



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

SHARING THE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON WITH OUR TROOPS: SENATOR RITCHIE'S WEEKLY COLUMN

PATTY RITCHIE November 4, 2015



When one thinks of the holidays, spending time with loved ones, exchanging gifts with friends and family, and other traditions come to mind. However, the reality is that for our troops, this special time of year can be much different; as many of the brave men and women who serve our country are often separated from their families or are in other situations that make enjoying the holidays a challenge.

That's why I'm once again teaming up with Ogdensburg native and radio personality Melody Burns and asking people to join our effort to send holidays greetings to soldiers through "Christmas Cards for Our Troops." The initiative—which is being organized through Albany's Veterans Miracle Center—collects holiday cards, personally signed by donors, to distribute to members of the military at veterans' hospitals, army installations and other locations to let them know they are remembered and appreciated during the holiday season.

In 2014, we were able to send more than 120,000 cards to troops. We're hoping to top that number this year, but need your help. If you're interested in participating, please follow the below guidelines:

Do not include envelopes;

Do not include personal letters, photos or inserts of any kind;

Include your name/organization's name and address with each bundle of cards;

Use generic salutations such as "Dear Service Member," as cards addressed to specific individuals cannot be delivered through this program; and

Avoid cards with glitter or using loose glitter as it can aggravate health issues of ill and injured warriors.

Once signed, cards must be sent or dropped off to my offices by November 16th:

Watertown: 317 Washington Street, Room 418, Watertown, NY 13601

Oswego: 46 East Bridge Street, 1st Floor, Oswego, NY 13126

Ogdensburg: 330 Ford St., Basement, Ogdensburg, NY 13669

Throughout the past four years I've been proud to see so many people from our region and beyond join with me to send greetings to soldiers during the holidays. I'm hoping that once again this year, we can all join the spirit of the season and spread cheer to the brave men and

women who have given so much for our country.