



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

## Senator Malcolm Smith holds his 13th Annual Send-A-Vet-A-Valentine event

MALCOLM A. SMITH February 28, 2013

(ST. ALBANS) – New York State Senator Malcolm A Smith (D-St. Albans) distributed care packages to service members at the Veteran’s Home at St. Albans as part of his annual Send-A-Vet-A-Valentine program. Smith handed out some 200 goodie bags containing blankets, toiletries and other items donated by WellCare, Health First and Health Plus. The senator had a chance to meet with veterans one-on-one and thank them for their service to our country and for the sacrifices they’ve made to keep our nation safe and to protect the freedoms we all enjoy.

Since there were so many goodie bags, Smith used a shopping cart to transport them around the facility. He smiled warmly at the veterans and shook their hands. He also paused to meet with the site’s staff and thank them for their dedication to helping their patients.

“This is something I do every year to let the vets know I’m thinking about them and appreciate what they’ve done to keep this country safe. It’s so nice to see the smiles on their faces when they realize we have not forgotten them,” Smith said.

“We give them information including contact numbers they can call for social services and other things they might need for themselves and their families,” Smith said. “I also have a veterans bill this year that will provide tax credits to businesses hiring service members.”

“I want to thank our sponsors Well Care, Healthfirst and Health Plus for donating hats, gloves, scarves and other items to the vets,” Smith added.

“This event is just wonderful. The veterans look forward to it. The fact that the senator thinks about the veterans and remembers them is wonderful. A lot of service members don’t have family to visit them so for them to have this human contact is great,” said Dierdre Samuel, coordinator of volunteer services at the Veteran’s Home at St. Albans.

“This is a very nice gift for us. We really appreciate it. He’s a nice man, a good man,” said Jack Stein, 83, a WWII Army veteran.

Most of the patients at the facility have served in either WWII, the Korean War or the Vietnam War. They are there because of a service related injury or because they are homeless. There are 24 million veterans living in the United States.