle, placing 31st, and contributed to the team's 200 freestyle relay. That relay — consisting of Yuchen Wei, Yu,

Dobbs Ferry sophomore Henry Turner, and Hamel — finished 26th with a time of 1:31.82.

Wei also represented AHEDI in the 100-butterfly, finishing 20th in 52.59 seconds, while contributing to multiple relays throughout the meet.

The championships began with the 200-yard medley relay, where Franks, Chen, Wei, and Ambotas combined for a 16th-place finish in 1:38.54.

While the weekend featured several strong individual swims, the relay events underscored the strength of the combined program. With swimmers from multiple Rivertowns schools coming together under the AHEDI banner, the team's success often hinges on chemistry and collective effort.

The 400 freestyle relay embodied that dynamic, as four swimmers from different schools combined for one of the program's best finishes of the season.

"States was an amazing experience," Ambotas said. "Being there with my teammates made it even better because we all supported each other the whole time. The energy was intense, but we stayed focused and swam hard. As a team, I think we performed really well and proved that we belong at that level. It was something I'll definitely remember."

With several underclassmen contributing throughout the lineup, the performance at Ithaca provided both a strong finish to the season and a promising glimpse of the future for the AHEDI program. "We are so proud of our boys," AHEDI coach Tobey Saracino said. "They did such an amazing job."

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 a classified notice, go to market.rivertownsdispatch.com/classies



PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AMENDING CHAPTER 38 OF THE ARDSLEY VILLAGE CODE ENTITLED "PROFESSIONAL CONSULTATION FEES"

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Ardsley will hold a public hearing on Monday April 6, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. or soon thereafter at Village Hall-Court Room, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY 10502 to discuss amending Chapter 38 of the Ardsley Village Code Entitled "Professional Consultation Fees".

Please check the calendar on the Village website for meeting details at www.ardsleyvillage.gov or email the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov.

The meeting will be able to be seen live on Channel 75 (Cablevision) or Channel 32/35 (Verizon).

Members of the public can also listen to the meeting via Zoom platform by dialing via phone+1 929 205 6099, Webinar ID: 881 4214 0918 Passcode: 04020 or Join Zoom Meeting here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88142140918?pwd=Zyc3UjRtdMlNvKaU4bHcx13sLbzBse.1/nMeetingID:88142140918>

Further details on this amendment is available at the Clerk's

office, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY during normal office hours Monday through Friday 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

Written comments may be sent to the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov or sent via regular mail to 507 Ashford Ave, Ardsley, NY 10502. All comments will be shared with the Board of Trustees and questions will be answered as quickly as possible.

All residents and taxpayers are invited to attend.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF ARDSLEY, NEW YORK

Ann Marie Rocco
Village Clerk
Dated: March 20, 2026

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AMENDING CHAPTER 96 OF THE ARDSLEY VILLAGE CODE ENTITLED "CODE ENFORCEMENT"

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Ardsley will hold a public hearing on Monday April 6, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. or soon thereafter at Village Hall-Court Room, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY 10502 to discuss amending Chapter 96 of the Ardsley Village Code Entitled "Code Enforcement".

Please check the calendar on the Village website for meeting details at www.ardsleyvillage.gov or email the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov.

The meeting will be able to be seen live on Channel 75 (Cablevision) or Channel 32/35 (Verizon).

Members of the public can also listen to the meeting via Zoom platform by dialing via phone+1 929 205 6099, Webinar ID: 881 4214 0918 Passcode: 04020 or Join Zoom Meeting here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88142140918?pwd=Zyc3UjRtdMlNvKaU4bHcx13sLbzBse.1/nMeetingID:88142140918>

Further details on this amendment is available at the Clerk's office, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY during normal office hours Monday through Friday 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

Written comments may be sent to the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov or sent via regular mail to 507 Ashford Ave, Ardsley, NY 10502. All comments will be shared with the Board of Trustees and questions will be answered as quickly as possible.

All residents and taxpayers are invited to attend.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF ARDSLEY, NEW YORK

Ann Marie Rocco
Village Clerk
Dated: March 20, 2026

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AMENDING SECTIONS 200-6, 200-14 AND 200-22 OF THE ARDSLEY VILLAGE CODE ENTITLED "PERMITTED USES" IN THE R-1 R-2 AND R-3 DISTRICTS

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Ardsley will hold a public hearing on Monday April 6, 2026, at 7:30 p.m.

or soon thereafter at Village Hall-Court Room, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY 10502 to discuss amending sections 200-6, 200-24 and 200-22 of the Ardsley Village Code Entitled "Permitted Uses" in the R-1, R-2 and R-3 Districts.

Please check the calendar on the Village website for meeting details at www.ardsleyvillage.gov or email the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov.

The meeting will be able to be seen live on Channel 75 (Cablevision) or Channel 32/35 (Verizon).

Members of the public can also listen to the meeting via Zoom platform by dialing via phone+1 929 205 6099, Webinar ID: 881 4214 0918 Passcode: 04020 or Join Zoom Meeting here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88142140918?pwd=Zyc3UjRtdMlNvKaU4bHcx13sLbzBse.1/nMeetingID:88142140918>

Further details on this amendment is available at the Clerk's office, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY during normal office hours Monday through Friday 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

Written comments may be sent to the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov or sent via regular mail to 507 Ashford Ave, Ardsley, NY 10502. All comments will be shared with the Board of Trustees and questions will be answered as quickly as possible.

All residents and taxpayers are invited to attend.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE

VILLAGE OF ARDSLEY, NEW YORK
Ann Marie Rocco
Village Clerk
Dated: March 20, 2026

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AMENDING CHAPTER 200-83B (30% RULE) OF THE ARDSLEY VILLAGE CODE ENTITLED "MAXIMUM HOUSE SIZE"

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Ardsley will hold a public hearing on Monday April 6, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. or soon thereafter at Village Hall-Court Room, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY 10502 to discuss amending Chapter 200-83B (30% Rule) of the Ardsley Village Code Entitled "Maximum House Size".

Please check the calendar on the Village website for meeting details at www.ardsleyvillage.gov or email the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov.

The meeting will be able to be seen live on Channel 75 (Cablevision) or Channel 32/35 (Verizon).

Members of the public can also listen to the meeting via Zoom platform by dialing via phone+1 929 205 6099, Webinar ID: 881 4214 0918 Passcode: 04020 or Join Zoom Meeting here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88142140918?pwd=Zyc3UjRtdMlNvKaU4bHcx13sLbzBse.1/nMeetingID:88142140918>

Further details on this amendment is available at the Clerk's office, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY during normal of-

ice hours Monday through Friday 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

Written comments may be sent to the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov or sent via regular mail to 507 Ashford Ave, Ardsley, NY 10502. All comments will be shared with the Board of Trustees and questions will be answered as quickly as possible.

All residents and taxpayers are invited to attend.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF ARDSLEY, NEW YORK

Ann Marie Rocco
Village Clerk
Dated: March 20, 2026

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Ardsley will hold a public hearing Monday, April 6, 2026 at 7:30 p.m. or soon thereafter at Village Hall-Court Room, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY to discuss adoption of a resolution setting sewer rents in the Village pursuant to Chapter 165 of the Village Code in the amount not to exceed \$2.124/CCF for the year 2026-2027.

Please check the calendar on the Village website for meeting details at www.ardsleyvillage.gov or email the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov.

The meeting will be able to be seen live on Channel 75 (Cablevision) or Channel 32/35 (Verizon).

Members of the public can also listen to the meeting via Zoom platform by dialing via phone+1 929 205 6099, Webinar ID:

881 4214 0918 Passcode: 04020 or Join Zoom Meeting here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88142140918?pwd=Zyc3UjRtdMlNvKaU4bHcx13sLbzBse.1/nMeetingID:88142140918>

Further details on sewer rents are available at the Office of the Village Clerk, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY during normal office hours Monday through Friday 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

Written comments may be sent to the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov and the Village Manager at jcerretani@ardsleyvillage.gov or sent via regular mail to 507 Ashford Ave, Ardsley, NY 10502. All comments will be shared with the Board of Trustees and questions will be answered as quickly as possible.

All residents and taxpayers are invited to attend.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF ARDSLEY, NEW YORK

Ann Marie Rocco
Village Clerk
Dated: March 20, 2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that a Public Hearing will be held before the Village of Ardsley Board of Trustees in person at Village Hall-Court Room Facility, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, New York on Monday, April 6, 2026 at 7:30 p.m. or soon thereafter for the purpose of considering the Tentative Budget for the Village of Ardsley, New York for the fiscal year beginning June 1, 2026 through May 31, 2027.

Please check the calendar on

the Village website for meeting details at www.ardsleyvillage.gov or email the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov.

The meeting will be able to be seen live on Channel 75 (Cablevision) or Channel 32/35 (Verizon).

Members of the public can also listen to the meeting via Zoom platform by dialing via phone+1 929 205 6099, Webinar ID: 881 4214 0918 Passcode: 04020 or Join Zoom Meeting here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88142140918?pwd=Zyc3UjRtdMlNvKaU4bHcx13sLbzBse.1/nMeetingID:88142140918>

The Tentative Budget is posted on the Village's website at www.ardsleyvillage.gov and is available for review at the Office of the Village Clerk, 507 Ashford Avenue, Ardsley, NY during regular office hours Monday through Friday 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

Written comments may be sent to the Village Clerk at arocco@ardsleyvillage.gov and the Village Manager at jcerretani@ardsleyvillage.gov or sent via regular mail to 507 Ashford Ave, Ardsley, NY 10502. All comments will be shared with the Board of Trustees and questions will be answered as quickly as possible.

All residents and taxpayers are invited to attend.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF ARDSLEY, NEW YORK

Ann Marie Rocco
Village Clerk
Dated: March 20, 2026

Girls' lacrosse preview

Continued from page 17

will guide a roster that blends youth and experience.

"One of our biggest strengths is our combination of talented young players and experienced veterans, who have already begun building strong team chemistry," Burt said.

The Eagles' goals center on continued development while competing hard in league play and the sectional tournament, Burt said. The team was scheduled to open the season at Yonkers on March 19.

— Hastings

Hastings begins a new chapter this season under first-year varsity head coach Marissa Staffu, who coached the JV last year. The Yellow Jackets finished 4-12 last season and did not qualify for the Section 1 Class D playoffs, but a young roster and new leadership bring renewed energy to the program.

Senior midfielder Mila Angoff returns as

one of the team's most accomplished players. An all-league selection last season, Angoff has already surpassed the 100-goal mark for her career and provides experience and scoring ability in the midfield.

Junior midfielder Alina Abrams also returns as a key leader and contributor. Angoff and Abrams will serve as captains alongside sophomore Rory McKinnon.

McKinnon is among the most notable newcomers to varsity after gaining experience with the JV team last season while appearing in several varsity games. The versatile midfielder contributes on offense and defense and brings a strong understanding of the game. "She's an extremely hard worker and demonstrates a high lacrosse IQ," Staffu said.

Sophomore Genesis Chacha also joins the varsity lineup and is expected to play an important role on defense while also seeing time in the midfield. Her communication, speed, stamina, and ability to read the field help stabilize the defensive unit, according to Staffu.

The Yellow Jackets will rely on their mid-field depth to drive the team's style of play, with players capable of contributing at both ends of the field.

"A major strength of this year's team is their commitment to growth," Staffu said. "The players have shown a genuine desire to improve, compete, and learn. This group is highly coachable and consistently brings a positive attitude to practices and games."

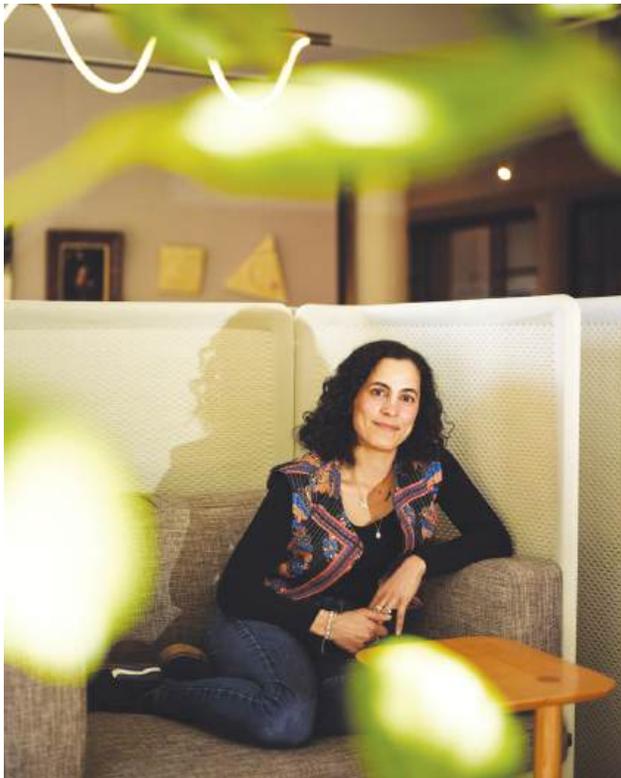
Hastings enters the season focused on development while laying the foundation for the future of the program through hard work, accountability, and a team-first approach.

"Our team is relatively young this season and our primary goal is to grow and develop both as a team and as a program," Staffu said. "With a strong coaching staff that brings experience from both the high school and collegiate levels, along with great leadership from our captains, we are focused on building a solid foundation for long-term success."

The Yellow Jackets open the season when they travel to Ardsley on March 25.



Bobbs Ferry's Hollen Peet will be a key player at midfield. File photo by Rob DiAntonio.



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