



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Murphy's moving veterans' wall honors four Putnam county heroes

TERRENCE MURPHY May 3, 2016



MAHOPAC, NY – Humbled, but by no means defeated, four former servicemen were recognized by Senator Terrence Murphy for their service to their country at a ceremony held at the Mahopac Library on Monday, May 2nd.

The ceremony marked the unveiling of a Moving Veterans' Wall sponsored by Senator Murphy and the New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame. The wall honors the wartime and civilian accomplishments of veterans from all conflicts of war. It will be on display at the

Mahopac Library from May 2nd through the 13th.

“These men offered their lives to a cause greater than themselves. Their bravery helped make America great and should never be forgotten,” Senator Murphy said. “When these men came home, they served their communities with distinction, as firefighters, legislators and business leaders, while continuing to reach out to help their fellow veterans.”

“It is an honor to recognize these courageous men who served on behalf of our country,” said Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell. “Our veterans allowed themselves to be put in harm’s way to protect those who were being oppressed and to keep us safe at home. We appreciate their selfless acts and are forever in their debt.”

Putnam County Sheriff Donald Smith, who served in the U.S. Army as a Brigadier General, added his heartfelt thanks. “This day is all about honoring those who love this country so much they marched to the sound of the guns, answering their country’s call to arms. My prayer for young people is that they never have to go through war. We must always be ready to defend ourselves, but as soldiers we honor the dead by serving the living.”

The 40th Senate District’s Veterans’ Hall of Fame Wall honors nineteen members, including four Putnam County heroes: Thomas Cairney (Patterson), Raymond Callinan (Carmel/Mahopac), Thomas Smith (Brewster) and Willis Stephens (Southeast).

Affectionately known as “Scotty,” Thomas Cairney served with distinction in the U.S. Army in Vietnam. Since his honorable discharge, he has provided outstanding service to his fellow veterans as a member of the Putnam Lake VFW Post, serving as Commander, chaplain and in several other capacities.

A veteran of the U.S. Navy, Raymond Callinan has received numerous awards, including the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign

Medal, Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation, and the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon. He has been Post Commander and currently serves as Chaplain for VFW Post 5491 in Mahopac, where he has been a member for 36 years.

Thomas Smith served in the U.S. Army in the European theater in Frankfurt, Germany and LeHarve, France in the U.S. Army during World War II. His primary duty was clearing snipers and stragglers. He was injured performing his duties during a shelling. His medals include the European African Medals, one cluster at the Battle of the Bulge, a Bronze Star, Combat Infantry Badge, WWII Victory Medal, Good Conduct Medal and the New York State Medal.

A pilot, Mr. Stephens flew for the Army Air Corps. Rising to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant, he became a flight instructor, training future pilots in Waco, Texas and Phoenix Arizona. In 1952 he was elected to the New York State Assembly, where he served for 30 years. During his tenure he was appointed Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and ranking minority member of that committee.