



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Seward Pays Tribute To Fallen Herkimer County WWII Airman

JAMES L. SEWARD August 5, 2013

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**FRANKFORT, 08/06/13** - State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today presented the family of United States Army Sergeant Dominick J. Licari with the state senate's Liberty Medal, the highest honor bestowed by the New York State Senate.

**“The Liberty Medal is conferred on a select few, those who have distinguished themselves by meritorious action against hostile odds. Sgt. Dominick J. Licari is that type of individual,”** said Senator Seward. **“He served with courage, bravery and valor, and made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of his country.”**

Sgt. Dominick J. Licari joined the United States Army shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and was officially inducted into the service on April 22, 1942. On March 13, 1944, while serving with the U.S. Army Air Corps, 312<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 389<sup>th</sup> Bombardment

Squadron, Sgt. Licari and his pilot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Valorie Pollard, were returning from a bombing raid on a Japanese airfield. Their plane crashed into a jungle-covered mountain in Papua, New Guinea. Both Licari and Pollard, along with four airmen in two of the mission's other A-20s that went down, were killed.

A number of search missions took place in the days that followed, but the planes were not found. In 1946, Licari was officially declared dead even though his remains had not been recovered. Over the years, the crash site was surveyed and resurveyed and in 2012 personal effects and remains were recovered. The Department of Defense then requested a DNA sample from Licari's brother and a positive match was made. Finally, nearly 70 years after Sgt. Licari gave his life in valiant service to our nation, the family had closure, and Sgt. Licari was returned home.

The Liberty Medal is the highest honor bestowed by the New York State Senate, recognizing those who were willing to sacrifice their lives, or did so, in defense of America and the cause of freedom and world peace.

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More on this story at [WKTV.com](http://WKTV.com).