



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young visits Technical Sergeant Richard Handrahan, World War II Veteran

CATHARINE YOUNG May 9, 2013

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Senator Young visited Technical Sergeant Richard Handrahan, a recent recipient of the "Southern France" campaign star and the French Legion of Honor for his service during the Operation Dragoon invasion of Southern France in August 1944. Senator Young and her office helped him obtain these awards that he earned almost 70 years ago.

Mr. Pascal Soares, France's Honorary Consul in Buffalo, presented the award during a ceremony at the American Legion in Wellsville on March 18.

Technical Sergeant Handrahan enlisted in the Army Air Forces on January 12, 1942, and was trained as an airplane mechanic/gunner. He flew 34 missions as a top turret gunner/flight engineer on a B-24 bomber with the 464th Bombardment Group. The Group was deployed to Southern Italy in February 1944 and entered combat service in April 1944.

The 464th Bombardment Group was engaged in very long range strategic bombing missions targeting enemy railroad marshalling yards, oil refineries, airdrome installations, heavy industry and other strategic sites in Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia.

Technical Sergeant Handrahan earned four Air Medals, four campaign stars on the European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.

He also earned a sharpshooter badge for the .45 caliber pistol. After leaving the military, he returned to college and wound up in Elmira where he began a career selling cars. He retired after a 35-year career from Hetzel Motors in Wellsville.

Thank you, Richard, for your brave service during World War II!