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New bookstore aims to
build community
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May 30, 2025

RIVERTOWNS Dispatch

Local News,
Locally Sourced
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ARDSLEY — DOBBS FERRY — HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON — IRVINGTON



Sierra Scott, Emma Freeman, and Jonah Scott, known as The Altogether, will perform at Waterfront Park in Dobbs Ferry at 7 p.m.

Tour returns with 10 hours of music

*Four villages to host
concerts on June 14*

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL
REGION — For its 10th year presenting music in parks, backyards, houses of worship, and village hubs throughout the River- towns, the RiverArts Music Tour is bringing hundreds of performers to audiences for free in Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, Irvington, and Tarrytown on Saturday, June 14.

The all-day event features professional musicians, semi-professionals, and hob- byists, including the Metropolitan Opera Chorus. Musician Adam Hart of Hastings, who was an emcee for venues during the first few years of the event, became its lead producer six years ago. For this year, he will perform with the band Riverrun, which he

has been part of for 28 years.

“I chose to play on somebody’s front lawn to shine the light on the origins of this event, which were really about people, neighbor- hoods, neighbors, and musicians coming out of their homes, onto their lawns where peo- ple maybe didn’t even know they were musi- cians,” Hart told the Dispatch. “All of a sudden they [neighbors] walk down the street and hear some music, and they’re like, ‘Look at that. My neighbor’s playing and they’re so good.’ That’s the spirit that it started with, and it’s grown over the years and evolved.”

Riverrun’s bass player and Hastings Village Trustee Douglass Alligood will be one of two local officials performing on the music tour. The other will be Irvington Trustee Mitch- ell Bard, who is the drummer for a pair of bands — The Scam and Talk to Me Louder.

This year’s music tour features more than 300 musicians across 85 performances, at 27 different venues. Nine of those venues are homeowners’ private lawns, like the yards where Riverrun and Grammy Award-win- ning saxophonist Gary Smulyan will per- form separately. Other venues include The Good Witch Coffee Bar in Hastings, which will host children’s music and African mu- sic, and the Mercy University Pavilion in Dobbs Ferry, which will feature electronic music by Dobbs Ferry resident Jon Hatch.

“That pavilion is right on the Aqueduct, and people who are active and like using the Aqueduct to run, walk, or cycle can ac- tually enjoy this music tour right from the Aqueduct,” Hart said.

Jazz is the theme of the day at the Dobbs

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District sets checklist for synthetic turf fields

BY AMY BOCHNER

HASTINGS — The Hastings Board of Educa- tion has shared a list of requirements for the two synthetic turf fields that are part of the third bond proposition that has roiled the commu- nity and will be put to a public vote on June 17.

The list, released at the board’s meeting on May 20, was developed by Bob Kernan of the architectural firm LA Group in consultation with the district’s Internal Turf Work Group. The work group, made up of school board and administration members, was established at the April 22 board meeting.

According to a memo from Schools Superin- tendent William McKersie preceding Kernan’s memo, the list was shared before the bond re- ferendum so that there is awareness about the specifications that would guide the bidding and request for proposal (RFP) process for a specific artificial turf product. Per New York State public procurement policies, the board is not able to identify a specific firm or product ahead of the bidding process.

The list features 10 points, each of which must be fulfilled for the board to consider a product. The

Continued on page 4

— You Answered —

How much do U.S. politics and
policies impact you?

As answered by 168 readers of the Rivertowns Dispatch

28% A lot
23% A moderate amount
15% A little
9% Not at all



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The Blotter

ARDSLEY

Theft of formula: On May 20, DeCicco and Sons reported that a man shoplifted baby formula worth \$299.88 on the afternoon of Wednesday, May 7.

Theft of check: On May 20, a Dobbs Ferry resident reported that a \$1,944.09 check mailed at the Ardsley Post Office had been altered, and that a failed attempt had been made to cash the check for \$5,000. The name of the payee was also changed.

DOBBS FERRY

Theft of check: On May 22, a Dobbs Ferry resident reported that a \$1,190 check mailed at the Dobbs Ferry Post Office on April 10 had been altered and that a failed attempt had been made to cash the check for \$13,290. The name of the payee was also changed.

Suspended registration: A 36-year-old Manhattan resident was arrested for driving a vehicle with a suspended registration, a misdemeanor, on Lawrence Street on the afternoon of Thursday, May 22.

Mischief to gate: An unidentified man damaged an electronic gate outside Hudson River Landing, 145 Palisade St., on the afternoon of Sunday, May 18. The man climbed over the gate, located on the east side

of a bridge that spans the Metro-North tracks.

Revoked license: A 28-year-old Dobbs Ferry resident was arrested for driving a vehicle with a revoked license on Lawrence Street on the afternoon of Thursday, May 22. He was charged with aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the third degree, a misdemeanor, and issued summonses for an unregistered vehicle, improper license plates, and no insurance.

Mischief to window: A basement window was damaged behind a Main Street building on the afternoon of Friday, May 23.

Robbery at Mobil: An unidentified man stole a \$100 bill from a customer inside the convenience store at the Chestnut Mobil, 430 Broad-

way, on Saturday, May 24, at 11 p.m. The thief fled in a vehicle east on Ashford Avenue.

IRVINGTON

Mischief to Kia: The driver's side front window of a 2017 Kia Forte was damaged on Sunnyside Place between Wednesday, May 21 and Thursday, May 22.

Aggressive deer: An aggressive deer at Halsey Pond was reported on the morning of Thursday, May 22 and the afternoon of Tuesday, May 27. Police suspect the deer was protecting a fawn.

Suspicious person: A suspicious man with a hatchet and a metal detector was reported on the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail, near Memorial Park, on the afternoon of Saturday, May 24. Police were unable to locate him.

RIVERTOWNS Dispatch

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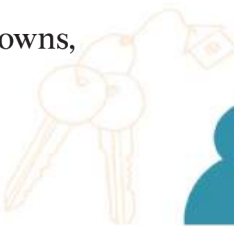



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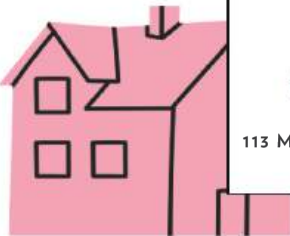


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ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER ORKIN LEWIS

Volunteer ^{OF} the Month

Barry leads efforts to preserve and present village history

BY JANINE ANNETT

Hastings residents who want to learn about the history of the village, and perhaps their own property, need look no further than the Hastings Historical Society. Through exhibits, presentations, newsletters, a website, ephemera, photos, oral histories, and more, the historical society keeps records of Hastings' past and tells the stories about the people who contributed to the unique place it is today.

Natalie Barry has been president of the Hastings Historical Society since 2016. Prior to that, she was co-president for two years with Sue Smith, the village historian. Barry also served as a trustee of the historical society from 2012-2014. She has also been involved with Family-to-Family, an organization dedicated to hunger and poverty relief, since it began in 2003, and currently serves as its treasurer.

During her career, Barry worked in publishing and in telecommunications, including an 18-year stint in the corporate strategy department at Verizon, where she assessed new business opportunities.

Barry has lived in Hastings since 1993 and raised two children — Katerina, now 30, and Aidan, now 28 — here with her husband, Tim. She wasn't always a history buff, though. "Around 2011 my husband and I came to the historical society for the first time and saw an exhibit about maps, and it was a fascinating exhibit, and I got totally enthralled," Barry told the Dispatch.

The historical society holds an annual meeting, as per the organization's bylaws. This year's will include a talk entitled "Gone, But Not Forgotten: Lost Buildings of Hastings" on Sunday, June 1, from 2-4 p.m. in the Hastings Public Library's Orr Room. The event is free and open to the public. Barry will give an overview of edifices that once stood in Hastings, but have since disappeared from the landscape.

"We have a slew of buildings, both com-



Natalie Barry at the Hastings Historical Society

mercial and residential, that are no longer around," Barry said. "So the idea is to present little vignettes of what was here before."

One such building, which is featured on the promotional materials for the program and can be seen on the historical society's website, was known as "Elmcroft."

"Wealthy New Yorkers bought property in Hastings either as summer homes or as their residences," Barry said. "They often named their properties. It was a fashion." (Burkeley Crest, the estate owned by actress Billie Burke and her husband, the impresario Florenz Ziegfeld, was another local example.) "Elmcroft was a residence that was on the site

of today's municipal building," Barry said. It was owned by one of Hastings' early mayors, who then bore the title "president."

The idea for Barry's topic partly stemmed from a presentation she gives each year to second-graders at Hillside Elementary School, where she shares images of buildings that used to be in Hastings and the children guess what's currently in the location where the buildings once stood.

"Presenting this history gives people an idea about what was in the past, and the people who built our village, and this is what makes our village an interesting place to live in. We have a unique character and sensibil-

ity, and I want to preserve that," Barry said.

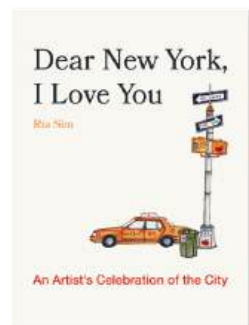
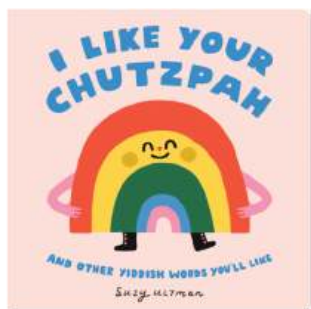
The Hastings Historical Society was founded in 1971, originally meeting — and using limited storage space — in the municipal building. Since 1997, the organization has been based in the Observatory Cottage in Draper Park, a site steeped in its own illustrious history. The building houses documents, photographs, pamphlets, manuscripts, albums, posters, and more.

"People are often astounded by how much information we have," Barry said. The historical society has permanent exhibits, like one about the Draper family, as well an annual

Continued on page 4

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ARDSLEY



DOBBS FERRY

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HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON



IRVINGTON

Turf requirements
Continued from page 1

first of these points is that the infill must not contain rubber-based products and instead be composed of, or be a blend of, organic or mineral infill. Traditional turf uses rubber infill for cushioning, board president Alex Dal Piaz explained. The product the board is guiding the bidding and RFP process toward does not require cushioning, and therefore does not require infill. However, he said, infill could be used to make the turf heavier for footing, or, in the case that the field gets too hot, could be used to lower the temperature of the field. The types of infill he mentioned for these two scenarios were sand and calcium carbonate (chalk).

While he didn't specify the name of the product, he offered more insight into how it works in comparison to a turf field with crumb rubber infill.

"This type of turf... was developed so that in hot places like the Southwest, instead of needing rubber fill for cushioning, you could use cooling fill," he said. "We're piggybacking on that capability. If this field proved to be too hot, you could put [in] the calcium carbonate fill... Crumb rubber fill is a huge heat sink. It's black in color, generally speaking. Our expectation would be that a field of this sort would have a totally different temperature profile than what we've been discussing."

Another requirement on the list is that the tuft type, which refers to the individual strands of artificial grass, must be suitable for multiple field sports including but not limited to lacrosse,

field hockey, softball, soccer, and football. The tuft height must also support these sports and meet shock attenuation requirements, which is the reduction of impact forces in activities such as running. The turf system must maintain ASTM F355 G-max measurements of between 100 and 165 for the life of the warranty. G-max measurement at the time of installation must not exceed 125. A shock pad, or an additional layer that goes underneath the field to provide cushioning, is optional and per manufacturers' recommendations. The permeability rate, which is how fast liquid can go through the field, must not be less than 30 inches per hour. Other requirements include that the product cannot contain lead components or be manufactured using PFAS. The product also must be recyclable or capable of being repurposed. Per NYSED requirements, the warranty must be a minimum of 12 years.

One point in the memo specifies qualifications the provider must meet. This includes a minimum of 10 years in the business manufacturing synthetic turf for use in athletics, a minimum of 25 completed installations of 65,000 square feet or more installed in the United States within the last five years, and a minimum of 10 completed installations of 65,000 square feet or more installed for public school districts.

Dal Piaz shared that, while the product they are looking for would have less plastic than a traditional synthetic turf field, the artificial grass can also shed microplastics, so the board is looking into a filtration system.

"I asked Bob Kernan to find some information for us," he said. "The way that this [filtration sys-

tem] works: water goes through the field, there's a drainage system that feeds into retention ponds, and the idea would be to look into whether we can put commercial filters as part of those retention ponds that could sequester microplastics... In a perfect world, whatever leaves the field gets captured and doesn't ever end up downstream, literally in this case, in the Hudson River."

On May 29, Dal Piaz told the Dispatch that the filtration system is now specified as part of the design characteristics behind Proposition 3 and will be a part of the bid process.

After the board reviewed the list, McKersie provided data regarding game cancellations for the 2025 spring semester as a result of field issues.

"We've had 35 home games cancelled or rescheduled," he said. "Three had to be put into a double-header format... Some couldn't be rescheduled and had to be dropped. Some varsity games have had to be moved or modified."

The bond referendum has been broken up into three propositions.

The first proposition encompasses districtwide infrastructure improvements for \$11,254,780, including mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and masonry work. The second covers instructional space and accessibility enhancements at the Farragut Complex for \$19,049,465. Key components of this proposition are adding six new classrooms, a new cafeteria, a new main entrance, and other upgrades to meet accessibility and safety codes. The final proposition, for \$8,171,259, would fund the two synthetic fields — a multi-sport field and a softball field, both at the Burke Estate — as well as bleachers, dugouts, site grading, irrigation, drainage, and retaining wall upgrades.

Barry
Continued from page 3

show — the current one is "Made in Hastings: Echoes of Our Industrial Past." The cottage also houses a database of digitized artifacts.

"We have 10,000 or more photos in our database right now," Barry said. The historical society also has oral histories dating back to 1972, all of which were recently digitized (thanks to a grant) and are available for free on the historical society's website. The website also has a blog, a selection of digitized photographs, and information about current and upcoming exhibits and events, as well as past ones.

The Hastings Historical Society is a volunteer operation. It typically attracts high school and college interns every year. Barry credits Greg Smith, chair of Hastings High School's social studies department, with creating interest in the historical society among students, bringing in his classes to look at the annual exhibit. The students always learn something, such as delving into the history of Kenneth and Mamie Clark, the Hastings couple who conducted groundbreaking research on the effects of segregation on Black children and whose findings were part of the landmark Supreme Court case *Brown vs. Board of Education*.

"We operate with membership money and donations, and a very small bit of merchandise sales," Barry said. A general membership in the historical society costs \$25 a year. To learn more about the historical society, visit <https://hastingshistoricalsociety.org/>



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ARDSLEY

— Coming Up This Week —

Board of Trustees Meeting

Monday, June 2, 7:30 p.m.
Village Hall

To attend via Zoom, visit ardsleyvillage.gov for the link.

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 3, 7 p.m.
High school library

Agenda and link to the livestream available at ardsleyschools.org.

Architectural Review Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 3, 8 p.m.
Village Hall

Agenda available at ardsleyvillage.gov.

Senior Event: Antique Roadshow

Wednesday, June 4, noon
Ardsley Community Center

Concert in the Square: What the Funk

Friday, June 6, 7-9 p.m.
Addyman Square

AMP FEST 2025

Saturday, June 7, 12:30-6 p.m.
Ardsley Middle School
Purchase tickets (\$12.50 in advance,
\$15 at the door; \$32.50 for families) at
ardsleymusicpartners.org.

"Stories from Suburbia"

Sunday, June 8, 2 p.m.
Ardsley Public Library

The historical society presents Tim Lamorte, editor of the Rivertowns Dispatch and former editor of the Rivertowns Enterprise, who will reflect on 25 years of covering the Rivertowns.

Car Show Benefiting Ardsley First Responders

Friday, June 13, 5:30-8:30 p.m.
Middle school
Admission: \$20

Featuring classic cars and motorcycles, food trucks, music, and raffles.

Juneteenth Celebration

Saturday, June 14, 1-3 p.m.
Pascone Park

The Multicultural Diversity and Inclusion Committee presents music, dance, arts and crafts, and food trucks.

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at amy@rivertownsdispatch.com



Indy Lab teachers and students celebrate the start of construction on May 24.

\$1.5M grant funds preschool's new home

Child Care Capital Program backs move to Ardsley

BY AMY BOCHNER

Inside the building at 1053 Saw Mill River Road in Ardsley, construction workers began renovations of what will be the new location for a preschool, the result of a \$1.5 million grant to expand child care in New York State. During the May 24 gathering, students of The Indy Lab, which currently operates in Elmsford, wore plastic hard hats as they played outside their future classrooms.

In December of 2023, Gov. Kathy Hochul announced a \$100 million allocation by the State to address a shortage of child care facilities. Half of that money was made available for the NYS Child Care Capital Program and took the form of grants to allow for the construction of new child care centers and the expansion of existing programs. The other \$50 million were business tax credits made available for eligible businesses that create or expand infant and toddler child care seats for their employees.

The Indy Lab, which now occupies a shared space at the Play Place in Elmsford, applied for the Child Care Capital Program Grant in May 2024. That October, 45 schools were awarded with sums ranging from \$500,000 to \$1.5 million, with The Indy Lab being the only one based in Westchester.

During the groundbreaking, Frida Matute of Hastings, the founder/director of The Indy Lab, offered parents tours of the gutted space, most recently home to a therapy agency, describing how the concrete and exposed wires would transform into a welcoming, educational facility.

Matute is a pediatric speech pathologist who

received her master's degree at Northwestern University. After working at various hospitals, she started a private practice called Indy Speech Services and a non-clinical class called Playful Literacy. In 2019, she began The Indy Lab, LLC, in an effort to teach families about the science of reading. Before establishing a home in Elmsford in 2021, her classes took place at various schools. Over the years, the program has grown to include a broader curriculum, such as STEM, Spanish immersion, movement, and cultural studies. Emphasis is placed on communication, which Matute described as "a pillar of early success in school-aged children." The preschool program serves children 18 months old to age 5, and there is also an after-school program for children up to fourth grade.

What makes The Indy Lab different from other schools, she explained, is how they incorporate a clinical perspective.

"A lot of the challenges I was seeing when I was practicing in schools was that the behavior of the child was stemming from more nuanced developmental concern that was overlooked. Sometimes it was medical and sometimes it wasn't, but it required a different type of training," she said. "We have a combination between the clinical aspect and the educational aspect that I think is different. Because of that, we have a parenting center with clinical specialists, like occupational therapy, child psychology, feeding, literacy, speech, and sleep, so that we can tackle each area of development and make sure that our kids are thriving."

After four years of sharing a space in Elmsford, Matute decided to find The Indy Lab a home of its own, leading to her learning about the Child Care Capital Program Grant. As the only Westchester-based recipient, Matute said that The

Indy Lab team feels "humbled."

"I think it speaks to the vision that we have in bringing together a new concept of dedicated clinical practice with understanding of education, child development, and really pushing kids to their fullest potential while also being playful and child led," she said. "There's a lot of room for parents to feel supported, and our goal is to do that and to be a place that's social and fun and feels like home."

The new location is in Ardsley because that village has fewer child care seats than other nearby municipalities; need was one of the stipulations of the grant.

The Indy Lab in Elmsford has three classrooms and 10 teachers, plus a couple of substitutes. In its new location, The Indy Lab will increase to five classrooms, which will include a kindergarten transition classroom, as well as an 18-month-old classroom. Four teachers will be hired, two per class. Also being built are a therapy room, an indoor jungle gym with a rock-climbing wall, and two outdoor playgrounds. While the school serves 46 families now, the new location will be able to accommodate 64.

Matute described the other new features the school will incorporate.

"We'll be running a lot of parent workshops [and] have open play over the weekend," she said. "We'll be doing some birthday parties as well, and community events during the weekend to bring in some fun elements to the school. We'll have more opportunities for volunteering and fundraising throughout the year. We're really wanting to connect back to the community and give back."

Construction is expected to be completed in mid-August. The school will transition into the new space in early 2026. Until then, The Indy Lab will continue classes at its Elmsford location.

ARDSLEY

New task force enhances commitment to a greener community

BY AMY BOCHNER

The Ardsley Board of Trustees passed two resolutions on May 19 that build upon the Village's efforts to combat climate change.

The first established the Clean Energy Communities/Climate Smart Communities (CEC/CSC) Task Force. Clean Energy Communities is a New York State Energy Research and Development Authority program that offers resources and funding to local governments trying to reduce their energy use and invest in clean energy. Climate Smart Communities is a New York State program that helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. The program offers grants, rebates for electric vehicles, and free technical assistance.

Sophia Johnson, who was appointed task force coordinator in a second resolution on May 19, shared her perspective on the program.

"It is New York State creating incentives for municipalities to make the transition to green energy and really toward preparing for future events... It really is creating some accountability at the state level and also at the municipal level, to make sure we're doing the things that we're saying we're going to do. Done correctly, once we have taken these actions, it really creates an opportunity for us to get funding from the State to implement and to continue expanding on some of these initiatives."

Ardsley first adopted a pledge to work toward accomplishing the goals of Climate Smart Communities in 2010. In the program, local governments can earn points for taking action across

several areas related to climate change, including energy use, solid waste management, and supporting a green economy. The Village was certified at the bronze level — one of a two-tier system with the gold tier under development — in September 2021, with 162 points earned from the 22 completed actions. For the Clean Energy Communities, which does not have a tiered system, Ardsley has 6,200 points for 13 completed actions.

This certification for the Climate Smart Communities is set to expire in September 2026, prompting the creation of the CEC/CSC Task Force, Johnson explained. She is also the chair of the Green Task Force, which was established in February to promote environmental sustainability within Ardsley.

"The Green Task Force is charged with this

responsibility of thinking creatively about how to address environmental challenges and to propose solutions and to collect evidence to substantiate or support the policies that we're advocating for," she said. "At the moment, the most important priority I've identified is that we need to get in alignment with Climate Smart Communities. The resolution is really an effort toward recertifying the municipality at the bronze level."

In addition to Johnson, the other CEC/CSC task force members include Pollinator Pathway chair Carol Sommerfield; Village Manager Joseph L. Cerretani; Allen Chen, confidential secretary to the village manager; and Trustee Sheila Narayanan, who serves as the board liaison.

With funding cuts occurring at the federal

Continued on page 15

Senior places fourth at international science and engineering fair with tuberculosis research project

Ardsley High School senior Anhad Kataria earned fourth place in the microbiology category at the 2025 Regeneron International Science & Engineering Fair (ISEF), which was held May 10-16.

Kataria and junior Avi Medar were two of the 20 students who advanced to ISEF from the Regeneron Westchester Science & Engineering Fair (WESEF). Kataria and Medar competed against finalists from more than 65 countries at ISEF, which took place in Columbus, Ohio.

Kataria's research investigated vaccine development for tuberculosis. His project focused on testing genetically weakened strains of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* to determine their ability to activate innate immune memory. One strain, mc27902, triggered a stronger immune response than the widely used BCG vaccine, offering potential for a safer and more effective future alternative.

Medar's project tackled inefficiencies in pre-clinical drug testing, specifically the

detection of pathogens in laboratory mice. He introduced a pre-amplification step to traditional screening protocols, improving the sensitivity of pathogen detection and offering a more efficient method for biomedical research facilities.

"Seeing Anhad recognized among the top young scientists in the world was an unforgettable moment," said Jamie Dowd, director of the high school's Science Research program. "And for Avi, as a junior, to per-

form at that level on a global stage speaks volumes about his potential. I'm incredibly proud of both students."

Kataria and Medar are the seventh and eighth Science Research students to advance to ISEF during the last four years. Dowd co-teaches the two-year program, which enables students to design and execute independent research projects in collaboration with professional scientists, with its founder, Diana Evangelista.

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DOBBS FERRY

— Coming Up This Week —

Screening: “Matter of Mind: My Alzheimer’s”

Saturday, May 31, 2-3:30 p.m.

Dobbs Ferry Public Library

—
Invasive Species Clearing

Sunday, June 1, 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.

—
Public Workshop #1: NY Forward Program/Downtown Revitalization

Tuesday, June 3, 6-8 p.m.

Embassy Center

—
School Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 3, 7 p.m.

Middle/high school library

Agenda available at dfsd.org.

—
Virtual Comedy Open Mic

Tuesday, June 3, 8 p.m.; sign-up starts at 7:30

Hosted on Zoom by the

Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Email ideery@dobbsferrylibrary.org to register.

For ages 18 and up.

—
Meet the Raptors

Wednesday, June 4, 3:45 p.m.

Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Teatown Reservation visits with a live presentation.

Registration recommended by emailing

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For ages 6 and up.

—
Public Meeting: NYS DOT Route 9 Complete Streets Project

Wednesday, June 4, 6-8 p.m.

Mercy University Rotunda, 555 Broadway

—
Trivia Night

Wednesday, June 4, 7 p.m.

The Yard in Memorial Park

—
Planning/Architectural Review Board Meeting

Thursday, June 5, 7 p.m.

Village Hall

Agenda available at dobbsferry.com.

—
Got news?

Email staff writer Julian Caldwell at

julian@rivertownsdispatch.com



Mansheng Wang working on “Without Us.” Image courtesy of the artist.

Installation reflects on human influence

Artist immerses visitors in untouched landscapes

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

Mansheng Wang of Dobbs Ferry, whose paintings have been displayed worldwide, has a new exhibit, titled “Without Us,” at The Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California, that makes a poignant statement about humans’ impact on the environment.

“I tried to create a pure land without a human touch, pollution, damage. And thinking about the environment, how much humans have been doing more and more since we have high technology, and are growing so that the damage will be faster,” Wang told the Dispatch.

In “Without Us,” which was created to fit the Huntington’s space as part of their artist-in-residence program, the “us” refers to humankind. The exhibit imagines an untainted world, with images of mountains, trees, and bodies of water, painted in black and dark brown ink on 22 silk panels, all about 8 feet tall, and either 3 feet or 4.5 feet wide, hanging from the ceiling.

The panels are organized in a way that they create boxes for viewers to be enclosed by the images on multiple sides. The material is transparent silk, so Wang’s paintings can be seen from either side of the panels.

“I created this nature from my imagination,” Wang explained. “When people walk in and walk by, it [the panel] swings a little

bit, so the movement, also created by humans, is sort of like how fragile the Earth and nature is when impacted by people.”

Wang travels to hike in mountains in places like California, Tennessee, Colorado, South Africa, and Switzerland, where there are trees that are hundreds and thousands of years old. On every trip, he studies the small plants, trees, mountains, rocks, and waterfalls, and photographs them as inspiration for his paintings.

“You could see the experience like a one-day hiking experience,” Wang said about walking through his latest exhibit. “You’re over the peak, then you go down to the valley into open space. There’s a pond with lotuses and all of those ancient trees. I love ancient trees because normally in human society those trees will not live their whole life cycle and will always be cut.”

The gallery’s walls, often used to hang paintings, are instead adorned by excerpts from the writings of classical Chinese philosophers and poets like Confucius, Laozi, and Zhuangzi, reflecting on the relationship between humans and nature. The statements were written by Wang in calligraphy, an artform he’s been practicing for almost six decades. Wang was born in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China, in 1962, and fell in love with calligraphy at the age of 6, but access to learning the ancient technique was limited.

“The Cultural Revolution had just started in China, so the traditional art and culture basically was forbidden, so it was

difficult to find a teacher or the materials to practice, but I was just crazy about it,” Wang said. “I wanted to practice calligraphy, but I had no teacher, I only found one text that I could copy of a famous calligrapher. So I copied every single day as a child; an hour each day I’d spend.”

Wang is a self-taught artist who visits colleges to teach calligraphy and whose art has been displayed at the Brooklyn Museum and Philadelphia Museum of Art, as well as museums in Beijing and Paris. When he arrived in Texas after leaving China in 1996, he decided to abandon his previous career as a television producer because he couldn’t speak English well at the time, and turned his art hobby into a profession. While his art has expanded from calligraphy to include landscapes, waterfalls, lotuses, and other botanical images, Wang maintains his original passion and the skill it entails.

“Sometimes I write thousands of characters each day, copying famous classic books, or Buddhist sutras,” Wang said. “That got me to understand how to control the brush and use ink, and work on handmade paper. So that sort of opened the gate for me to do painting. In China we say that painting and calligraphy grow out from the same root.”

“Without Us” is on display at The Huntington through Aug. 4. Wang hopes to exhibit the work on the East Coast. To see more of his art online, visit manshengwang.com.

DOBBS FERRY

Co-directors talk about food insecurity and the need for support

For the latest episode of the Rivertowns Dispatch podcast, Timothy Reuter interviewed the co-directors of the Dobbs Ferry Food Pantry, Vera Halpenny and Donna Assumma. The food pantry has been helping people in need since 2011, operating out of South Presbyterian Church and serving about 400 people every Wednesday from 10:30 a.m. to noon. The pantry is available to residents of Dobbs Ferry, Ardsley, Irvington, and parts of Greenburgh. To listen to the interview, search for the Rivertowns Dispatch Podcast on Spotify or Apple Podcasts, or visit www.rivertownsdispatch.com/tag/podcast. The following excerpts were compiled by Amanda Scholz.



Q: Can you give us a sense of the types of people that are coming in to get food from you? What are some of their stories?

Donna Assumma: We have single moms. We have families that are working two to three jobs to try to make ends meet. We have senior citizens... Especially



Dobbs Ferry Food Pantry volunteers prepare to participate in the annual Rivertowns Crop Hunger Walk at Irvington Presbyterian Church on April 6.

with the rising costs, we are going to find our numbers rising.

Q: Do you get any money directly from the government? Does Dobbs Ferry in some way fund the Dobbs Ferry

Food Pantry?

Vera Halpenny: We just rely on our communities to kind of jump in and help out. So, we have churches that are giving. We have a women's club that is giving to us on a really regular basis, like a monthly

basis, sometimes it's money, sometimes it's food, sometimes it's both.

Q: You mentioned that Feeding Westchester is not able to provide as much as it was previously. What do you understand to be going on there and how are you affected by that?

Vera Halpenny: There is a program called the Credit Commodity Corporation. It was founded in 1933... This was a way for farmers to sell their leftover product to local food banks and schools for lunches and things like that. That has been suspended... And then [Feeding Westchester] talked about the tariffs with Mexico and Canada. Feeding Westchester is feeling that with that larger price they won't be able to purchase a lot of things... tomatoes, avocados, peppers, strawberries, pork, and seafood...

Q: Do you have any thoughts of how our country might do a better job at a systemic level in addressing food insecurity?

Vera Halpenny: Everyone should be involved in their community one way or another.

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HASTINGS- ON-HUDSON

— Coming Up This Week —

Juneteenth Celebration

Sunday, June 1, 1-5 p.m.

Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue

Live music, food, and family fun by Parenting Children of Color.

“Gone But Not Forgotten: Lost Buildings of Hastings”

Sunday, June 1, 2-4 p.m.

Hastings Public Library

Historical society president Natalie Berry discusses structures that have disappeared from the village landscape.

School Board Meeting

Monday, June 2, 6 p.m.

Hillside Multi-Purpose Room

Agenda available at hohschools.org.

Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, June 3, 7 p.m.

Village Hall

Agenda available at hohny.gov.

Public Meeting: NYS DOT Route 9 Complete Streets Project

Wednesday, June 4, 6-8 p.m.

Mercy University Rotunda,
555 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry

Shop-on-Spring

Thursday, June 5, 5-7 p.m.

Spring Street

Participants include Art Transcending Time, Leaves in a Bowl Tea, Hastings Beauty Salon, Vanishing Ink Bookstore, The Hōm Market, and FoundHastings.

The Jazz Jam: Open Jam Session

Thursday, June 5, 7-10 p.m./ \$5 to play, \$10 to listen. The Good Witch Coffee Bar, 134 Southside Ave. DestinationHastings.org

Family-to-Family: Pool Bag Drive

Drop off donations Monday-Friday,
10 a.m.-5 p.m., by June 6
581 Warburton Ave.

(2nd floor of Moviehouse Mews building)
For details about what to provide for a child in need, visit family-to-family.org.

Farmers' Market

Saturday, June 7, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue

For details, visit hastingsfarmersmarket.org and follow the market on Facebook.

Got news?

Email staff writer Amy Bochner at
amy@rivertownsdispatch.com



Allyson McCabe (right) prepares to welcome customers after a ribbon-cutting with Mayor Niki Armacost on May 17.

New bookstore aims to build community

Vanishing Ink opens at Spring and Southside

BY LAURA SCHILLER

A new chapter has begun in Hastings with the opening of *Vanishing Ink*, an independent bookstore founded by local author and journalist Allyson McCabe. More than just a shop, it's a cozy, inviting space across from the Hastings Public Library, devoted to books, ideas, and the thrill of finding something new.

"I didn't just want to open a bookstore," McCabe told the Dispatch. "I wanted to create a space where the ideas in books could spark conversation and build community."

After teaching narrative nonfiction at Yale University for 14 years, McCabe moved to Hastings a decade ago, with her family, and pivoted to journalism, contributing to NPR, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and other major outlets.

In 2023, Hastings lost its last remaining bookstore, Galapagos, the same year McCabe published her award-winning book, *Why Sinéad O'Connor Matters*.

"The village has a long history of bookstores in the downtown," Hastings Downtown Advocate Barb Prisament said. "From Good Yarns, to Riverrun for rare books, and Galapagos Books, over the last few decades. When Amada Abad retired last year and closed Galapagos, it created a void in a village filled with book lovers, avid readers, and local authors."

Prisament recalls that McCabe first shared her dream of opening a bookstore at the "Words on Hudson" event in April 2024, where the community gathered to honor Galapagos' 30-plus-year legacy and celebrate Abad's retirement.

"It took a year for Allyson to find the right space," Prisament said, "but she was back at 'Words on Hudson' this year to announce she'd found one! We're so thrilled that she's opened Vanishing Ink Books, and that our village is once again home to a bookstore."

Over the course of that year, McCabe traveled across the country meeting with booksellers and hosting pop-ups at markets and festivals — including the Texas Book Festival in Austin, which drew over 40,000 book lovers — learning the ins and outs of the trade.

That grassroots approach to bookselling is evident in the store's DNA. Before the shop had walls, McCabe was building relationships in the community. "I met a woman wearing a cap that said 'Romance Reader' — not a genre I know much about — so I asked her to curate our romance section," she recalled. "Then there was a guy named 'Giggle Thump' selling these adorable sock puppets at a market, and now we carry those, too."

The store opened on May 17 to an overwhelming response, complete with a ribbon-cutting by Mayor Niki Armacost and visits from local authors like children's book writers Roni Schotter and Veera Hiranandani, as well as *New York Times Magazine* journalist Susan Dominus, each of whom signed copies of their books.

"The shelves are already being restocked," McCabe said a week after opening, while still exploring the shop's potential as a hub for curious minds. "Eventually we'll have readings and workshops. Everything, even the checkout counter, is on wheels, so we can reconfigure the space for all kinds of events."

With crisp white walls and sunlight streaming through a picture window, the shop feels airy and thoughtfully arranged. According to

McCabe, "It smells like a new bookstore... it's a happy smell." Inside, around 1,000 hand-selected titles line the shelves. "One of the things that sets us apart is that there's no filler," McCabe noted. "We like to say that while we can't stock every great book, we can make sure every book we stock is great."

Sections range from children's books, music memoirs, and food writing ("Food is Culture") to graphic novels (for both young adults and adults), poetry and essays, and themed collections like "New York Stories" and an entire shelf devoted to science fiction writer Octavia Butler. "I love Octavia, so she gets her own section," McCabe said. "Everyone should know about her." There's also an Ireland shelf for fans of Sally Rooney looking to explore more contemporary Irish fiction.

Painted on a wooden beam across the ceiling is the statement "*This bookstore is a mixtape*" — a fitting metaphor for McCabe's curatorial style. "If you only listen to commercial pop radio, you hear the same hits over and over," she explained. "But a mixtape? That's where you sneak in the deep cuts, the discoveries you want your friends to fall in love with."

Vanishing Ink also features a local authors shelf, creative tools and toys, art prints, greeting cards, journals, and other literary-inspired gifts, all from unique and interesting sources. It's an eclectic, lovingly crafted collection, and a direct response to the cultural moment.

"The name *Vanishing Ink* came out of what I was seeing around me... book bans, curriculum censorship, the decline of public media," McCabe said. "I worried that certain stories, especially those by and about marginalized people, were at risk of disappearing. So I wanted to create a place where those voices would be celebrated,

Continued on page 15

HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON

Duo's monthly Jazz Jam sets welcoming tone at The Good Witch

BY TOM GAMBARDELLA

When Hastings resident Ben Appel was a freshman at Harrington High School in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, he heard his first jazz recording: a tape his father, a professional pianist, played for him of 27-time Grammy Award-winner Chick Corea.

"It just totally blew my mind," Appel said. "I feel like this can be said for any music, but jazz is just so limitless... I think people have this notion that it has, like, no rules, which I don't totally agree with, but I do feel like it does have this lack of limit on it, as to where you can take it and how much you can express with it."

On June 5, the 28-year-old Appel on piano partners with 31-year-old bassist Zach Kirsimae of Yonkers for the third installment of their monthly Jazz Jam at The Good Witch Coffee Bar in Hastings, which happens on the first Thursday of every month.

Both musicians moved to Westchester during the pandemic — Appel from Philadelphia after securing a teaching job, and Kirsimae from Brooklyn after visiting Tarrytown with his then fiancée. Once in the county, Appel said, setting up a jazz jam in the area felt like a necessity based on the amount of talent around them.

"It just felt like something that needed to happen. You know, there [are] so many musicians in Hastings, there [are] so many jazz musicians in



Ben Appel, Zach Kirsimae, Jeremy Pharo, and Michelle Samuels perform during the Jazz Jam on May 1.

Hastings and the Rivertowns, in Westchester in general," Appel said. "Bringing people together, making a community, connecting over music, getting to hear people's voices — musical voices — on songs. It's just, you know, it's a really rich element of jazz, and it's a great way to meet new musicians and meet new people."

Appel teaches middle school chorus in the Mount Pleasant School District. He earned a bachelor's degree in jazz studies from The New

School and a master's in music education from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

Kirsimae earned a bachelor's degree in jazz performance from The New School and is now pursuing a master's degree in music composition there. He works as a teacher's assistant with New School professor Reggie Workman, an upright bassist and winner of a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters Fellowship. Kirsimae also works one day a week at The Good Witch

as a baker and barista. Appel's wife, Annie, also works at The Good Witch.

"It's interesting. Honestly, it's really great, because it's such a hands-on place," Kirsimae said about The Good Witch. "It's cool having that full-circle moment performing at a place where I work. I feel very connected to the building, that's for sure."

For the first two Jazz Jams, on April 3 and May 1, Appel and Kirsimae hauled in their own upright bass, keyboard, microphone setup, and amplifiers. According to Kirsimae, the work was rewarding.

"It's very much a labor of love to do it. Joanna [Prisco, owner of The Good Witch] really runs the show there, and I know how much of a labor of love it is for her, so I think at these sessions it's very much a reality for all of us: doing what we love and putting in the work to express it with the community and make it something of interest for everyone, something of value, hopefully."

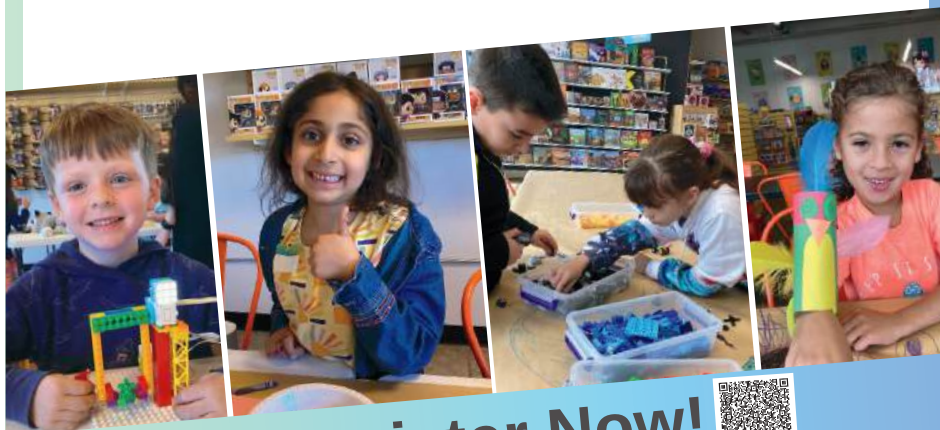
The Jazz Jams feature Appel on keys, Kirsimae on bass, and a rotating drummer, plus a signup sheet for musicians to play with the trio. The first two jams featured Will Brenseke and Usman Salahuddin on drums, respectively. Brenseke will return to the drum set on June 5.

"We'll start with our own session with the house band where we'll play some songs and make it like an organized set, so people are guar-

Continued on page 15

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IRVINGTON

— Coming Up This Week —

Closing Reception: “Through My Lens”

Saturday, May 31, 2 p.m.

Irvington Public Library

Last chance to view Pam Grafstein’s photography exhibit.

Irvington Green Policy Task Force: Video Contest

Register by Saturday, May 31

Irvington High School students are invited to create an instructional video on how to sort cafeteria resources.

Submission deadline is Sept. 15.

Registration and details at

irvingtongreen.org/waste.

Farmers’ Market

Sunday, June 1, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Main Street School, 101 Main St.

Visit theirvingtonfarmersmarket.org and follow the market on Facebook.

Board of Trustees Meeting

Monday, June 2, 7 p.m.

Village Hall

To attend via Zoom,

visit irvingtonny.gov for the link.

School Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 3, 7:30 p.m.

High school library

Agenda available at irvingtonschools.org.

Public Meeting: NYS DOT Route 9 Complete Streets Project

Wednesday, June 4, 6-8 p.m.

Mercy University Rotunda,

555 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry

Details at irvingtongreen.org/events.

Planning Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 4, 7 p.m.

Village Hall

To attend via Zoom,

visit irvingtonny.gov for the link.

“Growing Connections”

Thursday, June 5, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Irvington Public Library

The Irvington Garden Club presents photographs featuring the interdependency of flora and fauna and an exhibit about the interconnection of local garden clubs.

Got news?

Email staff writer Julian Caldwell at

julian@rivertownsdispatch.com



The intersection of Main and Spring streets in Ossining, which is now a parking lot.

Film documents period of displacement

Irvington Library to host screening on June 5

BY JULIAN MICHAEL CALDWELL

A documentary that will be screened in Irvington on Thursday, June 5, chronicles how an urban renewal project in the 1970s led to the displacement of a significant part of Ossining’s Black community and includes firsthand accounts of the people who lived through that upheaval.

The 30-minute film, titled “The Hidden Cost of Progress – Urban Renewal in Ossining,” was directed and produced by lifelong Ossining resident and village historian Joyce Sharrock Cole, filmed by cinematographer Ken Sargeant, and made in collaboration with Irvington-based group Commemorate, which was formed in 2018 to explore the history of enslaved Africans in Irvington.

Since 2021, Cole has organized annual Black History Month exhibits at the Bethany Arts Community in Ossining, which highlights Black history in Westchester. A little more than a year ago, Commemorate co-chair Sarah Cox began discussions with Cole about using her knowledge of Ossining’s history to put together a documentary about how the village’s efforts to redevelop areas it deemed “blighted” negatively affected the Black community. Cole’s project received \$13,000 in funding from the Westchester County Board of Legislators, with support from Legislator David Imamura, and premiered in Ossining on May 22.

Cole has lived in Ossining for 49 years, and her mother’s ancestors have been there since the late 1800s. She grew up hearing stories of how Ossining’s Main Street looked significantly different in the past, but didn’t understand how that related to her family and other members of the Black community. She knew that Route 9 had long served as an unofficial border separating the Black and white populations, but it wasn’t until Cole

began working on the film that she learned that much of the Black population lived on Main Street until the 1970s.

“It became very clear that the buildings that came down were the houses of these people, and now [where they stood] is all parking lots,” Cole told the Dispatch. “Where’s the justice in that? I understand clearly now the message that sends to these people who have to look at those parking lots, knowing that was their home.”

For the film, Cole talked to current and former residents in their 60s and 70s who remembered their families or their neighbors being pushed off of Main Street to other parts of the village, or out of Ossining completely, as the buildings they lived in were demolished. Six people agreed to appear on camera, with several of those participants expressing that this was the first time in five decades that they’d been able to publicly share their story.

“I didn’t know that it was going to be the cathartic moment for the people we had interviewed who had been holding that in for years,” Cole said. “A few times I just wanted to cry.”

One particular moment that stuck with Cole came after discovering a map with a plan to build a park where an arch in town served as a gathering space for the Black community. She recalled that the proposal claimed “If we bring in more businesses, it will get the undesirables out” — a reference to the men who would congregate at the arch. A conversation with one of the film’s subjects, Cheryl Cherry, revealed that the “undesirables” were military veterans, who, she admitted, had drinking problems, but also protected the Black children, like Cheryl, who hung out in that area.

“To read on the map that they wanted to get those ‘undesirables’ out, and then to hear from her that those ‘undesirables’ were our veterans who were not given mental health services when they came home, I

had a visceral reaction to it,” Cole said. “By documenting these stories, we not only honor the resilience of those affected, but also ensure that their experiences inform how we move forward and give some justice to those people.

“It’s like a cautionary tale,” Cox explained. “This might not necessarily happen to our businesses and homes [in Irvington], but what did happen in other communities was a direct reaction to systemic racism, where communities of color were not offered the same opportunities for financial gain, mortgages, or business loans. Consequently, it was perceived by lawmakers that these communities were the ones that looked blighted, even if they weren’t blighted, and would be taken to the ground.”

Cole’s research revealed that some of those buildings were not falling apart, and were structurally sound enough that they took multiple attempts to raze. She was also surprised to uncover documents detailing that her great-great-grandparents, who owned their home, were helped by the redevelopment initiative.

“There was this dangling carrot for a small subset of the Black community who were fortunate enough to be homeowners in good standing with all of their bills,” Cole explained. “They [the Village] gave them money to make improvements in their homes and all kinds of things. But you had this majority that depended on social services who lived on Main Street that was severely affected.”

“The Hidden Cost of Progress – Urban Renewal in Ossining” will be shown on Thursday, June 5, at 6:30 p.m. in the Martucci Gallery at the Irvington Public Library, 12 South Astor St. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the individuals in the film, moderated by Cole. The event is part of Irvington’s 6th Annual Juneteenth Celebration, which includes a concert at Irvington Theater on Wednesday, June 18.

IRVINGTON

Milemarker series kicks off with '90s tribute at Irvington Theater

BY KERRY LYONS

The historic Irvington Theater will debut its Milemarker 27 Music Series this Saturday, May 31, with music by Oasis and Green Day performed by two local '90s bands, The Muscle and Melodramatic Fools. Building on the success of the recent concert for victims of the Los Angeles wildfires and the popularity of the Irvington Halloween bands, the new series aims to promote the theater's mission: to become "a home and hub to our local artists while creating elevated and entertaining programs for our audiences," according to Jessica Arinella, co-chair of the Irvington Theater Commission.

The Muscle, which includes musicians Francis O'Shea, Mike Zakarin, Josh Rosenblum, Danny Blumberg, and Dan Weiss, will cover top tracks from Oasis, pioneers of Britpop. Formed in Manchester, England, in 1991, Oasis gained worldwide fame for chart-topping hits "Wonderwall" and "Champagne Supernova," as well as the band's feuding brothers, Liam and Noel Gallagher.

Fans of Green Day, the Californian punk band, will be excited to hear Melodramatic Fools cover many of their pop-punk hits including "When I Come Around," "Good Riddance," and "American Idiot." Dan Weiss, who is a producer of the show and also plays drums for The Muscle, is joined here by Michael Moshan, Nathan Williams, Vin Fiorillo, and Paul Smetana.



The Muscle will perform songs by the band Oasis.

Weiss has been instrumental in bringing this event, "90s Rock Nostalgia featuring the Music of Oasis & Green Day," to life. He played with The Muscle for the Irvington Halloween crowd in October and has "been thinking about bringing the two bands together for a while." After the fundraiser for L.A., which he also helped produce, he wanted to capitalize on the opportunity to do more. "With the backdrop of Halloween and how much people love it, why only do it one night a year?" he thought.

The Milemarker 27 Series, named for the

marker on Broadway (Route 9) that measures Irvington's distance from New York City and was installed during Benjamin Franklin's tenure as postmaster general, offers local musicians the "privilege to get to play in the beautiful Irvington Theater," Weiss noted, while providing our community "the opportunity to get together and have fun together. We need that togetherness as a community, especially post-Covid. That's what we're trying to do here."

Arinella concurs, sharing that she was "stunned by how quickly people stepped up" to

create the fundraiser for L.A. That event came together in three weeks, raised over \$17,000 and crystallized that "we really have something here. The talent, heart, and verve of locals giving their time is really life affirming." She went on to share that there is a new theater commission "working hard to rebuild the programming of the theater to create community connections." As a professional actress and producer, she sees firsthand the "contraction in the arts, both in terms of works that are produced and what people have access to given the expense." Irvington Theater is committed to ensuring arts of all genres — from music to theater to film and beyond — are accessible to the local community, including children.

On that note, the '90s Nostalgia concert is a family-friendly affair. Be forewarned that "bad words are included" in some of the lyrics, but if you ask Weiss, "it's so easy for friends and neighbors, it's right in town, and this may have a 'Parental Advisory' sticker on it but my kids will be there." Arinella's children will be in attendance as well, and she reinforced that the theater is committed to ensuring all members of the community have affordable access to the arts.

Irvington Theater manager Greg Allen shared that they are committed to producing "one-night-only" events as opposed to "a theater company running a show for months. We're excited to have

Continued on page 15



LADIES COMEDY NIGHT



JUNE 5



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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 rivertownsdspatch.com/contact-us.

Architectural critiques fail to justify opposition to Hastings school bond proposition

To the Editor:

We were recently surprised by architectural criticism expressed in two letters printed in the May 16 edition of this publication. Both letters addressed Proposition 2 of the school bond which proposes renovations and modest additions to the Hastings school complex.

In one letter, the proposal for glass façades was criticized for not being climate conscious. Did the author review the design's energy conservation analysis as a basis for this criticism? Or the glass wall

details? We doubt this was the case, as the design is still under development. Regardless, New York State has implemented the NYS Energy Conservation Code which would mandate that an energy analysis be submitted for the permits to be issued. The analysis must demonstrate that the improvements comply with the code requirements. This code regulates many of the building systems beyond the building envelope, including lighting and heating/cooling. The criticism failed to mention these energy conscious safeguards and pre-

sented opinions without factual knowledge. Completely denying improvements is not a sustainable approach for the environment, school systems, or any institution seeking to remain current.

The second letter criticized the proposed glass façade as "inconsistent with the tone of the brick complex" and "resembling a contemporary museum, not a school." If schools are expected to be made of brick, should houses then always be made of wood and government buildings clad in white marble? The school complex is already a quilt

of additions, each with its own history and reflective of its respective era. Requiring a specific architectural vocabulary in this given setting is illogical. Moreover, the glass improvements represent only a small fraction of the extensive brick façades.

We believe both critiques are misleading and do not provide a valid basis for opposing Proposition 2. For these reasons, and many others, we strongly encourage a "yes" vote.

MARA AYUSO, AIA AND
AGUSTIN AYUSO, RA
Hastings

Vote against 'all glass' and fake grass for schools

To the Editor:

As a 33-year Hastings homeowner who is against the Hastings school bond propositions 2 and 3, I'm offended by the opinions expressed by some of the pro-bond parents and the BOE's mishandling of this issue. I have messages for each:

Pro-bond parents — regarding a recent letter to the Dispatch, it is not a civic duty to vote "yes" on this bond. It is a civic duty to vote. Full stop. Hastings residents have always supported the schools by voting for cost-effective, green investment. These two bond items are not that. Vilifying other residents as not being civic-minded or caring (as mentioned in another letter) because they disagree is divisive. Further, personal attacks on Hastings Sustainable Schools (a grassroots organization) on Facebook are uncivil. You need voters who do not currently have children in the schools, approximately 70% of village residents, to support any bond. My grandmother used to say, "You catch more flies with honey than vinegar." Please take a closer look at the many thoughtful objections to bond items and reconsider your actions.

BOE — Hastings experienced a bond debacle about 10 years ago, when artificial turf at Reynolds Field was voted down 2:1. This BOE is making the same mistakes. The BOE promised community outreach at the start of the bond process, not at the very end. Until recently, the BOE was blaming anti-bond people for spreading misinformation (they were not.) And, with the BOE changing the bond contents seemingly willy-nilly, one cannot talk about the bond without risking being out of date. What is the new net number of classrooms? Who can keep up?

The BOE has damaged its credibility by mismanagement of this bond process. No to "all glass" and no to fake grass.

ELLEN GOLDS
Hastings

Drake will be an excellent steward as mayor of Hastings

To the Editor:

As a Hastings resident for 18 years, I am thrilled to support Tom Drake for mayor.

Tom and his family embody everything that it means to be wonderful neighbors and caring community members. In addition to spending many years with Tom's wife, Julia, on the board of the Hastings Education Foundation, I have been lucky to live up the street from the Drake family, for more reasons than I can count.

Waiting for the school bus with Tom was not only a good time, it was also a great education on whatever was happening in town — Tom is

always up on local events, and often involved in them himself. Sharing an annual block party with Tom and his family means that we get to enjoy the delicious food they cook, and the terrific live music from his band.

Tom is the neighbor you can call on Christmas Day when your husband's first attempt at cooking a turkey on the grill ends up in flames (ask me how I know), and Tom will help you out with calm reassurance and a great sense of humor. He is a longtime member of Hastings' volunteer fire department who, upon seeing that your family has just called 911 at midnight,

will race to your house (despite not being on call), and will carefully walk your family member down all of your steps to the ambulance.

Practically, I believe that Tom Drake will be an excellent steward of our town, our schools, our waterfront, and every one of our residents, and I urge people to learn more about him and his positions at tomdrakeforhastings.com. Personally, I cannot imagine a more thoughtful and involved neighbor that we would be so lucky to have as our mayor.

KIM MEISNER
Hastings

Fleisig has the dedication needed to be an effective mayor

To the Editor:

In the Democratic primary for mayor of Hastings-on-Hudson, we enthusiastically support Morgen Fleisig. A village trustee, architect, and committed Democrat, Morgen has proven himself as an incredibly hardworking and productive local leader.

One can easily find Morgen's impact throughout Hastings. A case in point is our bike route from Five Corners to the South County Trailway.

In 2019, when the County announced it would repave Farragut Avenue without design changes, Morgen took the lead as Village liaison to make the case for new bike lanes, per our Comprehensive Plan, and myriad other traffic, parking, and pedestrian im-

provements. Because of his efforts, this main drag past our schools is more accommodative not just for cyclists, but for all of us.

Then there is the Ravensdale Bridge — rebuilt with attractive architectural features and landscaping due to Morgen's advocacy with the State. The same is true for the railway access across the bridge. Formerly overgrown and forgotten, Morgen persuaded state Department of Transportation to restore it as a safe and bucolic paved path, with new trees and split-rail fencing.

Serving on a village board is time-consuming work, for which the maxim "no good deed goes unpunished" could not be truer. Yet over and again, Morgen steps up

and takes on more responsibility to address these and our most thorny and complex issues. He masters the details, listens to the community, negotiates with stakeholders, and sees the job through for its best possible outcome. These are hallmarks of an effective leader — and in a small community like ours, it's this level of dedication that makes all the difference.

Please learn about Morgen at fleisigforhastings.com and join us in supporting this worthy candidate. There will be early voting at the Hastings library June 14–22. Primary day is June 24.

GABY AND ANDREW BORDWIN
Hastings

Drake has demonstrated commitment to community first

To the Editor:

We proudly endorse our fellow veteran, Thomas Drake, for mayor of Hastings-on-Hudson in the Democratic primary on June 24.

As parents and veterans who have known Tom for years, we've witnessed his unwavering commitment to our community. A Hastings native, Tom exemplifies civic engagement — from his service as a village trustee to his instrumental role in securing Hastings' designation as a "Purple Heart Village." Year after year, he organizes Veterans Day school presentations and Memorial Day ceremonies at Mount Hope Cemetery, keeping our community connected to its heritage.

Tom's life reflects genuine public service. After graduating from Hastings High School, he served as a Navy Hospital Corpsman before joining the NYPD and later becoming an investigator for the Westchester District Attorney. As a volunteer firefighter and active American Legion member, Tom consistently puts community needs first.

Having served as U.S. Army officers in combat missions throughout Iraq, we understand that true leadership means leading by example and prioritizing others. Tom Drake embodies these principles. Whether helping a neighbor or addressing village concerns, Tom

approaches each challenge with integrity, diligence, and dedication.

For a candidate who understands Hastings' unique character and has the experience to guide its future, Tom Drake is the clear choice. Learn more about his vision at www.tomdrakeforhastings.com.

Join us in voting for Thomas Drake in the Democratic primary on June 24 — a leader who will put Hastings first.

MORGAN RATCLIFFE AND
DAVID H. CHEN
Hastings

Letters continue on page 16

The Agenda

SAT
31

Live Rock and R&B: Groove Machine

ARDSLEY

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

“World Builders”

HASTINGS

7:30 p.m. / \$30, \$20 for students and seniors. River’s Edge Theatre Company Studio, 546 Warburton Ave. A dark comedy takes a tender look at mental health and imagination. Also on Sunday, 3 p.m. riversedgetheatre.com

’90s Rock Nostalgia

IRVINGTON

7:30 p.m. / \$28. Irvington Theater, 85 Main St. Irvington Theater’s new Milemarker 27 Music Series celebrating local talent kicks off with the Muscle, performing the music of Oasis, and Melodramatic Fools, performing songs by Green Day. irvingtontheater.com

Chamber Music Concert

TARRYTOWN

7:30 p.m. / \$40. Reformed Church of the Tarrytowns, 42 N. Broadway. RiverArts presents an evening of music celebrating great American composers with a connection to the Hudson Valley. Purchase tickets online. riverarts.org

“Twelfth Night”

TARRYTOWN

7 p.m. / \$50 (includes a beer, wine or soft drink). Makers Central, 84 Central Ave. Anywhere Theater Company’s Shakespearean production is set to a live soundtrack by the folk-rock group The Altogether. Also on June 1, 7, and 8.

Comedy: Brian Regan

TARRYTOWN

7 p.m. / \$71-\$91. Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. tarrytownmusicall.org

Nilson Matta Samba Meets Jazz Quintet

TARRYTOWN

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

Garden of the Heart: Sufi Poets

YONKERS

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. / \$25. Untermyer Park and Gardens, 945 N. Broadway. Purchase tickets online. untermyergardens.org

Countywide Juneteenth Kickoff

OSSINING

11 a.m.-1 p.m. / Free. Bethany Arts Community, 40 Somerstown Road. Celebrate this year’s theme, “Unity and Shared History,” with music, dance, spoken word, and cultural tributes. artswestchester.org/juneteenth

Timeless Singer-Songwriters

OSSINING

7:30 p.m. / \$30. Westchester Collaborative Theater, 23 Water St. Guitarist and vocalist Peter Calo and



The Hastings Historical Society presents “Gone But Not Forgotten: Lost Buildings of Hastings” this Sunday, June 1, at the Hastings Public Library.

vocalist Anne Carpenter perform the music of Joni Mitchell, Paul Simon, Carly Simon, and James Taylor. wctheater.org

SUN
1

“The Ten Scoops”

DOBBS FERRY

3:30-4:30 p.m. / Free. Greenburgh Hebrew Center, 515 Broadway. Celebrate the giving of the Ten Commandments with ice cream, crafts, and stories about

Shavuot for children and parents. RSVP at PLibrary@ghcny.org.

Juneteenth Celebration

HASTINGS

1-5 p.m. / Free admission. Commuter Lot, Southside Avenue. Live music, food, and family fun by Hastings Parenting Children of Color. destinationhastings.org

“Gone But Not Forgotten: Lost Buildings of Hastings”

HASTINGS

2-4 p.m. Hastings Public Library, 7 Maple Ave. Hastings Historical Society president Natalie Berry discusses the historic structures that have disappeared from the village landscape. hastingshistoricalsociety.org

Farmers’ Market

IRVINGTON

9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Main Street School, 101 Main St. The season of weekly markets resumes with live music by Milton and runs through Nov. 23. theirvingtonfarmersmarket.org

Silk Flower-Making Workshop and Landscape Tour

TARRYTOWN

12:30-3:30 p.m. / \$60. Lyndhurst, 635 S. Broadway. Led by fashion designer Kathlin Argiro. For ages 14 and up. lyndhurst.org

Family Field Day

TARRYTOWN

9:30-11 a.m. / \$10 per family suggested. Shames JCC on the Hudson, 371 S. Broadway. Sports and rec games for families with children ages 10 and under. Register online. shamesjcc.org

Jazz Harmonicist: Hendrik Meurkens

TARRYTOWN

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

Open Jam Session

TARRYTOWN

8 p.m. / \$10 for listeners, \$5 for players. Jazz Forum Club, 1 Dixon Lane. Hosted by longtime Hastings resident and jazz pianist David Janeway and his trio. jazzforumarts.org

VIP President’s Garden Tour

YONKERS

10 a.m. / \$50. Untermyer Park and Gardens, 945 N. Broadway. Purchase tickets online. untermyergardens.org

TUES
3

Live Music: Ruby Pucillo and Jasper Zimmerman

HASTINGS

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

WED
4

Senior Picnic

ARDSLEY

11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. / Gerard J. Byrne Center at Anthony F. Veteran Park, 11 Olympic Lane. Lunch provided by the Greenburgh Nutrition Program. Reservation required by calling 914-989-1822.

Astronomy for Grown-ups: The Secrets Hidden in Light

YONKERS

2 p.m. / \$20 for adults, \$15 for students and seniors, free for members. Hudson River Museum, 511 Warburton Ave. Planetarium show, followed by Q&A. Reservations recommended. hrm.org

THURS
5

Outdoor Live Music: Milton

DOBBS FERRY

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

Artist Conversation: “Intricate Fabric of Life”

HASTINGS

7 p.m. / \$20. Upstream Gallery, 8 Main St. RiverArts presents moderator Marie Louise Miller and artists Susan Richman and Rachel Weatherford Whitlow to explore their relationship with nature. riverarts.org

Shop-on-Spring

HASTINGS

5-7 pm. / Spring Street. Participating businesses include Art Transcending Time, Leaves in a Bowl Tea, Hastings Beauty Salon, Vanishing Ink Bookstore, The Hōm Market, and FoundHastings.

The Jazz Jam: Open Jam Session

HASTINGS

7-10 p.m. / \$5 to play, \$10 to listen. The Good Witch Coffee Bar, 134 Southside Ave. DestinationHastings.org

“Growing Connections”

IRVINGTON

10 a.m.-5 p.m. / Free. Martucci Gallery at Irvington Public Library, 12 S. Astor St. The Irvington Garden Club presents a photography show featuring the interdependency of flora and fauna and an educational exhibit about the interconnection of local garden clubs. On view through June 21. irvingtonlibrary.org

Juneteenth Screening and Panel Discussion

IRVINGTON

6-7:30 p.m. / Free. Irvington Public Library, 12 S. Astor St. Watch “The Hidden Cost of Progress-Urban Renewal in Ossining,” followed by a Q&A panel moderated by director Joyce Sharrock Cole. irvingtonlibrary.org

Instrumentalist Chris Botti

TARRYTOWN

8 p.m. / \$65-\$135. Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main St. tarrytownmusicall.org

Sunset Tour

YONKERS

7:15 p.m. / \$22. Untermyer Park and Gardens, 945 N. Broadway. Purchase tickets online. untermyergardens.org

FRI
6

Concert in the Square

ARDSLEY

7-9 p.m. / Addyman Square. Live music features the band What the Funk. Bring your own chair.

Live Jazz: Bill Charlap Trio

TARRYTOWN

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

Paint and Sip

SLEEPY HOLLOW

7:30-9:30 p.m. / \$45. Hudson Valley Writers Center, Philipse Manor Station. writerscenter.org

Free First Fridays: Diverse Concert Artists

YONKERS

5-8 p.m. / Free admission. Hudson River Museum, 511 Warburton Ave. The ensemble blends classical, pop, Broadway, and hip-hop, featuring LGBTQ+ and Black composers in celebration of Pride and African American Music Appreciation Month. hrm.org

Music Tour

Continued from page 1

Ferry Waterfront Park, which will also host the Phoenicia Flea Market during the day. From 6 to 9 p.m., the waterfront will be the main focus of the tour, starting with an 18-piece big band called the New Standards Jazz Orchestra, which features educators from schools in Westchester and New York City. The music tour will feature a teen stage at Reynolds Field in Hastings organized in a collaboration between The Lab open mic that happens at South Presbyterian Church in Dobbs Ferry and the Hastings Youth Council. Ardsley High School student Fran Guido, who also works at The Lab, will serve as audio engineer for the stage.

"This has grown into a really vibrant place for young people to come gather, hang out with

their friends, and see their friends perform in a format that's outside of school, even though it's technically on school property," Hart said.

The music tour is also upgrading its static map to an interactive online map that will allow users to locate performances in real time, get directions, and curate their routes. The webpage is expected to be available via riverartsmusicstour.com by the beginning of June. While it's not necessary to attend, RiverArts encourages audiences to RSVP at the event website. Hart shared that the RSVPs are especially needed after the organization lost one of its corporate sponsors this year.

"RiverArts is a not-for-profit organization in the arts, and some of our funding is in jeopardy," Hart explained. "So by people signing onto that page saying that they're coming, it gives us numbers so that next year we can go to our benefactors and say,

Jazz Jam

Continued from page 10

anted that there's some organized music," Kirsimae explained. "But the idea is really to get the community involved and have a space for people to play. A lot of musicians do other things professionally, and they don't have the chance to play as much as they'd like. If they live nearby this is

Task Force

Continued from page 6

level, Johnson emphasized the necessity of renewing Ardsley's certification with CSC. The task force, she said, is committed to "continuing

'Look at how many people show up for this event, and if your logo is on it, you're getting visibility.' So there is a real need for people to be willing to sign up for events. That in itself is a donation."

Still, with live performances every hour from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., and an increasingly diverse range of folk, rock, classical, jazz and more, the RiverArts Music Tour continues to expand beyond the imagination of the original organizers who decided to bring smaller acts to private lawns a decade ago.

"The thing that remains the same, and what keeps it alive and vibrant is the gratitude, not only of the performers, but of the community who comes to see the performers," Hart said. "People are just so happy to be outside at the beginning of the season and to be able to share music with each other in a social environment."

an opportunity at least once a month to come out and play. When we moved up here, there wasn't really anything like that in Hastings... So we had this idea to have a space where music can be made and have it be an open environment for the community to get together and connect."

The Jazz Jam begins at 7 p.m. and ends at 10 p.m. Entry costs \$10 for general admission and \$5 for players.

this race toward sustainability."

"Our goal is helping the Village of Ardsley take action on climate change," she said. "That goal is whether or not there's funding, because we care about our community; we care about our children and the air we breathe."

Vanishing Ink

Continued from page 9

where the ink never vanishes."

Though small in square footage, Vanishing Ink is deeply intentional, and its relationship with the village's library, across the street, is central to its identity. As McCabe put it: "Sometimes people come in looking for a book that's checked out at the library, or they're about to return an overdue library book and want to own other books by the same author. Between the two of us, we're creating a town where you can always find your next great read."

Vanishing Ink, at 2 Spring St. (enter on Southside Avenue), is open Tuesdays-Saturdays from 11 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. For more information, visit www.vanishingink-books.com.

'Shop-on-Spring' on June 5

Six businesses on Spring Street will host an intimate street fair, called "Shop-on-Spring," on Thursday, June 5, from 5-7 p.m. Art Transcending Time, FoundHastings, Hastings Beauty Salon, Leaves in a Bowl, The Hōm Market, and Vanishing Ink Books will be open for the occasion, which will include music and refreshments.

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Opinion

Hastings needs excellent schools and diverse culture

To the Editor:

I've lived here and used and supported the school system for 63 years. I remain supportive of our school system.

The first part of the BOE's current bond proposal represents necessary repair, maintenance and improvements. I will vote "yes" on that part of the bond.

The second part of the bond proposal is not convincingly related to education or necessary physical changes.

Even a look at the board's rendering of the changed facade and cafeteria reveals extravagance and irrelevance. The existing entrance is adequate as is. Why a two-story glass atrium cafeteria, or more classrooms, when enrollment is not increasing? And what would be the effect on energy usage with so much glass?

The third part of the bond, the athletic fields, should be limited to maintenance and necessary upgrades, but it should not fund as yet very debatable artificial turf fields.

These proposals would increase property taxes for a typical residence by over \$700 a year. We're still paying off earlier bond issues, and State aid (not permanent in any case) is more unpredictable now.

Sustainability, in my opinion, should include the historically excellent school system, but also the diverse culture of the Village. We are more than a school district.

We must keep in mind that right now our economy is unstable and worrisome. So now is not the time for any unnecessary changes to our school buildings and grounds.

Therefore, I would urge residents to join me in voting "yes," "no," "no."

GERALD DIXON

Hastings

Mayoral candidates forum to be June 11

To the Editor:

The League of Women Voters of the Rivertowns is hosting a candidate forum for the Hastings-on-Hudson mayoral Democratic primary election.

The forum will be a Zoom webinar on Wednesday, June 11, from 7-8 p.m. The forum can be viewed live by pre-registration at <https://bit.ly/Hastingsmayorprimary>

Questions must be submitted ahead of time either at registration or by email to info@lwv-rivertowns.org. The deadline for submission of questions is Monday, June 9, at 9 a.m.

Candidates are Tom Drake and Morgen Fleisig, both currently trustees on the Hastings Village Board. The primary election is June 24.

The event will be recorded and made available on the Rivertowns League YouTube channel, LWV Rivertowns, and website <http://www.lwv-rivertowns.org>.

SUSAN MAGGIOTTO

President, LWV Rivertowns

Bond proposition aims to address loss of space at middle school

To the Editor:

Though the upcoming bond touches on each of our three schools, Proposition #2 at its heart is an attempt to redress the state of the middle school, which is 40% smaller than the high school even though it serves the same number of students.

This lack of space happened not by design, it happened by downsizing — and flowed from decisions begun in the late 80s and early 90s when the school district fell to under 1,000 students — 40% smaller than it is today. During this time approximately 10,000 square feet and many classrooms that were in the Farragut Complex were turned into offices and a cafeteria.

This space never returned to the mid-

dle school.

As the district population has rebounded (currently ~1,630), along with NYS curriculum mandates and changes to special education which affect the middle school, the community has made it known to our board that our middle school has become hard to learn in, hard to teach in, and hard to lead. Both data and observation bear this out.

Much of the work contained within Proposition #2 seeks therefore to redress something fundamental. It is about ingredients which our community may consider central and deserved for every child's opportunity in school: space, light, quiet, and organization.

What we know as trustees is that families are more apt to describe their experience

of the middle school in these critical formative years in opposite terms — as tight, uncomfortable, loud, and chaotic — and that our most vulnerable students are impacted most.

This is what Proposition #2 seeks to resolve. The mechanism by which it can achieve this is by right-sizing a new cafeteria and returning the old cafeteria to the 6,000 square feet of middle school classrooms and instructional space which it used to be.

ALEX DAL PIAZ, SILVIA ROBLES, DAVID BARONE, CATHERINE DIMARTINO, THERESA

MCCAFFREY, JODIE MEYER, AND MAUREEN LENNON-SANTANA

Hastings Board of Education

Invest in Hastings students by supporting all three propositions

To the Editor:

As a parent of a preschooler in Hastings, I've been thinking a lot about the future — not just my children's future, but the future of all students in our village. That's why I'm proud to support the upcoming school bond and urge my fellow parents and community members to vote "yes" to all three propositions.

Though my own children won't benefit from these improvements for several years, I believe now is the time to act. This bond is more than a plan for better classrooms — it's a much-needed investment in the future of education in Hastings. It includes science rooms with the space students need

to explore, experiment, and collaborate like real scientists and engineers. It provides a larger cafeteria where students can recharge and connect. It ensures a secure, ADA-compliant entryway so that every student and visitor is welcomed with dignity and safety. And it adds two new turf fields — giving our student-athletes more time to practice, play, and grow. These updates aren't just about bricks and mortar — they're about creating the kind of environment where the next generation of Hastings students can become engineers, artists, scientists, and maybe even another Super Bowl champion.

As preschool parents, we know how fast

time flies. The halls we invest in today will soon be the very places our children grow, learn, and discover who they are. And even more immediately, this bond will support the students currently walking those halls — our neighbors, our friends' children, the future leaders of Hastings.

Voting "yes" on this bond means choosing a brighter future for every child in our village. It means coming together, as a community, to say we believe in the power of education. We believe our kids deserve spaces that reflect the promise we see in them.

DAVID MIELE

Hastings

Backing all three propositions would be too financially risky

To the Editor:

For 40 years, I have voted "yes" on Hastings school bonds. Schools are a public trust.

But this time is different. I will vote "no." Why? "Yes" betrays that public trust. To raise school debt now would be a fiscal blunder for the schools and for Hastings as a whole. Raising fixed cost sharply while income becomes uncertain raises our collective risk.

Our world is rife with short- and long-term risk. Global trade wars, Wall Street volatility, federal chaos, and extreme weather translate directly into economic uncertainty. Will these risks continue? Businesses fail? Hastings residents lose their jobs? If the market falters,

will property values and retirement incomes follow? Will floods and fires demand more local spending on infrastructure? Probably.

Public schools are especially vulnerable. They need reliable revenue, but don't produce it (as a store might). For public schools, the lions' share of revenue comes from state and local taxes. Increases are tied to population and property values. When these wobble, revenue does, too. Yet fixed costs remain.

Expanding school facilities raises fixed costs — heat, light, maintenance, depreciation. Financing them with bonds (debt) adds the substantial fixed-cost of debt service. But

they only increase expenses, not revenue.

If I believed our environment were stable, and tax revenue reliable, I might not hear alarm bells. But I am doubtful about them, thus can't vote "yes."

As Peter Bernstein, financial guru, put it, "Risk means not having cash when you need it." Let's keep some "cash" — purchasing power — around to mitigate the financial risks ahead. If the risks don't materialize, all the better.

But for now, vote "no" on Propositions 2 and 3 (and "yes" on 1). We need to be smart.

CLARA MILLER

Hastings

Support student athletes by voting in favor of Proposition 3

To the Editor:

As a physician, medical researcher focused on cancer prevention and cancer epidemiologist, as well as the parent of student athletes, I have the appropriate perspective to assess the benefits and potential downsides of Proposition 3. As it is currently, most of the Hastings spring and fall athletes (soccer, football, field hockey, lacrosse) already play the majority of their games on turf fields between school and

club sports — this is largely the standard across the county and country. Voting for or against Proposition 3 will not change this.

We have already clearly demonstrated that Hastings has neither the funds in the school budget nor necessary personnel to maintain high-quality grass fields. I have first-hand witnessed several significant injuries that can be attributed directly to the very poor conditions at Burke upper field. The idea that grass fields are inherently safer

is a fallacy, and I have no concerns letting my kids play on turf fields. Proposition 3 is not a choice between turf and high-quality grass fields. It is simply a choice between good and poor athletic fields. Athletics are an important part of development, teaching invaluable skills including teamwork, collaboration, and leadership. A "yes" vote for Proposition 3 is a vote for our kids.

JULIAN ABRAMS

Hastings

Sports

EDITED BY ROB DIANTONIO

McGrath's home run propels Hastings to final

Baseball roundup

BY ROB DIANTONIO

It was a moment every baseball player dreams about.

With the game tied heading into the top of the seventh inning and a spot in the Class B championship game on the line, Hastings senior Kieran McGrath strolled up to the plate with Andrew Rizzo on first base. After falling into a two-strike hole, McGrath launched a fastball for a two-run home run to left-center field to propel No. 3 Hastings to a 4-2 win over No. 2 Briarcliff on May 28.

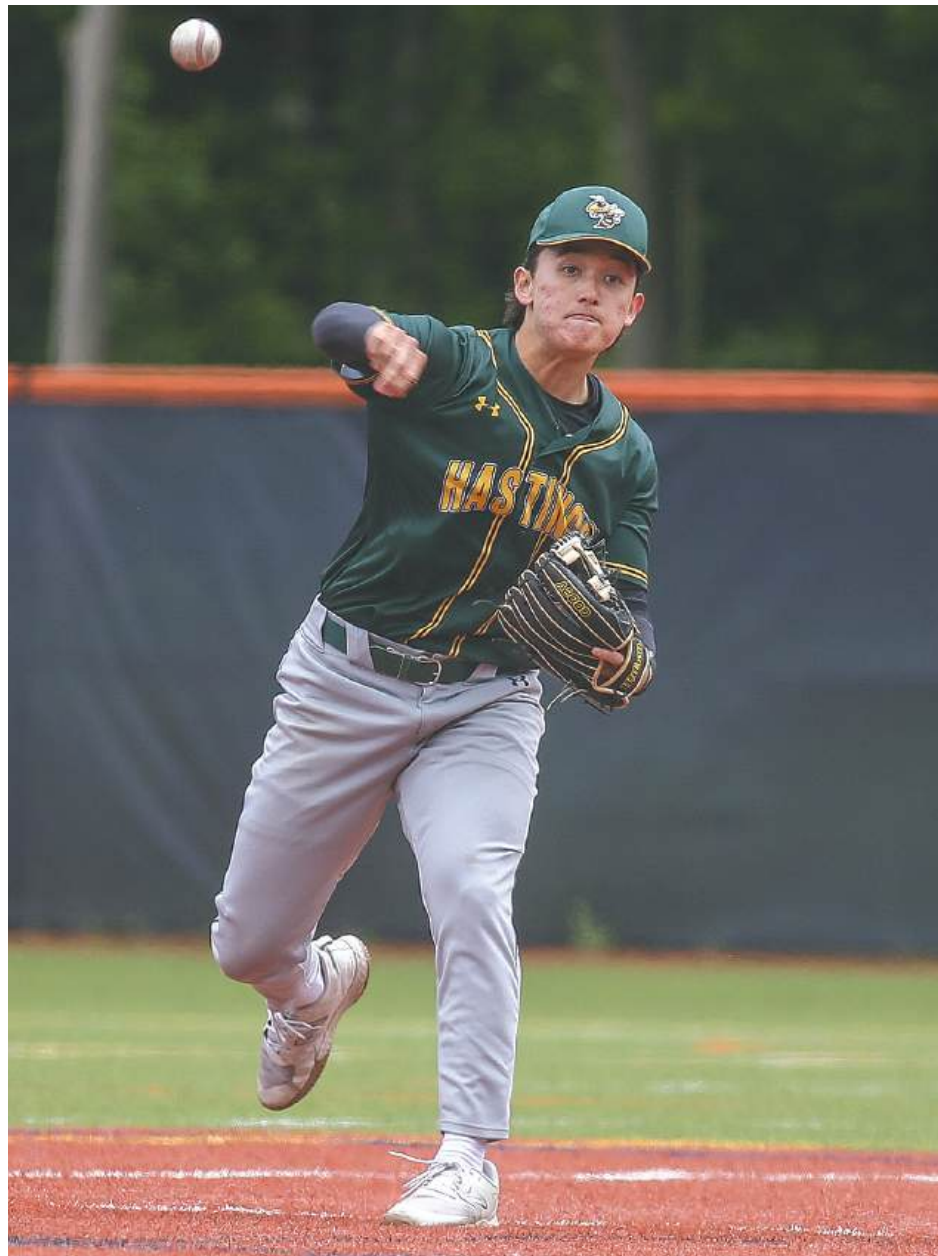
"Honestly, I didn't expect to get pitched to," said McGrath, who finished 2 for 2 and walked twice. "Later in the season, especially in the playoffs, there was a lot of pitching around me and intentional walks. A faster pitcher came in in relief and we'd seen him before. I kind of had to get my timing down on the first few pitches. You can't really write it better than that."

The Yellow Jackets advanced to the Section 1 Class B final where they will face top-seeded Putnam Valley this Saturday, May 31, at Purchase College. They will have to beat Putnam Valley twice to win the championship, so if the Jackets win on May 31 they will return the next day.

Senior Jackson Acree relieved fellow senior Nathan Krapf in the seventh inning for the save against Briarcliff. Acree got the final out by strikeout to end the game. Krapf was a bulldog for the first six innings to pick up the win. He struck out eight and escaped a jam in the bottom of the sixth. Krapf allowed a one-out triple but struck out the next batter and then induced a ground out.

"He's tough and he cares so much," McGrath said of Krapf. "Every time he's out there he's giving his all. And Jackson is always locked in and in the zone."

Trailing 2-0 in the top of the fifth, Hast-



Hastings shortstop Kieran McGrath makes the throw to first base in the semifinal round. Photo by Rob DiAntonio.

ings started its comeback. Rizzo drove in Avi Rothstein and Charlie Richardson with a two-run double to tie the game up at 2-2.

"This team fights, man," McGrath said. "This team doesn't give up no matter what the score is, no matter who we're playing."

We've dealt with a lot of adversity this season. We lost a lot of seniors last year. We bounced back and came back stronger."

Krapf gave credit to his defense for supporting him. McGrath made a full-extension diving snag in the sixth inning while Julius Stephens ran a long way to track down a fly ball in the third.

"I knew I could just trust my stuff and trust my fielders," Krapf said. "We've got a great field behind us. All I had to do was just throw strikes and we've got it."

Hastings defeated Briarcliff for a third time season as the Jackets went 3-1 against the Bears. The teams shared the league championship.

In the first game of the semifinal round, Hastings rallied to defeat host Briarcliff 9-7 on May 24. Once teams reach the semifinals the tournament becomes double elimination.

Acree (win, 3 innings), Krapf (4 innings, 2 strikeouts), Aidan Curtis (3-4, home run, double, 4 RBIs), McGrath (1-2, 3 walks, run), Matt Corbo (double, run), Stephens (2 runs), Johnny Sbrega (2 runs), and Rothstein (home run, 2 RBIs) led the Jackets to the win.

"What I love about these kids is they didn't give up at all," Hastings coach Dom Cecere said after the first playoff win over Briarcliff. "They got down a little bit, picked themselves up, and were able to finish the game off. Our backs were against the wall and the kids were able to get the W."

Hastings lost to host Putnam Valley 10-0 in the next round of the semifinals on May 27. The Yellow Jackets were missing all of their seniors due to the prom.

Now, Hastings (14-10) is looking forward to another shot at defeating Putnam Valley, this time with the stakes even higher in the championship round.

"It means everything," McGrath said of advancing to the finals. "This is what you play for."

Hastings edges Ardsley in quarters, falls to Edgemont in semis

Boys' tennis roundup

BY ROB DIANTONIO

Sixth-seeded Hastings defeated No. 3 Ardsley 3-2 in the Section 1 Division 2 quarterfinals on May 16 at Harrison High School.

After dropping both singles matches, the Yellow Jackets swept the three doubles matches to earn the win. William Andrus and Leo Ferris defeated Max Zhou and Jacob Frank 8-5, Charles Baer and Lukas Kovac bested Ronald Chen and Ryan Siglag 8-4, and David Franco and Andrew Fran-

co topped Zachary Poselle and Samuel Kaufmann 8-1.

"We're very happy with the win and I'm proud of our team spirit," Hastings coach Stefan Riecher said. "It paid off that we worked a lot on doubles strategy during the season and the boys have improved their doubles game tremendously. Unlike many other teams we have a very deep roster, with 14 strong players, and that helped against Ardsley."

In singles, Ardsley's Cameron Weiss defeated Hastings' Andre Forrest 8-3 and Bode

Vujnovich blanked Eli Sundheim 8-0.

The Yellow Jackets fell to No. 2 Edgemont 3-0 in the semifinals on May 18. The match was called, with Edgemont leading, due to poor weather conditions.

"Two of the three matches we lost 10-12 in the third-set tie-breaker, so it was extremely close and our boys fought until the end," Riecher said. "We were up in the tie-breaker of doubles No. 3 when the match was called, so another upset win for us was within reach."

With just three seniors graduating, Hast-

ings will be in the mix again next season. "I'm confident that we will have a very strong team again," Riecher said.

In the individual portion of the Section 1 tennis championships, Ardsley's doubles team of Vujnovich and Weiss came up one win short of qualifying for states. The duo advanced to the semifinals of the tournament, where it fell to the top-seeded team from Briarcliff, 3-6, 4-6. They were then in the third-place match with the winner going to states, but fell 6-4, 4-6, 2-6.

Bulldogs pounce on North Salem in quarterfinal victory

Girls' lacrosse roundup

BY ROB DIANTONIO

The defense was intense from the opening draw. Any time a North Salem player had possession, Irvington players were not far behind and were ready to force a turnover.

Fourth-seeded Irvington used its defensive pressure along with key offensive contributions from seniors Sadie McRae and Aly Raimondo to defeat No. 5 North Salem 13-6 in the Section 1 Class D quarterfinals on May 27. McRae had four goals and five assists while Raimondo scored five goals and collected eight ground balls.

"Our senior players set the tone well, giving us an early advantage," Irvington coach Pat DiBenedetto said. "Sadie had an outstanding game, creating scoring chances for herself and setting up her teammates. When we needed to score early, Aly's determination and game awareness came through."

Isi Doncov (1G, 4 GBs), Sophia Im (1G), Alexis Canfin (1G, 5 draws), Tessa McRae (1G), Mia Cantillana (4 saves), and Sadie Kilbury (7 saves) also contributed to the win.

Sadie McRae netted Irvington's first three



Irvington's Sadie McRae takes a shot against North Salem in the quarterfinals. Photo by Rob DiAntonio.

goals to propel them to a 3-1 lead. Canfin scored with 40.7 seconds left in the first quarter to make it 5-2. Raimondo finished three straight Irvington goals in the sec-

ond quarter to extend the lead to 8-3. Tessa McRae and Sadie McRae scored the next two goals with Sadie's coming with 30 seconds left as the Bulldogs went into halftime

with a commanding 10-3 advantage.

"Draw control, as always, played a crucial role," DiBenedetto said. "Even when we didn't win the draw, our defensive pressure and anticipation allowed us to regain possession and stay on the attack."

Irvington (12-5) was scheduled to travel to top-seeded Pleasantville for the semifinals on May 30. DiBenedetto said "executing the fundamentals and taking care of the little things" will be critical against the Panthers.

Ardasley falls to Pelham in first round

No. 13 Ardsley lost to No. 4 Pelham 17-1 in the opening round of the Section 1 Class C playoffs on May 23. Lyla Vega (1G), Lily Tiernan (1A), and Sienna Kay (8 saves) paced the Panthers, who finished the season with a 7-10 record.

Eagles clipped by North Salem

No. 12 Dobbs Ferry lost to No. 5 North Salem 16-4 in the opening round of the Section 1 Class D playoffs on May 22. Mary O'Dea (1A, 5 draws), Hope McCormack (1G, 3 draws), Megan Hartnett (1G), Hollen Peet (1G), and Molly O'Brien (1G) led the Eagles, who completed the campaign with a 7-9 record.

Dobbs Ferry blanks Yonkers to move on to championship game

Softball roundup

BY ROB DIANTONIO

Second-seeded Dobbs Ferry advanced to the Section 1 Class B championship game with a 12-0 six-inning win over No. 3 Yonkers Montessori Academy in the semifinals on May 28.

"It was a total team effort offensively and defensively," Eagles coach Kim Reznicek said.

Abby Dann had a big day at the plate, going 2 for 2 with a home run and a triple. She drove in three runs for the host Eagles.

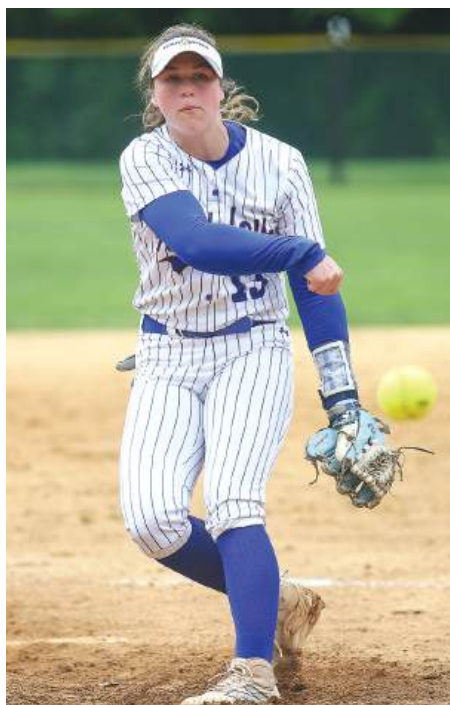
"Every time she stepped up to the plate, you felt like she was going to do something big — and she did," Reznicek said.

Kamryn Addis, Maysin Kannapin, Emily Marron, and Riley Sullivan each had a double and an RBI. Nicolette Giorgio went 2 for 3 while Alexa Vicchio was 2 for 4. Addis and Giorgio also came through with crucial defensive plays.

Victoria Baron earned the win on the mound, tossing a complete game with seven strikeouts. She also had two hits and one RBI. "For a seventh-grader, she kept her cool, knowing it was a big game," Reznicek said. "At one point, she faced a leadoff triple followed by a hit batter. She stayed composed, striking out the next two and getting the last one to ground out."

The Eagles (14-7) will face either top-seeded Hastings or No. 5 Putnam Valley in the championship game on May 31 at North Rockland High School.

Dobbs cruised past No. 7 Blind Brook 19-1 in the quarterfinals on May 25. Sullivan (3-3, double, 4 RBI), Addis (2-3, RBI), Vicchio (2-3, RBI), Marron (2-3, double, RBI), Giorgio (2-4, 2 RBIs), Kannapin (RBI), Dann



(Above) Ardsley's Sofia Haber pitches against Rye. (Right) Ardsley's Emma Philp connects with a pitch against Rye. Photos by Rob DiAntonio.

(RBI), Gianna Stone (RBI), Maddie Piacentino (RBI), and Ella Rizzo (win, 4 innings, 6 strikeouts, RBI) stuffed the stat sheet.

Ardsley edges Rye but falls in semifinals

With seventh- and eighth-graders filling key positions and making significant contributions, Ardsley will be in good hands for years to come. The middle infield consists of two eighth-graders in shortstop Emma Philp and second baseman Noemi Ippolito,

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Softball

Continued from page 18

with seventh-grader Mia King at catcher.

It was Philp who led the second-seeded Panthers to a 3-1 win over No. 10 Rye in the Section 1 Class A quarterfinals on May 24. The shortstop blasted a two-run home run to give Ardsley a 2-0 first-inning lead. Ippolito, who was celebrating her birthday, walked and scored on the homer.

"I had a feeling when I was going up to bat," Philp said. "Having Noemi on base, I knew I had to drive in a run somehow. I was kind of looking for a little base hit, but the first pitch that I saw, I was just taking advantage of it."

Philp was on varsity as a seventh-grader and admitted she "was a little scared" a year ago. "But coming back for eighth grade, I knew this was going to be my year because I already had a year under my belt," she said.

Ardsley coach Noreen Degnan pointed out that it was Philp's fifth home run of the season.

"She's just a phenomenal athlete," Degnan said. "She helped us big-time with the bat and obviously you saw her at shortstop with her arm. Her softball IQ is very high. I'm very blessed to have her for another four years."

In the fifth inning, Sofia Haber drove in Ippolito, who started the inning with a single, to extend the lead to 3-0.

Rye threatened in the top of the seventh and was able to push a run across on an RBI single. But Haber got out of the jam and snagged a liner back to her to end the game. "I knew coming into this game that it was going to be close," Degnan said. "They were a lower seed but played a tough schedule. They're a very well-coached team."

Haber tossed a complete game three-hitter. She struck out 11 and walked one. "I love having a pitcher I can rely on," Philp said. "I think she's a really great leader and I love having her as my captain."

Ardsley (15-6) lost to No. 3 Hendrick Hudson 3-1 in the semifinals on May 27. Haber pitched a complete game with 15 strikeouts while allowing three earned runs. She also had a double. King went 2 for 3 with a double.

Hastings wins in quarters, semifinal postponed

Top-seeded Hastings was trailing visiting Putnam Valley 2-1 in the third inning of the Section 1 Class B semifinals on May 28 when the game was postponed due to poor weather conditions. The game was scheduled to be completed on May 29. If Hastings wins, the Yellow Jackets will advance to the championship game against Dobbs Ferry on May 31 at North Rockland.

The Yellow Jackets improved to 14-6 when they blanked No. 8 Briarcliff 7-0 in the quarterfinals on May 25. Hazel Sabella (win, 3 hits, 7 innings, 12 strikeouts), Lola Norlander (double, 2 RBIs), Izzy Doherty (2-3, 2 RBIs), Ella Rizzo (double, RBI), and Lexie Schur (RBI) led the way.

Irvington falls in first round

No. 12-seeded Irvington (7-12) lost to fifth-seeded Pearl River 12-0 in five innings in the Section 1 Class A opening round on May 23.



Ardsley's Joie Levy throws a pass against Hen Hud in the Section 1 Class C final. Photo by Rob DiAntonio

Sailors sink Panthers in flag football final

BY ROB DIANTONIO

After enduring a lopsided 40-point regular-season loss to Hendrick Hudson back on May 8, Ardsley found itself facing the Sailors again on May 24. But this time the stakes were much higher.

Ardsley battled to the end in the second meeting, falling to Hen Hud 13-12 in the Section 1 Class C flag football championship game at Lakeland High School.

"It was a great game," Panthers coach Sean Cappiello said. "We knew we didn't play our best the first time around. The girls prepared hard like they did all season and we were confident we could play much better. We had a good game plan and just didn't make a play or two. The game could have gone either way."

The Panthers trailed 7-6 at halftime. Hen Hud extended its lead to 13-6 on a touchdown pass with 14:31 left in the game. Ardsley answered when senior Joie Levy threw a jump-ball touchdown pass to junior Dylan

Paley in the left corner of the end zone. The Panthers went for two but the pass from Levy to Ava Santavicca was incomplete as Ardsley trailed 13-12 with 7:59 left.

The Panthers were unable to threaten again as they had one last chance with seconds remaining, but they were stopped deep in their own territory.

Levy set the tone in the first half with two interceptions. The senior captain's first pick helped set up her 36-yard touchdown pass to Santavicca to give Ardsley a 6-0 lead.

"Joie's obviously a special player and she was motivated to play better than she did the first time, and of course that's what she did," Cappiello said. "We played her on defense in the playoffs, which was something I was reluctant to do during the regular season because I didn't want to wear her down, especially coming off the long basketball season. But as she showed with her multiple interceptions, she has the ability to impact the game in multiple ways."

The Sailors responded with a touchdown pass with 27 seconds left in the first half. They converted the extra point to take a 7-6 halftime lead.

It was a standout season for the Panthers, who were in their inaugural season competing in flag football. Levy led the way throughout the season but the team grew as a unit and finished with a 12-4 record.

With Levy, Sam Amir, and Emily Nudelman the lone graduates, plenty of talent will return for Ardsley next spring, harboring hopes of building on a successful first season.

"I'm extremely proud of what this team accomplished," Cappiello said. "To go to a section championship in our first year and be one play away from winning it against a team that has been around for a while is exceptional. But more than that, they played together, supported each other, prepared hard, and had fun. They set the tone for a program that I hope has a ton of success in the future."

Blind Brook bests Bulldogs by 1 with seconds left

Boys' lacrosse roundup

BY ROB DIANTONIO

Blind Brook's Noah Brookman scored with 5.9 seconds remaining in the game to hand No. 3-seeded Irvington a 9-8 loss in the Section 1 Class D quarterfinals on May 28.

The host Bulldogs had one last chance to send the game to overtime as junior Alex

Zinman won the ensuing face-off and passed ahead to Bowie Frank, who quickly got off a desperation shot but it was wide.

No. 6 Blind Brook led 6-5 at halftime and was up 8-6 at the end of three quarters. Saxon Frank scored just 13 seconds into the fourth quarter to make it a one-goal game. Bowie Frank scooped up a rebound and finished to tie the game at 8-8 with 1:58 remaining.

Bowie Frank led the Bulldogs in scoring with five goals and added an assist. Zinman

had one goal, four assists, and was dominant on face-offs, winning 19 of 20. He also scooped up 19 ground balls. Saxon Frank had two goals and one assist. Josh Tatz had an assist.

Irvington completed the campaign with a 16-5 record.

Eagles eliminated by Haldane

No. 10 Dobbs Ferry (6-11) went on the road and lost to No. 7 Haldane 16-4 in the Section 1 Class D opening round on May 23.

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