



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

## Thomas J. "Tailspin" Morley, Jr.

JOHN J. BONACIC May 15, 2018

| ISSUE: **VETERANS HALL OF FAME**



Thomas J. "Tailspin" Morley Jr. was born December 9, 1949 in Astoria, Queens. He graduated from high school in 1967 and attended Pace College for one year, but desired to serve his country in the Vietnam War.

Having successfully completed the Army Flight Aptitude test, Mr. Morley was sworn in to the Army, completed his training, and was appointed Warrant Officer 1st Class (WO1), receiving his orders for Vietnam.

On August 24, 1970, while preparing for a routine mission, WO1 Morley was advised of a downed scout aircraft. Upon arriving, he observed the downed helicopter on its side. After three attempts to hover down through the canopy unsuccessfully, a medevac Huey was summoned. While hovering and attempting to extract the survivors, enemy opened heavy fire on the helicopters; the crew chief of the downed helicopter began to return fire, as did WO1 Morley's crew chief. Having sustained 43 bullet hits, the hovering medevac aircraft was able to move ½ mile away to a clearing and make a successful forced landing. WO1 Morley landed beside them, transferred and airlifted the dead and wounded directly to Long Binh Army Evac Hospital. Voluntarily returning to the crashsite, WO1 Morley coordinated a second medevac aircraft and the removal of the remaining crew survivors.

WO1 Morley received promotion to Chief Warrant Officer 2nd Class on December 1, 1970. During his one-year tour in Vietnam, he flew over 300 combat missions, accumulating more than 1,296 hours of flying time. After Vietnam, he returned to civilian life and Pace University to complete his degree. WO1 Morley joined the Active Army Reserves and subsequently, the NYANG, maintaining his flying status. Upon his separation from the service in 2008, he had attained the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 4.

In January 1974, Thomas Morley became a NYS Trooper. He worked 25 years between Troop K and Troop C, before retiring in May 1999.