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December 8, 2021

**Food for Thought** 

"There's nothing stronger than the heart of a volunteer." – Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle

#### **Superintendent's Corner**

It seems almost ironic that right in the middle of each years' holiday season we are reminded of a day that lives in infamy in our national psyche. December 7, 1941 represented a watershed event in American history, as our country was plunged into a conflict that would forever change the fabric of our lives. It was through World War II that the United States solidified its reputation as the watchdog of democracy, as our people proved to be the ultimate defenders of liberty around the globe. While we might squabble among ourselves and vigorously debate the issues of the day, our citizens will always band together when threatened from abroad. There is a quiet, yet steely resolve that burns in our American souls, and we must always remember that the things that bind us are far greater than those that divide us.

# News from Deputy Superintendent/Business Dr. Joseph Centamore

The holiday season is upon us and with it brings our music department's exciting winter concert series. To ensure an enjoyable as well as safe and healthy concert experience, the performing groups will be spaced over multiple venues, dates and times. Protocols such as masks and social distancing will be in place. We ask that families sit with one another.

Last night, the Stimson Orchestra kicked off the winter concert season. It also marked the return to live performances to an audience. Under the direction of Ms. Smith, both the 7th and 8th grade Orchestras played beautifully. Special thanks to 8th grade student, **Erica Chung**, for creating the cover art for the program.

The December Winter Concert schedule is as follows:

#### Stimson Middle School

December 9th – Chorus - Walt Whitman HS PAC at 6:30 pm Jazz Band & Band, Walt Whitman HS North Gym at 7:30 pm

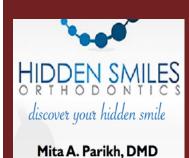
#### Walt Whitman High School

December 13th - Concert Band & Wind Ensemble - Walt Whitman HS North Gym at 7:30 pm

Symphonic Orchestra - Walt Whitman HS North Gym immediately following the Band/Wind Ensemble

December 16th - Chorus - Walt Whitman HS PAC at 7:30 pm



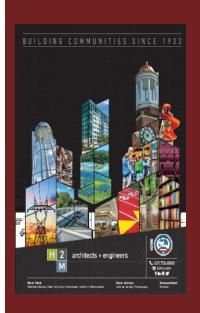


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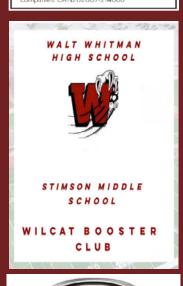
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#### News from Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Dr. John Murphy & **Dr. Gayle Steele**

Infinite Campus Student Course Requests on IC Student Portal As we begin to progress through the year, the scheduling window has begun for many students at the Secondary level, grades 7-12. To empower and inspire students to become active in the scheduling process, South Huntington has opened the student course requests on Infinite Campus. Filling out the information on the student portal will allow focused conversations to occur regarding students and their current academic interests. As always, if you have any questions, please contact your child's building at any time.

**Show Your Coding Spirit During the Hour of Code** 

Computer Science Week is December 6th-10th! Students across our district will have the opportunity to learn Computer Science. Coding or programming is an interactive way to create step-by-step instructions to tell the computer what to do. Have you ever played a computer game or app? A "Coder" had to create the program for the game or app you played. Show your coding spirit during Computer Science Week and be sure to wear the following:



#### 11th Grade Chromebook Replenishment

On December 2nd, all students in 11th grade swapped out their old Chromebooks for a new one as part of the device replenishment cycle during their US History class. If your child did not switch their device, please go to Walt Whitman Library and see Mrs. Campbell to swap out your old Chromebook.

#### **PSAT Scores Available on December 6th**

Score reports for PSAT-related assessments will be available for parents and students on December 6th. Students who provided their email address on their PSAT/NMSQT answer sheets will receive an email reminder to view their October PSAT/NMSQT scores online. If you have any questions, please contact your child's guidance counselor at your earliest convenience.

**Parent Portal Trainings** 

We will be offering our last Parent Academy session for 2021 on December 20th, at 7 PM for Parent Portal. Do you want to learn more about the Parent Portal? Please click here to register for the session or view videos of any prior Parent Academy missed.

**Primary Theater** 

We are happy to announce that the theater program will be starting this week at our primary schools. A notice was sent home through Parent Square and sign up was closed as of December 7th. Please look for additional information through Parent Square if your child is part of this after school program. We look forward to great performances.





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# News from David Barth, Supervisor of Physical Education, Health, Athletics & Recreation

Congratulations to our 10 Fall Varsity teams who earned the NYSPHSAA Scholar-Athlete Team award. This award is given to varsity programs that have 75% of their team average at a 90% GPA or higher. Success on the field of play, and success in the classroom, these teams have accomplished it all: Girls Cross Country, Field Hockey, Girls Soccer, Boys Cross Country, Girls Swimming and Diving, Girls Volleyball, Girls Tennis, Boys Volleyball, Golf, and Football.

Congratulations to our Varsity Football team who were awarded the *Rutgers Trophy* given to the best team in Section XI as voted on by the Suffolk County Coaches Association. This is just the second time in school history that they have won this award and the first time since 1974. Senior **Nicholas Bottoni** won the **Boomer Esiason Award** presented to the top quarterback in Suffolk County, and Senior **Liam Villanti** won the **Labue Award** given to Suffolk County's Top Scholar-Athlete. **Coach Robin Rosa** was awarded the Suffolk County Football Coach of the year as voted on by the Suffolk County Coaches Association.

Winter sports are now in full swing, with gameplay already starting. Good Luck to all of our student-athletes and coaches as they embark on the new season. Visit <a href="SectionXI.org">SectionXI.org</a> for the most up-to-date schedule. Spectators are welcomed at all home events, and away contests vary, based on the school. Please reach out to your child's coach with specific questions. Currently, spectators are not permitted at Suffolk Community College for indoor track meets.

Visit our Athletics website for updated scores, sports offered, coach's contact information, and more. All events taking place in the Walt Whitman North Gym, South Gym, and on the Turf Field will be live-streamed on the NFHS Network (<a href="www.NFHSNetwork.com">www.NFHSNetwork.com</a>).

#### **News from School Nutrition Services**







#### It is never too late to Give Thanks.

As we began our Thanksgiving celebrations throughout the district, the School Nutrition Program was invited to provide an early holiday meal to Ms. Sanicola's class in the Countrywood Primary Center. Each student's lunch was provided in individually packaged decorated boxes, and contained all of the main holiday fixings for their classroom celebration. Turkey, mashed potatoes, corn, and cranberry sauce were just a few of their Thanksgiving favorites.





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The smiles on the children's faces as they opened the boxes and enjoyed their special meal was incredible. Days such as this confirm the wonderful part of working for our SHNS program.

Now, it's on to the next holiday celebrations! Stay tuned...



**News from Mr. Kenneth Costa, Principal of Walt Whitman High School** 

What better way to lift our holiday spirits then by decorating the halls and making this place feel warmer and a little brighter. In 2016, our WWHS Science department started this wonderful tradition in an effort to spread Holiday cheer and school spirit, decorating the hallways for students and faculty to enjoy. Over the last couple of years, all of our hallways participated, spreading feelings of goodwill throughout the school. To help give further incentive and bragging rights, we will continue to reward the winning hallway with a bagel breakfast and some "get out of duty" coupons. So, work with your wing mates, get students to help during clubs/activities and accept the challenge. We will be judging the hallways on Wednesday, December 22nd, at the beginning of 1st period, and we will announce the winner on Thursday, December 23rd. Here are the hallway breakdowns:

100 wing 400 wing 200 Art/Music Wing 500 wing - Ramp to 501 200 wing - PAC to Student Services 500 wing - Ramp to Forum 600 wing - Library to 634 200 wing - Student Services to 201 600 wing - Ramp to 601 300 wing

**Ugly Sweater Contest** 

On Tuesday, December 21st, come dressed in your ugliest holiday attire. Undercover elves (judges) will be frolicking around all day, judging the Ugly Sweater Contest. Winners will be announced late that afternoon. Prizes will be awarded.

**Holiday Car Parade** 

On **Wednesday**, **December 22nd**, the GSO will host our annual Holiday Car Parade from 5-6 pm in the horseshoe parking lot. Teachers who will judge the event should decorate their cars and park on the building side of the horseshoe by 4:50 pm. At 5, all students and families, in their best decorated cars, are welcome to begin their parade drive through the horseshoe (about 3 laps) to show off their holiday spirit. Winners in several categories will be announced on Thursday, December 23rd.

**Winter Concerts** 

The WWHS Orchestra and Band are hosting their Winter Concert on Monday, December 13th, in the North Gym at 7:30 pm.

WWHS Chorus Winter Concert will be held on Thursday, December **16th**, in the PAC at 7:30 pm.

I thank you in advance for supporting all of our students, and please remember to support our various parent/student organizations and boosters.

"Be curious, not judgmental." ~ Walt Whitman

News from Mr. Eddie Smith, **Principal of Stimson Middle School** 







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I just wanted to thank our Orchestra students and Ms. Smith for an amazing concert last night! We know that the last few years have been extremely challenging for our music department. Last night's performance was another step forward. It was wonderful to see our parents and family members filling the PAC at Walt Whitman High School. On Thursday, December 9th, our Chorus 7 and Chorus 8 will perform at 6:30 pm in the PAC. The Band 7 and Band 8 concert will begin at 7:30 pm in the Walt Whitman North Gym. \*Please note the time and location differs from the school calendar. All of the hard work and dedication by the students makes these concerts an enjoyable evening.

#### News from Mr. Steve Toto, Principal of Silas Wood Sixth-Grade School

A thought to live by: If you're making mistakes it means you're out there doing something. – Author Neil Gaiman, Make Good Art

Our annual "Giving Tree" has once again taken its place of honor at Silas Wood! Faculty, staff, students and families graciously support our "Giving Tree" by selecting "tags" offered on the tree which specify hoped-for items (age, size, etc., specified) to be provided to local individuals and families in need, to help make the holiday season as joyful as possible for one and all. Non-specified new (or very gently used) items are also welcome. We invite anyone who might wish to participate to stop by and "pick a tag" or make a drop off. Deliveries should be made to Silas to the attention of Mr. Shaka Williams any time before our holiday break. Many heartfelt thanks to those who participate.

For those who have decided to participate in the SW Homework-Free-Night-For-Everyone Gingerbread House Decorating Contest on December 15th, please be reminded that the Gingerbread Houses will be distributed to students during PM Homeroom this Friday, December 10th.

Silas Wood is pleased to offer an <u>After-School STEAM Enrichment Program.</u> This STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) program will immerse students in cutting-edge technology and student-centered problem solving incorporating computer programs using the NAO Robot, Z Space, 3D printing, and mi-

croscopes. This hour-long program will be offered to students at Silas Wood on Mondays OR Wednesdays from 3 to 4 pm. The first official day of this program for those participating on Mondays will be on Monday, December 13, 2021; the first official day of this program for those participating on Wednesdays will be on Wednesday, December 15, 2021. There is no after-program transportation home provided by the district. Therefore, all students must be picked up promptly at 4 pm. There are a limited number of openings available, so those interested should look for the info sheet backpacked home earlier this week.



Silas staff and students were surprised on Monday morning to find our lobby sporting a fresh coat of paint in preparation for an exciting and inspiring new mural to be completed soon. Look for photos of our new look to be included here in upcoming weeks.

As we roll into concert season here in South Huntington, the Silas Wood family can plan on the following schedule for our music con-



The U6, U7 & U8 program offers twice a week professional training: Wednesdays after school with the Red Bulls and Saturday mornings with ATSC Training. Games are on Sundays with referees.

All Practices/games held at Signal Hill Elementary School, Wolf Hill and Caledonia Roads.

Cost: \$90 per child each season, Spring and Fall.

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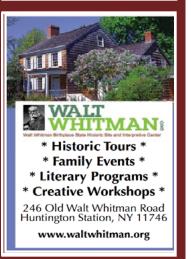












certs, all on one night, in the comfort of facilities at WWHS.

January 18, 2022 Chorus – 6:30 – 7 pm in the WWHS PAC Band – 7:15 - 7:45 pm in the WWHS NORTH GYM; Orchestra – 8 - 8:30 pm in the WWHS NORTH GYM

We all look forward to a beautiful evening of music.

#### News from Mr. Anthony Ciccarelli, Principal of Birchwood Intermediate School

Social Emotional Learning in Homes & Communities

Social and emotional learning starts at home. Parents and families are critical partners in helping their children develop social and emotional know-how. They can model the kinds of skills, attitudes, and behaviors we want all students to master. The following is a list of resources that focus on the role of parents and parenting in social and emotional learning (SEL).

#### Websites:

Parentingchangemakers.org: Offers resources with a focus on building four skills in family life: empathy, teamwork, new leadership, and change-making. The process will help the parent problem-solve for themselves and leads families and communities in addressing the issues that are most pressing to them.

<u>Commonsensemedia.org</u>: Reviews movies, apps, video games, and other media available to children. Each movie, for example, lists a parent-level age rating, along with a kid's perspective of the appropriate age level.

<u>Confidentparentsconfidentkids.org</u>: The only site for parents that focuses explicitly on actively promoting kids' social, emotional, and ethical development.

Greatschools.org: A community resource to find and share information about schools. You can type in any school, city, or zip code and get demographic information on schools in your area such as ratings, reviews, and extracurricular activities. The video series "Milestones" describes grade-level expectations in K-5, including children's perspectives. The site has an "Emotional Smarts" section with a toolbox, a game, and a video series.

<u>Healthychildren.org</u>: Developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, this site provides information on children's developmental ages and stages, healthy living practices, safety and prevention, and dealing with health concerns at home.

<u>Infoaboutkids.org</u>: This site is committed to publishing resources with a solid research base. It has sections on body, mind, emotions, and relationships.

Mindbrainparenting.org: Designed for ages 5 to adult, the cards cover six categories (self-awareness; relationship skills; self-management; social awareness; responsible decision making; and diversity, equity, and inclusion) and ask questions such as What is fairness? or What is luck? They can be used in a multitude of ways — as conversation prompts during dinner or daily errands, or in place of playing cards in a game of Go Fish.

<u>Parenttoolkit.com</u>: Provides developmental markers at each age/ stage, with guidance for parents on how to support each aspect of development. Resources include the areas of academic, health and wellness, and social and emotional development.

<u>StopBullying.gov</u>: Focused on helping parents, educators, and community members stop bullying. There are also resources and articles targeting kids and teens.

Birchwood would like to thank our wonderful PTA for planning and organizing our Holiday Boutique last week. We appreciate the extra effort it takes to provide our students with this experience.





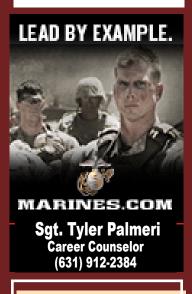






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Thanks to our generous Birchwood family for our successful Thanksgiving Collection. We collected a substantial amount of money and food to help our South Huntington Community.

Please have your children prepared for outdoor recess and outside classroom time by bringing jackets, gloves, and hats with them to school every day. We will go outside whenever the temperature is above 32 degrees. It is also helpful to have all items labeled with your child's name, so we can return any items that get misplaced.

#### News from Mr. William Hender, Principal of Maplewood Intermediate School

It has been a very busy week at Maplewood. We have had lots of new activities kick-off this week that continue to provide opportunities for students both in and out of the classroom.

Within the classroom, our students spent the week celebrating "an hour of code" as they continue to learn the art of computer programming. Under the direction of Mrs. D'Elia, students completed a week of activities dedicated to improving their coding skills. Students also had an opportunity to work with and learn from our Whitman High School students who spent Monday in our building. A great time was had by all, as students are still talking about their high school role models!

Outside the classroom, our after-school intramural program is off to a fantastic start. With higher than expected temperatures this week, students have been able to participate in a variety of sports and activities outdoors from 3:30-4:30. Project Friendship also begins before school this upcoming Thursday, as we look forward to supporting and engaging in new friendships with our classmates. Our theater club continues to practice hard each Thursday and we can't wait to watch them perform. Lastly, our Student Council has been collecting many toys for their toy drive and is also planning some fun spirit days throughout the upcoming months as we continue to demonstrate our Maplewood School Spirit!

It truly is the most wonderful time of the year here at Maplewood.

#### News from Dr. Annie Michaelian, Principal of Oakwood Primary Center

Oakwood is ringing in December. We hope that all of our families who celebrated Hanukkah enjoyed their time with their family and friends.

The Oakwood family continues the holiday spirit with our Second Annual Door Decor Contest. We are excited to see the decorations that will be displayed throughout the building over the next two weeks. All of our students, faculty, and staff will be able to vote on the best door displays that will include all students and staff members who work in the room. Three winners will receive a trophy and bragging rights for having the best winter holiday themed door.

Our Student Council continues to recognize two outstanding members of the Oakwood family. This week, the Student Council "Gratitude Board" has recognized **Ms. Bonnie Zubkovs**, one of Oakwood's Paraprofessionals and **Mr. Eric Cajowski**, one of our great custodians. We thank them for always supporting the Oakwood family.

Our Oakwood students are continuing to get paper pom-poms for exhibiting positive character traits. Our classes are scheduled to go to the Kindness Store to redeem their pom-poms next week. Please continue to encourage your child to continue to be safe, respectful, and responsible in school.



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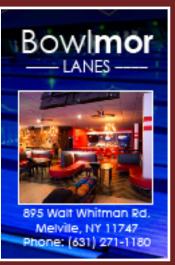
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Oakwood is posting new pictures on our social-media accounts on Instagram and Twitter! We are very excited to share all of the wonderful things happening to enhance and build on our home-to-school connection. If you are interested in following us, please see the information below:

Instagram: oakwood\_primary\_center

Twitter: @Oakwood\_PC

Have a wonderful week ahead! #theoakwoodway

News from Mr. Mitchell Levy, Principal of Countrywood Primary Center

This week our Countrywood students have been enjoying coding in their classrooms as part of the "Hour of Code" program taking place across the country. A huge thank you to students from Walt Whitman High School who came by on Tuesday to assist many of our teachers and their students with fun, hands-on coding activities. It is wonderful to see our students so engaged and enjoying coding; who knows, maybe several of our Countrywood students will go into careers in coding and technology.

Wednesday morning students who ride the bus had an opportunity to practice bus safety drills. Just as we practice fire, lockdown and other drills in the school, it is equally important to make sure that we are all prepared in the event of a bus emergency. Thank you to our bus drivers and matrons, who assisted in carrying out this important safety drill.

On Thursday, Parents for Megan's Law will be here for our Kindergarten students, providing important reminders on staying safe, and being in control of their own bodies during their program "You're in Charge." "You're in Charge" enforces child safety by teaching empowerment and body-autonomy through an explanation of boundaries, not keeping secrets, and the importance of saying "no" and telling a trusted adult. This is always an important topic that we want to make sure is conveyed to all of our students. The agency has a wonderful way of doing this, in an age-appropriate fashion. We thank them for their work with our students.

Looking ahead to next week, we are excited to bring back our Writer's Workshop Museum, where select classes will have an opportunity to have their student's writing pieces displayed in the All Purpose Room for other classes to come and view. We had started this project right before COVID, and are excited to once again be bringing it back. It's wonderful to see the look on our students' faces when others read their writing.

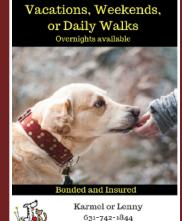
As previously mentioned, please be reminded that while lunch will now be indoors until the Spring, we will still be going outdoors for recess and physical education classes whenever possible, so please dress your children appropriately for the weather of the day. Also, please be reminded that there are MANY items that have been lost throughout the year that are in our lost and found. If your child is missing anything, please encourage them to take a look. Whenever possible, if you can label your child's belongings, that will go a long way in helping us return items to their rightful owners.

We wish you a wonderful week ahead!

# School Board Notes – A Message from the Board of Education

Our Board of Education invites residents, staff and alumni to attend











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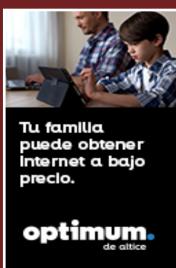


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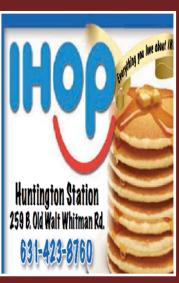
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this evening's business meeting with three very meaningful presentations that will take place prior to the business meeting.

The first is a holiday treat with the Oakwood "stars" singing two melodies for the audience, reminding us all of the wonderful ways the holiday season brings complete joy and anticipation to our younger primary-aged children.

The second presentation is bittersweet--the recognition of **Edward J. Nitkewicz**, **J.D.** as a board member for the past 12 years--who is leaving the District effective December 31, 2021. We will have old friends in the audience--Mr. Jim Kaden, prior board president for 24 years; Dr. David Bennardo, previous Superintendent of Schools; and Lorraine Deller, Executive Director of the Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association speaking on Ed's behalf, and former trustees Lisa Brieff and Michele DeGaetano in attendance as well.

The third and last presentation is for our Division I Suffolk County Champion Varsity Football Team with the added distinction of the Rutgers Trophy. Our Varsity football players will be present with the coaches, and we hope to provide the appropriate appreciation for bringing such honor to our South Huntington community.

Please consider attending--the meeting will be held in the Performing Arts Center of Walt Whitman High School and will start at 7:30 p.m.

News from South Huntington Educational Foundation, SHEF



SHEF's New Year's Eve holiday raffle is a great way to create, cultivate and celebrate! Have all the ingredients delivered to your door and join a zoom with The Charcuterie Queen of Long Island on December 31st, at 1 p.m., to make your own board for that night. Be sure to visit <a href="SHEFINC.ORG">SHEFINC.ORG</a> for your chance to win this special holiday offer that makes a great gift for you or someone you know. Winner will be announced on Facebook and Instagram on December 22nd.



Our goal is to increase the number of **SHEF Senior Scholarships** to support *more students in more diverse fields* as they pursue their next steps in the arts, STEM, volunteerism, service and vocational programs. Kindly click <u>HERE</u> to make your tax-deductible gift today through SHEF's website using PayPal or donate through <u>Facebook</u> as well. **SHEF** will continue to accept donations through the end of year to support this important cause as your participation will directly make a difference in the lives of our Wildcats.



#### **News from SEPTA – Maureen Basedow**

Our Holiday Raffle Fundraiser is still going on! We are pulling the winning ticket on Tuesday, December 21st. Make sure you buy your raffle tickets asap. Thank you all for all your support. Happy Holidays to all!







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#### **Community and School District Flyers**

In an effort to make our weekly newsletter more convenient, each of the flyers we receive are listed below. Click on the one that interests you and you will be automatically linked to that flyer.

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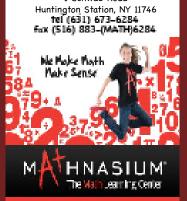
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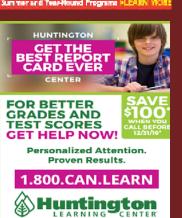
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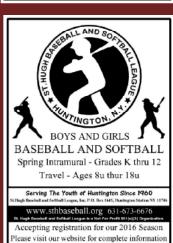


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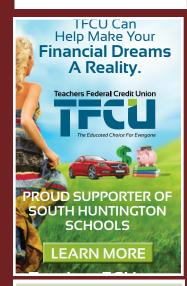




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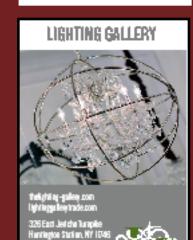




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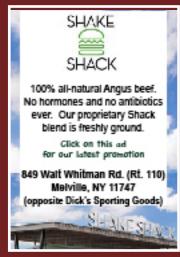


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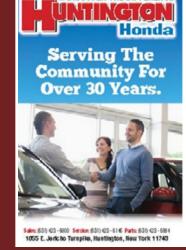


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