THE GREENLAWN BUGLE

Greenlawn Post 1244 Winter 2024

Veterans Day



On November 11th, the Town of Huntington gathered together to honor the brave men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces. The annual Veterans Day ceremony, sponsored by Post 1244, was held at the Greenlawn Monument. It brought together veterans, their families, local leaders, and residents to pay tribute to the sacrifices made by those who have defended our nation.

The event began with the presentation of colors by our Post 1244 Color Guard, followed by our members and other veterans at the memorial. The colors of other organizations including the Greenlawn Fire Department and those of local scout troops also joined in.

After an invocation by Chaplain Carr, our National Anthem was performed by Walt Whitman High School student Lucy Maniatis. Remarks from Commander Carlo Giordano and Vice Commander Steve Scinta, followed.

A wreath was placed at the memorial by past commanders Dennis Madden and Bob Santo. Wreaths from the Greenlawn Fire Department and other community organizations followed.

As is our tradition, our ceremony ended fittingly with the sounding of Taps.

Scenes From Veterans Day 2024



Boys State / Girls State 2025



Candidate interviews for the 2025 Boys & Girls State Programs have already begun. By the time you read this, our Greenlawn Post 1244 team will have interviewed at least ten candidates for Girls State from two high schools.

Being recommended to be interviewed certifies that the student is a member of the junior class and plans to be going into their senior year, has been selected by the High School Principal certifying they possess outstanding qualities of leadership, character, honesty, scholarship, cooperation, and maturity.

As you can imagine, the selection process is not an easy one. We have a limited number of positions and usually more candidates than positions. Our aim is to fill as many positions as possible because as a team, we realize the importance of the Boys & Girls State Program. We have seen how candidates react to the program and how successful it has been. The program has many objectives, the most important of which we feel are:

• To develop civic leadership and pride in American citizenship. Hopefully, those who attend will return

Andrew Schild Honored

At this year's Veterans Day ceremony, a dedicated and long-time friend of our post received well-deserved recognition. For the past 13 years, Andrew has generously volunteered his skills to provide DJ services for our annual Veterans Day event at the Greenlawn Monument.

His efforts have transformed a modest annual gathering of a handful of veterans into a community-wide event that brings together residents from all across our town.

Thank you, Andrew!



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to their community and be better citizens than when they left.

- To stimulate a keen interest in the study of government.
- To incite in these young citizens a determination to maintain our form of government.

To develop in these candidates a full understanding of our American traditions and a belief in the United States of America.

The American Legion aims to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to their community, state and nation in these young candidates. The program was developed from the concept that young people should be offered a better perspective on government operations that the individual is an integral part of and responsible, for the character and success of their government.

At our post meeting in August, our members will, once again, have the opportunity to meet the candidates who will have attended the Boys & Girls State program. They will tell you about their experience and you can evaluate the success of the program and its goals.

Edward O'Shea

Co-chairman, Post 1244 Boys and Girls State



Operation Enduring Enduring Care

It is that time of year when my wife Connie and I want to wish everyone a very happy holiday and a Happy New Year.

It has been a busy year for Operation Enduring Care. With guidance from members of the post and my wife's organizational skills, we have donated clothing, food, a large 55 cup coffee pot and vacuum cleaner to Beacon House at the Northport VAMC.

Paul Fluitt, the house manager of Building 11 has been thrilled with our support.



L-R: Charlie Armstrong, Hank Sarno of Centurion Cruisers and Commander Carlo Giordano

Charlie Armstrong Saluted

In addition, we have made donations to Island Harvest of food and toiletries and monetary donations to Angels for Warriors, Paws of War, Rebuilding Long Island Together, United Veterans Beacon House and more.

With the help of our American Legion Riders, we sent supplies to a veterans home in Queens and they were very happy to receive it.

I would like to thank Charlie Armstrong and the Centurion Cruisers Car Club for their wonderful car show this year. We had nearly 300 cars from all over and there was a car or truck for every taste. We raised a record amount of money and we're flush with needed supplies. Thanks to all who came and participated and supported us. Commander Carlo Giordano presented a plaque to Hank Sarno of the Centurion Cruisers for their efforts on behalf of the veterans we serve.

It gives me a good feeling to see so much support for our veterans and their families. Connie and I are looking forward to the New Year and the continued operation of our program and our post. Again, bless you all for this past year.

> **John Carr** Chairman, Operation Enduring Care Chaplain, American Legion Post 1244 (516) 935-4268 P38Lightning45@gmail.com

Suffolk County Legislator Tom Donnelly recently honored Charlie Armstrong of South Huntington as the 17th Legislative District's 2024 Veteran of the Year, recognizing his exceptional service to our country and his ongoing dedication to the community.

Charlie is an active member of Greenlawn Post 1244 and served as the post Sergeant at Arms for 15 years. He also coordinates the American Legion Boys & Girls State Program, teaches flag etiquette to Scout troops, and oversees the Flag Retirement Program, managing 11 drop boxes at public libraries across the Town of Huntington to ensure respectful flag retirements.

Born in Philadelphia, PA, Sergeant Armstrong studied Mechanical Engineering at Penn State University before enlisting in the United States Air Force in 1965. He trained as an aircraft mechanic at Sheppard Air Force Base, achieved the rank of Sergeant, and served honorably from 1966 to 1971 at Dover Air Force Base, working on C119 and C141 aircraft.



Long Swamp Cemetery

Cemeteries are special spaces, often rich with history, culture, and personal stories. Among the most valuable cemeteries are historic ones—repositories of the lives and legacies of past generations. Over time, these sacred grounds can fall into disrepair, suffering from weathering, vandalism, neglect, or the simple passage of time.

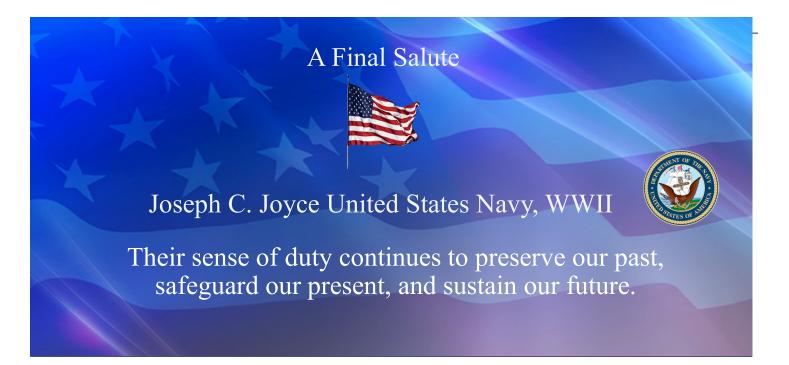


Long Swamp Cemetery in Huntington Station is one such historic cemetery, made special by the sacrifices of three early patriots: Sgt. John Carll, Pvt. Scudder Carll and Pvt. Joseph Ireland, all members of Col. Josiah Smith's 1st Regiment, Suffolk County Minutemen. Years of neglect had led to badly damaged and toppled head stones, fallen trees and branches, litter and overgrown vines. In 2012, Post 1244 became stewards of this burial ground. Ed and Deb Hayde have spent countless hours planting and tidying the site and Ed contributed the welcome sign and flag painting on the site.



Left Side L-R Risa Pastore. Capt, Sean Burke, Marciano Aloe. Below: Lt. Ryan Pastore, Thomas Spatafora. Right Side L-R: Kelly Rodriguez, Jeziel Negron, Matteo Holmgren and Past Cmdr. Donna Boyle. Below: Daniela Bausano.

In recent years, volunteers from the Huntington Manor Fire Department Juniors, under the direction of Past Commander Donna Boyle have conducted annual clean up of Long Swamp, raking leaves, removing fallen branches and eliminating invasive plant species. This year's cleanup was held on Election Day. With the schools closed we were assisted by a fine crew from the Huntington Manor Juniors who spent hours making this historic cemetery a decent tribute to "Huntington's First Veterans."



Raptor Day

We have always taken pride in being the veterans organization that shows up when needed! When the "Bald Eagles of Centerport" invited us to attend a fundraiser for "Wildlife in Need of Rescue & Rehabilitation" (WINORR), we gladly accepted. They provided us with a space where we could distribute poppies and connect with the public.

So far this year, WINORR has rescued approximately 400 birds. Raptors, which were once rarely seen on Long Island, have become more common in recent years. These include Red-Tailed Hawks, Great Horned Owls, Cooper's Hawks, and, of course, our national symbol, the Bald Eagle.

The Centerport bald eagles arrived in 2017, took over a red-tailed hawk's nest, expanded it, and made it their home.



L-R: Chaplain John Carr, Hal Dieterle, Vice Commander Steve Scinta and Commander Carlo Giordano.

American Legion High School Oratorical Contest

The American Legion Oratorical Contest aims to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the U.S. Constitution among high school students.

The program offers participants an academic speaking challenge that teaches essential leadership qualities, the history of the nation's laws, and the ability to think and communicate clearly. It also emphasizes the duties, responsibilities, rights, and privileges of American citizenship.

Post 1244 has sponsored students in the American Legion Oratorical Contest for many years, and many of its contestants have achieved great success. This year, the oratorical contestants were from Pius V School in Melville. Laura Williams was the first place winner in the Suffolk County contest this year.



Contestants L-R: Tom Marrone, Laura Williams and Peter Kennedy.

What's the PACT Act and how will it affect my VA benefits and care?

The PACT Act is perhaps the largest health care and benefit expansion in VA history. Expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 eras

- Adds 20+ more presumptive conditions for burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic exposures
- Adds more presumptive-exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation
- Requires VA to provide a toxic exposure screening to every Veteran enrolled in VA health care
- Helps us improve research, staff education, and treatment related to toxic exposures If you're a Veteran or survivor, you can file claims now to apply for PACT Act-related benefits.
- Contact your Post 1244 Service Officer Scott McCord for more information: 631-786-9736

American Legion Riders



American Legion Riders of Post 1244 want to wish all a Happy Holiday and we wish 2025 is a better year for all of us. We have had a busy year and could not have done it without help from our Post 1244 members and want to thank

you for all the support you have given us.

Last month, the Riders had our Thanksgiving Ride. To date one of the best rides I can remember. Seeing some Post members we haven't seen in a while and their families, just to remind them we haven't forgotten them or their family .

This was an amazing day that I wish did not have to come to an end.

It was a busy month, Dropping of the Roses, Wreaths Across America at Long Island National and Calverton National Cemetery, and always a sad time when we lose a Veteran.

Every day is Veterans Day. Let us not forget.

2024 is coming to end, welcome 2025 Happy New Year.

Wishing you all good health and happiness,

Bruce Blanco

President American Legion Riders Greenlawn Post 1244





Spotlight on the Community

Sal Ferro - Huntington Town Councilman



Q. Prior to your election as a Town Council member, what was your experience in the private sector?

A. As a production manager, I began my career with Alure, a small painting contracting business in 1989. After serving many roles, in 2002 I took on the roles of President and CEO.

Alure grew from a very successful remodeling company in the country, Alure Home Improvements, Alure Designs, and Fusion Commercial Contracting.

I served as Vice President and Partner in Old Fields Capital Partners. I serve on the boards of several nonprofit organizations, including The Clark Gillies Foundation, Family Service League, The Farmingdale College Foundation, The Community Chest of Long Island, and my charity and served as a member of the Huntington Hospital Board.

Q. Tell me about your foundation and the work it does on behalf of veterans.

A. The Ferro Foundation is a non-profit organization on Long Island supporting veterans, first-generation college students, veterans, and other underserved groups. Essentially this organization supports the groups offering them opportunities they may not have access to otherwise.

Often veterans return from service facing hardships in their transition to civilian life. The Ferro Foundation is here to help them reintegrate into civilian life and continue to do so.

Q. As an elected official what are your goals for the residents of the Town of Huntington?

A. As a knowledgeable businessman with a background in construction and a compassionate advocate for the betterment of our town and people in general my goal is to have good communication with

constituents. It is important to be out in the community to hear what's happening and address the community needs.

We all deserve to be seen and heard. I want the community to thrive, by supporting local businesses and Attracting new businesses that align with the town's character and meet residents' needs, which can boost job creation and diversify the local economy.

To create a healthy environment, with social connections and safe shorelines to enjoy in the Town of Huntington and natural spaces. I believe it is important that we take into account environmental concerns. I want our entire town to be a team and ideally be on the same page. While creating affordable homes, we must always be cognizant of the whole environment we create in doing so.

Q. How do you see yourself helping veterans in your position on the Town Board?

A. As a member of the Town Board, I see it as my duty to ensure that our veterans receive the support and recognition they deserve for their service. In my position, I am focused on creating opportunities to enhance veterans' welfare through local initiatives and partnerships with organizations that specialize in these areas.

I work with my foundation to streamline services and make resources more accessible by collaborating with veterans' groups. Additionally, I am committed to ensuring our town recognizes and honors the sacrifices made by veterans, by supporting events and memorials that celebrate their contributions to our nation.

By Mary Flatley

Charlie's Corner

"Pearl Harbor Remembrance 2017"

Long Island National Cemetery

The parking lot was dotted with the colorful jackets and decorated hats that proudly announced our affiliations. There were fewer of us this year, a certain result of patriotic old-timers passing, and not enough young bloods filling their void.

The march from the parking lot to the ceremonial flagpole seemed to have gotten longer this year. Some older marchers needed to be assisted; their proud but frail legs and lungs betraying them along the way.

The usual cadre of public officials took their turn at the podium, mechanically honoring those who

perished on that horrific day in 1941. We politely clapped as each concluded. The more heartfelt offerings were given by elderly Veterans who could more closely relate to the victims of the day that will forever live in infamy.

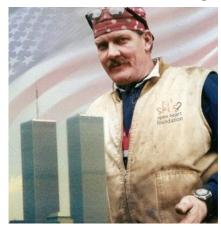
But when all the speeches were over, and all the wreaths were laid, the 24 haunting notes of Taps, and 3 brief rifle volleys, finally expressed what no mere words ever could....

Charlie Tritto Past Post Chaplain American Legion Post 1244



Mark Gajewsky Toy Drive

Post 1244 members and friends stepped up this year to make this year's Toy Drive one of the best ever. Donations contributed by our many members as well as toys collected by the Cold Spring Harbor Library through the efforts of Steve and Diane Scinta made up a good portion of the toys.



Mark Gajewski, a union operating engineer, worked six months straight on clearing Ground Zero after the terrorist attacks.

As always, we received a special donation of toys this year from Crystal Gajewski Borella of **Ski's Open Heart Foundation.** Crystal's dad, Mark Gajewski, a 911 responder and Post 1244 member died of a rare cancer in 2011. Mark was the inspiration for

our Toy Drive which was launched 13 years ago in his honor.

We delivered our toys to Rogerlyn Velez, CEO of **An**gels for Warriors on December 16, along with many gift



L-R Michelle McMahon (a faithful toy donor), 2nd Vice Cmdr. Steve Scinta, Past Cmdr. Dennis Madden, and Cmdr. Carlo Giordano. Front: Rogerlyn Velez with "Marco"

cards to benefit veterans and their families throughout the year as well as a large donation generated by the Chinese Auction at our Holiday Party.

Angels for Warriors assists and guides Nassau and Suffolk County Veterans, active duty military, and their families through essential resources, with an emphasis on pro-bono and low-bono legal representation.

Vice Commander's Message



Greetings Fellow Legionnaires.

As 2024 ends, we reflect on the many accomplishments, challenges, and stories that have shaped our American Legion family. Throughout the year, our members have

continued to honor the legacy of those who served before us while supporting our fellow veterans and the communities we call home.

We invite all American Legion members, their families, and our broader community to continue supporting these efforts as we move into the new year. Whether through volunteering, donating, or simply spreading the word about the importance of our work, every bit of support helps.

Together, we will continue to uphold the

principles of **Veterans Serving Veterans** and make a lasting impact on the lives of those who served our great nation.

From all of us at the American Legion, thank you for your continued dedication and service.

I hope that those who have yet to renew their membership will, and we ask your help to recruit new members. On a final note, we wish you a safe, prosperous, and and Happy New Year!

Happy New Year!

Regards to All,

Stephen Scínta

Stephen Scinta Vice Commander Greenlawn Post 1244

Why Your Membership Matters

The American Legion stands as a beacon of inclusivity and camaraderie, offering a welcoming embrace to veterans and their families from all walks of life. Serving as more than just a gathering place, it fosters a sense of belonging and understanding within the veteran community, transcending differences, and uniting individuals under a shared bond of service. Legionnaires and their family members can also be eligible for a myriad of financial grants during times of financial hardship, natural disasters, or even for educational scholarships.



Commander's Call

A Veterans Day Message



Following are from remarks delivered by Commander Giordano on Veterans Day, "Good morning Ladies

and gentlemen.

Thank you for being here on this very special day. It is an absolute honor to stand before

you today to commemorate Veterans Day.

This day is not just marked on our calendars. It is a moment in time where we pause to reflect on the bravery, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication of those who have worn the uniform of our great nation. As a proud member of The American Legion, I want to share a few thoughts on what this day means to me and to all of us.

Veterans Day is a day of remembrance, a day to honor our brothers and sisters who have served in the military. Each one of you knows someone who has served. Maybe it was a parent, a sibling, a friend or perhaps even you. They are the individuals who have answered the call to duty—who have put their lives on the line to protect our freedoms and our way of life.

When I think about the dedication of our veterans, I am reminded of the countless stories that have shaped our history. Each story is unique, filled with moments of triumph and challenge.

I remember my own experiences. The camaraderie and the friendships we faced together. These bonds are unbreakable and they remind us that we are part of something much larger than ourselves. Let us also remember the families of veterans for they have also made sacrifices. The loved ones who waited at home, who prayed for our safe return and who provided support during and after service. Their resilience is commendable and deserves our recognition and appreciation.

Once again, thank you for honoring our veterans."

Carlo Gíordano Post Commander 631-487-4776 msgtlegion@gmail.com

2024 Holiday Party

Post 1244 kicked off the Holiday Season with our annual party at the Huntington American Legion on December 11. Over 100 guests joined in the festivities.

Members of the Knights of Columbus in Greenlawn and the Huntington Legion Post joined Post 1244 for an evening filled with music, friendship, delicious food, and fun. Commander Giordano served as our MC and was assisted by Past Commander Donna Boyle, who managed the Chinese auction.

The auction featured a variety of donated prizes, keeping everyone engaged and eager for more. A significant amount was raised from the auction to benefit **Angels for Warriors**. This organization provides numerous services to support veterans and their families, including pro bono and low bono legal representation. Learn about AFW at:



Enjoying the evening with friends and family

www.AngelsForWarriors.org

Greenlawn Bugle Ideas Welcome



Do you have an idea for our newsletter?

Please contact Bob Santo at: post1244@verizon.net or 516-458-7881

To subscribe to our weekly

email: "Veterans News" Contact Bob at the email above. Keep up with what is going on at your post.

Book Drive for Northport VA

We are looking for donations of appropriate books to fill the bookshelves in the waiting rooms at the Northport VA Medical Center.

Hardback books or paperbacks in good condition are preferred. No magazines.

We can also use puzzles/board games and DVD's.

Contact Sean Delle 631-208-7004.

Members please bring your books to our next monthly meeting, or call Sean to arrange a pickup if you cannot attend. 2025 Flag Drop Box Schedule American Legion - Greenlawn Post 1244

Public Libraries

January 2 - February 3. Half Hollow Hills, Dix Hills

February 3 - March 3. Half Hollow Hills, Melville

March 3 - April 1. Northport

April 1 - May 1. East Northport

May 1 - July 1. South Huntington

July 1 - Aug 1. Huntington - Huntington Station Branch

Aug 1 - Sept 2. Huntington - Main Branch

Sept 2 - Oct 1. Harborfields

Elwood . Oct 1 - Nov 3

Commack - Nov 3 - Dec 1

Cold Spring Harbor -Dec 1 - Jan 2

- Any flags dropped off at the libraries when the Flag Drop Box is not present will be sent to the South Huntington Public Library for Collection.
- The Northport American Legion Post 694 also has a drop box year round at 7 Woodside Avenue, Northport.

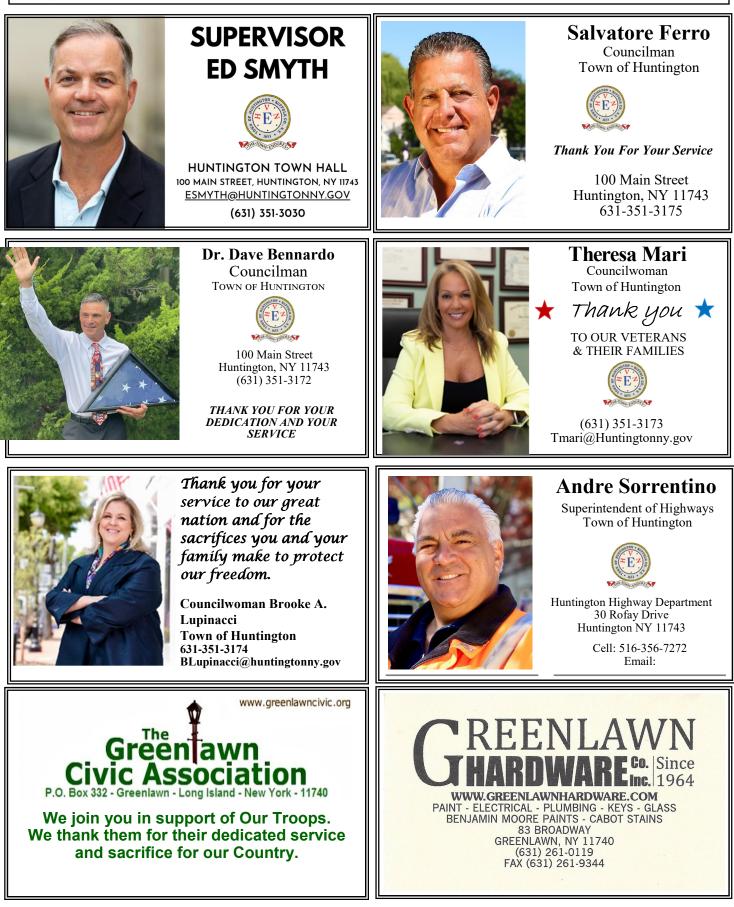
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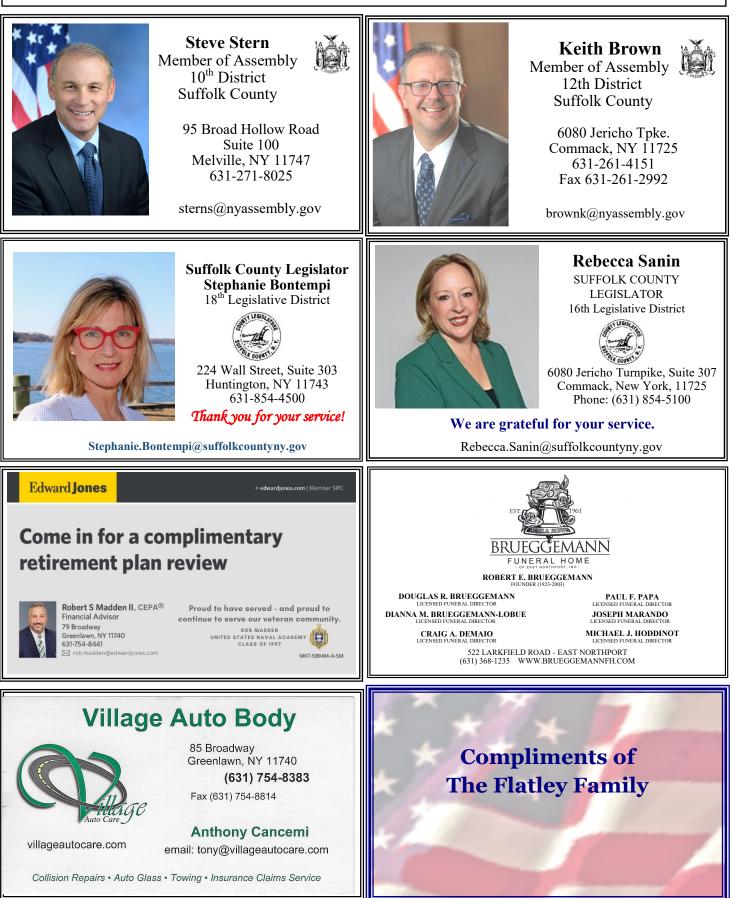


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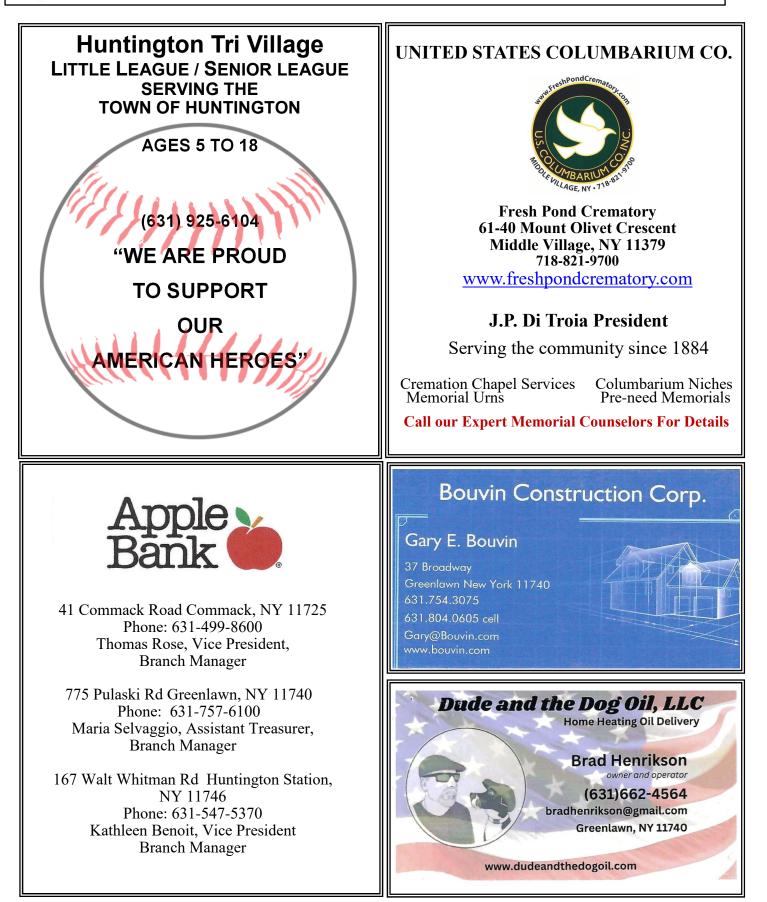




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