



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara inducts Yates County veteran into Senate Veterans Hall of Fame: Statewide virtual ceremony on Thursday (WATCH HERE), local recognition scheduled for Veterans Day in Penn Yan

THOMAS F. O'MARA November 8, 2023

| ISSUE: **2023 VETERANS HALL OF FAME**



"It is truly an honor to induct Andy Swarthout into the Senate Veterans Hall of Fame to ensure that his service and his commitment to area veterans will always be remembered," said Senator O'Mara.

I remain grateful that the New York State Senate provides this annual opportunity to salute the lives of our local veterans who have made such a difference for our communities, our state, and the United States of America. Andy served our nation in Vietnam with great courage and distinction.

Penn Yan, N.Y., November 9—State Senator Tom O’Mara (R,C-Big Flats) today inducted Andrew Swarthout of Yates County, a highly decorated Vietnam War veteran and mainstay of local veterans’ organizations, into the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame.

Swarthout represents O’Mara’s 58th Senate District and is among approximately 60 veterans from throughout the state inducted into the Hall of Fame this year.

He was nominated for this year’s induction by Yates County resident Kathy Prendergast.

Senators honored their respective 2023 inductees through a virtual ceremony earlier today.

The 2023 Veterans Hall of Fame virtual induction ceremony and additional tributes can be viewed [HERE](#).

Swarthout’s full Hall of Fame page can be viewed [HERE](#).

O’Mara will also recognize Swarthout at a local ceremony as part of the Yates County Bicentennial and Veterans Celebration Gala on Veterans Day, Saturday, November 11, at Seasons on Keuka Lake at Hampton Inn (110 Mace Street, Penn Yan). The gala begins at 5:00 p.m. and O’Mara’s presentation is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. at the event.

O’Mara said, “It is truly an honor to induct Andy Swarthout into the Senate Veterans’ Hall of Fame to ensure that his service and his commitment to area veterans will always be remembered. I remain grateful that the New York State Senate provides this annual opportunity to salute the lives of our local veterans who have made such a difference for our communities, our state, and the United States of America. Andy served our nation in Vietnam with great courage and distinction. Then he came back home to Yates County where he has remained committed to the critical work of honoring and assisting his fellow veterans and their families. He’s made a great difference in so many lives and I am proud,

through the Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame, to express our collective gratitude and respect.”

The Senate established its online Veterans' Hall of Fame in 2005 and, including this year, has inducted more than 500 veterans. The Hall salutes New York veterans for their service in the United States Armed Forces and their civilian accomplishments.

O'Mara's previous Veterans Hall of Fame inductees are:

- > Philip C. Smith, a highly decorated Korean War combat veteran and well-known figure in Schuyler County government and veterans' affairs (2011);
- > J. Arthur “Archie” Kieffer, a World War II combat veteran and a widely admired fixture in Chemung County government as the Chemung County historian (2012);
- > Painted Post Mayor and World War II combat veteran Roswell L. “Roz” Crozier, Jr. (2013);
- > Anthony J. “Tony” Specchio, Sr., a distinguished Korean War veteran and widely respected for his long-standing and active service to veterans and government in Watkins Glen and throughout Schuyler County (2014);
- > P. Earle Gleason, a lifelong Yates County resident and longtime director of the Yates County Veterans' Service Agency (2016);
- > Warren A. Thompson, a lifelong Steuben County resident and farmer, and a stalwart in the county's civic and veterans affairs (2018);
- > Paul C. “Digger” Vendetti of Elmira, a World War II United States Navy veteran and longtime caretaker at Woodlawn National Cemetery (2019);
- > in 2021, Richard T. “Dick” Gillespie of Penn Yan, a veteran of World War II (2021); and

> last year, Dennis Dennis L. "Denny" Wolfe, Sr. of Chemung County, a Vietnam War veteran and founder of the Vietnam War Museum in Elmira.

Other area veterans who are Hall of Fame members are Frank C. "Fritz" Pesesky, a veteran of World War II and former director of the Chemung County Veterans Service Office (2005); William K. Kastner, a Vietnam veteran and longtime director of the Steuben County Veterans Service Agency (2006); and Robert Laskaris, a highly decorated combat veteran and well-known figure in Chemung County veterans' affairs (2008).