



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kathleen A. Marchione

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KATHLEEN A. MARCHIONE September 16, 2015

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Senator Marchione honored seven Veterans' Hall of Fame Honorees for 43rd Senate District, public ceremony also included a special moment of remembrance for victims of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks

New York State Senator Kathy Marchione is pictured proudly standing with her 2015 Veterans' Hall of Fame Awardees. Pictured, from left to right, front row, are: United States Navy Veteran Stephen Dennis (Mechanicville, NY); United States Marine Veteran John Parkinson (Petersburgh, NY); United States Navy Veteran M. Duane Wehnau (West Sand Lake, NY); and United States Army Veteran Marilyn Wright (Ghent, NY). Also pictured, from left to right, back row, are: United States Army Veteran William Allendorph (Averill Park, NY); United States Navy Veteran Robert F. Burlingham (Victory Mills, NY); and New York State Senator Kathy Marchione (R,C,I-Halfmoon). Not pictured is United States Army Veteran Vincent Grimaldi (Ancram, NY), as Mr. Grimaldi was unable to attend the awards ceremony. Senator Marchione honored the seven distinguished veterans during the 2015 Veterans' Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony she hosted at the NYS Military Museum in Saratoga Springs. Photo Credit: Bruce McDonough.

Saratoga Springs, NY – Senator Kathy Marchione (R,C,I-Halfmoon), Chair of the Senate's Local Government Committee and new member of the Senate's Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committee, recently hosted a special salute to local veterans at the New York State Military Museum. During the public honors ceremony, Senator Marchione inducted seven distinguished and decorated Capital Region veterans into the Veterans' Hall of Fame for the 43rd Senate District. The special ceremony also included a special moment of remembrance for victims of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

“The heroes we honored defended freedom and served with true valor and distinction. It is my honor to salute their service with this Veterans' Hall of Fame Award recognition,” Senator Marchione said.

Senator Marchione's Veterans' Hall of Fame Advisory Panel that assisted in the selection of local veterans honored during the ceremony was comprised of Allen Ayotte of Saratoga County, John Miller of Columbia County and Jodi Luskin of Rensselaer County. The seven local, distinguished and decorated military veterans honored during the ceremony were:

William Allendorph, United States Army (Averill Park): Mr. Allendorph began his service in the United States Army as a draftee in Troy, NY on January 16, 1967. In June 1967, following Basic and Advanced Infantry training, he entered Infantry Officer Candidate School and graduated a 2nd Lieutenant in May, 1968. In Vietnam, Mr. Allendorph was detailed to Quang Tin Province in the 1 Corps Tactical Zone. There he served as Mobile Advisory Team Leader and was promoted to 1st Lieutenant in 1969. One of the most gratifying missions he commanded in Vietnam was to rescue an imprisoned US Army Soldier, Specialist 4 Larry D. Aiken, from the enemy. Specialist Aiken was the only imprisoned soldier to be forcibly returned to friendly control during the war. For his service and bravery, Mr. Allendorph received 3 Bronze Stars, an Army Commendation Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, US Army Parachutist Badge, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, NYS Conspicuous Service Medal, and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star;

Robert F. Burlingham, United States Navy (Victory Mills): Mr. Burlingham enlisted in the United States Navy on June 15, 1953. He was stationed on the Aircraft Carriers CVB 43 USS Coral Sea and CVII USS Intrepid. After four years active duty he was honorably discharged on June 7, 1957 with the rank of AB3, Aviation Boatswain's Mate Petty Officer Third Class. While in the Navy he was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, as well as the Navy Occupation Service Medal European Class. He is a lifetime member of the Post 278 Schuylerville American Legion and the Greenwich, VFW Post 7291 and serves as chaplain of both the Schuylerville American Legion Post and the Saratoga County American Legion;

Stephen Dennis, United States Navy (Mechanicville): Mr. Dennis enlisted in the Navy at the age of 19, four days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Assigned to the USS Atlanta, he soon saw action at Coral Sea. On June 4, 1942, the Atlanta was in the decisive Battle of Midway Island. [On November 13](#), the Atlanta was the lead American ship at Iron Bottom Sound on Guadalcanal, taking a direct hit from a torpedo and being hammered by 49 shells. Eight hours later, having lost 172 men with 79 more wounded, the Atlanta went down. Mr. Dennis and the rest of the surviving sailors were evacuated from the stricken vessel. Mr. Dennis was later assigned to the USS Ancon as a radio operator and served in the amphibious invasion of Okinawa. On September 2, 1945, he

witnessed the formal surrender ceremony, which took place aboard the battleship USS Missouri. Mr. Dennis had the momentous task of radioing news of the surrender back to the United States. Mr. Dennis is also Senator Kathy Marchione's 2015 inductee to the New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame;

Vincent Grimaldi, United States Army (Taghkanic): Mr. Grimaldi joined the United States Army when he turned 17. He was stationed in Germany from 1966 to 1967, and served in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968 with the 18th Engineer Brigade, S-3 Operations, as an Administrative Specialist and Motor Vehicle Operator. He was honorably discharged on August 26, 1968 and received the National Defense Medal, Vietnam Service Medal and the Vietnam Campaign Medal. Mr. Grimaldi serves as the 19th Congressional District Veterans Advisory Committee Columbia County Director and Website Manager for the Hudson Valley Regional Veterans Resource site. He also serves as Master of Ceremonies for both the Hudson Memorial Day and the Hudson Veterans Day Parades and Services;

John E. Parkinson, United States Marine Corps (Petersburgh): Mr. Parkinson served in the United States Marine Corps from 1948 to 1952 and served in various duty stations around the world. In June of 1950, the Korean War began and he was sent to Japan as part of the 1st Marine Division. He was then sent to Korea and landed at Inchon Harbor. His platoon fought to capture Seoul, the Capital of South Korea. They moved north where John fought in the Chosin Reservoir Campaign. He received two purple hearts, a Bronze Star – V, and a Silver Star, and remained in Korea for an additional 13 months. The platoon Mr. Parkinson was in started with 96 men and after the campaign ended there were only 6 survivors. Today, Mr. Parkinson is the only survivor from the platoon. Mr. Parkinson was discharged from the Marine Corps in October 1952;

M. Duane Wehnau, United States Navy (Sand Lake): Mr. Wehnau served in the United States Navy during World War II, from July 7, 1943 to March 26, 1946. He was honorably discharged at the rank of Aviation Machinist's Mate, Second Class. During his military service, Mr. Wehnau was awarded several military decorations including Aircraft Engine Overhaul, World II Victory Medal, World War

II American Theater Medal, Asiatic Pacific Medal, Medal of Good Conduct and the National Defense Medal. Mr. Wehnau is a charter member of the Lt. Perry Williams VFW Post 3025. He has contributed countless hours over the past decades supporting local service men and women of the Town of Sand Lake. For many years Mr. Wehnau took care of the former site of Veterans' Memorial in West Sand Lake. The monument is now incorporated into the new Sand Lake Veterans' Memorial Park; and

Marilynn Wright, United States Army (Ghent): Ms. Wright served in the United States Army in the Women's Army Corp (WAC) during World War II. She was stationed at the Engineer Replacement Center at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and Fort Devens, Massachusetts. She earned the rank of Private First Class and was the only female who worked with a Seabees unit assigned to repair bridges stateside. Private Wright was honorably discharged [on 8/30/43](#) at the age of 22. She went on to work as a nurse's aide at various facilities in New York State. Over 150,000 American women served in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) during World War II. Members of the WAC were the first women other than nurses to serve within the ranks of the United States Army. By the war's end, their contributions would be widely heralded and Marilyn Wright was proud to be one of these women.

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