



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Chemung County, other area senior volunteers honored at Senior Citizens Day event at State Capitol

THOMAS F. O'MARA May 6, 2014

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Albany, N.Y., May 6—New York State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats), Assemblyman Chris Friend (R-Big Flats) and Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R,C,I-Corning) welcomed senior citizen volunteers from Chemung and Schuyler counties to the State Capitol today as part of the 2014 Senior Citizens Day Celebration sponsored by the New York State Office for the Aging.

According to the Office for the Aging, Senior Citizens Day is celebrated in New York in conjunction with events across the nation during May to observe National Older American's Month. Today's event seeks to acknowledge the significant contributions made by older New

Yorkers to their communities.

Local county Offices for the Aging submitted nominations for the 2014 recognitions.

“What a great honor for all of the outstanding and meaningful service these area seniors have provided to so many of their fellow seniors throughout the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions. It’s a fitting tribute to the thousands of hours of they’ve volunteered which have made such a difference in so many lives,” said O’Mara.

The following seniors were honored in Albany as part of today’s celebration:

-- **Donna Barto (nominated by Chemung County Department of Aging):** Barto, of Horseheads, was co-winner of the Chemung County Senior Citizen of the Year Award in 2013. She has been volunteering since the 1970’s at a variety of organizations, utilizing her skills as a retired registered nurse and especially at her church, Our Savior’s Lutheran Church where she is the Parish Health Nurse and has also been Camp Nurse at Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Camp. She was the first woman member and a past president of the Big Flats Lions Club. She especially values volunteering and working with the visually impaired;

-- **Dale Bryant (Chemung County):** With Barto, Bryant, of Elmira, was co-winner of the Chemung County Senior Citizen of the Year Award in 2013. Bryant is extremely active in many community organizations including the Popcorn Truck Preservation Society, Friends of Woodlawn Cemetery and the Eldridge Park Preservation Society. He is the current President of the Chemung County Farmer’s Museum and is co-founder of the Finger Lakes Region Vintage Chevrolet Club of America;

-- **Joy Perry (Chemung County):** Winner of the “Chemung County Mildred Parfitt Award” in 2013, Perry has been a volunteer at the Arnot Ogden Medical Center for over 25 years, beginning as a “candy-striper” and having served as President of the Arnot Auxiliary Board. She is extremely active in her church, Trinity Episcopal, and many other community organizations and activities including as a member of the Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes, the ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes, the Thursday Morning Musicales and the Wednesday Morning Club; and

-- **Tony Vickio (Schuyler County):** A lifelong resident of Watkins Glen and well-known throughout Schuyler County, Vickio has donated his time and talents to many community organizations and activities over the decades including the Boy Scouts of America, animal shelters and local schools. In 2002, he founded “Spirit of Schuyler” (SOS), a non-profit, emergency response organization that assists county residents with basic needs such as fuel oil, utility costs and car repairs. Vickio remains president of SOS and volunteers countless hours to promote, organize and staff the organization (see more on Vickio's tribute [HERE](#)).

[In the photo above, Senator O'Mara and Assemblyman Friend welcome two of Chemung County's honorees at today's Senior Citizens Day Celebration at the Hart Theatre in Albany. From left to right: Donna Barto, Assemblyman Friend, Joy Perry, Senator O'Mara, and Pamela Brown, Director of the Chemung County Department of Aging and Long Term Care.]

The following seniors were unable to attend today's event in Albany and will be recognized by their local Office for the Aging:

-- **Alise Irwin (Steuben County):** Irwin, of Branchport, has been active in numerous volunteer efforts and organizations, including the Bath Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), which she has served as President. She is currently President of the Board of Directors of the Pulteney Free Library, Chairperson of the Steuben County Office for the Aging's Advisory Council, a member of the Pulteney Aging in Place advisory group. She is also active in her church, St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Penn Yan where she is a Sunday School teacher and staff worker at the Closet of Hope; and

-- **Lauren Snyder (Yates County):** Born and raised in Penn Yan, Snyder was employed at Yates County Public Health for 33 years, including 28 years as Director prior to her retirement in 2009. She was instrumental in 1997 as a co-founder of the S2AY Rural Health Network, which for nearly two decades has been the catalyst for notable health improvement projects across Yates County and regionally. She remains active in the network as a coordinator on a Neighborhood Health Status Improvement project in Dundee. She also remains active in numerous civic, business and community service organizations, including the Dundee Rotary Club; Milly's Pantry; Yates Christmas for the Needy; Dundee Mobile Food Pantry; and as a Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer.

O'Mara announced yesterday that Snyder will also represent his 58th Senate District this year as a [New York State Senate "Woman of Distinction."](#) She will be honored at an awards ceremony in Albany next Tuesday, May 13, 2014.