



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Area state legislators congratulate local senior volunteers honored at Capitol tribute: O'Mara, Friend, Palmesano recognize regional contributions

THOMAS F. O'MARA May 23, 2018

| ISSUE: **SENIOR VOLUNTEERS**

**OLDER
AMERICANS
MONTH**



ENGAGE AT EVERY AGE: MAY 2018

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Albany, N.Y., May 23—New York State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R,C,I-Corning) and Assemblyman Chris Friend (R,C,I-Big Flats) today

congratulated senior citizen volunteers from Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins and Yates counties who were honored at the State Capitol on Tuesday as part of the state's 2018 Older New Yorkers' Day celebration.

The New York State Office for the Aging (OFA) sponsored this week's event.

In a joint statement, O'Mara, Palmesano and Friend 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, Older New Yorkers' Day is celebrated 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 OFAs submitted nominations for the recognition.

The following area seniors attended Tuesday's event:

> **Harold "Jay" Hoffmeier, Jr. (Rock Stream, Schuyler County):** Jay Hoffmeier joined The Arc of Schuyler Board of Directors in 1992, serving as vice president from May 2006 to April 2009, and as a president from 2009 to 2012. He also serves on The Arc's audit, budget and finance, by-laws, incident review, and human resources committee. He is a passionate advocate for his son, who receives services through The Arc, and others impacted by decisions made at the state and national levels regarding services for people with disabilities and their families. Jay also serves on the advisory board for Arnot Medical Services, is a member of the New York State Society of Physician Assistants, and is a Vietnam War veteran. Jay and his wife, Betsy, of 47 years have lived in New York State for nearly 50 years and are the proud parents

of five children, five grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren;

> **John Terry (Watkins Glen, Schuyler County):** John is a pillar in the Watkins Glen community. He has quietly devoted himself to serving others and assisted in countless activities serving his community. He has served on and volunteered for numerous organizations including the Watkins-Montour Lions Club; Watkins Glen Housing Authority; Schuyler Hospital Foundation; Schuyler County Industrial Development Agency; Watkins Glen Board of Education; and American Chemical Society-Cornell Section. John is married to Dr. Cynthia Terry, an area physician, and they have two sons and two grandchildren;

> **Glenn Davis (Avoca, Steuben County):** For more than 50 years, Glenn has been a member of the Avoca Fire and Ambulance Department and has been honored by the American Red Cross as a “Real Hometown Hero.” A sales engineer for the Mercury Corporation for 48 years, six years ago Glenn used his drafting experience with Mercury to lead “The Ramp Guys.” This dedicated group of volunteers travels throughout Steuben County designing and building ramps for older adults and people with disabilities free of charge. In 2017, The Ramp Guys spent 1800 hours building 40 ramps valued at more than \$29,000, with over half of the material used being donated. He and his wife, Linda, were classmates at Avoca High School. They have four children. In addition to the Avoca Fire Department and Ambulance Department, Glenn has served on and volunteered for numerous community organizations including the Finger Lakes Chapter of the American Red Cross; Avoca United Methodist Church; and the Order of Freemasons. Glenn served as the Mayor of Avoca for 13 years, and on the Avoca Village Board for 20 years;

> **Phyllis Rathbun (North Cohocton, Steuben County):** Phyllis started the Willing Workers 4-H Club of North Cohocton in 1953 and has continued leading the group for the past 65 years. The club focuses on life skills like cooking, sewing and public speaking, teaching self-sufficiency, courage, tenacity and service to others. Phyllis has been recognized by the New

York State 4-H for her impact, dedication and advocacy as a “NYS Salute to Excellence Lifetime Volunteer Award” recipient. Following her graduation from Wayland High School, Phyllis earned her teaching degree from SUNY Geneseo and was an elementary school teacher in the Naples Central School District for 35 years;

> **Eleanor Parker (Penn Yan, Yates County):** If you live in Yates County, you know Eleanor Parker. At 78, she juggles a schedule including everything from volunteering at the food pantry, to serving as the town of Benton’s historian and health officer, and on the Advisory Council for the Yates County OFA. She attributes her choice of a career in nursing and teaching, as well as her commitment to volunteerism, to the fact that as a child, people were there to help her when she needed it. Eleanor has been involved with and served on numerous community organizations including Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc.; First Baptist Church of Penn Yan; Yates County Fire Auxiliary; The Windmill Farm and Craft Market; The Living Well; and the Woman’s Auxiliary of the Benton Volunteer Fire Department; and

> **Kathy Roush (Owego, Tioga County):** Kathy’s commitment to civic engagement in Tioga County has spanned more than four decades. A retired probation officer, she has made a tremendous difference contributing a wealth of knowledge and experience to many challenges including mental health, domestic violence and community development. She currently volunteers as a Medicare counselor for Tioga Opportunities, Inc. She has served numerous community organizations including Tioga Opportunities, Inc.; Rural Economic Area Partnership; Tioga County Mental Hygiene; Community Care Network of Nichols; A New Hope Center; Cornell Cooperative Extension; First Call for Help; and the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board.

The following Chemung and Tompkins counties volunteers were honored but did not attend the May 22 ceremony in Albany:

> **Marlene Carpentier (Elmira, Chemung County):** For the past three decades, Marlene has devoted her life to the food pantry housed at the North Presbyterian Church in Elmira, which is staffed by volunteers three days a week. Marlene initially started as an assistant but in 1999 was promoted to coordinator overseeing all aspects of the operation. Under her guidance, the Pantry Patch Garden was established and supplies fresh vegetables to clients. What began as a storage closet has grown into a full-fledged pantry that fed over 5000 people in 2017. Marlene taught elementary school for 35 years. She has two children and five grandchildren;

> **Charles H. Grund (Elmira, Chemung County):** Charles “Mud” Grund, a retired financial broker, has spent the majority of the past 44 years volunteering for Care First (Hospice) and the Elmira Correctional Facility in its prison ministry. A veteran of the United States Army, Charles and his wife raised three children in Elmira. He has served on and volunteered for numerous organizations including the YMCA and Jewish Community Center; Elder First Presbyterian Church; Rotary Club; ACTS – Area Christians Together for Service; and the Chemung Volunteer Action Corps; and

> **Mary Pat Dolan (Trumansburg, Tompkins County):** Mary Pat served as Commissioner of the Tompkins County Department of Social Services for 19 years before retiring in 2003. Following her retirement she has had a number of administrative positions with area non-profits and has volunteered for numerous community organizations including Cayuga Medical Center; Goodhope Youth Home; Kitchen Theatre; William George Agency and the George Junior; Republic Union Free School District; Catholic Charities; Food Bank of the Southern Tier; and Kendal at Ithaca.