

Smartphones in schools
Dispatch to host discussion
about proposed rules
p 4

Yoga for ALS
Yoga teacher at heart of
upcoming fundraiser
p 5

Plea for support
Irvington Historical
Society faces deficit
p 11

Vol 1. Issue 28.

March 21, 2025

RIVERTOWNS Dispatch

Local News,
Locally Sourced
~

WWW.RIVERTOWNSDISPATCH.COM

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

\$2⁵⁰



Rooftop fire

Volunteer firefighters extinguished a fire on the roof of the Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Ardsley on the evening of Wednesday, March 19. The school was evacuated. Ardsley was assisted by firefighters from Dobbs Ferry, Fairview, Hastings, Greenville, Irvington, and Valhalla, as well as by the Ardsley Police Department and the Ardsley-Secor Volunteer Ambulance Corps.

Villages join legal effort to oppose rate hikes

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL
REGION — Ardsley, Hastings, and Irvington, as well as the Town of Greenburgh, are among the Westchester municipalities that agreed to hire a lawyer to oppose proposed Con Edison rate hikes of as high as 25.1% for county residents in 2026.

This week, the three villages and the Town passed resolutions to join at least 20 municipalities to collectively hire attorney Joel Dichter, who specializes in utility law, to represent them in rate increase hearings between Con Edison and the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC).

Hiring Dichter will cost a total of \$100,000, and won't happen unless 20 municipalities agree to take on his services. That means the maximum any one municipality would pay is \$5,000, or less if more than 20 sign on.

The Village of Rye Brook would coordinate payment to Dichter. According to Rye Brook Village Manager Christopher Bradbury, as of March 19, 11 municipalities had passed resolutions to contribute, and 18

Continued on page 17

Plan approved for cornerstone site

555 Warburton Ave. and 15 Spring St. to be redeveloped

BY AMY BOCHNER

HASTINGS — The proposal to redevelop 555 Warburton Avenue and 15 Spring Street in downtown Hastings received site plan approval from the planning board on March 13.

First presented to the planning board on Sept. 19, 2024, the proposal is for a mixed-use complex combining two properties — the former Hastings Funeral Home on Spring Street, which will be demolished, and the three-story building on the corner of Spring

and Warburton Avenue. The plan is to create three commercial spaces, one of which would be part of a live-work unit, and 15 residential units, including two affordable units.

Of the residential units, which would range from 818 square feet to 2,156 square feet, there would be 10 two-bedrooms, four one-bedrooms, and one three-bedroom. The three commercial units would be 438, 682, and 1,802 square feet.

The project includes a three-story addition to 555 Warburton that would replace the former funeral parlor.

Dubbed a transit-oriented development because of its proximity to the Metro-North

train station and Bee-Line bus routes, the proposal includes 15 parking spaces in a basement garage.

Built in 1918, 555 Warburton Avenue was home to Hastings House, a restaurant and bar, with apartments on the second floor and a ballroom on the third. The building has been vacant for 15 years. A central part of the project, as described by architect Christina Griffin at the planning board meeting in September, is to restore and maintain the original facade. The funeral parlor, built in the 1960s, closed in 2019.

On Jan. 30, the zoning board of appeals

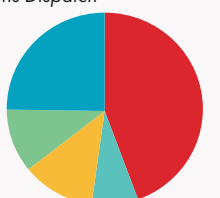
Continued on page 16

— You Answered —


What is your spring sport of choice (to watch or play)?

As answered by 113 readers of the Rivertowns Dispatch

- 44% Baseball/Softball
- 8% Lacrosse
- 12% Track and Field
- 11% Golf
- 25% Tennis



Vote at rivertownsdispatch.com/the-weekly-poll



The Blotter

ARDSLEY

Escort fraud: On March 12, an Ardsley resident reported that he and a friend were defrauded out of \$1,950 as they attempted to hire two escorts through a website on Sunday, March 9. The money was sent through Zelle in response to calls and texts from a man who claimed to own the website.

Theft of medical records: A 78-year-old resident of the Atria Woodlands senior facility reported that medical records were stolen from a notebook in his apartment between Sunday, March 9, and Thursday, March 13.

Shoplifting arrests: A

Man slaps two women

Two women — one in Dobbs Ferry and the other in Irvington — reported that an unidentified man slapped their buttocks in public after asking to swat insects off of them on the morning of Monday, March 10. The incidents occurred on Broadway (Route 9) at Oak Street in Dobbs Ferry and on the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail at West Clinton Avenue in Irvington. He was not apprehended.

33-year-old man from Mount Vernon and a 31-year-old woman from Yonkers were arrested for shoplifting from the CVS at 725 Saw Mill River Road (Route 9A) on the afternoon of Sunday, March 16. He stole \$163.25 worth of items while she stole \$78.53 worth of items. Both were charged with petit larceny, a misdemeanor. He was also charged with criminal contempt in the first degree, a felony, for violating an order of protection that prohibited him from being with her. Officers Zach Pack and Brian Roemer made the arrests.

DOBBS FERRY

Counterfeit C-note: An unidentified man used a counterfeit \$100 bill to buy an \$8.71 beer at Climbing Wolf, 78 Main St., on the evening of Thursday, March 6, which was reported to the police on March 11.

Suspended registration: A 22-year-old Dobbs Ferry resident was arrested for operating a vehicle without a license or insurance, and with a suspended registration, on Broadway on the morning of Wednesday, March 12. He was stopped for speeding in the school zone outside the middle/high schools.

Check fraud: A Dobbs Ferry resident was defrauded out of \$1,096.74 between March 7-9, which was reported to the police on March 16. During that time-frame, he received photos of two checks in response to an online ad he posted for an Airsoft gun. He used the photos to deposit the checks, and then returned the money at the request of the sender. He was then notified by his bank that the checks were fraudulent.

Shoplifting arrest: A 45-year-old Bronx resident was arrested for shoplifting \$986 worth of items from the Ulta Beauty at Rivertowns Square on the afternoon of Monday, March 17. She was charged with petit larceny, a misdemeanor. Officer Brad Scala made the arrest.

Assault arrest: A 16-year-old student was arrested for punching a 19-year-old student at The Children's Village

Continued on page 17

RIVERTOWNS
Dispatch

PUBLISHER
Allison Schulte
allison@rivertownsdispatch.com

EDITOR
Tim Lamorte
tim@rivertownsdispatch.com

SPORTS EDITOR
Rob DiAntonio
rob@rivertownsdispatch.com

STAFF WRITERS
Julian Caldwell, Amy Bochner
Julian@rivertownsdispatch.com
Amy@rivertownsdispatch.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITER
Janine Annett
Janine@rivertownsdispatch.com

LISTINGS EDITOR
Jennifer Gold
Jennifer@rivertownsdispatch.com

COPY EDITOR
Lauren Casper

ART DIRECTOR
Adrienne Brockway

MEDIA SALES
Jen Schulte
jen@rivertownsdispatch.com

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
Sarah Grabel
sarah@rivertownsdispatch.com

INTERN
Alex Grandine
alex@rivertownsdispatch.com

Rivertowns Dispatch, (ISSN XXXX-XXXX) (USPS XXX-XXX), is published weekly on Fridays by The Rivertowns Dispatch LLC at 145 Palisade Street Suite 200 Dobbs Ferry NY 10522. Application to Mail at Periodicals Postage is Pending at Dobbs Ferry, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Rivertowns Dispatch at 145 Palisade Street Suite 200

For subscriptions go to:
rivertownsdispatch.com/membership

Questions, comments, feedback:
hello@rivertownsdispatch.com



WAKE UP TO HUDSON RIVER
SUNSETS IN THIS STUNNING
DUTCH COLONIAL

Nestled in the heart of Hastings, this enchanting 1920s Dutch Colonial blends historic charm with modern luxury. Thoughtfully renovated, it features a chef's kitchen, a sunlit open floor plan, and a serene primary suite with vaulted ceilings and a cozy reading nook. Enjoy breathtaking Hudson River views from nearly every room or entertain on the expansive deck. With a newly finished lower level, home office, and upgraded amenities throughout, this exceptional home offers both elegance and functionality—just moments from schools, the Village, and Hillside Woods.

17 Circle Drive, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
\$2,300,000 | 5 Beds | 4 Baths | 4,080 SF

Get in touch today
to learn more!



THE FRANCIE MALINA TEAM

The Francie Malina Team at Compass
M: 914.261.0276
franciemalinateam@compass.com
2 Ashford Avenue, Dobbs Ferry, NY
Licensed Real Estate Salespersons



The Francie Malina Team is a team of real estate agents affiliated with Compass, a licensed real estate broker and abides by Equal Housing Opportunity laws. All material presented herein is intended for informational purposes only. Information is compiled from sources deemed reliable but is subject to errors, omissions, changes in price, condition, sale, or withdrawal without notice. This is not intended to solicit property already listed. Photos may be virtually staged or digitally enhanced and may not reflect actual property conditions.

COMPASS

ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER ORKIN LEWIS

Local Curiosities

— GETTING TO KNOW —

Cyndy Cecil Comedian to host 'Ladies Night Out' in Dobbs Ferry

BY JANINE ANNETT

Cyndy Cecil is a Dobbs Ferry resident who's a comedian, mom, and video producer ("For Lent, I decided I was going to be someone who just doesn't care," she quipped). On March 28, she's hosting a lineup of women comedians at "Ladies' Night Out: a Comedy Show Honoring Women's History Month" at HudCo, 145 Palisade Street, Suite 200, Dobbs Ferry. Cecil will be joined by comedians Tiffanee Lee, Esther Chen, Ruthy Ferrera, and headliner Becky Veducchio. The doors open at 6 p.m. and the show starts at 7 p.m.

The Rivertowns Dispatch talked with Cecil about standup, as well as what drew her to Dobbs Ferry, what makes for good comedy, and her favorite places and things in the Rivertowns.

How long have you lived in Dobbs Ferry?

Nine years. We lived in the city, and then lived in Maryland and wanted to move back to New York. I knew I wanted to be in Westchester, so my daughter and I came up here and we went to ice cream shops all over the place: Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Rye, Tarrytown, Irvington, Hastings, and Dobbs Ferry. I knew I wanted to be on this side of the county. At the ice cream shops, I looked at what the kids were wearing, how they communicated with their parents. You just get a sense of the community. I knew that people were friendly here. My realtor told me, "Dobbs is your place." And she was right. I fit right in here.

What's it like being a standup comedian?

I love doing comedy. Some people use work-outs as their outlet to feel better about life. Some people use alcohol. I use comedy. I also love put-



Cyndy Cecil in a freight elevator at Hudson River Landing in Dobbs Ferry

ting women on stage any chance I get. It is magic. Any chance to put women's voices on a stage is so important.

I try to find comedians who are owning their life. In comedy, you either have a wound or a scar. We want people who are scarred, and they're laughing at their own lives. There are things going on in my own life that I would not talk about, but I will, one day. I like it when people enjoy their own problems, in a way, rather than putting other people down.

What's the lineup like for the comedy show on March 28?

I see so many women in comedy and I love being a part of it and supporting it. I do a lot of shows with Tiffanee Lee. She does a hilarious

bit about cereal and she gets people to talk about what their favorite cereal is. I was in a class with Esther Chen right before the pandemic, and I always remembered her — she's such a pro. She's been on tons of TV shows. Ruthy Ferrera won the newcomer's award at the "Ladies of Laughter" show last year. She is going to bring down the house with this bit she does about her husband. As for Becky Veducchio, my favorite bit of hers is about her Italian family, which should do well in Dobbs Ferry since we have 10 Italian restaurants in a 3-mile radius. My latest material is all about how I'm an empty nester and have an empty bed and am trying to date again, about being divorced but still being friends with my ex.

Comedy is a way to get to your truth. The truth

is often funny. It's a muscle to flex, to be unfiltered and truthful. I'm a recovering people pleaser. A friend of mine said, "Cyndy, we love watching your midlife crisis onstage. And I said, 'No, it's my midlife awakening.'"

HudCo is a great place to have this show — they have such a great community for women. We have a pizza truck coming, we'll have cocktails — it will feel like a celebration. It'll be like a book club, without the pesky books.

What are some of your favorite things and places in the Rivertowns?

Best place to be outdoors: Hudson Social

Best place to get pizza: The Parlor

Continued on page 17

15% off for New Customers!

J&C Masonry & Landscaping Inc.

Masonry Services, Retaining Walls, Excavation,
Landscaping Services, Drainage Systems, Hardscaping,
Stone Walls, Patios, Walkways, Steps, Belgium Block Apron, Stone Columns,
and any Masonry Repairs and Asphalt Paving.

office: (914) 941-8146 • cell: (914) 490-8260

email: jandcmasonryinc@gmail.com • <https://www.jandcgeneralcontractor.net/>

Westchester License WC-11191-H00 & Full Insurance

THE RIVERTOWNS' SPECIALTY CHEESE SHOP

cheese and charcuterie platters
cut-to-order cheese | fine charcuterie and pantry
host gifts and homewares
private events and classes

3 CEDAR STREET, DOBBS FERRY, NY
TUE-SAT 11AM-6PM | (914) 231-6106 | BLOOMYDOBBS.COM

bloomy
Cheese & Provisions

Fontina Valle d'Aosta Alps
Month Gruyere
CORNERSHINE
An exploration of local flavors
and literal culture. Take a
look at your own plate!

Dispatch to host panel discussion about school smartphone use

Gov. Kathy Hochul’s proposed “bell-to-bell” smartphone restrictions for K-12 students in New York State will be the subject of a panel discussion hosted by the Rivertowns Dispatch at HudCo in Dobbs Ferry on Wednesday, March 26, at 7 p.m.

The panelists will be Dobbs Ferry Schools Superintendent Ken Slentz, Ardsley High School social worker Monique Johnson, Irvington parent Francis O’Shea, and Hastings High School senior Frieda Belasco. Dispatch contributing writer Janine Annett of Hastings will be the moderator.

To register for the event, which is free, visit <https://tinyurl.com/ar5dwck5>. HudCo occupies Suite 200 at Hudson River Landing, 145 Palisade St.

Hochul introduced the restrictions on Jan. 21 as part of her 2026 executive budget proposal, which has an approval deadline of April 1. If backed by the state Legislature, the rules would start with the 2025-26 academic year.

Hochul’s proposal prohibits the use of internet-enabled smartphones, smartwatches, and tablets on school grounds for the entire school day, including during lunch and in between classes, and requires schools to provide a way for parents to contact their children in case of an emergency. The restrictions would not apply to laptops provided by schools, or devices without internet access.

The proposal allows school districts to develop their own policies and plans for

storing devices during the day, and allocates \$13.5 million to distribute among schools for purchasing storage options. It also requires school districts to release annual reports detailing enforcement of their policy from the previous year, beginning in September 2026.

In the Rivertowns, students in kindergarten through eighth grade must keep their cellphones and smartwatches powered off at school. The school districts vary on whether devices must be kept in students’ lockers or backpacks.

Rivertowns high school students can bring cellphones to classes, but not use them unless permitted by teachers. Hastings and Irvington students must put their phones in pouches or other storage containers in classrooms. Students at all four schools can use cellphones in between classes and during lunch periods.

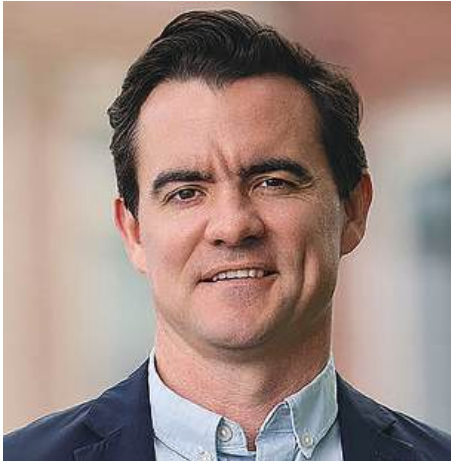
Slentz has been the superintendent in Dobbs Ferry since 2022, and a school superintendent in New York State since 2002. Johnson has been a licensed clinical social worker at Ardsley High School since 1997. O’Shea is the father of a second-grader and a fifth-grader, and a member of Heads Up Rivertowns, a volunteer committee committed to building a more screen-smart community. Belasco is the co-editor of her school newspaper (The Buzzer); co-president of the Amnesty International Club; secretary of the Model U.N. Team; and chair of the executive board of Hastings KIDS.



Frieda Belasco



Monique Johnson



Francis O’Shea



Ken Slentz

Summer Maker Lab

For Rising 5th-9th Graders

Schedule

Week 1
July 7- July 11 9AM to 12PM
Week 2
July 14 - July 18 9AM PM to 12PM
Week 3
July 21 - July 25 9 AM to 12PM
Week 4
Aug 11 - Aug 15 1:30 PM to 4:30PM
Week 5
Aug 18 - Aug 22 1:30 PM to 4:30PM
Week 6
Aug 25 - Aug 29 1:30 PM to 4:30PM

This isn’t just another camp—it’s a chance to level up skills in coding, engineering, and design while making something awesome. Signing up for multiple weeks lets students explore different types of projects or go deeper into a topic that excites them.

Projects we will be exploring including building arcade games with integrated electronics, sound responsive light boxes, miniature worlds with 3Dprinted elements.

Learn more at www.makerhive.space

@makerhivespace

416 Warburton Ave, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY

Opposite Antoinette’s coffeeshop

Bella Rosa Pizzeria

1455 NEPPERHAN AVENUE
YONKERS, NY 10703
(914) 410-3821

DINE IN, DELIVERY, CATERING
& MORE

OUR FAMILY'S KITCHEN, TO YOUR FAMILY'S TABLE

For our Full Catering Menus & Other Specials Please Visit
<https://www.bellarosapizzeria.com>



ARDSLEY

— Coming Up This Week —

Ardsley Cares Day

Saturday, March 22, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Ardsley High School and throughout the village
Sign up at ardsleyptsamembershiptoolkit.com.

Invasive Vine Cutting

Saturday, March 22, 10 a.m.-noon

V.E. Macy Park

Register at ardsleyvillage.gov/home/events/41646.

Board of Trustees Work Session

Monday, March 24, 7:30 p.m.

Village Hall

Agenda available at ardsleyvillage.gov.

Virtual Tour of Siena, Italy

Tuesday, March 25, noon

Register by emailing

Peggym@ardsleylibrary.org.

Native Plants, Trees, and Shrubs for Your Yard

Wednesday, March 26, 7:30 p.m.

Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Steering Committee members Jen Sanchez, Kathy Evers, and Carol Sommerfield discuss the free native plant giveaways at Ardsley Pollinator Day on Sunday, April 6, and the Arbor Day event at the Greenburgh Public Library on April 29. Register for the Zoom link online at ardsleypollinatorpathway.org.

AVFA's Careers in the Visual Arts Night

Wednesday, March 26, 7-9 p.m.

High school cafeteria

Zoning Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 26, 8 p.m.

Village Hall

Agenda available at ardsleyvillage.gov.

Navigating the Digital World

Thursday, March 27, 7 p.m.

Ardsley High School, 300 Farm Road
The Ardsley School District hosts a presentation for parents by Sgt. Tom Rich of the Summit (N.J.) Police Department on "Navigating the Digital World: Impact, Awareness, and Health Habits."
RSVP at <http://shorturl.at/SrKSV>

Pioneer Homecoming Game

Thursday, March 27, 4 p.m.

High school gym

The Ardsley Panthers take on the Mount Vernon Knights.

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at amy@rivertownsdispatch.com



Emma Poritzky Aaliyah Bello, and David Koo

Musical serves fairy-tale figures for all

AHS Drama Club stages 'Into the Woods'

BY AMY BOCHNER

Ardsley High School's Drama Club presents its spring production, "Into the Woods," this weekend, showcasing twists on familiar fairy-tale characters.

Performances of the Tony Award-winning musical will take place in the school's theater on March 21 at 7 p.m. and March 22 at 2 and 7 p.m. The production, which features 30 cast and crew members, is directed Steve Loftus with musical direction by AHS music teacher Kyle Banks.

"Into the Woods," with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and a book by James Lapine, follows the intertwined stories of various Brothers Grimm characters, including Cinderella, Rapunzel, Little Red Riding Hood, and Jack and the Beanstalk. The musical explores the consequences of these characters' wishes, according to AHS Drama Club adviser Tiffany Moleski.

"You can have anything you want, but you can't have everything... When you're talking about fairy tales and fairy-tale endings, everyone thinks happily ever after," she said. "[Into the Woods] takes a turn with some of those tried-and-true Disney stories. With the Disney princesses, their wishes and their dreams for their lives came at a price, and that's what this story is all about."

Moleski shared how "Into the Woods," which premiered in San Diego, California, in 1986 and opened on Broadway in 1987, came to be this year's spring production.

"We tried to choose a recognizable show that will attract families in the community, not just the high school students," she said. "We want the spring musical to be a family-friendly community event... and 'Into the Woods' definitely fits the bill with that, with its Disney references and its recognizable characters for young kids."

In addition, the high schoolers had been asking to perform "Into the Woods," excited at the prospect of taking on roles familiar from their childhoods.

"The idea of being able to play a Cinderella, a Snow White, a Rapunzel, or a Jack from Jack and the Beanstalk is always appealing to our kids," Moleski said. "They might be teenagers, but they are still kids at heart. Those stories are nostalgic for them."

For junior Sophia Manalang, Cinderella is a dream role.

"I love her story, ever since I watched the movie [Disney's 2014 "Into the Woods"] when I was younger," she said. "Most people know the fairy tale, but 'Into the Woods' is different, in how she is, how she doesn't end up with the prince, and how she wishes for more than just balls and gowns. That story is really important to me, and resonated with me when I was younger."

"Into the Woods" offers a unique opportunity, and a testing ground, for the actors, especially Sondheim's score, Manalang said.

"It is a very adventurous show to take on — definitely a more challenging one than we've ever done before," she said. "We had so many music rehearsals where we just drill music trying to figure that out... Doing it right is very important."

Mila Lee, a senior who plays the Witch, agreed.

"The timing is really tough, because it'll change the time signature in between," she said. "There's a lot of complicated stuff going on with the music, and then on top of that, you have to stay in character and go back and forth between different people singing."

Nevertheless, Lee was enjoying the experience, in particular portraying the show's major villain.

"It's a really big character [and] very different from the ones I've played before, in terms of being over the top and just really fun to play," she said.

For senior David Koo, cast as the Baker, "Into the Woods" has given him the chance to play a new kind of character.

"There's such a strong emotional attachment between the Baker and all of the other characters. Many of the roles that I've done before were more antagonist roles, and so they were just usually angry all the time," he said. "Playing the Baker lets me express more than just anger. He's so well-rounded. He expresses happiness, love, sadness, and grief."

With a large cast of characters, Koo believes each actor shines onstage.

"There are so many roles, and we have so many good people in our cast," he said. "Having such a big show with so many talented people, it's wonderful seeing all of their performing abilities."

Tickets for "Into the Woods" cost \$20 for students/children and \$22 for adults. They can be purchased at <http://cur8.com> with the keyword "Ardsley."

ARDSLEY

Village hires contractor to intall solar panels atop DPW facility

BY AMY BOCHNER

In an effort to boost sustainability, the Ardsley Board of Trustees awarded a contract to install a solar power system at the new Department of Public Work's garage on March 17.

Rivertown Solar will install the system on the roof of the facility, located at 220 Heatherdell Road. The nonprofit Sustainable Westchester advised the board on the project. Leo Wiegman, the director of solar programs at Sustainable Westchester, attended the board meeting on March 17.

According to Village Manager Joseph Cerretani, this project has been in the works since last summer and will be "a cornerstone of the Village's commitment toward sustainability and a reflection of the substantial efforts this board has taken to reduce our carbon footprint."

In January, the board received three bids. The lowest, Ecogy Energy, withdrew in February, prompting the Village to move forward with Rivertown Solar, the second-lowest bidder.

The gross project amount is \$994,400. After federal and state incentives and rebates, the net project amount is \$379,680. The state incentive, called the NY-SUN Megawatt Block Program, offers the Village a rebate of \$216,960. The federal incentive is the Investment Tax Credit under the Inflation Reduction Act. The base rebate the Village would



The new DPW facility at 220 Heatherdell Road

receive from the ITC is \$298,320, with an additional \$99,440 as a result of the project using domestically sourced content. In total, the federal rebate would be \$397,760.

While state incentives are still available, Wiegman noted the risk to federal incentives after finding discrepancies on government websites.

"The main English explanations of the Inflation Reduction Act and the accompanying tax credits and production credits that exist at the Department of Energy site and at

the Environmental Protection Agency sites, those pages are all '404, page not found,'" he said. "But if you go into the weeds in the IRS instructions, where it's just the technical filing instructions, those are still there."

This discrepancy raises concerns about the stability and future availability of the federal incentives. If the federal incentive is removed, the Village would need to pay the difference, and the net cost for the project would be \$777,440. The Village will file for the federal incentive at the end of the calendar year.

The projected savings from the solar panel system is between \$50,000 and \$60,000 per year. The system's expected lifespan is 25 years, and is warrantied for linear performance over that period of time. With the current rates and incentives, the project would have paid for itself by year seven. Without the federal incentive, Wiegman estimated the project would pay itself off by year 14. According to Wiegman, the roof is estimated to be large enough to supply electricity for the DPW building and have "75% extra to cascade" to the Village of Ardsley's next largest energy users. Mayor Nancy Kaboolian said during the meeting that this may include Village Hall, the library, and the community center.

Wiegman noted the benefit of the project in light of Con Edison's recent proposal to the New York State Public Service Commission that would increase electric customer bills by 11.4% beginning January 2026.

"When you buy a solar system, you're pre-paying for electricity for 25 years," he said. "There's pressure on electric prices across the board.... I'm very aware of the most recent price increases that Con Edison has asked for. There's upward pressure on electric prices no matter what."

According to Cerretani, the Village anticipates that the solar system will be fully operational by fall of this year.

preventative and aesthetic dentistry
prosthodontics



parlor dental

don't forget that you have
a beautiful smile

see a dentist to maintain it.

book your
next visit at
parlor dental





DOBBS FERRY

— Coming Up This Week —

Free Tax Preparation Services

Saturdays through April 12 (except March 29),
9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Sundays through April 13 (except March 30),
9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Mercy University, 555 Broadway, Victory Hall,
Room 100

To schedule an appointment, dial "211" (within
Westchester County) or 1-800-899-1479, then select
menu option 8 to reach tax assistance personnel.

Documentary Screening: "Home Court"

Sunday, March 23, 1 p.m.

Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Advanced screening of the PBS documentary
that traces the ascent of an Asian American high
school basketball star pursuing her dreams.

Invasive Species Clearing

Sunday, March 23, 10 a.m.-noon
Juhring Preserve

Volunteer to help the Conservation Advisory
Board remove invasive Japanese knotweed and
barberry and plant native species. To sign up,
visit eventbrite.com and search for the Dobbs
Ferry Conservation Advisory Board.

Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, March 25, 7:30 p.m.

Village Hall

Agenda available at dobbsferry.com.

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 25, 7 p.m.

Middle/high school library

Agenda available at dfsd.org.

A Dispatch Discussion: Cellphones in Schools

Tuesday, March 26, 7 p.m.

HudCo, 145 Palisade St., Suite 200

The Rivertowns Dispatch hosts a panel
moderated by one of its writers, Janine Annett,
to discuss Gov. Kathy Hochul's proposed limits
on smartphones in schools. Reserve a spot at
eventbrite.com.

Romance Book Club

Tuesday, March 26, 6 p.m.

Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Discuss "Funny Story" by Emily Henry.

Register by emailing

sbook@dobbsferrylibrary.org.

Got news?

Email staff writer Julian Caldwell at
julian@rivertownsdispatch.com



David Enrich at his home in Dobbs Ferry

Book documents repression of the press

Journalists contend with legal threats and lawsuits

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

New York Times deputy investigations editor David Enrich details what he describes as an organized effort to stifle the media's ability to scrutinize politicians, corporations, and wealthy public figures in "Murder the Truth: Fear, the First Amendment, and a Secret Campaign to Protect the Powerful," his most recent book, released on March 11.

Enrich contends that efforts from lawyers and politicians to roll back legal protections for journalists can also impact the ability of any citizen to be critical of a local business or elected official.

A resident of Dobbs Ferry since 2017, Enrich began working at the Times that same year. Previously, he spent a decade reporting on finances for The Wall Street Journal. He was motivated to begin work on "Murder the Truth" in 2022 after noticing that he, and the team of investigative reporters he manages, were facing more potential lawsuits than in his previous 20 years as a journalist.

"Every time we started looking into the affairs or finances of a rich person or a big company, it felt like we were on the receiving end of threatening letters from lawyers," Enrich, 45, told the Dispatch. "My hunch was that if tactics like this were being used against The New York Times, they were also being used a lot against smaller outlets."

Enrich acknowledged that while the Times is a large organization with the funds to retain a team of quality lawyers, that's not the case for local newspapers, podcasters, and other independent news sources that are the targets of the same tactics. To conduct research for the book, Enrich contacted a long list of reporters and editors and reached out to the press associations of all 50 states, who helped connect him with local lawyers, publishers, and more journalists.

"I talked to so many journalists for this book that have seen their lives completely turned upside down by not just lawsuits, but legal threats that lack any basis in law," Enrich said. "And yet the mere act of being threatened or sued, especially if you are a local or independent journalist, is a huge deterrent to writing about powerful people."

In "Murder the Truth" Enrich details how lawyers also are looking to push the U.S. Supreme Court to roll back previous decisions that protect journalists and other citizens from being successfully sued for accidentally writing something false about a business, politician, or other public figure. The first such Supreme Court decision, in the case of The New York Times vs. Sullivan in 1960, ruled in favor of an advertisement in the Times, paid for by civil right leaders, that was critical of politicians in southern U.S. states.

More Supreme Court cases in the following decades further protected citizens from

legal recourse for factual errors unless "actual malice" could be proven, demonstrating that the writer or speaker knowingly spread lies to do damage.

"The Supreme Court has found that in a country where we really prize the ability of people to speak freely, and where we think that citizens and journalists being able to investigate powerful institutions and powerful people is important, there needs to be some breathing space so that if you make an honest mistake, you won't get sued into oblivion," Enrich explained. "So that obviously helps journalists when they're investigating the president of the United States, or the mayor, or a local police force, but it also applies to someone who says something nasty about a local politician on Facebook, or criticizes a restaurant."

Enrich's book reveals that for decades the precedent set by the Supreme Court was supported by Americans across the political spectrum, from conservatives to liberals, who benefited from the rules. He's seen that change since a 2016 speech by then presidential nominee Donald Trump in which he shared his desire to lower the threshold for public figures to be able to successfully sue news outlets for publishing false statements.

Data that Enrich researched illustrates a spike in the number of lawsuits filed against media companies since 2016; it doesn't include untracked threats that never materi-

Continued on page 16

DOBBS FERRY

Former local yoga teacher at heart of upcoming ALS fundraiser

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

Former longtime Hastings resident Sarah Knox is rallying her yoga community for an event to combat ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, while she copes with the debilitating illness.

On March 30, Knox, collaborating with research funding organization Project ALS and with YogaHaven, where Knox used to teach, will be the center of a class and fundraiser at HudCo in Dobbs Ferry called "Yoga for ALS Research."

ALS, short for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. According to the ALS Association, the mean survival time for ALS is two to five years after diagnosis, while some people live 10 more years, or even longer.

Knox, who lived in Hastings from 1994 to 2022, has continued to teach yoga virtually from her home in Connecticut after being diagnosed with ALS in December 2023. She began her yoga career as an instructor at Yoga Zone in Irvington in the 1990s, and started teaching virtually during the Covid pandemic.

In anticipation of losing the ability to speak, which commonly occurs with ALS, Knox began recording her voice in 2024. When her speech became unintelligible last fall, she began using a device that works off of those recordings, and turns her typing into digital speech that mimics her voice. Knox uses the technology to teach class remotely, and with the help of a brace on her left



Sarah Knox

leg and a cane, she's still able to walk and move with students.

"Yoga philosophy helped me explore my spiritual side, which has made living with a fatal disease more bearable," Knox explained in a text conversation with the Dispatch. "The physical practice has helped me stay on my feet. I know

how to move mindfully, which helps keep me from falling."

In the spring of 2022, Knox, who will turn 66 next month, began slurring words and noticed she had excess saliva. She began seeing a neurologist that December after symptoms progressed to a noticeable muscle twitch in her face and tongue.

It took a year for her to be conclusively diagnosed with ALS, a typical timeframe as there is no definitive test for the disease.

Throughout 2024, Knox's difficulty swallowing increased, and in December she had surgery to place a feeding tube. In January, she started using a cough assist machine to help clear phlegm from her throat, and a noninvasive breathing device which she uses a few hours a day to give breathing muscles a rest. Still, Knox continues to teach classes from home, has helped plan the fundraiser, and expects to be at the event in person, engaging as much as she's able.

"I am a private person, but the fundraiser gives me a sense of purpose, which I so appreciate," Knox said. "I'm very grateful to be able to participate."

"Yoga for ALS Research" will include an hour-long yoga class led by YogaHaven founder Betsy Kase of Dobbs Ferry and teacher Jill Gnassi, and an 8-minute video of Knox talking about her journey with yoga and with ALS, which was recorded in collaboration with Knox's husband, David, an Emmy Award-winning camera operator. Up until 2020, Kase ran YogaHaven locations in Scarsdale and Tuckahoe, where Knox taught for more than 20 years. Last year YogaHaven opened up a new location in Tuckahoe.

Kase first met Knox when she visited Knox's class at Yoga Zone.

Continued on page 17



piccola
TRATTORIA

RESERVATIONS







*Join us for a
Delicious
Italian Brunch*
Saturdays & Sundays • 12-3pm



23 Cedar Street, Dobbs Ferry • 914-674-8427 • piccolany.com
Mon-Tue-Wed 5pm-11pm • Thu-Fri 5pm-12pm • Sat 12pm-12am • Sun 12pm-10pm



HASTINGS- ON-HUDSON

— Coming Up This Week —

Hastings Repair Café

Saturday, March 22, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

James Harmon Community Center

Sign up to volunteer at repaircafehv.org/hastings.

Library Board Meeting

Monday, March 24, 7 p.m.

Hastings Public Library

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 25, 6 p.m.

Farragut Complex Lecture Room

Agenda available at hohschools.org.

Local Luminaries: New York Green Roofs with Amy Falder

Thursday, March 27, 7 p.m.

Hastings Public Library

Zoning Board Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 7 p.m.

Village Hall

Agenda available at hohny.gov.

PTSA Used Book Fair

Friday, March 28, 5-8 p.m.

Saturday, March 29, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Hillside School

Kids' Night Out

Friday, March 28, 6-9 p.m.

James Harmon Community Center

Drop off ages 5-12 for entertainment and activities with Hastings High School students and adult supervisors. Suggested donation: \$60 per family, plus \$5 per child for pizza. Visit hohny.gov for the link to the registration form.

Mobile Shredder

Saturday, March 29, 10 a.m.- 1 p.m.

Chemka Pool parking lot

"John Singer Sargent: His Art, His Life, His Muse"

Sunday, March 30, 2-4 p.m.

Hastings Public Library

Hastings resident and author Gil Reavill discusses the famed portrait painter.

Library Giving Day

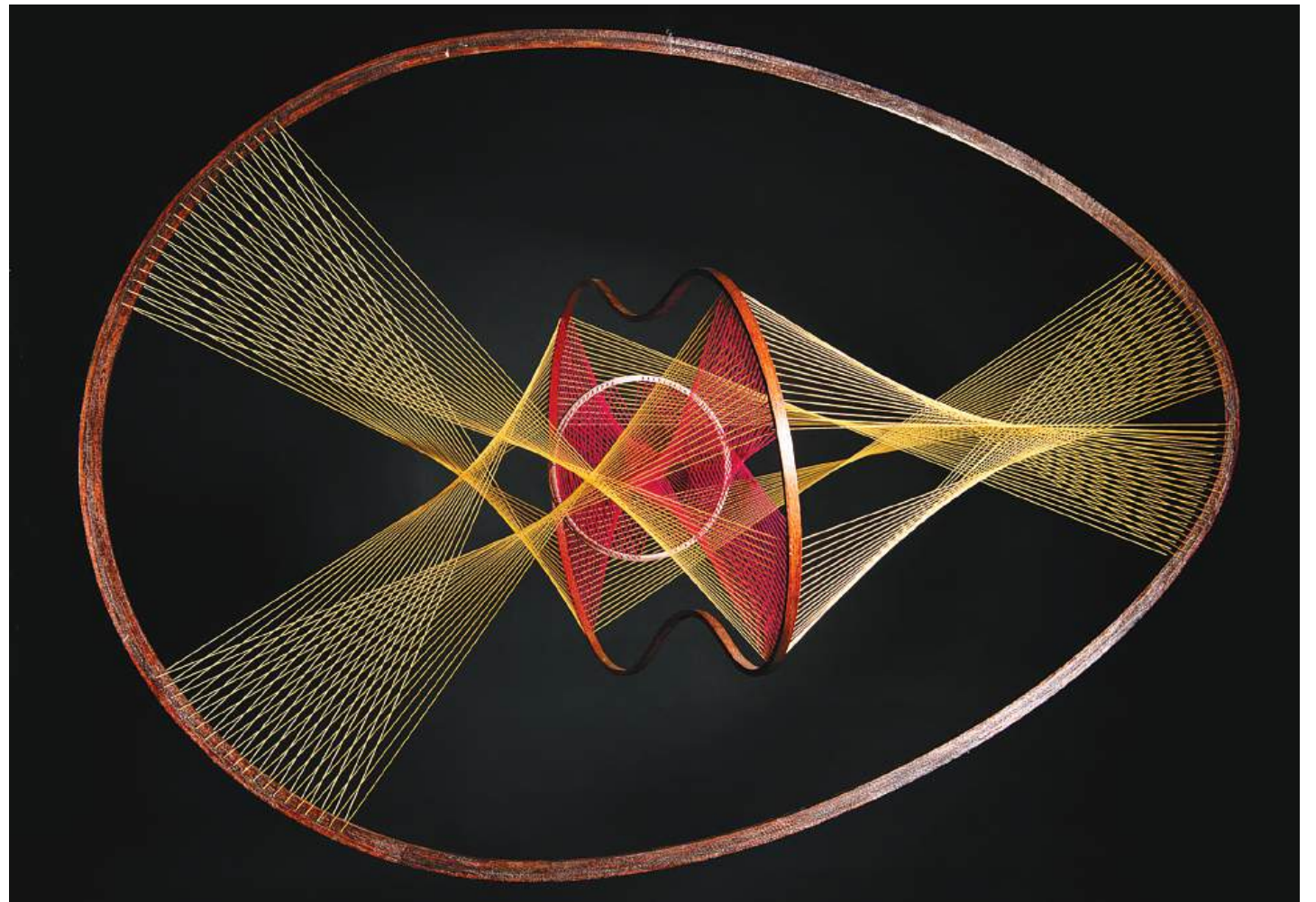
Tuesday, April 1, 9:30 a.m.- 7 p.m.

Hastings Public Library

Stop by for free coffee, sweet treats, and a coupon for any book from the Barkin Corner Bookshop, located inside the library, as a token of appreciation for support of the library.

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at amy@rivertownsdispatch.com



Photos by Jim Metzger

Sculptor weaves art and math in string

Museum showcases work by Hastings resident

BY RITA WALTON

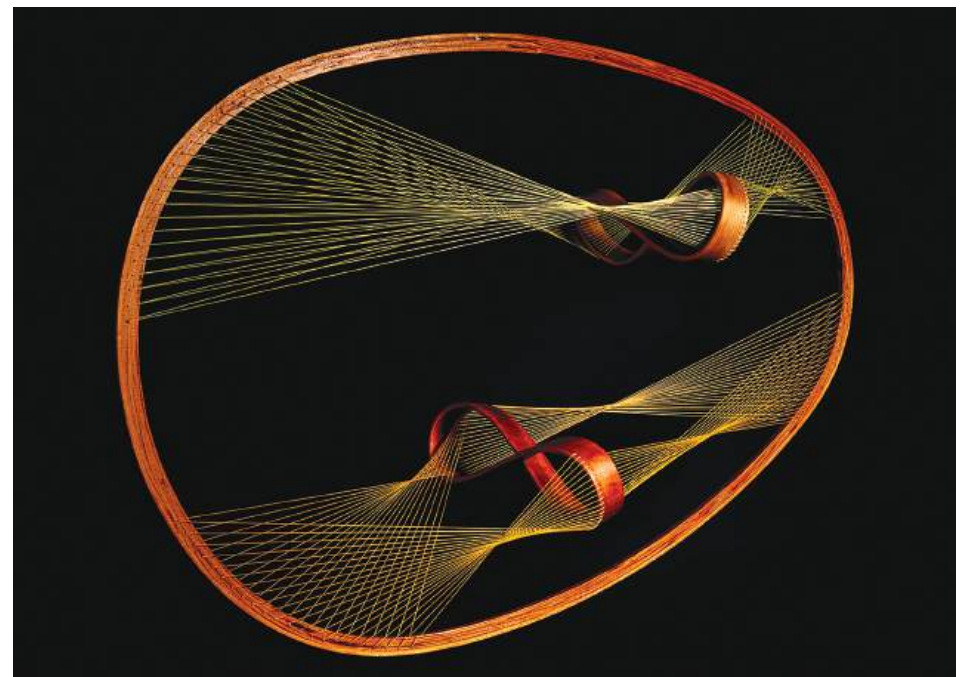
Thirteen colorful string and wood mobiles rotate from the ceiling of the Composite Gallery at the National Museum of Mathematics in Manhattan. Some seem to change shape when viewed from different angles and some cast geometric shadows on the wall. The artist behind these creations is David Press of Hastings, a retired teacher who has been creating string art for more than 50 years.

The exhibit, entitled "Emergent Surfaces: Studies in Tension," features work by Press alongside the crochet art of Shiyong Dong.

Press's mobiles are constructions with straight string interlaced around and inside wood frames; the largest measures about 48 inches. The pieces are intended to be meditative and relaxing, but there are also mathematical concepts contained within these structures. The rod-and-circle piece in the gallery's front window is one of the configurations that can be strung so it changes shape as it turns; the diamond shapes are called asteroids.

In his artist statement, the 78-year-old Press notes that he is dedicated to exploring the possibilities of three-dimensional shapes formed from straight lines. For inspiration, he draws on the work of 19th-century mathematician and model-maker Theodore Olivier and artists Kenneth Snelson, Alexander Calder, and Naum Gabo.

Press, who grew up in Irvington, has lived in Hastings for 48 years and participates



in the annual RiverArts Studio Tour. He taught computer science at Blind Brook High School in Rye Brook for more than 30 years.

In an interview with the Dispatch, Press recalled how he started working in string art.

"I graduated from college in 1968 with a degree in computer science," he said. "A lot of my college roommates were moving to Canada to avoid the draft for the Vietnam War. I had been doing some work for the peace movement and for [presidential candidate] Eugene McCarthy. My father did some work with his hands so he had some tools. One night, I took a piece of old

wood and I tried to draw a peace symbol with thread on nails. I started like a lot of string art people, with nails and wood, and it grew to three dimensions and trying to get points to float in space."

One of the pieces in the exhibit, "Two Infinities (and beyond)" is credited to Press and wood artist Jenny Wong-Stanley. This piece, two figure eights, is interwoven with golden string. The artwork is located at the entrance of the exhibit and is front-lit to cast shadows on the wall.

Press described how the collaboration with Wong-Stanley came about. "I visited Jenny in Croton and saw the two infinity

Continued on page 17

HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON

Updated Comprehensive Plan to be aired at upcoming hearing

BY AMY BOCHNER

The Village of Hastings released a draft of its updated Comprehensive Plan, setting out to address the community’s needs, opportunities, and vision for the future.

The board adopted the first Comprehensive Plan in 2011, and began the process of updating it in 2022. A 14-member committee was appointed, with MJ Engineering serving as the consultant team. The updated plan is available for review at <https://www.planhastings.org/documents>. A public hearing will be held at village hall on Tuesday, April 1, at 7 p.m.

Mayor Niki Armacost explained to the Dispatch why the board of trustees decided to undertake the revision.

“We were getting to a point where we really needed to have an updated plan, so that the things that the community wanted to do were embedded in a new document,” she said. “We had been able to get many of the things that were outlined in the first Comprehensive Plan completed. The focus was on trying to make it a more current, robust document.”

The Village also wanted to create the Comprehensive Plan in conjunction with an LWRP (Local Waterfront Revitalization Program) initiative, which aligns a municipality with principles set out by the State,

in order to receive funding. The same committee was tasked with creating both documents. While the draft of the Comprehensive Plan is available for the public to review, the draft of the LWRP is being finalized.

Armacost compared the original and updated plans.

“This Comprehensive Plan is much more robust in terms of sustainability and environmental-type issues than the 2011 Comprehensive Plan,” she said. “Since that original plan was adopted, Hastings is the highest-ranked Climate Smart Community in the state. We’ve done many more actions than were contemplated in that plan. This plan is much more detailed, much more cutting edge in terms of sustainability issues.”

The updated plan incorporates Smart Growth principles, which is a approach developed by New York State for creating livable, sustainable communities. According to the updated Comprehensive Plan, this is accomplished by “promoting a blend of various building styles and functions, a range of housing and transportation choices, integration within established neighborhoods, and active community involvement.”

Armacost detailed how this is incorporated throughout the plan.

“We explicitly noted each of the Smart

Growth principles,” she said, “and then we created a matrix which shows you exactly where that content is in the document.”

The plan also includes an implementation framework, to make it “easier for us to track successful implementation,” Armacost said.

Since the 2011 plan, new concepts in sustainability and economic vitality have emerged, many of which are incorporated into the updated version, including accessory dwelling units, maker spaces, and pro-housing communities. The updated plan also includes discussion of issues that were not as top of mind in 2011 as they are now.

“In 2011, we’d just come out of the financial crisis, and there wasn’t investment in infrastructure in the same way as there has been in the last five to six years,” Armacost said. “We’ve done a lot of investment, as a board, in sidewalks and increasing walkability, mobility. The bike lanes have gone in. All of that’s happened in the last five years. None of that existed in 2011.”

Another issue discussed in the updated plan is flooding.

“Everyone knew that flooding occurred in the village, but since 2011 we’ve had multiple 100-year, if not 500-year storms,” Armacost said. “The other thing we’ve done in the last five years that hadn’t been done before

is really invest in storm infrastructure and really think about the ways in which we can build resiliency as a community in relation to extreme weather events.”

The Covid-19 pandemic also led to changes in the Hastings community, according to Armacost.

“In terms of businesses, there is more of a reliance on ordering things directly to people’s homes now than there was back in 2011,” she said. “Some small things have changed, and that sort of adjusts the way that you think about how you can build vitality, for example, in the village [downtown].”

Armacost shared her excitement over the updated plan, and praised the Comprehensive Plan Committee for its work since 2022.

“They did a great job in creating a vision which really reflects the community... They’ve come up with this document, which I think provides a really solid blueprint for the Village moving forward,” she said. “We’re going to hear from the community on April 1. If they feel like there are specific things that they want to see in it, we will evaluate what those things are, but I feel like this is a really solid document. I think the explicit covering of Smart Growth principles and sustainability elements makes it a unique, modern comp plan that we should be proud to be implementing here.”

FOUNDATIONS

PHYSICAL

THERAPY

Specializing in pelvic floor rehabilitation

Our team treats men, women, teens and children for:

- Pelvic pain
- Constipation
- Post-urogenital cancer rehabilitation
- Menopause-related pelvic floor disorders
- Back and hip pain



Learn more on our website!



914-768-3802 | info@foundations-pt.com
www.foundations-pt.com

One-Stop Shop

FOR ALL YOUR HOUSEHOLD NEEDS

Since 1932

HASTINGS PAINT & HARDWARE

548 WARBURTON AVE. HASTINGS

914-478-1417

MON – FRI 7:30AM–5PM

SAT 8AM–5PM

SMALL TOWN STORE



FIVE-STAR SERVICE

and

Painting on Hudson

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

INTERIOR & EXTERIOR PAINTING SERVICES

www.hastingspaintandhardware.com

www.paintingonhudson.com



IRVINGTON

— Coming Up This Week —

Invasives Cleanup

Saturday, March 22, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
O'Hara Nature Center, 170 Mountain Road
Volunteer to help remove Japanese barberry from Irvington Woods Park, and learn best practices for identification, removal, and tool usage.
Registration required at register.capturepoint.com/villageofirvington.

The Modern Marionette Company: "Jack and the Dancing Beanstalk"

Saturday, March 22, 4:30 p.m.
Recreation center
Fee: for ages 14 and under, \$10 for village residents, \$15 for nonresidents; for ages 15 and up, \$15 for residents, \$20 for nonresidents.
Register at register.capturepoint.com/villageofirvington.

Farmers' Market

Sunday, March 23, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Main Street School, 101 Main St.
For details, visit theirvingtonfarmersmarket.org and follow the market on Facebook.

Architectural Review Board Meeting

Monday, March 24, 8 p.m.
Village Hall
To attend via Zoom, visit irvingtonny.gov for the link.

Virtual Program: "Six Scholars/Six Books"

Tuesday, March 25, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Celebrate Women's History Month by learning about six pioneering female scholars. Register at irvingtonlibrary.org for the Zoom link.

Zoning Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 25, 7:30 p.m.
Village Hall
To attend via Zoom, visit irvingtonny.gov for the link.

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 25, 7:30 p.m.
High school library
Agenda available at irvingtonschools.org.

4 in the Forest

Sunday, April 6, 9 a.m.; registration fee (\$45) increases on April 4.
The 4-mile run on the Peter K. Oley trails starts and ends at Irvington High School.
Visit tinyurl.com/3e7er7ut to register.

Got news?

Email staff writer Julian Caldwell at julian@rivertownsdispatch.com



Exterior details of the McVickar House



Historical society issues plea for support

Nonprofit faces projected deficit of \$9,000 in 2025

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

After writing a letter to the Irvington Board of Trustees about the impact of rising expenses, Irvington Historical Society president Veronica Gedrich and vice president Scott Mosenthal appealed to the board for increased funding during a public meeting on Monday, March 17.

The historical society, which also relies on public donations, anticipates a \$9,000 deficit for the 2025 calendar year. Established in 1972, the nonprofit organization hosts free talks and exhibits, and maintains an archive available to the public for research. The society has been headquartered at the McVickar House on Main Street, a Village-owned property, since 2005.

"The options for us are to remain in the McVickar House and continue to store our archive, or become an online organization," Gedrich told the Dispatch. "In that way we could still serve the village, but not in the same capacity."

The society's Con Edison bill doubled from \$3,427 in 2019 to \$6,860 in 2024. Costs to print its quarterly newsletter, event postcards, and other materials also doubled over that period, while telephone, internet, and computer expenses more than doubled

— from \$2,134 to \$5,268.

While the Village has helped with maintenance costs for the McVickar House, and subsidizes the cost of archival storage, this is the first time the historical society has asked the board for additional help covering annual operating costs.

"Everybody's facing it — towns, village governments, households, and everybody else," said Mosenthal, who retired as principal of Irvington High School in 2012. "The price of things just keeps going up. We're in a tough spot because we're a volunteer organization. We just want to be able to run our programs."

Since 2007, the Village has allocated \$10,200 annually to the historical society to help pay for storing materials such as clothing worn by Washington Irving, vintage tools from when Irvington was farmland, and clothing, furniture, and artifacts from longtime Irvington residents who passed away. Since 2013, the archives have been housed at a location on North Dearman Street, where the Village's contributions now cover less than half of the roughly \$22,000 annual rent.

The historical society holds an annual gala at the Ardsley Country Club, but as the cost of renting that venue increase, that event earns less for the society. With its 20 board members and six officers working on a volunteer basis, the historical society's list of expenses is short.

"Our budget stuff gets put on half a page," Mosenthal explained. "We have a few big-ticket items and a couple little ones, and that's kind of it. So we don't have a lot of room to play. It's going to be a challenge [to find expenses to cut]."

During the meeting on March 17, the board talked with Gedrich and Mosenthal about the possibility of the Village taking on all maintenance costs for the McVickar House in lieu of increasing support from the village budget. They also talked about the possibility of reducing the amount of material kept in the archives and moving to a smaller location with lower rent. The mayor and trustees plan to schedule a meeting with historical society to further discuss ways to support the organization.

"Hopefully, as we sit down and talk we can at least find ways to offset the deficit," Mosenthal said. "And I think that we require some things on our part, but also some generosity on the side of the village board."

"It's a nonprofit organization — we rely on the support of the public," Gedrich added. "We provide a lot of programs, events, research opportunities that we don't — and should not — ask for money for. So with that type of arrangement, you're not sure that you can remain a viable institution."

To donate to the Irvington Historical Society, visit irvingtonhistoricalsociety.org.

IRVINGTON

— COMMUNITY BRIEFS —

National Honor Society inductees

More than 80 Irvington High School students were inducted into the National Honor Society (NHS) on Feb. 5. The students were recognized for exemplifying the four pillars of the NHS: leadership, scholarship, character, and service.

The ceremony began with a procession led by senior musicians and NHS members Michelle Zhou and Martina Albay. Club officers Gabriella Brenner, Alexandra Lyashenko, Jacob Reichgott, and Ella Sasso delivered reflections on the core values of NHS.

Guided by club advisers Jacquelyn Grant and Jen Lentini, the inductees received their certificates from Principal Jon Hirsch, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Gail Duffy, and Assistant Principal Sara Rust.

Superintendent of Schools Mara Ratesic and Hirsch concluded the event with congratulatory remarks.

Students excel at science symposium

Irvington High School juniors Lucy Acharekar, Madeline Barth, Max Bloom, and Anna Dorokhova presented their science research projects at the inaugural UAlbany in the High School Science Research Symposium on Feb. 26. The competitive

event brought together 50 students from science research programs across the state.

Bloom earned first place for his research and presentation on “The Structure Biology of TCR-pMHC Complexes in Autoimmune Disease.”

“What set Max apart was his ability to make complex science accessible to others,” Science Research teachers Amy Ma and Nadia Parikka said. “When watching him present you could really see how much he enjoys what he is doing and his love for learning.”

Acharekar presented her project, “Characterizing Bleeding and Factor Levels in Females in a National Hemophilia Genotyping Program.” Barth presented her project, “The Correlation Between Cerebrospinal Fluid Volume and the Presence of a Psychiatric Disorder.” Dorokhova presented her project, “Designing a System to Determine Naked Mole Rat Dispersers.”

Outstanding Instructional Technology Coach

Stephanie Peborde Burke, an instructional innovation coach with the Irvington School District, received the TELL (Technology in Education through Leadership and Learning) Outstanding Instructional

Technology Coach Award on March 6.

After 14 years of as a sixth-grade science and high school science research teacher, Burke transitioned into educational technology. She started in Irvington in 2023, after earning a doctorate in educational technology leadership from New Jersey City University.

Burke supports faculty and staff districtwide, inspiring the adoption of novel technology to engage, enhance, and extend learning. She secured an Irvington Education Foundation grant to equip the entire district with STEAM and creative tools, including robots, electronics kits, 3D printing supplies and professional audio/video equipment.

All-County Orchestra

Irvington Middle School eighth graders Beckett Eisenlau (double bass) and Elijah Sirulnik (violin), and Irvington High School freshman Harrison Lorenz (cello), performed at the Westchester Coun-



Stephanie Peborde Burke

ty School Music Association’s All-County Orchestra concert on March 8 at New Rochelle High School.

During the concert, the students played “Hoe Down” by Aaron Copland, arranged by Stephen Bulla; “Swinging Door” by Yukiko Nishimura; “Nocturne” from String Quartet No. 2 by Alexander Borodin, arranged by Merle Isaac; and “Jupiter” by Mozart, arranged by Todd Parrish.

Students in grades 4-6 and 7-9 were selected for the All-County Orchestra based upon their performances during the New York State School Music Association’s solo festivals last spring.

All-Eastern music ensemble

Irvington High School senior Gabriella Brenner will perform with the 200-student mixed chorus during the National Association for Music Educators Eastern Division festival concert on April 27 at the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts in Hartford, Connecticut.



Gabriella Brenner

HUDSON SOCIAL
LUNCH • DINNER • BRUNCH • HAPPY HOUR
PRIVATE EVENTS • OUTDOOR SEATING & BAR • FREE PARKING
11 STATION PLAZA, DOBBS FERRY, NY
HUDSONSOCIAL.COM • (914) 478-3634
@HUDSONSOCIAL /HUDSONSOCIAL

CLUB CAR GRILLE
LUNCH • DINNER • BRUNCH
HAPPY HOUR • PRIVATE EVENTS
FREE PARKING
MONDAY THRU SATURDAY
1/2 OFF WINE BY THE GLASS FROM 12-4PM
EVERY WEDNESDAY
1/2 OFF BOTTLES OF WINE UNDER \$100
6 S. BROADWAY, IRVINGTON, NY
(914) 591-2033
CLUBCARGRILLE.COM
@CLUBCARGRILLENY /CLUBCARGRILLE

REGISTER NOW!
NEW KAWAII AFTER SCHOOL
8 SESSIONS • APRIL 7 - JUNE 9
Board Games • Crafts • LEGOs • Fandom Design Lab
Magic: the Gathering • Dungeons & Dragons
Pokémon • Math Enrichment • Homework Club
New Kawaii Toys & Games
1 Bridge Street • Irvington NY
914-279-0001 • www.NewKawaii.com

Opinion

The Dispatch welcomes letters to the editor about subjects related to the Rivertowns. Letters must be no more than 300 words, submitted by Monday at noon for that week's issue, and include the names, home addresses, and phone numbers of their writers. No letter is guaranteed publication. To submit a letter, visit rivertownsdispatch.com/contact-us.

Hastings Board of Education responds to criticism of proposed bond projects

To the Editor:

In response to a recent Dispatch letter ("Reduce ill-conceived Hastings school bond") the Hastings Board of Education Trustees welcome the opportunity to correct and clarify several points:

Our school bond has never contained any proposal for "new classrooms at the courtyard bridge."

With regard to the shared cafeteria, though older high schoolers frequently leave campus to eat, our middle school has virtually the same number of students (500-plus) and our cafeteria needs to meet the cumulative demand of 1,000-plus students

for breakfast and lunch, together with the demand from the 100-plus teachers and staff who occupy both buildings.

More significantly, the consideration of a new cafeteria is driven by two critical factors:

- By constructing a new cafeteria atop an unused courtyard, we can efficiently reclaim the space our current cafeteria occupies — space which was classrooms decades ago and which can be readily converted back to the 6,000 square feet of educational space our middle school requires.

- Concurrently, the New York State Education Department has agreed that our

cafeteria is substantially undersized for our school population and is therefore willing to cover roughly half the cost of constructing a suitable cafeteria.

To another aspect raised, about the glass-fronted cafeteria design, consultations with our architects and engineers reveal that there is no appreciable cost savings in pursuing alternate materials. Furthermore, glass is indicated because the new cafeteria would enclose several existing exterior windows. Glass preserves needed interior light and ambiance and, as well, helps meet the State Historic Preservation Office's preference for approving projects

that "seek a balance between contrasting and complementary design."

Please note that accurate information about our bond is now available through a dedicated email address. Residents are encouraged to email with questions, comments, and fact-checking inquiries at bond@hohschools.org.

ALEX DAL PIAZ (PRESIDENT), SILVIA ROBLES (VICE PRESIDENT), DAVID BARONE, CATHERINE DIMARTINO, THERESA MCCAFFREY, JODIE MEYER, MAUREEN LENNON-SANTANA
Hastings-on-Hudson Board of Education

Public needs to weigh in before school board decides scope of bond for Hastings

To the Editor:

We are disappointed by last week's letter from the Hastings Board of Education regarding its \$38 million bond.

The board members say they've been "listening closely and carefully," yet there's been virtually no outreach to the full community or solicitation of broader input. Their letter states that they'd address the bond at their March 11 meeting — though that would be a non-starter for the public because the board submitted their letter for

the Dispatch's March 14 edition.

A "Special Bond Presentation," set for March 19, has apparently been advertised to the school community and on the district website. Seventy percent of Hastings residents don't have children in the schools; don't get the school mailings; and don't routinely check the district's website. But they do pay taxes. Residents want to be part of the discussion about how scarce resources are allocated. And one-directional public comments at board meetings, where board

members don't respond, are not sufficient.

The board's response in last week's letter to the public is troubling: They claim there's "a lot of erroneous information" about the bond, without giving specific (or non-specific) examples. As for our group, Hastings Sustainable Schools, we have used the board's information whenever possible and endeavored to carefully check the facts when it is not possible.

New York State law strictly prohibits the use of school resources to advocate for a

"yes" vote on budgets and bonds. Simply decrying supposed "erroneous information" seems to us inappropriate.

We encourage the community to learn about the bond and make its voice heard before the final scope is approved by the board, likely in the next few weeks. And we encourage the Hastings Board of Education to listen.

ALAN GOLDS, DANIEL LEMONS, LISA LITVIN, AND PETER SWIDERSKI
Hastings Sustainable Schools

Urge New York State legislators to back bill that puts people before plastics

To the Editor:

While D.C. trashes environmental protections, New York fights plastic pollution. Raising my energy-drink-guzzling teen athlete, I always believed what we dragged to the curb every week was magically transformed. The ugly truth is only about 9% of plastic bottles and packaging is recycled, while the rest poisons the environment and our bodies. The award-winning documentary "Plastic People" reveals how plastic pollution is increasingly deadly — and who profits from it. Come to the special-event

screening of "Plastic People" at the Yonkers Riverfront Library, April 27, 2-4:30 p.m.

New York faces a growing plastic pollution crisis. We produce 6.8 million tons of packaging waste each year. Most of this packaging is sent to landfills, incinerated, or littered in our streets, parks, beaches, rivers, and, ultimately, the Atlantic Ocean. In Westchester County, plastics constitute approximately 16.8% of the municipal solid waste stream. That's 378 tons of plastic waste per day for Westchester alone.

New York legislators are introducing a crit-

ical bill to reduce the amount of plastic made and used — and save money for New York in the process. The Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act (S1464/A1749) would require big companies selling products in New York to cut plastic packaging by 30% over the next 12 years. The bill, introduced by Senator Harckham and Assemblymember Glick, would also ban 14 highly toxic chemicals, including PFAs that are used in packaging. The PRRIA shifts the financial burden for dealing with this toxic waste from taxpayers

to the companies responsible for creating it.

Per renowned activist Judith Enck, "We can't recycle our way out of this problem!" We must reduce this toxic waste that harms our health and speeds climate change. Please call your state senator and Assembly members and urge them to pass the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act. Thank you.

CAROL JACOBS
Hastings

Letters continue on page 16

PICTURE BOOK

Dobbs Ferry, New York



Come in for books, coffee, & conversation

Your Rivertown Bookshop with Boxing Day Café 9am-2pm

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

Need a jumpstart learning AI?

AI confidence starts here.

Claude
Copilot
ChatGPT

Training & Support
■ For you
■ For your team

Luminate helps professionals like you elevate your career in just 4 weeks.

Our proven methods will help you:

- Integrate AI seamlessly into your workflow
- Boost productivity and creativity
- Get confident using AI for impactful results

Rivertowns-based AI training for local professionals and teams



Luminate
LuminateSolutions.net/dispatch

The Agenda

SAT
22

Ardsley Cares Day
ARDSLEY
8 a.m.-1 p.m. Ardsley High School and throughout the village. Sign up at ardsleyptsamembershiptoolkit.com.

“Into the Woods”

ARDSLEY
2 and 7 p.m. / \$22, \$20 for students. Ardsley High School, 300 Farm Road. The Sondheim musical is presented by the Ardsley High School Drama Club. Tickets at cur8.com with keyword Ardsley.

Live Music: “Hardcore in the 914”

ARDSLEY
9 p.m. / \$10 cover charge. Saw Mill Tavern, 925 Saw Mill River Road. NYHC Comics presents a lineup of local bands, including Brass Knuckle Brigade, Grave Heist, Human Train Wreck NYHC, Shatterhead, and Mickeys Crew. Reservations encouraged. smtavern.com

The Modern Marionette Company: “Jack and the Dancing Beanstalk”

IRVINGTON
4:30 p.m. / for ages 14 and under, \$10 for village residents, \$15 for nonresidents; for ages 15 and up, \$15 for residents, \$20 for nonresidents. Irvington Recreation Center. Register at capturepoint.com/villageofirvington.

“The 3 Dianas: An Original Theatrical Event”

YONKERS
3 p.m. / \$13 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. The narrative introduces three female heroes: Goddess Diana, Princess Diana, and Wonder Woman. hrm.org

Untermeyer Volunteer Kickoff

YONKERS
1-3 p.m. / Free. Untermeyer Park and Gardens, 945 N. Broadway. Information meeting about opportunities for new and active volunteers. Register online. untermyergardens.org

Community Science: Spring Equinox BioBlitz

YONKERS
1-3 p.m. / Free. Lenoir Nature Preserve, 19 Dudley St. Start with an introduction to the iNaturalist app, then log species in the app while hiking around the preserve. facebook.com/LenoirPreserve

“FeederWatch”

YONKERS
2-4 p.m. / Free. Lenoir Nature Preserve, 19 Dudley St. Help count birds for a citizen science project run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. No experience necessary. Also Sunday. hras.org

Jazz Singer Jane Monheit

TARRYTOWN
7 and 9:30 p.m. / \$40, \$35 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. jazzforumarts.org



The Modern Marionette Company presents “Jack and the Dancing Beanstalk” this Saturday, March 22, in Irvington.

Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse

WHITE PLAINS
7:30 p.m. / \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door. Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 468 Rosedale Ave. This month’s folk concert features Seamus Kennedy. walkaboutchorus.org

“Praise! Project” Dance Theater Performance

OSSINING
7 p.m. / \$25, \$20 for students and seniors. Bethany Arts Community, 40 Somerstown Road. Recommended for ages 15 and up. bethanyarts.org

“(Un)Common Ground” choral concert

DOBBS FERRY
2 p.m. / \$30 general admission, \$20 for students. South Presbyterian Church, 343 Broadway. The Ensemble

Companio chamber choir performs the premier of Forrest Pierce’s “Fire in the Meadow,” which fuses mystical texts by Hildegard von Bingen and the 20th-century Sufi poetry of Inayat Khan, alongside the work of composers Reena Esmail, Kerry Andrew, Andrew Balfour, Laura Jekabsone, Russell Wallace, and others. ensemblecompanio.org.

Documentary Screening: “Home Court”

DOBBS FERRY
1 p.m. / Free. Dobbs Ferry Public Library, 55 Main St. Advanced screening of the PBS

documentary that traces the ascent of an Asian American high school basketball star pursuing her dreams. dobbsferrylibrary.org

Tea and Printmaking: Negative Shape Gelliprinting

HASTINGS
2-4 p.m. / \$15. The Maker Hive, 416 Warburton Ave. makerhive.space

Farmers’ Market

IRVINGTON
9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Main Street School, 101 Main St. theirvingtonfarmersmarket.org

Live Music: Peter Brainin Brazilian Group

TARRYTOWN
4 and 6 p.m. / \$25, \$20 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. Pereira performs with his band, Blindfold Test. jazzforumarts.org

Friends of Old Croton Aqueduct: Weir Tour

OSSINING
10 a.m. / Free. Joseph Caputo Center, 95 Broadway. Guided exploration of the original 1842 brick water tunnel. Registration required. aqueduct.org

Virtual Tour of Siena, Italy

ARDSLEY
Noon / Free. Register by emailing Peggym@ardsleylibrary.org.

Live Music: Colin McGrath with Justin Hines and Lexy Casano

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

Virtual Program: “Six Scholars/Six Books”

IRVINGTON
6:30-7:30 p.m. / Free. Irvington Public Library, 12 S. Astor St. Celebrate Women’s History Month by learning about six pioneering women scholars. Register online for the Zoom link. irvingtonlibrary.org

Coffee, Class, and Conversation: A Free Program for Seniors

YONKERS
10-11:30 a.m. / Free. MorDance Studio, 86 Main St., 6th floor. RSVP online. mordance.org

“Creativity in Bloom: Flowers and Art”

SCARSDALE
4:30 p.m. / Free. Scarsdale Public Library, 54 Olmsted Road. Ardsley artist Beverly Shipko presents a hybrid program about flowers as creative inspiration. Registration required online to attend in-person or via Zoom. scarsdalelibrary.org

Virtual Lecture: “Exciting (Free) Native Plants, Trees, and Shrubs for Your Yard”

ARDSLEY
7:30 p.m. / Free. Ardsley Pollinator Pathway Steering Committee members Jen Sanchez, Kathy Evers, and Carol Sommerfield give an overview of the native plants that will be given away as part of Ardsley Pollinator Day on Sunday, April 6, and the free native shrub and tree saplings at the Arbor Day event at the Greenburgh Public Library on April 29. Register for the Zoom link online. ardsleypollinatorpathway.org

A Dispatch Discussion: “Cellphones in Schools”

DOBBS FERRY
7 p.m. / Free. HudCo, 145 Palisade St., Suite 200. The Rivertowns Dispatch hosts a panel moderated by one of its writers, Janine Annett, to discuss Gov. Kathy Hochul’s proposed limits on smartphones in schools. Reserve a spot at eventbrite.com.

Rivertowns Chamber Networking Event

HASTINGS
5-6:30 p.m. / Free for members, \$25 for nonmembers. Bread & Brine, 19 Main St. Includes light bites. Register online. rivertownschamber.com

Hybrid Film Club: “The Red Shoes”

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 Agenda

“Birding the Rio Grande Valley”

YONKERS
7 p.m. / Free. Lenoir Nature Preserve, 19 Dudley St. Michael Bochnik discusses the wildlife at the border of Texas and Mexico. hras.org

THURS 27
ARDSLEY
7 p.m. / Free. Ardsley High School, 300 Farm Road. The Ardsley School District hosts a presentation for parents by Sgt. Tom Rich of the Summit (N.J.) Police Department on “Navigating the Digital World: Impact, Awareness, and Health Habits.” RSVP at <http://shorturl.at/SrKSV>

High School Basketball: Pioneer Homecoming Game
ARDSLEY
4 p.m. / Ardsley High School, 300 Farm Road. The Ardsley Panthers take on the Mount Vernon Knights. ahs.ardsleyschools.org/familiescommunity

Local Luminaries: Amy Falder
HASTINGS
7 p.m. / Free. Hastings Public Library, 7 Maple Ave. A founding partner of New York Green Roofs discusses her projects including the Empire State Building, Statue of Liberty Museum, and Chemka Pool. hastingslibrary.org

New Exhibit
HASTINGS
2-5 p.m. / Free. Upstream Gallery, 8 Main St. Opening of Sondra Gold’s “Some of My Favorite Things” and the New Member Showcase. Reception on Sunday, March 30, 2-5 p.m. On view through April 20. Hours: Thursday-Sunday, 12:30-5:30 p.m. upstreamgallery.com

A Taste of the Levant
TARRYTOWN
7 p.m. / \$110, \$90 for members. The Ark at the Shames JCC, 371 S. Broadway. The Middle Eastern culinary experience includes a four-course meal. Purchase tickets online. shamesjcc.org

FRI 28
ARDSLEY
9 p.m. / No cover charge. Saw Mill Tavern, 925 Saw Mill River Road. Reservations encouraged. smtavern.com

Ladies Night Out: A Comedy Show Honoring Women’s History Month
DOBBS FERRY
6-10 p.m. / \$35, \$25 for members. HudCo, 145 Palisade St., Suite 200. Cyndy Cecil brings together an all-female comedic crew. Purchase tickets online. hudco.eventbrite.com

“The Hello Girls”
IRVINGTON
7 p.m. / \$27, \$23 for students and seniors.

Irvington Theater, 85 Main St. Broadway Training Center presents this new musical about female telephone operators during World War I. Also 7 p.m. on March 29 and 3 p.m. on March 30. irvingtontheater.com

Live Jazz: Peter Janeway Quintet
TARRYTOWN
7 and 9:30 p.m. / \$35, \$30 for students. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. The pianist and longtime Hastings resident performs with Billy Hart, Cameron Brown, Freddie Hendrix, and Craig Handy. Also March 29. jazzforumarts.org

Rivertown Dance Academy Festival
TARRYTOWN
6:30 p.m. / \$31. Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. Students showcase ballet, jazz, modern dance, theater jazz, tap, and hip-hop. Also 1 p.m. on March 29 and 30. tarrytownmusichall.org

ONGOING

“Contemporary Landscape & Figure Paintings”
IRVINGTON
Martucci Gallery at the Irvington Public Library, 12 S. Astor St. This month’s exhibit features minimalist depictions by Irvington artist Daniel Rush. Through March 29. irvingtonlibrary.org

Annual Westchester Photo Contest
GREENBURGH
Greenburgh Public Library, 300 Tarrytown Road.

Submit photographs digitally by March 31 to photocontest@greenburghlibrary.org. Selected photos will be displayed May 2-June 12. Prizes will be awarded at a reception on May 17. Contest rules are available online. greenburghlibrary.org

Art Exhibit
ARDSLEY
Village Hall, 507 Ashford Ave. Paintings by village resident Morry Silbiger are on view through August.

“Soundscapes”
HASTINGS
Upstream Gallery, 8 Main St. The spring group show features Rivertowns artists. On view through March 23. Hours: Thursday-Sunday, 12:30-5:30 p.m. upstreamgallery.com

“Icons Reconstructed and Repainted”
HASTINGS
Village Hall Gallery, 7 Maple Ave. Edward Bear Miller’s exhibit features portraits of James Baldwin, Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, and Harriet Tubman. On view through April.

“This Heart Contains”
DOBBS FERRY
The Donald Gallery at South Church, 343 Broadway. Katie Reidy’s graffiti-style artwork features spray paint on canvas. Reidy is currently the owner of and art teacher for two after-school children’s programs in Hastings. On view through March 26. southpres.org


A Dispatch DISCUSSION

Cellphones in Schools

Wednesday MAR 26

7 p.m.

HudCo
145 Palisade St.
Dobbs Ferry



A lively panel discussion on New York’s proposed school phone ban, featuring educators, parents, and students.


Moderator: Janine Annett
Rivertowns Dispatch
Contributing Writer

Ken Slentz
Dobbs Ferry School District
Superintendent

Monique Johnson
LCSW, Ardsley School District
Social Worker

Francis O’Shea
Irvington parent

Frieda Belasco
Hastings High School Senior



Alcott School

535 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry

A MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL

Now enrolling students for our 6 week Summer 2025 program

2 Year Old Classes: Full Day or Half Day Mornings (Diapers Welcome)

3-5 Year Old Classes: Full Day or Half Day Mornings


Early drop and late pick up options

*


Montessori Certified Teacher / Montessori Classroom Materials

BENEFITS OF A MONTESSORI CLASSROOM

- Children become Independent Learners
- Improve Self Esteem and Self Confidence
- Build Socialization Skills
- Help Develop Small and Large Motor Skills
- Multiage Classroom Benefits



Two Large Outdoor Playgrounds
Bike Path * Large Indoor Gym
Nature, Music and Movement Classes



Call or email for further information and to schedule a tour

CJalalat@AlcottSchool.org 914-693-4443

Opinion

Support for Hamas' goals does not comport with nonviolence

To the Editor:

As a retired rabbi living in Hastings, I want to say “amen” to Steven Siebert’s call that “all humanity might live and flourish together.” I am moved by Steve’s commitment to nonviolence which, he writes, extends to the point “that he has even told his own daughters that he would not automatically kill somebody to save them.” Moved, but not persuaded.

Religious and non-religious ethicists alike have come to different conclusions about the most moral and ethical thing to do under such circumstances. Utilitarian ethicists argue that the greater good is served by stopping (killing, if

necessary) a would-be murderer. Deontological ethicists argue that the intrinsic immorality of killing generally forbids it, but allow that the duty to protect innocent life overrides such prohibition. The position Steve occupies is vanishingly rare.

The personal becomes political when Steve stands with Jewish Voice for Peace. JVP wants to abolish Israel’s right to exist as the Jewish state, and blames Israel for the October 7 attack on babies, children, women, and men (see “U.S. pro-Palestinian groups applaud Hamas terror onslaught, plan support rallies,” Times of Israel, Oct. 8, 2023).

I am strongly pro-two-state solution. To vastly

understate the case, Hamas is not. Their goal is Israel’s eradication. Their ideology, articulated in their 1988 Charter is: “The Day of Judgment will not come about until Muslims fight the Jews, when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees. The stones and trees will say O Muslims, O Abdullah, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him” (Article 7). Their refusal to share Israel/Palestine is reiterated in their Charter of 2017: “There is no alternative to a fully sovereign Palestinian State on the entire national Palestinian soil, with Jerusalem as its capital” (Article 27).

RABBI MARK SAMETH

Hastings

Gas leaf blower use reflects a lack of consideration

To the Editor:

As I sit and write this on Saturday, March 15, the obnoxious sound of gas leaf blowers (prohibited in Dobbs Ferry until today) has started. From now until May 15, our ears and lungs will be assaulted by these tools. I used to think that I was just becoming less tolerant as I got older, but this is different. Neighbors have become less considerate of neighbors. Neighbors do not seem to care that this intrusion on peace and quiet can actually go on for three to four hours at a time.

This disregard for our neighbors has prompted many municipalities from further banning gas leaf blowers. Good for them. It is unfortunate that we need laws to regulate common sense.

I suspect that in the near future, there will be a countywide ban on gas leaf blowers at all times. I look forward to supporting these actions. If you or your landscaper’s employees really need to rid your property of those awful leaves, please consider a rake or a quiet electric blower.

JOSEPH BOVA

Dobbs Ferry

As schools weigh spending, prioritize teaching and learning

To the Editor:

During the March 11 Hastings Board of Education meeting, we heard several accounts of how proposed budget cuts landed on parents and, by proxy, their children, who are excited to take a range of curricular offerings, only to find that there won’t be enough faculty to teach them.

But I want to acknowledge how this might land on someone with my profession — a high school English teacher. As inventive as teaching can be, it’s also highly iterative: If you have 15 kids in a class, you have 15 essays to grade and 15 voices to draw into discussions. If you have 27 kids, you have nearly

50 percent more grading and half as much chance for each voice to be heard.

On a weekend morning with enough coffee, you might get through six or eight essays in a session. If you teach 15 kids, you’re halfway there; if you teach 27, you just can’t give the same kind of attention.

Or let’s say you’re on chapter five of a great novel, and you want to froth a discussion about its currents of pride, injustice, community, and sin. With 15 kids, there’s an entryway for reflection, a give and take. With 27, it’s more likely that the extroverted kids will flex their public speaking skills. And as

more kids detach, more become distracted.

I know the bond and the budget are two separate “buckets,” but as someone with one brain, it’s hard to overlook the fact that we might gain a glass-enclosed, two-story cafeteria space with roof deck, but lose an English teacher; or we might add a marquee-like entrance façade, but not have any more anthropology class.

Schools work because real people are there and present; against all that erodes us now, they are bastions for humane, face-to-face encounters. We need to prioritize teaching and learning.

TIM DONAHUE

Hastings



CGA Studio Architects’ rendering for the redevelopment of 555 Warburton Avenue and 15 Spring Street

Warburton and Spring

Continued from page 1

granted variances and view preservation approval for the project. Representatives of the project who attended the meeting were Griffin, the principal of Hastings-based CGA Studio Architects; Michael Lang of 555 Warburton, LLC, who owns the property; and CGA architect Karen Chubak.

The three variances granted were a request to allow for 15 off-street parking spaces (one per residential unit) instead of the required 25; a request for a 15-foot rear-yard setback for the proposed balconies on the third floor instead of 20 feet; and a request allowing the

heights of various aspects of the building to exceed the 40-foot limit. Those aspects are an additional 1.6 feet for the roof, 3 feet for a parapet wall, and 20.8 feet for the bulkhead of a proposed elevator and stairs.

On March 13, the planning board added two conditions to the site plan approval, which were that the commercial workspace not be permitted to be used for any residential use, and that comments from the board’s consulting engineer be addressed to his satisfaction.

The next step is for the architects to get a building permit. For the permit to be issued, the architects must address comments were made in a memo to the planning board by its consulting engineer.

‘Murder the Truth’

Continued from page 7

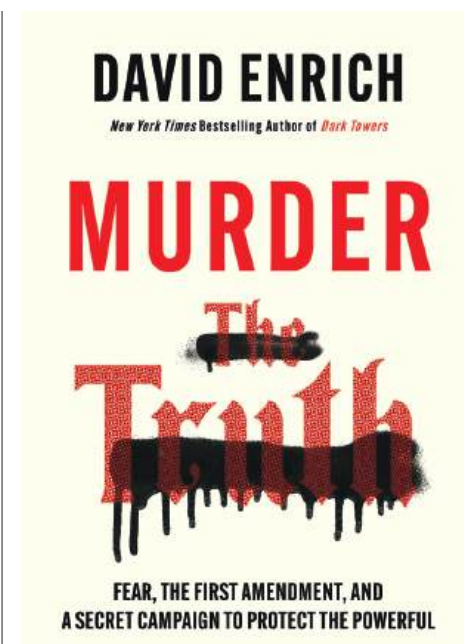
alized into formal lawsuits.

“That speech in early 2016 was kind of one of the moments of ignition for this legal movement that was just getting underway at the time,” Enrich said. “Trump and his allies have — I think — really tried to turn the public and the legal system against the media because the media has been one of the most effective checks on the power of governments and big companies and other powerful people and institutions.”

Enrich also believes that lack of transparency and accountability from publications has played a part in eroding citizens’ trust in media, and growing public support for efforts to make it easier to sue media outlets.

“We all have biases and sometimes those biases blind us or color our thinking about things, and sometimes that leads us to come down too hard or too soft on someone or something,” Enrich noted. “Mistakes like that are completely unavoidable; we’re imperfect, we’re humans. But I think we in the media in general could be doing a much better job at owning up to those mistakes and trying to reckon with what caused them and trying to do so in public in a way that’s aimed at restoring trust and transparency.”

However, Enrich asserts that reversing a court decisions like the Times vs. Sullivan isn’t the answer, and would weaken the public’s ability to check the power of the



government and corporations. True to the topic he explores, Enrich said he received “quite a bit of legal threats and intimidation” before the book was released.

“Murder the Truth” is Enrich’s fourth published book, following “Servants of the Damned: Giant Law Firms, Donald Trump, and the Corruption of Justice” in 2022, “Dark Towers: Deutsche Bank, Donald Trump, and an Epic Trail of Destruction” in 2020, and “The Spider Network: The Wild Story of a Math Genius, a Gang of Backstabbing Bankers, and One of the Greatest Scams in Financial History” in 2017.

Yoga benefit

Continued from page 8

“I was like, ‘Wow, this is a very special and unusual yoga teacher,’” Kase told the Dispatch. “Sarah is a quiet, thoughtful, spiritually connected teacher. She sees her students and she can tailor what she plans to teach to what she’s seeing in the room.”

As a longtime friend and former co-worker, Knox continued to impress Kase as a popular teacher, especially for students ages 50 and up. Knox also taught a “Yoga and Osteoporosis” class after she was diagnosed with osteoporosis, and taught trauma-informed yoga to youth in juvenile detention and residential treatment centers.

The March 30 event is the second fundraiser for ALS research in Knox’s honor, following an online campaign that Clare Karten, a student of Knox’s since 2015, helped organize with Kase. Together, they reached out to their respective yoga communities, as well as Knox’s community, and raised more than \$6,000 for Project ALS and other ALS-focused organizations.

“We think about all of the horrible diagnoses that anyone can get, but we don’t stop to think so much about how many horrible diagnoses are now preventable, treatable, curable — and all of that is because of medical and scientific research,” said Karten, who has worked with the March of Dimes as a health information specialist, and with several cancer research organizations. “So it’s always my impulse, as a way to help, to start fundraising.”

“Yoga for ALS Research” takes place next Sunday, March 30, at 4 p.m. at HudCo, 145 Palisade Street, Suite 200. Tickets are \$75 and available at donate.projectals.org/a/yoga-als-research. Light fare will be available for purchase. Donations will also be accepted for those who can’t attend.

Cyndy Cecil

Continued from page 3

Best place to get a manicure: The Dazzle Dry manicure at Hastings Nails & Foot Spa

Best lipstick to wear around town: MAC New York Apple and MAC Ruby Woo

Best place to go for a walk: Old Croton Aqueduct

Best place to shop for groceries: Stop & Shop

Best thing about living here: The people are friendly

For more information about Cyndy Cecil, visit <https://www.cyndycecil.com/>. For more information about Ladies’ Night Out at HudCo, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ladies-night-out-a-comedy-show-honoring-womens-history-month-tickets-1236261795309>.

Police

Continued from page 2

residential treatment center on the evening of Monday, March 17. He was charged with assault in the third degree, a misdemeanor.

HASTINGS

Senior defrauded: A 75-year-old Hastings resident was defrauded out of \$2,500 on Friday, March 14. She had received a phone call from someone who claimed to work for Chase and who told her that her Zelle account had been hacked and that she had to pay \$2,500 to resolve that problem.

David Press

Continued from page 9

shapes and I thought they’d be perfect for the show,” he said. “I thought that infinity symbols [figure eights turned sideways] would be perfect for a Museum of Mathematics show, perfect for shadows of the infinity images, and perfect for a play on words — Buzz Lightyear’s ‘to infinity and beyond’ tagline from ‘Toy Story’ — for the kids who go to the museum.”

Behind the gallery, in the interactive math museum, visitors can learn about hyperbolic trigonometry by riding the square-wheeled bicycles, and about tessellations by making an origami “frog’s tongue.” Inside the gallery, artists are using such mathematical ideas to create wonder and beauty.

Press discussed the ideas that inspire his artwork. “I’m looking at tensegrity, like the ‘Needle Tower’ by Snelson. That is just mind-boggling — it just goes up and up and looks like it’s being held by nothing. By creating tension from different angles, you end up with the integrity of the piece, so it becomes solid.”

Noting that he has been playing around with the rod-in-the-circle configuration for 45 years, Press said he would like to create a piece that is 8 feet tall: “And then whichever direction you spin it in, one color goes inwards and one goes outwards. Similar idea

Con Edison

Continued from page 1

more, including Dobbs Ferry, plan to vote on the matter at future board meetings.

On Jan. 31, Con Edison filed a petition with the PSC to increase delivery rates, starting Jan. 1, 2026. Con Edison’s proposal would increase electric rates for residential customers in Westchester County by 25.1% and natural gas delivery rates for residential customers by 20%.

When factoring in commercial properties, the increase comes out to 18% for electricity and 19.1% for natural gas across the board. Statewide, those numbers would cause an 11.4% increase for electric bills and a 13.3% increase for gas bills. Con Edison rates for electricity and natural gas delivery in Westchester have increased 20% over the last three years.

“When ConEd files a petition with the Public Service Commission for an increase, they basically have to substantiate it by financial numbers, almost like a budgeting

Unruly youths: Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, and Westchester County police dispersed hundreds of youths in Hillside Woods on the evening of Saturday, March 15. Fights followed on Edgewood and Lefurgy avenues, during which a Hastings police officer was injured. No one was arrested. Six summonses for vehicle and traffic violations were issued. In addition, quality-of-life violations, including public urination, were observed. In response, Hastings Police Chief David Dosin issued a letter stating that police would patrol Hillside Woods and “enforce all applicable laws.”

Unregistered vehicle: A 65-year-old Yon-

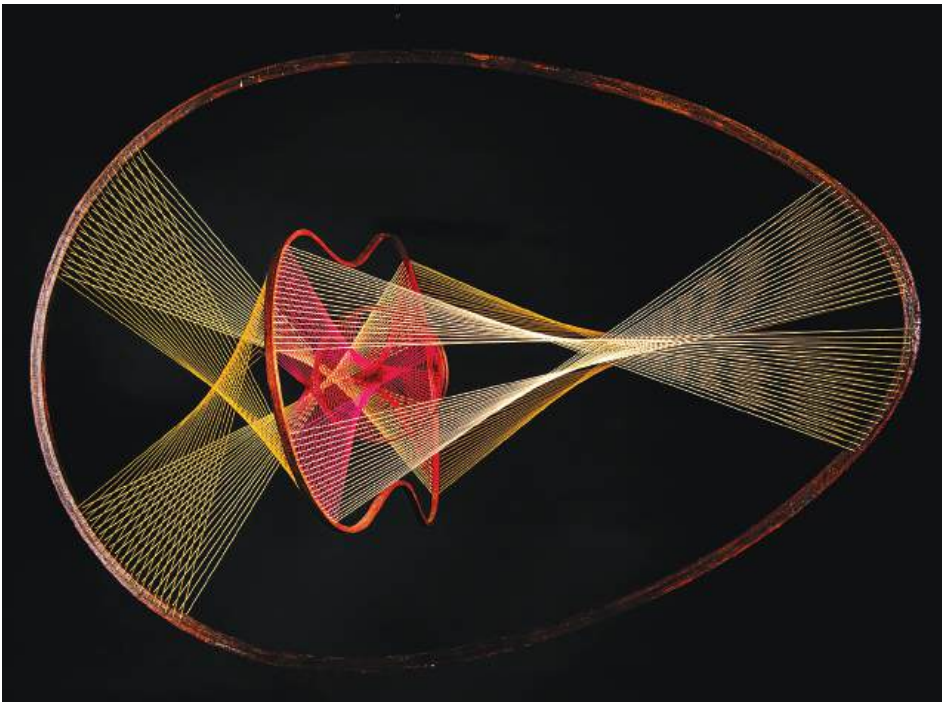


Photo by Jim Metzger

to the old barber poles.”

Press exhibited at the 2024 Bridges Math and Art Conference Exhibition in Richmond, Virginia. His work is in the collection of the Mechanical Art and Design Museum in Stratford-Upon-Avon, in the United Kingdom. He also wrote an essay on stringing patterns for the magazine “Hyperseeing” in 2010.

process, to determine how much money they need to collect from rate-payers to cover their costs, plus a profit,” Dichter told the Dispatch.

In the petition, Con Edison explained that the proposed rate increase is intended to cover the cost of new facilities, increased property taxes, and other expenses, while still allowing the utility company to return a profit. Through hearings that will take place throughout the year, the PSC will determine how much profit Con Edison is entitled to, and thus how much of a rate increase the PSC will permit.

While New York City had attorneys present at similar hearings in recent years, Westchester County did not. According to Dichter, that allowed New York City to better control rate increases.

Two online public hearings will be held on Tuesday, April 8. The PSC will also hold hearings later this year for administrative law judges to hear testimony from parties like Dichter.

On Monday, March 10, the Westchester County Board of Legislators voted to have

“Emergent Surfaces: Studies in Tension” opened March 13; a closing date has not yet been scheduled. The Museum of Mathematics, 225 Fifth Avenue, is open seven days a week, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is \$25 for adults; \$20 for students, seniors, children (2-12); and free for members and children under age 2.

County Executive Ken Jenkins and other legislators participate in the upcoming online hearings on behalf of residents.

“This legislation ensures that Westchester County will have a powerful voice in the rate case proceedings, advocating for working families, seniors, and small businesses who would be disproportionately affected by the proposed hikes,” Jenkins said in a statement issued after the vote.

In a March 5 letter to the PSC, state Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, whose District 35 encompasses the Rivertowns, wrote that while Con Edison explained it needs more money to replace infrastructure and distribution lines, “Nowhere in their rationale is how these improvements will lead to lowering the cost of energy. Improvements and maintenance should not be made on the shoulders of their customers.”

While there is no exact deadline, Bradbury is encouraging all municipalities to decide by the end of this month whether to hire Dichter.

kers resident was arrested for operating a vehicle with a revoked registration, a misdemeanor, on Farragut Avenue on the morning of Sunday, March 16.

IRVINGTON

Threatening texts: On March 13, an Irvington resident reported that he had received threatening text messages.

Bank fraud: On March 15, an Irvington resident reported that an attempt had been made to withdraw \$5,000 from his Chase account and that an unauthorized Capital One account had been opened in his name.

Attempted larceny arrest: A 37-year-old Manhattan resident was arrested on March 18 for attempting to deposit a \$4,129.67 check on Feb. 10 that the Village of Irvington mailed on Feb. 3. The attempt was made at an ATM in Manhattan. The name of the payee was changed on the check. An arrest warrant for the defendant was issued on March 17. His parole officer contacted police the next day. He was charged with attempted grand larceny in the third degree, a felony, and remanded to the Westchester County Jail. The arrest resulted from an investigation by Det. Sgt. Matt Eckert, Officer Ryon Burnett, and Officer Anthony Di Nardo.

Sports

EDITED BY ROB DIANTONIO



Ardsley is all smiles after receiving the Class A regional championship plaque. Photo by George Corluka.

Panthers advance to final four in state playoffs

BY ROB DIANTONIO

Offensive stats usually steal the headlines, but it is a tenacious defense that takes a team from competitive to championship material.

The Ardsley girls' basketball team prides itself on its defense, which was showcased again when the Panthers held Section 4's Johnson City to just 20 points in a 51-20 win in the Class A regional championship game on March 16 at Visions Veterans Memorial Arena in Binghamton.

Ardsley senior Iva Corluka said the defensive effort came down to "effort and determination."

"We have always been a defensively focused team and always try to use our defense to send a message by being stifling," Corluka said. "We all take our commitment to defense very seriously and with a lot of pride."

Ardsley allowed just 13 points in the first half as it springboarded out to a 25-13 lead. The Panthers turned up the pressure even more in the

second half, where they let up just seven points.

Ardsley coach Nick Resavy said he made the call to switch to a 1-4 zone defense early on and it paid dividends. The Panthers also forced 21 turnovers and out-rebounded Johnson City by a 40-18 margin.

"We did a great job defensively," Resavy said. "I'm extremely proud and it's what we're built on. I thought our intensity and execution was excellent."

In their five postseason games, the Panthers have held opponents to 20, 40, 36, 36, and 31 points for an average of just 32.6 points allowed per game.

Corluka led the way for Ardsley with 22 points, 16 rebounds, and three blocks. Fellow senior captain Joie Levy had 10 points, three assists, and three steals. Juniors Madison Bortstein and Dylan Paley netted seven and six points, respectively. Leah Burriss, another junior, tallied four points, eight rebounds, and four steals.

Junior Lily Tiernan added two points.

Corluka scored 16 of her 22 points in the first half to help the Panthers get out to a lead. The game was tied 7-7 midway through the first quarter but a Corluka putback and Paley right-corner three-pointer gave Ardsley a 12-7 lead after one quarter.

"We got out in transition, turning defense into offense," Resavy said. "Iva set the tone for us on the low block and we did a great job playing for each other."

Johnson City was down just 19-12 with 3:26 left in the second quarter, but the Panthers closed the half on a 6-1 run to take the 25-13 edge into the break.

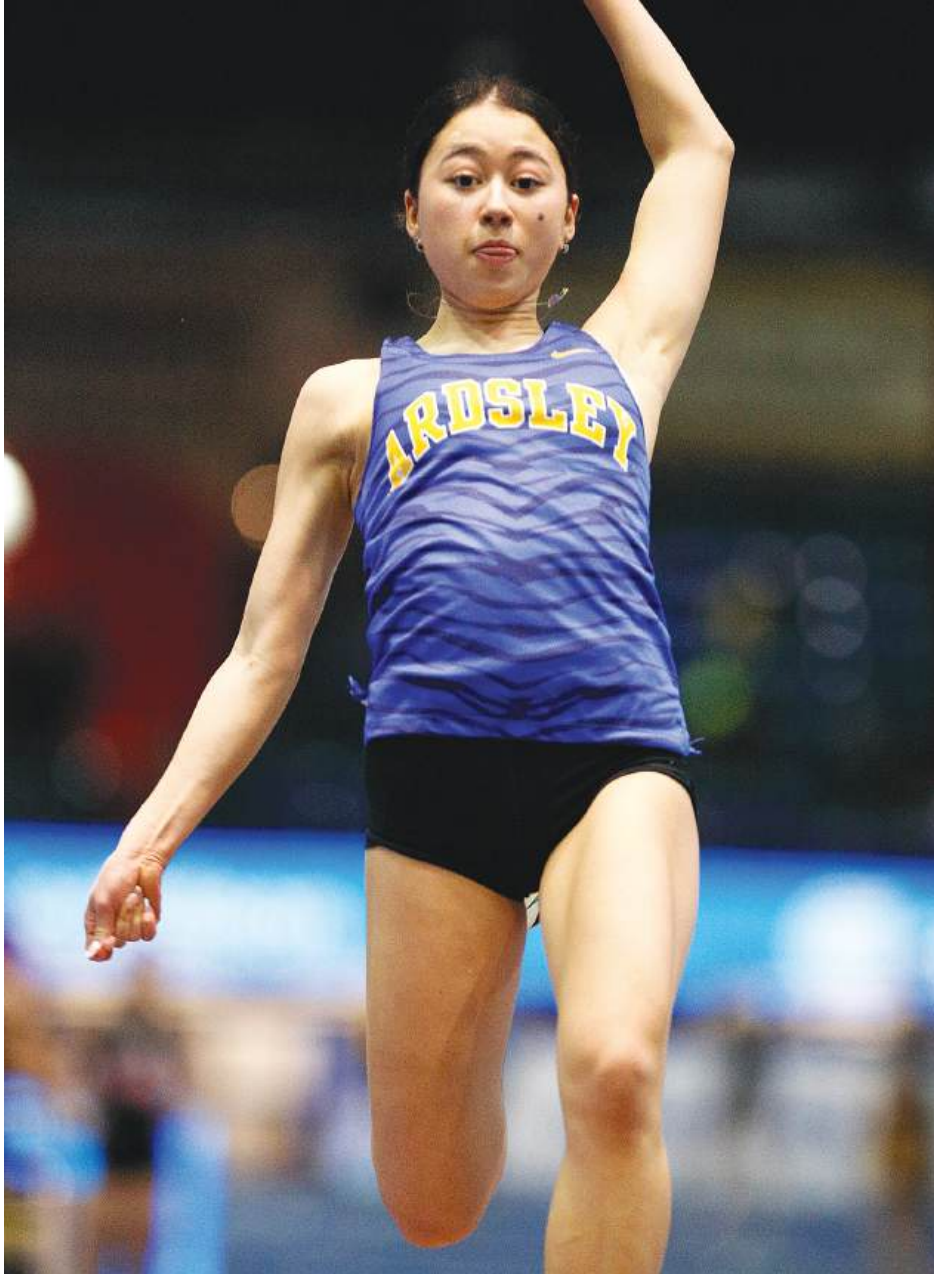
"The key during the first half was to go into the game ready to go from the jump ball," Corluka said. "We were locked into the game and set on dominating from the beginning pregame."

Continued on page 19



Iva Corluka had 22 points and 16 rebounds in Ardsley's regional win. Photo by Rob DiAntonio.

AHS boys' and girls' relay teams thrive at state and national meets



Ardsley's Mioko Martin placed in the top 20 in the long jump and was a member of the third-place 4x200-meter relay team at states. Photo by Jim MacLean.

States roundup

BY ROB DIANTONIO

Ardsley had an impressive showing in relay races at the indoor track and field state championships on March 8 at the Ocean Breeze Athletic Complex on Staten Island.

In the 4x200-meter relay, the boys' team placed second out of Division 2 public schools and fifth overall with a time of 1:33.65. Zaire Bell, Ahmady Dolcine, Derin Adewunmi, and Peyton Francis made up the relay.

For the girls' 4x200-meter D2 relay, the Panthers placed third out of public schools and fourth overall in a school record clocking of 1:47.37. Mioko Martin, Niamh O'Donovan, Czarina Adewunmi, and Zaniya Bell ran in the relay.

Ardsley also had a pair of top 20 finishes in field events. Gabrielle An was 17th in the high jump with a leap of 5-2. Martin doubled up on events and competed in the long jump, where she placed 16th (16-10 3/4).

Hastings had two athletes compete at states in Caitlin Thomas and Danae Morgan. Thomas, a Georgia Tech-bound senior, placed seventh in the 3,000 meters in a time of 9:49.68. Morgan was 15th in the shot put with a 33-7.

Dobbs Ferry senior Jayden Smith finished 16th in the 300 meters in a time of 35.39 seconds.

The 4x200 Ardsley boys' relay team of Bell, Dolcine, Derin Adewunmi, and Francis finished 10th of 38 teams in the emerging elite category at the Nike Indoor Nationals, which took place from March 13-16 at the Armory Track and Field Center. The relay had a time of 1:32.23.

The 4x200 girls' relay team of Martin, O'Donovan, Czarina Adewunmi, and Bell was 13th out of 35 teams in the emerging elite category. They clocked a time of 1:47.42.

Martin took 25th in the long jump in emerging elite with a 16-3 1/4. Czarina Adewunmi

was 22nd in the freshman 55-meter dash in 7.65 seconds. Andrew Herceg placed 45th in the 55-meter dash (7.04).

Morgan of Hastings competed at the New Balance Nationals in Boston, which took place on March 13-16 at the TRACK at New Balance. She finished 35th in the weight throw (44-11 1/4).

Smith of Dobbs Ferry also competed at the New Balance Nationals and clocked a time of 22.69 seconds in the 200-meter dash.

Boys' swimming

Dobbs Ferry sophomore Nikita Ambotas, a member of the Ardsley/Hastings/Edgemont/Dobbs Ferry/Irvington combined team, competed in the 100- and 200-yard freestyle at the boys' states on March 7-8 at Ithaca College. Ambotas finished 14th in the 100-yard freestyle in a clocking of 47.78 seconds. He was 21st in the 200-yard freestyle in 1:45.68.

Wrestling

Ardsley sophomore Ethan Mitev went 2-2 at 160 pounds in the Division 2 state wrestling championships on Feb. 28 at the MVP Arena in Albany.

Mitev, who came in as the No. 19 seed, defeated No. 14 Dylan Bulger of John Glenn by pin in 1:18 in the opening round. He lost to third-seeded Liam English by a 13-2 majority decision in the round of 16.

The Panther sophomore won his next match by pin in 1:32, but lost the following match by a 4-0 decision.

Bowling

Irvington sophomore Nate Moshan competed on the Section 1 boys' composite team at the state championships on March 15 at AMF Strike N Spare Lanes in Syracuse. Moshan rolled games of 152, 176, 155, 186, 193, and 154 for an average of 169 over his six games.

Ardsley hoops

Continued from page 18

Ardsley put the game away with a big third quarter, outscoring Johnson City 16-5 to take a 41-18 lead. In the final 3 minutes of the quarter, Levy went coast to coast for a layup followed by Paley and Bortstein draining back-to-back three-pointers to essentially seal the victory.

"We executed well on both ends and came out hungry," Resavy said of the third quarter. "But it always starts on the defensive end for us."

The Panthers (22-3) advance to the Class A state semifinals where they are slated to face Section 6's Williamsville South at 3:15 p.m. on March 21 at Hudson Valley Community College in Troy. A win would land Ardsley in the state championship game the following day at 7:45 p.m. against either Section 2's Albany Academy or Section 8's Wantagh.

"The team's mindset coming into the state final four is that we are extremely determined to win," Corluca said earlier this week. "Even though our sights are set on winning the state title, we know to take it one game at a time, so as of right now we are focused on winning our next game."



Matthew DeCarlo, a Dobbs Ferry resident, at the NYS Catholic High School Athletic Association bowling championship.

DeCarlo rolls to fifth at states

Fordham Prep junior Matthew DeCarlo, a Dobbs Ferry resident, was one of 25 athletes to compete at the New York State Catholic High School Athletic Association bowling championship on March 1 in Buffalo. DeCarlo finished in fifth place, with only 65 pins separating the first and fifth-place finishers.



Scan me

HUDCO

Ladies Night Out

A Comedy Show Honoring Women's History Month

Friday Mar 28

Doors 6PM
Show 7PM

Featuring Mostly Dough pizza and HudCo bar cocktails!

Hosted by
Cyndy CECIL Tiffanee LEE Becky VEDUCCIO Esther CHEN Ruthy FERRERA Viorica ANDERSON

HudCo | 145 Palisade Street, Suite 200, Dobbs Ferry | \$35 (\$25 HudCo Members)