



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## A Tribute to Our Troops: Ritchie Delivers \$50,000 for 10th Mountain Division Monument

PATTY RITCHIE August 11, 2015

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### **Groundbreaking to Take Place August 12<sup>th</sup> at Thompson Park**

In advance of its groundbreaking Wednesday, State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced she has secured \$50,000 to assist with the construction of a new monument at Watertown's historic Thompson Park that will honor the sacrifices made by 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division soldiers.

“Here in our region, support for our soldiers is something that we see every day—whether it’s a ‘thank you’ to someone in uniform or a yellow ribbon placed outside one’s home,” said Senator Ritchie.

“But, the ‘North Country Honors the Mountain’ takes it one step further. This monument—which will be built at the center of Watertown for all to see—will be a way for local residents and visitors to Thompson Park to witness just how much our community appreciates the service and sacrifice of troops stationed at Fort Drum, as well as their families.”

Funds secured by Senator Ritchie will be disbursed to the city of Watertown and brings the project one step closer to its fundraising goal.

“10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division soldiers, as well as their families are an integral part of our community—and they have been for decades,” said Gil Pearsall, North Country Honors the Mountain Committee Chairman.

“Not only will this monument celebrate them, it also will serve as a reminder that the North Country is committed to Fort Drum and the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. We cannot thank Senator Ritchie enough for her support, which is a testament to her appreciation of the sacrifices made by our troops and will be vital to making this project possible.”

Designed by Susan Raymond, a Colorado-based sculptor known for her creation of military themed monuments including the “Fallen Warrior” at Fort Drum’s Memorial Park, the monument will be constructed on city grounds at Thompson Park’s Tower Square and is expected to be completed by next summer.

Senator Ritchie’s support for the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division Monument represents only her most recent effort not only to honor our troops, but also to improve Watertown’s historic

Thompson Park; a park designed by a group led by Frederick Law Olmsted, which was responsible for designing New York City's Central Park, Boston Commons, the very first State Park in the nation at Niagara Falls and other famous spaces. Last month, Senator Ritchie announced \$50,000 in special funding to help upgrade the park's wooden playground.

In addition, to honor our troops, Senator Ritchie for the past four years has hosted 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day at the State Capitol; an annual event that celebrates For Drum and the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division's contributions to the North Country region, the state and our nation. She has also honored dozens of local veterans through her "Veterans Hall of Fame Ceremony," which takes place each spring and recognizes veterans for their military service as well as their continuing involvement in causes that benefit and improve our local communities.

Final release of funds secured by Senator Ritchie is subject to state contract completion.