



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Area senior volunteers honored at State Capitol tribute during 2016 Senior Day Celebration

THOMAS F. O'MARA May 11, 2016

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Albany, N.Y., May 11—New York State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), Assemblyman Chris Friend (R,C,I-Big Flats) and Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R,C,I-Corning) helped welcome senior volunteers from Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben and Tompkins counties to the State Capitol on Tuesday as part of the 2016 Senior Citizens Day Celebration sponsored by the New York State Office for the Aging.

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

According to the Office for the Aging, Senior Day is celebrated in New York in conjunction with events across the nation during May to observe National Older American's Month. This week's event acknowledges the significant contributions made by older New Yorkers to their communities. Local county Offices for the Aging submitted nominations for the 2016 recognitions. View the state Office for the Aging "[Senior Day 2016 Program.](#)"

[In the photo above, from left to right, are: Assemblyman Friend, Senator O'Mara, Lucy Brown, Donald Snyder, Patricia Finnerty, Charles Evans, Nancy Evans, Roberta Beckhorn, Thomas McGarry, Allen Covert, and Assemblyman Palmesano.]

The following area seniors were honored as part of this week's celebration:

> **Charles and Nancy Evans (nominated by Chemung County Department of Aging and Long Term Care):** Charles and Nancy Evans, both born and raised in Elmira, have been married for 58 years. They've been longtime community volunteers. Dick enjoyed a 38-year career at the Linn S. Chapel Co. in Elmira. He serves on several community boards including the Westside United Methodist Church and Friends of Woodlawn Cemetery. He's also an active member of the Board of Elmira AARP Chapter 276. Following her retirement after a 23-year career at the Corning Federal Credit Union, Nancy has also been an active volunteer in various capacities for the past 16 years, especially with the Chemung Volunteer Actions Corps (formerly RSVP). The couple has two adult sons and four grandchildren.

> **Roberta Beckhorn (Schuyler County Office for the Aging):** Having had parents and grandparents who viewed volunteering as an important civic responsibility, Beckhorn began volunteering as a child in her school library. She's volunteered throughout her life in many capacities – school committees, churches, 4-H, US Pony Clubs, the Finger Lakes Kennel Club and more. In particular, Beckhorn has volunteered at the Elizabeth B. Pert Hector Library for nearly 40 years where, for the last 38 years, she has coordinated the library's largest annual fund-raiser – the Hector Fair Book Tent. Beckhorn attended Cornell University and was subsequently employed at the Cornell School of Hotel Administration followed by work as an elementary school teacher at South Seneca Elementary School in a career which spanned 28 years. She and her husband, Dave, raised five children and have five grandchildren. They have lived in Hector for over three decades and own a horse farm not far from the Hector Library.

> **Thomas McGarry (Schuyler County):** McGarry, of Montour Falls, has been a very active community volunteer over many years. His volunteer service has assisted the American Red Cross where he serves on the Schuyler County Disaster Assistance Team; the Watkins-Montour Lions Club where has served as President and Visitation Chair; the Montour Falls Village Planning Board, where he serves as Chair; the Watkins Glen Public Library, where he volunteers with his wife, Marge, and their son, Matt; and, over the past few years, with the Arc of Schulyer.

> **Patricia Finnerty (Steuben County):** Finnerty, of Bath, a Corning Inc. retiree, has been a dynamic community leader for most of her life, including serving as Chair of the Solicitation Planning Committee and as Vice Chair for the Steuben Senior Services Fund; Treasurer of the Southern Tier Library System Board of Trustees; and a leader of Steuben County Bone Builders Program. Her experience in the business world and in academia (she taught junior and senior high school in the Albany area, Homer [Cortland County], and Bath, as well as

teaching at Corning Community College), among a wealth of other life experiences, has made her a volunteer in high demand. Finnerty's late husband, John, served as the Steuben County District Attorney and County Judge.

> **Donald “Doc” Snyder (Steuben County):** Snyder, of Bath, has become a pioneer in the area of aging in Steuben County. He and his wife, Grace, deliver meals to homebound seniors in rural Steuben County several times a week and provide transportation and grocery delivery to those in need. He has also introduced the Office for the Aging to new ideas for Aging in Place that are currently being implemented to allow area seniors to successfully and safely remain in their own homes. A graduate of Penn State University and Alfred University, Snyder has broad volunteer experience with the Boy Scouts of America; Centenary United Methodist Church, including leadership positions, as a youth advisor and a missions volunteer; the Bath Chamber of Commerce; and the Bath Rotary Club.

> **Lucy Brown (Tompkins County):** Brown, of Ithaca, is the heartbeat of Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services (INHS). As a lifelong resident of downtown Ithaca, she has worked tirelessly to help INHS create affordable housing opportunities in the community. She has asked the hard questions when needed, stood up for INHS when questioned, and gone door to door when INHS needed introductions and access. Her vision and commitment have made INHS successful in its attempts to navigate challenges. Brown worked for Cornell University's administration for 30 years. She has four children, four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

> **Nancy Istock (Tompkins County):** Istock, of Ithaca, when volunteering at the Cancer Resource Center takes charge of her assignments and always gives 110%. A few years ago she noticed people were having difficulty donating new or gently used medical equipment. She organized a system to accept the supplies and to find new “homes” for them, which benefited many others, not just in the Ithaca community but all over the country. Nancy also provides

rides to out-of-county medical appointments. She sees a need and then strives to fulfill it. Nancy's passion for helping others and her attention to detail led her to volunteer at the Alternatives Federal CU Tax Preparation Program. She helped many seniors and working families gain access to tax credits, putting well-earned money into their pockets. Nancy also has served on the Tompkins County Democratic Committee. Nancy has two daughters and three granddaughters. She has been a teacher, a research technician in biology, and a tax preparer.

Palmesano, who also represents a portion of Seneca County, also recognized the following Seneca County senior:

> **Allen Covert (Seneca County):** Covert, of Waterloo, is a Vietnam War veteran who served four years in the United States Navy. He continues to honor and support his fellow veterans by volunteering, in a variety of capacities, at both the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). He is also an active member of the Legion Riders, a motorcycle group which conducts rides in support of America's veterans and their families, often to welcome home returning troops and at parade observances such as the annual Memorial Day Parade in Waterloo. The Legion Riders also organize numerous events to raise funds and awareness for numerous causes including children's hospitals, college scholarships, and to help support wounded warriors and their families.