



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Help Wanted: Join in My Effort to Send Christmas Cheer to Our Troops

SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE October 25, 2018

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### Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Dating back some 175 years, the tradition of sending Christmas cards to family and friends around the world has become one of the most important ways we let the people we love and care about, know that while they may not be in our immediate presence, they are still with us.

As the home of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, the most deployed division in the entire United States Army, our brave men and women in uniform are often deployed far away on the holidays, or perhaps they or a veteran are recovering in a hospital. Just as it is important to let our loved ones know we are thinking of them during the holidays, we too should make an extra effort to show those who fight for our freedom that we appreciate their sacrifices.

One way we can ensure our soldiers and veterans know they are not forgotten this Christmas, is to join me in the annual “Christmas Cards for Our Troops” program, which spreads holiday cheer to our service members by sending them personal greeting cards during the holiday season.

For the seventh year, I am teaming up with the Albany Veterans Miracle Center and Ogdensburg native and radio personality Melody Burns for the “Christmas Cards for Our Troops” program. We are asking people to deliver personally signed Christmas cards to my offices in Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence County. Last year, we collected more than 10,000 cards that were delivered to military members and veterans. These greetings are part of the 60,000 local people have sent via the program.

These greetings came from organizations and groups such as local libraries, businesses, schools and other organizations. Local families and individuals across our region have also joined in. Last year, the program as a whole helped to send more than 300,000 Christmas cards to active duty troops and veterans.

If you would like to join in this year’s effort to recognize those who serve, please follow the below guidelines:

- Sign each card with your first name, city, state and a personal message if desired;
- Do not include envelopes;

- 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.

**By November 9<sup>th</sup>, send or drop off signed cards at my offices:**

- 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

For many, the holidays are the happiest time of year. I hope you will share some of that cheer with members of the military at veterans' hospitals, army installations and other locations by participating in the "Christmas Cards for Our Troops" program.